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## The Status of the High School Principal in North Dakota

Albert Charles Auch

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THE STATUS OF THE HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPAL IN  
NORTH DAKOTA

A Thesis

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty  
of the  
University of North Dakota

By

Albert Charles Auch

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

August, 1940



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This thesis, offered by Albert Charles Auch, as a partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Science in Education in the University of North Dakota, is hereby approved by the Committee of Instruction under whom the work has been done.

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## Chapter I

### INTRODUCTION

#### Historical Aspect of the Principalship

The modern high school principalship finds its origin in the academy which had a head master with probably several assistants, usually called ushers. Previous to the academy the first secondary schools in this country were the Latin grammar schools. Although the early school masters may be considered great masters of education, they were not administrators in the modern sense. The earlier academies were not far different in organization from the Latin grammar schools. Some of the academies developed into good sized schools with several teachers. The need for administration in the academies was small, but the arrival of a need for an administrator can be noted. According to Douglass, "The "committee" or "governors" of the school delegated but little of their administrative duties and responsibilities. Masters were scholars whose duties were to teach, not to organize, administer, or supervise."<sup>1</sup> The title given the school heads varied. They were known by titles such as rector, preceptor, head master, and occasionally principal.

Although academies are still in existence today, the new high school rapidly replaced it, especially after the Civil War.

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1. Douglass, H. R., "Organization and Administration of Secondary Schools", p. 542.



The first general high school law was enacted in Massachusetts in 1827, but the term "high School" did not appear in the law until 1840.<sup>1</sup> Ensign states that "very early in the high school movement new administrative duties and responsibilities were required of the principals. The schools, being free, attracted large numbers and drew students from all classes of society, imposing on the principal the necessity of some sort of classification."<sup>2</sup> The new school continued in growth and number unchecked. Who was to head this school? Naturally, the qualifications demanded of the principal of the school would be scholarship, leadership, and organizing abilities. He was the original principal of a high school.

The growth of the cities and likewise the schools brought about the need for another official, the superintendent of all the schools in a community. Historically the high-school principalship originated before the superintendency, but the principal soon found himself with a superior official, the executive selected by the board of education.

Ensign states:

"With the development of the school superintendency, near the middle of the nineteenth century, came the graded school system, crowned by the high school. The new official, the superintendent, was often less scholarly than the high school principal.

"As public education developed still further, the graded system found its way very generally into small places, where, in the West especially, the school head was usually principal

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1. Cook, W. A., "High School Administration", p. 17.
  2. Ensign, Forest C., "Evolution of the High School Principalship", The School Review, Vol. XXXI, (Mar. 1923), p. 138.



of the high school and superintendent of the grades as well. In such cases, his chief interest tended to center in the fascinating activities of the high school. This in turn exalted the office of principal so that even yet in many smaller towns the superintendent is called, popularly and often affectionately, professor of the high school. With the increase in population and the accompanying multiplication of schools, the superintendent was forced to give up, often reluctantly, his duties in the high school, turning them over to his chief assistant and giving him the title of high-school principal."<sup>1</sup>

Principals failed to recognize the urgent need for leadership in administration and supervision of the high school.

Pierce states:

"At first administrative duties of the principal were mainly clerical in character. Even after being freed from classroom teaching and receiving clerical assistance, principals continued to be occupied chiefly with administrative duties of a routine nature. Prior to 1900, principals had gained recognition as the administrative heads of their schools, but made little effort to assume effective supervisory leadership although encouraged to do so by superintendents. They permitted general and special supervisors to function only through the principal's office.

"It was not until 1912 that principals generally began to sense their responsibilities for educational leadership. Impetus was given the movement by the formation of the Secondary and Elementary Departments of School Principals in the National Education Association. As individuals and in associations, principals have begun to study their problems and to evaluate the results of their work. The principalship is currently attaining professional status."<sup>2</sup>

High school principals occupy important positions in the modern school systems. Present educational organization establishes the individual school as the unit, the high school being one of the units. It is to the principal that the superintendent, the board of education, and the people look for efficient

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1. Ensign, Forest C., op. cit., pp. 188-189.
  2. Pierce, Paul R., Bulletin of the Department of Secondary School Principals, Abstract of Doctor's Thesis, Vol. 20, No. 62, (May 1936), p. 224.



administration and supervision of the high school.<sup>1</sup>

The small and medium size high school principalships are in a somewhat peculiar situation. Although designated as high school principal, he shares with the superintendent the administration and supervision of the high school. Since North Dakota has a large percentage of small high schools the status of the high school principal should be interesting.

#### Purpose of the Study

The discussion so far has revolved about the origin and development of the position of high school principal. It has been the purpose of this study to investigate the existing conditions of the high school principalship in North Dakota classified high schools.

The primary purpose was to set forth the present status, the professional training, and the extent of initiative and responsibility assigned the principal. The problem immediately presents several questions which confronted the writer:

1. What is the personal and professional status of the principal?
2. What professional training and experience has the principal?
3. To what extent have initiative and responsibility been assigned to the principal in administrative and supervisory duties?

Comparisons of the status of the high school principal in

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1. "Know Your School Principal", Leaflet No. 49, United States Office of Education, (1939) p. 1.



North Dakota and of other states and with accepted practice cannot be made until his present status has been determined. Principals might also desire to compare their own status with that of other principals in the state.

#### Source of Data

The North Dakota Educational Directory lists 218 classified high schools in the state.<sup>1</sup> A questionnaire was sent to all classified high schools including public, private, and parochial schools. Of the classified high schools, 15 are private and parochial schools and 203 are public schools.

The 218 questionnaires brought 124 responses. The distribution over the entire state was adequate in that 46 counties are represented with not more than six returns from any one county. (Figure 1) Names of towns where respondents are located and a copy of the questionnaire sent will be found in Appendix A and Appendix B respectively. It can be seen from Table 1 that the questionnaires were well distributed among the three classes of schools. First class schools, of which there are a greater number, returned 64 per cent of their total; likewise second class schools, having the smallest number, reported 47 per cent of their group, and third class reported 56 per cent. Including all schools, the 124 responses represent 57 per cent of all classified schools. Forty-four of the sixty-nine North Dakota high schools that are members of the North Central Association of Secondary Schools responded. These

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1. North Dakota Educational Directory, pp. 6-15.



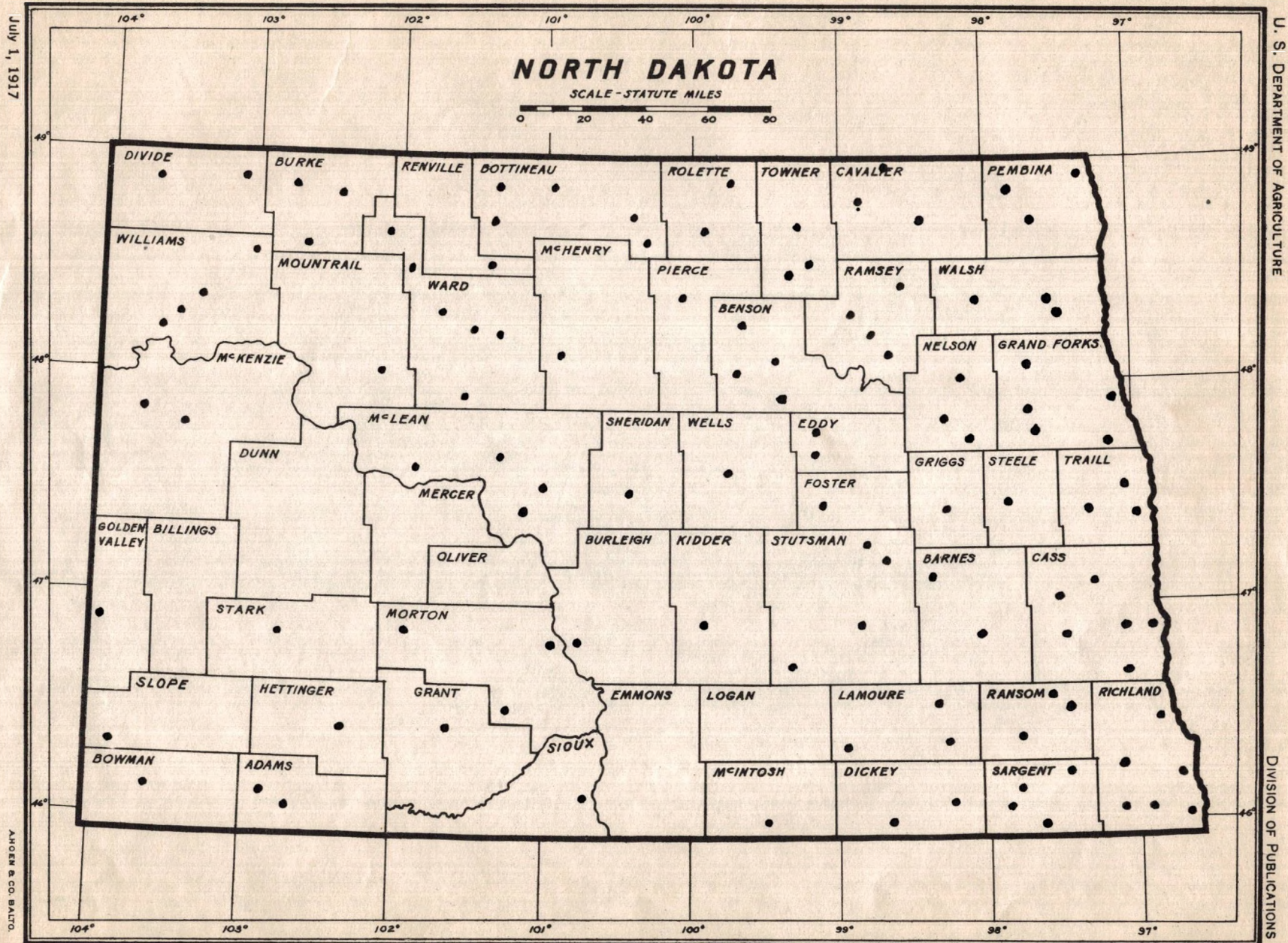


Figure 1. Distribution of Questionnaire Returns by Counties



Table 1  
Distribution of Returned Questionnaires

Type of School	Number of Questionnaires Sent	Number of Questionnaires Returned	Per cent Returned
First Class	99	62	63.6
Second Class	49	23	46.9
Third Class	70	39	55.6
Total	218	124	56.8

schools are included in the first class in Table 1, but they are mentioned here as a sampling of a selected group which will be used for comparison with other enrolment groups. The percentage of returns from all schools and the even distribution over the state appears to be a fair and representative sampling of the entire field of principals in classified schools.

For comparative purposes the schools will be placed into three groups according to enrolment. Group I will represent enrolments of 200 or more students, Group II will represent enrolments of 100-199, and Group III will represent schools of enrolment of less than 100. It was considered that the data would be more valuable if interpreted in terms of the different enrolments of the schools. Table 2 shows the returns according to the enrolments of the schools. Although the percentage is high for schools of 200 or more enrolment, the data should be satisfactory and meaningful for comparative purposes.



Table 2  
Distribution of Questionnaire Returns  
According to Enrolment Group

Group	Number Sent	Number Returned	Per cent Returned
I	26	21	80.8
II	64	41	64.1
III	128	62	48.4
Total	218	124	56.8

The related data of average enrolments of each group will be useful for interpretation and comparison. Table 3 gives in a brief form the mean enrolment of each group and the range of enrolments within each group.

Table 3  
Mean Enrolments of Three Groups of  
Classified High Schools

Group	Mean Enrolment	Range
I	362	200-1500
II	135	100-198
III	70	36-98

The mean enrolment of the members of the North Central Association is 232 students, having a range of enrolments from 62 to 1500 students.

From the questionnaire returns the data of enrolments was also very closely related to the type of school organization. The highest frequency for the type of school organization is the eight-four type, in which the principal will have responsibility



connected with four years of high school. However, as Table 4 shows, the six-six type ranks second. There were a total of six different types of school organizations reported by the principals. The first three types in Table 4 accounted for 93 per cent of all types in use, while the last three organizations very likely represent local conditions. Nothing was said as to

Table 4

Number and Percentage of Various Types  
of School Organizations

Type of School Organization	Groups			Total	Per cent
	I	II	III		
Eight-four	11	18	33	62	51.7
Six-six	3	12	22	37	30.8
Six-three-three	4	6	3	13	10.8
Seven-five	1	2	1	4	3.3
Six-two-four	2	0	0	2	1.7
Seven-two-three	0	1	0	1	0.8
No report	0	1	0	1	0.8

reason for the particular type of organization. The principal is concerned with the type of school organization and likewise this study is concerned because the enrolment and number of teachers to be supervised will increase for the Six-six and the Seven-five types over the Eight-four type, thus making it necessary for the principal to be in charge of five or six grades rather than four.

#### Limitations

It was necessary to secure the data by the questionnaire method. The questionnaire was reduced to a convenient two-page letter size, including objective type of items. An effort was made to avoid questions where opinions, bias or generalities



might enter into the responses. In cases where respondents were asked to list undergraduate and graduate courses in education, extra-curricular activities, and community activities the replies were not as complete as might be desirable. All replies that could not be intelligently interpreted were excluded from the data.

Only such returns were used which answered "Yes!" for the following question: "Are you definitely assigned as principal?" Three returns were excluded because the person acted as both principal and superintendent. One school of Group II returned a blank questionnaire with the notation: "We do not have a high school principal; superintendent is both principal and superintendent." After all eliminations were made 120 usable returns or 55 per cent of all classified schools were left. The scope of the study includes the status of the high school principal in classified schools where a principal is definitely assigned to the high school and working under the superintendent as the executive of the school system. Since the study covers only one particular year, no particular tendency or trend can be determined.



## Chapter II

## Professional Training of High School Principals

Modern high school principals are rapidly striding in the direction of professionalizing their position. The position is passing from that of a head teacher, who checks hall discipline, rings bells, and handles routine clerical duties, to an educational leader with specialized training.

Douglass states:

"The high-school principalship is rapidly becoming a position demanding not only administrative personality, but also specialized intensive professional training beyond the bachelor's degree, comparable with that of the dentist, physician, and attorney."<sup>1</sup>

Boardman and Thompson made a study of the professional status of the principalship in the nation as a basis for proposals for the improvement of the principalship in Minnesota.

They state concerning the national trend toward professionalizing the position:

"Evidence of this trend is seen in the fact that in 1924 only seven states demanded any special qualifications for the principalship or issued a principal's certificate, while in 1939 thirty-two states made such requirements.

.....  
 "The more outstanding facts concerning the standards for the high school principalship among the forty-eight states may be summarized as follows:

1. Thirty-two states issue a certificate for a high school principal and make requirements for this office not made for high school teachers.
2. In seventeen states the degree required for the principalship is an M. A. Five require graduate work beyond the B. A. degree, and ten require only the B. A. The other states do not issue a certificate for the principalship.

1. Douglass, H. R., "Organization and Administration of Secondary Schools", 1932, p. 548.



3. The modal number of required years of teaching experience is three years.
4. Fifteen of the thirty-two states issuing a principal's certificate have more than one grade of certificate. In some states this acts as a permit to serve in any high school. In others, such as Iowa and Nebraska, it qualifies only for service in smaller schools.
5. In eighteen of the thirty-two states issuing a principal's certificate the certificate is valid only for that office. Most of the other states issue a general administrative certificate."<sup>1</sup>

North Dakota ranks among the ten states that require only the bachelor's degree as the standard for the administrative position of high school principal. The state certification requirement in North Dakota is the same for principals as it is for all high school teachers.

The writer looked further to the catalog offerings of the educational institutions of this state that offer training to the principals. Of the institutions, the State University alone offers or awards the "Principal's Certificate."

According to the University Catalog of May, 1940:

"The "Principal's Certificate" is awarded by the School of Education to those of its graduates who have had successful experience in teaching, either before or after graduation, and who have satisfactorily completed twelve semester hours in Education, in addition to the nineteen hours required for graduation. The additional courses may be selected from the following. At least three hours in school supervision or administration must be included."<sup>2</sup>

The courses offered by the School of Education for the Principal's certificate are : Supervision of Instruction,

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1. Thompson, Anton, and Boardman, Charles W., "Certification Requirements for the High School Principal", Minnesota Journal of Education, Vol. XX No. 6, (Feb. 1940), p. 219.
  2. Bulletin of the University of North Dakota, Vol. XXXII, No. 2. (May, 1940), p. 178.



School Administration, Educational Tests and Measurements, Statistical Methods in Education, School Finance, and School law.<sup>1</sup>

The catalog states further: "Persons receiving the Master's degree in Education with a major in School Administration, who have had successful experience in teaching are also entitled to receive the Principal's Certificate."<sup>2</sup>

According to Thompson and Boardman, the credits of work required for the principal's certificate throughout the nation varied a great deal. They state, however: "In general the requirements call for credit in high school administration or high school supervision or in both and in other professional courses."<sup>3</sup>

Burke made a study of the professional courses for secondary school principals as required by twenty-six principal's credentials. There is no understanding or agreement among Teacher's Colleges or Schools of Education as to what principals should study. The exceptions to the disagreement are, school administration and school supervision. These rank first in the requirements, in the recommendations and among those courses of greatest value to principals.<sup>4</sup>

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1. Ibid., p. 178

2. Ibid., p. 178

3. Thompson, Anton and Boardman, Charles W., "Certification Requirements for the High School Principal", Minnesota Journal of Education, Vol. XX No. 6, (Feb. 1940), p. 219.

4. Burke, Arvid J., "Professional Courses for Secondary School Principals", Educational Administration and Supervision, Vol. XX (Oct. 1934) p. 512.



Section A and Section B, Standard VIII, of the Administrative Manual for North Dakota High Schools are of particular application to the high-school principal:

"Standard VIII- Superintendents, Principals, Supervisors and Teachers.

- A. 1. Superintendents, high school principals, and all teachers of academic subjects in the traditional senior high school must be graduates of standard colleges and universities, accredited by one of the regional accrediting agencies. Each candidate must have at least sixteen semester hours of work in educational subjects, aside from general psychology.
2. They must hold the first grade professional certificate issued by the Department of Public Instruction in North Dakota.
- B. Superintendents of first and second class high schools and principals of third class high schools must have had specific training in a school, college, or department of education for administrative and supervisory work. Such training must include a minimum of six semester hours of School Administration and Supervision."<sup>1</sup>

The single state professional requirement, then, for the position of high school principal of first and second class schools is the same as for all high school teachers. There is no special training required by regulation of the State Department of Public Instruction. Local boards of education may have certain special professional requirements. This study did not include local requirements.

In this chapter a presentation of data will be made of the principal's undergraduate and graduate professional training in preparation for the principalship or as training after entering the principalship. The respondents were asked to list the undergraduate and graduate courses in education.

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1. Administrative Manual For North Dakota High Schools, 1938, pp. 25-26.



Previously it was stated that to qualify as a high school principal, one must be a graduate of a standard college or university accredited by one of the six accrediting agencies. One of the items in the questionnaire requested the respondents to give the degrees that have been granted to them. While all principals must hold at least bachelor's degrees to qualify as a high school teacher, about 12 per cent have been granted master's degrees, which is the highest degree so far attained by any principal. Several stated that they had almost completed requirements for the doctor's degree. Of the principals who have been granted master's degrees, six are located in public

Table 5

## Type of Degree Held by Principals

Degree	Number of Principals by Enrolment Group			Per cent
	I	II	III	
Bachelor's Degree Only	16	33	57	88.3
Master's Degree	5	6	3	11.7
Doctor's Degree	0	0	0	0
Total	21	39	60	100.0

high schools, five are located in parochial schools, two in high schools connected with teachers' colleges, and one in an Indian school. In the schools which are members of the North Central Association, seven principals hold the master's degree, representing 17 per cent of the principals in these schools.

The undergraduate training of the principals reporting was taken at thirty-one different institutions. Two-thirds, or 67 per cent, received their training in eight North Dakota institu-



tions and the remaining one-third received their preparation in twenty-three institutions of other states. Table 6 shows that Jamestown College, a denominational school, trained about 18 per cent of all principals. North Dakota University was second, training 12 per cent of all principals. The state institutions in North Dakota together trained about 49 per cent of all principals reporting.

Table 6

Institutions From Which Principals Received  
The Bachelor's Degree

Institutions	Number of Principals			Total	Per cent
	I	II	III		
Jamestown College	2	10	9	21	17.7
University of North Dakota	5	6	3	14	11.8
Mayville State Teachers College	0	5	8	13	11.0
Valley City State Teachers College	0	4	8	12	10.1
Minot State Teachers College	1	2	5	8	6.7
North Dakota State College	1	2	2	5	4.2
Dickinson State Teachers College	1	0	3	4	3.4
Ellendale	0	0	2	2	1.7
St. Cloud State Teachers College	0	1	0	1	0.8
Colorado State Teachers College	0	1	1	2	1.7
St. Cathrine	0	1	1	2	1.7
Morningside	1	0	0	1	0.8
Oregon State College	1	0	0	1	0.8
Hope College	1	0	0	1	0.8
Iowa State Teachers College	1	0	0	1	0.8
Wisconsin University	0	1	0	1	0.8
Minnesota University	0	1	1	2	1.7
Hanover College	0	1	0	1	0.8
Dakota Wesleyan	0	1	0	1	0.8
Northern State Teachers College	0	1	0	1	0.8
Gustavus Adolphus	0	0	1	1	0.8
Des Moines University	0	0	1	1	0.8
Yankton College	0	0	1	1	0.8
McPherson College	0	0	1	1	0.8
Superior State Teachers College	0	0	1	1	0.8
Illinois College	0	0	1	1	0.8
Notre Dame University	1	1	0	2	1.7
Park College	0	0	1	1	0.8
Nebraska University	0	0	1	1	0.8
Concordia College	3	0	3	6	5.0
Luther College	1	1	1	3	2.5
Augsburg College	1	0	2	3	2.5
St. Olaf College	0	2	0	2	1.7



### Undergraduate Training

It is of importance to look into the principals' undergraduate professional training, in order to determine whether they have taken courses which are specific preparation for the principalship. The principals were asked to list the courses in education that were taken as undergraduate work. The undergraduate courses in education listed by the respondents vary considerably in number and name of courses and therefore it is difficult to classify and list the courses. Table 7 gives a list of courses taken by principals. A total of thirty courses are listed. There are the usual education subjects which are required courses in the high school teacher's training. They are also basic training for the high school principal, but any courses beyond those required of high school teachers for education minors are mentioned less frequently by principals. School administration was listed by 44 per cent of the principals who reported this data; 47 per cent listed tests and measurements; 38 per cent listed secondary education; 14 per cent listed a curriculum course; 10 per cent listed school supervision or supervision of instruction; three per cent listed educational statistics, and three per cent listed a course in guidance. It was mentioned previously that the reporting of this data by principals was not as complete as might be desirable. The 24 replies which could not be interpreted were excluded from this study. The percentages in Table 7 are based on the 96 usable replies. The above mentioned education subjects would be some of the courses considered over and above that of ordinary requirements for a minor in education for all high school teachers.



Table 7

## Courses In Education Taken As Undergraduate Work

Education Course	Frequency of Reporting	Rank	Per cent
Educational Psychology	64	1	66.6
Special Methods and Practice Teaching	63	2	65.6
High School Methods	51	3	53.2
History of Education	50	4	52.0
Tests and Measurements	45	5	46.9
School Administration	42	6	43.8
Secondary Education	36	7	37.5
Introduction to or Principles of Education	28	8	29.2
Observation	22	9	22.9
Curriculum	13	10	13.5
Child or Adolescent Psychology	12	11	12.5
Philosophy of Education	11	12	11.4
School Supervision	10	13	10.4
Teachers' Courses in Subject Field	6	15	6.6
Educational Sociology	7	14	7.3
Classroom Management	4	16	4.2
Elementary Methods	3	17	3.1
Psychology of High School Subjects	3	17	3.1
Educational Statistics	3	17	3.1
Guidance	3	17	3.1
Public Health	3	17	3.1
Extra-curricular Activities	2	18	2.1
The Junior High School	2	18	2.1
Social Psychology	2	18	2.1
Rural School Education	2	18	2.1
Advanced Psychology	1	19	1.0
Orientation	1	19	1.0
Ethics	1	19	1.0
Mental Hygiene	1	19	1.0

Another item included in the questionnaire concerning the undergraduate training of the principal was the academic major or minor. High school principals have selected history and social science as their undergraduate major or minor more often than any other subject. Over one-third have a major in this subject field, and 42 per cent have a minor in the social studies field. Natural science was next in rank, 23 per cent



having a major in this field, and 36 per cent having a minor. English, likewise, ranks third in the frequency of the principals reporting both as a major and as a minor.

Table 8

Frequency and Percentage of Academic Undergraduate  
Major and Minors Studied by Principals

Subject Field	Major		Minor	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
History and Social Science	43	35.8	50	41.7
Natural Science	27	22.5	43	35.8
English	19	15.8	31	25.8
Mathematics	18	15.0	16	13.3
Languages	12	10.0	19	15.8
Commerce	7	5.8	7	5.8
Industrial Arts	2	1.7	0	0
Psychology	1	0.8	6	5.0
Music	1	0.8	6	5.0
Physical Education	1	0.8	5	4.2
Home Economics	1	0.8	0	0
Journalism	1	0.8	0	0
Religion	1	0.8	1	0.8

Although an education major is not a teaching major, it is a significant point in professional training that nine principals or eight per cent reported majors in education in undergraduate work. It is questionable whether this is a good policy in view of the teaching service required of the principal before and after entering the principalship. It must be remembered when inspecting Table 8, that multiple majors and multiple minors account for the numbers.

#### Graduate Work

In the interest of professionalizing the position of principal it is necessary to look to the advanced work of the principals. The respondents were asked to state the number of



semester hours of graduate work they had completed and to list the graduate courses in education they had studied. Over one-half, or 53 per cent, of the principals reported having had some graduate work. Table 9 shows the graduate work in semester hours according to the enrolment group where the principal is located. From the lowest group to the highest group there is a consistent increase of graduate work. Principals located in schools of Group III have an average of six semester hours of

Table 9

Total Number Semester Hours of Graduate Work  
Reported By the Principals

Semester Hours	Group			
	I	II	III	N. C. A.
Over 36	7	5	2	9
34-36				
31-33		1		
28-30	1		3	2
25-27	2	1	2	3
22-24	2	1		3
19-21		1		
16-18	1	2	4	3
13-15		2	3	3
10-12		5	4	5
7-9		2	3	1
4-6	1	3	3	3
1-3	1		1	1
None	4	16	35	10
Total	19	39	60	43

graduate work. Those located in schools of Group II have 13 semester hours, and this is increased to 28 hours for the principals in schools belonging to Group I. The average principal has completed 15 semester hours of advanced work. Principals located in North Central Association schools have completed 22



hours of advanced work, only six hours less than the average of the largest schools. The data on graduate work shows quite conclusively that the average principal is seeking advanced work and indirectly professionalizing the principalship.

#### Graduate Courses in Education

A decided shift from the undergraduate work has taken place in the training of the principal. "School" or "high school" administration has now moved to first place in rank from the sixth place, and school supervision has moved into second place from the thirteenth place in undergraduate work. "Curriculum changes", "high school curriculums," or "curriculum building" as the course was named, has now moved up in rank to third place from the tenth place and a guidance course has moved up in rank to the sixth place from the twentieth place. The shift of emphasis is also seen in the appearance of many graduate courses which are further training for the principal's professional work. Some of the courses which were not listed in undergraduate work but are now mentioned in the advanced work are as follows: School law, school finance, methods of research, personnel administration, progressive education, and advanced educational psychology.

Previously it was stated that more than one-half of the principals have completed work beyond the bachelor's degree. Of the sixty-three principals who reported advanced work, 30 per cent have not taken any graduate courses in education, although they reported having advanced work in other fields. Apparently the need of seeking further professional training



is not recognized by this group or they may be turning to other lines of work.

Considering data of Tables 7 and 10, 67 per cent of all principals have taken work either in undergraduate or graduate training in school administration, 41 per cent have had school supervision, 63 per cent have had tests and measurements, 22 per cent have had a curriculum course, five per cent have had educational statistics, eight per cent have had school law, seven per cent have had school finance, and seven per cent have had methods of educational research. In observing the data of the two tables it must be remembered that only by examination of the questionnaire could one determine whether a principal had taken the course in graduate or undergraduate work. Because of repetition of similar work in graduate study on the part of some principals, the tables do not bring out a clear picture; for instance, some principals studied school administration as an undergraduate and as graduates they took advanced work in this field.



Table 10

Frequency and Percentage of Principals Listing  
Certain Graduate Courses in Education

Course	Frequency	Rank	Per cent
School Administration	24	1	38.1
School Supervision	14	2	22.2
Curriculum	13	3	20.6
Tests and Measurements	10	4	15.8
School Law	9	5	14.3
Guidance	8	6	12.7
School Finance	8	7	12.7
Methods of Research	8	8	12.7
Secondary Education	8	9	12.7
Methods	8	10	12.7
Child and Adolescent Psychology	7	11	11.1
Personnel Administration	4	12	6.3
Advanced Education Psychology	4	13	6.3
Philosophy of Education	3	14	4.7
Educational Statistics	3	15	4.7
History of Education	3	16	4.7
Elementary Education	3	17	4.7
Seminar in Education	2	18	3.1
Progressive Education	2	19	3.1
School Health	1	20	1.6
School Plant Planning & Management	1	21	1.6
Problems in Education	1	22	1.6
Library Science	1	23	1.6
Advisors Course	1	24	1.6
Physical Education Administration	1	25	1.6
Extra-curricular Activities	1	26	1.6
Parent Education	1	27	1.6
The Junior High School	1	28	1.6
Approaches in Liberal and Cultural Education	1	29	1.6
Classroom Management	1	30	1.6

Clem and Murray stated in their study of the principal in Pennsylvania that "principals lack adequate training in educational administration and supervision. Principals rank education courses in terms of professional value for their work as follows in decreasing importance: Supervision, methods of



teaching, psychology, administration, secondary education, curriculum organization."<sup>1</sup>

Murphy's study in West Virginia in 1930 brings out the inadequacy of the undergraduate training when he states,

"The undergraduate work of the principal was not designed to train him for the duties of the principalship, although fifty-two per cent stated they took undergraduate courses for such preparation.

"The graduate work in Education has been of a more specialized character and of more utility for the principal in his special field of work. The average principal has done eighteen hours of graduate work."<sup>2</sup>

Some years before that time Kocs, in 1924, in a nationwide study of high school principals, has the following to say,

"Obviously, a majority of the principals in and through their training have been endeavoring to compensate for the professional inadequacies of undergraduate training."<sup>3</sup>

Principals in North Dakota recognizing the inadequacy of undergraduate professional training have apparently shifted emphasis of professional training in their graduate work. Only one-half have taken graduate work and therefore the inadequacy in training of one-half has not been remedied before entering the principalship or after entering.

#### Summary

The national trend toward professionalizing the position of high school principal is seen by the requirement of a

- 
1. Clem, Orlie M. and Murray, James F., "The Status of the Pennsylvania High School Principal", Educational Administration and Supervision, Vol. XIX, (Sept. 1933), p. 450.
  2. Murphy, I. R., "Status of the High School Principal in West Virginia", Unpublished Master's Thesis, University of Cincinnati, 1930, p. 19.
  3. Kocs, L. V., "The High-School Principal", p. 53.



principal's certificate in thirty-two states. North Dakota is found among the ten states that do not require such a certificate. The State Department of Public Instruction does not require any special training for the high school principal other than to hold a bachelor's degree with 16 semester hours in education, which is the certification requirement for high school teachers. Of the state institutions which offer training for the principalship, the State University alone awards a "Principal's Certificate," according to catalog offerings of the institutions. The general requirements for the "Principal's Certificates" throughout the nation call for work in high school administration or high school supervision or in both and in other professional courses. The State University offers eighteen hours, of which the principal must select twelve hours including at least three hours in school supervision or school administration to qualify for the "Principal's Certificate."

Two-thirds of the high school principals received their undergraduate professional training within the state. Jamestown College ranked first as a training institution, which granted bachelors' degrees to 18 per cent of all principals. The University of North Dakota ranked second, training 12 per cent, followed by Mayville State Teachers College with 11 per cent. The master's degree was the highest degree reported, 12 per cent of the principals having attained this degree. The remaining 88 per cent hold bachelors' degrees. In the undergraduate training, 10 per cent of all principals reporting such data had taken supervision of instruction, 44 per cent had



taken school administration, 13 per cent, a curriculum course, 38 per cent, secondary education, and three per cent, educational statistics. Academic majors and minors selected by principals are history and social science, followed by natural science, English, and mathematics in decreasing order. A major in education was reported by eight per cent of the principals.

Over one-half or 53 per cent of the principals reported some graduate work. The amount of advanced work increased consistently from an average of six semester hours for principals of Group III to 13 hours for those located in schools of Group II, and more than doubled the preceding group, or 28 hours for those in schools of Group I. Fifteen semester hours was the average amount of graduate work for principals of all schools reporting. A decided shift has taken place in the graduate work toward subjects of more utility in the principals' professional work. School administration ranked first in the selection of advanced education subjects, school supervision ranked second, a curriculum course ranked third, followed by tests and measurements, school law, guidance, school finance, and methods of research. In combining undergraduate and graduate work in education, 67 per cent of all principals reporting such data had work in school administration, 41 per cent had work in supervision of instruction, 63 per cent in tests and measurements, 22 per cent in curriculums, five per cent in educational statistics, eight per cent in school law, seven per cent in school finance, and seven per cent in methods of research. Although the graduate work of the principals was of greater utility in their professional position, only about one-half have



done graduate work, and of those who have done graduate work  
30 per cent have taken work other than education.

*Maanah*  
CERTAIN BOND  
HAS CONTENT



### Chapter III

#### Personal Status, Educational Experience, and Tenure of High School Principals

The present chapter will consider several aspects of the personal status of the principal. A presentation will be made of the principal as to age, sex, marital status, family size, and salaries. Later in the chapter data will be presented in regard to his experience and tenure.

High school principals in North Dakota as a group are young men or women. The average age of the principals is 30 years. The average age of the principals in Group III is 29.2 years, in Group II, 31.1 years, and Group I, 33.4 years. The principals located in schools which are members of the North Central Association reported an average age of 33.8 years, which is higher than the average of the principals of the 21 largest schools. Table II shows the average age of the principals according to enrolment group where the principal is located.

Table II

#### Average Age of Principals

Group	Mean Years
I	33.4
II	31.1
III	29.2
All Schools	30.0

Figure 2 presents a graphic distribution of the ages reported by 116 principals. The ages were quite evenly distributed



between 22 years and 35 years and there is a scattering of ages above the 35 year level. Fifty per cent of the principals are 29 years of age or less.

Age	Distribution of Principals
50 and over	*****
49	
48	
47	*
46	*
45	*
44	
43	*
42	
41	
40	***
39	**
38	*
37	
36	***
35	****
34	***** _____ 75%
33	*****
32	***
31	*****
30	*** _____ 50%
29	*****
28	****
27	*****
26	*****
25	***** _____ 25%
24	*****
23	*****
22	*****
21	*

Figure 2. Distribution of Ages of Principals

#### Sex Distribution of Principals

The data concerning sex distribution shows a predominance of men. Considering all the schools, men hold 72 per cent of all the principalships. If the sex distribution of the principals



is considered by enrolment groups, Table 12 shows 70 per cent of the principals in Group III are men, while in Group II a smaller percentage, or 64 per cent, are men. The data are in accordance with previous studies of this type. The larger schools show a predominance of men. Only 9.5 per cent of the principals in the schools of Group I are women.

Table 12  
Numerical and Percentage Distribution  
of Principals by Sex

Group	Men		Women	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
I	19	90.5	2	9.5
II	25	64.1	14	35.9
III	42	70.0	18	30.0
All Schools	86	71.1	34	28.8

Although women hold principalships in schools of enrolment up to 200, larger schools have selected men, with the exception of two schools. Referring to the North Dakota Educational Directory, the writer found that they were the only women holding principalships in public schools of 200 or more enrolment.<sup>1</sup>

In comparison with the above enrolment groups, the sex distribution of the principals located in North Central Association schools, shows that 77 per cent are men. A somewhat greater percentage of men is reported for this group than for the average of all schools.

1. North Dakota Educational Directory, pp. 6-15.



### Marital Status

Since 29 per cent of all the principals are women, as shown in Table 12, it would somewhat account for the 59 per cent of the principals who reported they were single. All the women in the principalships are single persons. According to Table 13, 62 per cent of the principals in Group I are married. In Group II and Group III the opposite is true. Forty-three per cent of all principals in Group II are married and 31 per cent of Group III are married. Unmarried principals predominate in the lower enrolment groups, largely because they are four to five years younger and a larger percentage of them are women who are not married, and the salaries will not permit the men to marry.

Table 13

#### Percentage of Married Principals

Group	Married		Single	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
I	13	61.9	8	38.1
II	17	43.0	22	57.0
III	19	31.2	41	68.8
All Schools	49	40.8	71	59.2

#### Size of Family

Table 14 shows that only 29 of the 49 married principals have children. One principal has seven children and twenty principals have none. The average married principal has one child.



Table 14

Number and Distribution of Children  
in Families of Married Principals

Number of Children	Principals
7	1
6	
5	
4	
3	5
2	9
1	14
0	20

Salaries of Principals

One great factor considered by young people when entering a profession is the future salary. The beginning salary and the future salary must be inviting enough to attract young people and to retain those already in the profession. In a salary study of college alumni in 1937, teaching was the lowest paid profession, both for those having been graduated and out of school one year and for those having been out eight years.<sup>1</sup> According to Davis, "The average salary of teachers, principals and supervisors in our public schools in 1938-39 was \$1380."<sup>2</sup> The salary most typical of all teachers in American public schools is considerably higher than the average salary of the high-school principal in North Dakota. By reference to Table 15 it can be seen that there is a consistent increase in salary from the small-

1. "Economic Status of College Alumni", Bureau of Education Bulletin, No. 10. (1937), p. 72.
2. Davis, Hazel, "Nation-Wide Salary Situation", The Nation's Schools, Vol. XXIV (Oct. 1939), p. 23.



est schools to the largest. The average salary for the men is higher than that of the women in all groups of schools. The average annual salary for all male principals is \$1212, or \$101 per month for twelve months. For all the women in the principalship the average annual salary is \$985, or \$82 per month for twelve months. The average salary for the men in Group I is \$1684, which is 68 per cent greater than the average salary of \$992 for the men of Group III. In the case of the women principals the average salary for Group III is \$932, but only an increase of a little over \$100 is found for the women of Group I. Women in the principalship receive lower salaries than male principals in all enrolment groups. In comparison with the data given in Table 15, the average salary for men in North Central Association schools is \$1483, for women of this group the salary is \$1136, and for all principals located in North Central Association schools the average salary is \$1415. Table 15 does not include parochial schools who reported "No salary."

Table 15  
Average Annual Salaries of Principals

Group	Men	Women	All Principals
I	\$1684	\$1072	\$1625
II	1223	1037	1166
III	992	932	976
All Schools	1212	985	1156

Referring to Figure 3, the range of salary was from \$765 to \$3100. Only one-third of the principals receive an annual



salary above the average for all principals of \$1156. If the curve were constructed of graphic distribution of salaries, a decided skewness toward the lower salary group would result.

Annual Salary	Distribution
\$2000 and above	*****
1900-1999	*
1800-1899	****
1700-1799	****
1600-1699	****
1500-1599	*
1400-1499	****
1300-1399	*****
1200-1299	*****
1100-1199	*****
1000-1099	*****
900-999	*****
800-899	*****
700-799	***

Figure 3. Graphic Distribution of Average Annual Salaries of Principals

#### Educational Experience

The items of the questionnaire making inquiry into the educational experience called for the number of years of experience in teaching in the grades, in the junior high school, and in the high school. Two items requested the numbers of years of experience as principal, including the present, and the number of years in the present position.

From the compilation of reports, as indicated by Table 16, it is apparent that high school principals are recruited from the ranks of high school teachers. A very small number have had experience in grade teaching, but the amount is so small that it is insignificant. The principals of Group III have an average



of five years of high school teaching experience. An average of seven years of high school teaching was reported for Group II, and another marked increase to ten years of high school teaching experience for the principals of Group I. Combining the experience in grade, junior high school and high school teaching experience for the total teaching experience, principals in Group III have an average of 6.3 years, Group II have 8.4 years, and Group I have 11.8 years. In comparison with the three

Table 16

## Type of Educational Experience in Mean Years

Type of Experience	Groups		
	I	II	III
Grade Teaching	.98	1.65	.43
Junior High School Teaching	.32	.76	1.1
High School Teaching	5.03	7.02	10.3
High School Principal	3.2	5.3	6.8
In Present Position	2.7	4.3	6.0
Total Experience	6.33	8.43	11.83
Experience Previous to Principalship	3.13	3.13	5.03

preceding groups, principals located in North Central Association schools have an average of nine years in high school teaching and 10.5 years of total experience. From the data, then, principals who have the greatest amount of teaching experience also are holding positions in the largest schools, as would be expected.

It can be seen by inspection of Table 16, that principals are promoted from the high school teaching staff. The teaching experience is an average of three years previous to entering the principalship for the principals of Group II and Group III.



Principals of Group I have an average of five years of teaching experience previous to entering the principalship. The data presented in Table 16 indicate that at least three to five years experience are expected before undertaking the administrative position of high school principal.

By inspection of Table 16, it can also be seen from the data included that the principals located in schools of Group I have an average of 6.8 years of experience in the high school principalship. The experience of this group is over twice that of Group III. Principals of Group III have an average of 3.2 years of experience in the principalship, while those of Group II reported an average of 5.3 years of experience as a high school principal. The data here are similar to that of high school teaching experience in that a marked increase in experience as a principal is shown as the enrolment of the high school increases. It is a significant comparison also that principals of North Central Association schools reported an average of 6.7 years of experience as high school principal, ranking very high. This is one-tenth of a year less than the principals of the twenty-one largest schools.

Figure 4 presents the data somewhat differently. Each asterisk in Figure 4 represents one principal. The years of experience as a principal ranged from one to twenty. Fifty per cent had three years or less experience as a principal, and 23 per cent were in the principalship for the first year.



Years Experience as High School Principal	Number
20	**
19	
18	
17	*
16	**
15	***
14	
13	
12	***
11	**
10	****
9	**
8	
7	****
6	****
5	*****
4	*****
3	*****
2	*****
1	*****

50%

Figure 4. Graphic Distribution of Total Years of Experience As High School Principal

Some Aspects of Tenure

Replies received from classified high schools indicate that high schools in North Dakota frequently have changed principals within the past two years. According to Figure 5, 46 per cent have been in their present positions only two years, while 28 per cent held their present position for the first year. Principals reported a wide range in reply to the questionnaire item concerning the number of years in the present position. The range of years in the present position is from one to eighteen years. Referring to Figure 4 it can be seen that 23 per cent were in their first year of the high school principalship. Figure 5 indicates that 28 per cent were in their present



position for the first year. The number of years in the present position for all principals is 3.8 years. Principals in the schools of Group I have been in their present position six years, almost twice as long as that of the average principal. Table 16 also shows that principals in Group III have been in their present position 2.7 years, and those in Group II have been in their present position 4.3 years. It is significant also to note that principals in North Central Association schools have been in their present position an average of 5.5 years. Apparently as the size of the high school increases so also will the length of service in the present position. One might infer that in the larger schools, Group I, principals have reasonable tenure, since 82 per cent have been in their present position three years or more. This is not the situation in the smaller schools where 43 per cent of the principals have been in their present position two years or less.



Years	Number
18	**
17	
16	*
15	
14	
13	*
12	***
11	**
10	****
9	***
8	
7	
6	*****
5	*****
4	*****
3	*****
2	*****
1	*****

Figure 5. Distribution of Principals according to the Number of Years in Present Position

#### Summary

The average age of the high school principals in classified schools of North Dakota is 30 years. Seventy-five per cent of the principals are less than 34 years of age. Seventy-two per cent of the principals are men, but in schools of Group I, where only two women hold principalships, the men are almost exclusively selected for the principalship. More than one-half, or 59 per cent, of the principals are single. Group I was the only group that showed more than one-half, or 62 per cent, married principals. The average married principal has one child.

The principals reporting receive a mean annual salary of \$1156. The average annual salary for men is \$1212 and for women \$985.



From the data presented, it might be inferred that principals are recruited from the high school teaching staff. The average experience, previous to the principalship, is three years for the principals of Group II and Group III; and five years for the principals of Group I. Fifty per cent of the principals have three years or less experience as a high school principal and 23 per cent are in the principalship for the first year. Forty-six per cent of the principals have been in their position two years or less, while 28 per cent are in their present position for the first year.

The typical high school principal is a single man, 30 years of age. He has been a principal for 4.3 years, and has been in his present position 3.8 years. He has been promoted to the position of high school principal, from the position as a high school teacher where he has had four to five years of teaching experience. The average salary of the typical high school principal is \$1156.



## Chapter IV

### Duties and Responsibilities of the Principal

The statutes of North Dakota in defining the duties of the superintendent state that he shall, subject to the final approval and authority of the board of education, supervise the administration of the course of study, visit schools, examine classes, and have general supervision of the professional work of the school, including the classification and assignment of principals, teachers, janitors, and assistants.<sup>1</sup> The line of authority thus definitely established, the high school principal must exercise his authoritative leadership upon the delegation of such leadership and responsibility by the superintendent. It has been previously stated that the unit of school organization is the individual school. A principal is then assigned to each school. He is delegated authority by the superintendent to organize, administer and supervise the important function of the school which is the training of the pupil.

It has often been stated that, as is the principal, so is the school. Principals in high schools of less than five hundred pupils are working more slowly to the achievement of responsibilities of leadership in administration and supervision than the larger schools for several reasons, according to Roberts and

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1. The General School Laws of the State Of North Dakota, Edition of 1935, p. 239.



## Draper:

"Some principals sacrifice their leadership, either because the teaching load is so heavy that they lose their energy and opportunity for leadership in the burdens of classroom management; or through too great limitations placed upon their action by their superintendents and boards; or, in the third place, through having too little or no conception at all of the possibilities for leadership inherent in the new position of high-school principal."<sup>1</sup>

They also state two main factors for the slow progress among small school principals in assuming responsibilities:

- "(1) the inexperience of the principals of the smaller high schools and
- (2) the number of classes which they are required to teach."<sup>2</sup>

Further reference is made to high school principals in the Administrative Manual for their responsibility in the secondary school.

In Standard VI - Supervision, is stated:

- "A. The superintendent or principal in charge of a school shall be provided with an office. The teaching duties of such an officer should be no more than three-fourths that of a full-time teacher. In schools of more than ten teachers, a part or full-time office clerk can be employed to advantage. The time of superintendent and principals is too important to be spent in routine matters which can as well be taken care of by some one else!"

- "C. Supervision of Instruction: Note: \* The term principal as here used refers to the administrator and supervisor of the high school. In the smaller schools of North Dakota the superintendent must assume these duties.

.....  
 The development of a technique for high school teaching during the last two decades, and the realization of the obvious yet often ignored fact that classroom instruction is the most important activity taking place in the school, in fact that the entire machinery and expense of the school is for the sake of instruction, has led to the conception of the principal as an educational leader, who through classroom supervision, conferences, teachers' meetings, and testing programs,

1. Roberts, A.C. and Draper, E.W., "The High-School Principal,"  
 2. Ibid., p. 311. (1927, p. 312.)



is continually endeavoring to unify, improve, and keep on a high plane, the instruction of his school. As we saw in the first development, the principal relieved of teaching duties we now see him relieved of office duties through clerical assistance and the delegation of many details of administration to other members of the staff."<sup>1</sup>

In the introduction the writer referred to the peculiar situation of the principal in small high schools where he shares with the superintendent the administration and supervision of the high school. This study included principals who were definitely assigned the position of high school principal. The superintendent also teaches classes in the high school, with the exception of the larger schools, according to a study of North Dakota superintendents by Elster:

"The time of the superintendents was generally heavily taken up by teaching duties. One hundred forty-four superintendents employed in 0-20 teacher systems were teaching from three to seven classes daily. The median number of classes being taught daily by them was 4.02. The median number of classes taught daily by the superintendents in larger than twenty teacher systems was 2.50. ....<sup>2</sup> The range of classes taught daily was from zero to three."

The superintendents in schools employing from none-20 teachers were spending a median of 91.41 minutes daily in supervision, while those of the larger schools were spending a median of 181.7 minutes daily in performance of supervisory duties.<sup>3</sup>

From the study of superintendents it is obvious that he is teaching one-half the day, and his limited time for supervision and administration over the high school and the grade school

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1. Administrative Manual For North Dakota High Schools, 1938, pp. 22-23.
  2. Elster, Julius J., "The Status of the Superintendent in North Dakota," Unpublished Masters' Thesis, University of North Dakota, 1933, p. 129.
  3. Ibid., p. 130.



would cause one to infer that one or the other would be slighted. It is imperative then that the high school principals be delegated the responsibility as head of the high school.

According to Reeves:

"The principal should supervise his teachers because he must assume responsibility for the work of his school. The best administrative practice would make the principal the responsible head of his school. It is a truism to state that authority must accompany responsibility. No one can be responsible for that over which he exercises little or no authority."<sup>1</sup>

In order to perform the supervisory and administrative duties of a principal as a responsible head of the high school, he must have time for his work. Table 17 shows the proportion of the school day the principal spends teaching classes and supervising study hall. The proportion of the school day spent in teaching

Table 17

Proportion of School Day  
Spent on Teaching and Study-Hall Duty

Group	Subjects Taught		Study-Hall Periods		Total	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
I	2.8	38	1.3	18	4.1	56
II	4.0	57	2.1	30	6.1	87
III	4.7	62	2.1	27	6.8	89
All Schools	3.7	51	1.8	25	5.7	77

and study-hall supervision decreases from 89 per cent in schools of Group III to 56 per cent for principals located in schools of

1. Reeves, Charles Everend, "The Principal as Supervisor," American School Board Journal, Vol. LXXVIII, (Feb. 1929), p. 51.



Group I. The average for principals in all North Dakota schools is 77 per cent, while principals in North Central Association schools spend a corresponding amount, or 76 per cent, of their time in teaching and study-hall duty. In Group I there is a marked tendency for principals to have time available for the performance of administrative and supervisory duties. Two principals in this group reported the entire day available for administration and supervision, but they are located in high schools where the enrolment is over 700 students.

Usually the high school principal teaches some social study, 50 per cent teaching one or more subjects in this field as indicated by Table 18. Next to that field, 44 per cent teach some natural science, and 32 per cent teach one or more subjects

Table 18

## Distribution of Subjects Taught by Principals

Subjects	Frequency of Listing	Per cent
History and Social Science	60	50.0
Natural Science	53	44.2
English	38	31.7
Mathematics	38	31.7
Commerce	29	24.2
Languages	14	11.7
Music	6	5.0
Psychology	5	4.2
Journalism	4	3.0
Industrial Arts	2	1.7
Other	5	4.2

in either the English or mathematics fields. A wide variety of subjects was reported with a number of principals teaching in four different fields. The highest percentages are found in



three fields, namely: social studies, natural science, and English where one might infer that the preparation necessary for classes is greater than in the fields of mathematics, commerce, or languages. In other words, principals are teaching in subject fields requiring a greater amount of outside preparation for their classroom teaching.

#### Extra-curricular Activities

The average principal has added to his already heavily loaded teaching and study-hall schedule the direction of one or two extra-curricular activities. One-third, or 33 per cent, as shown in Table 19, direct one activity, 34 per cent have two activities to direct, while 17 per cent have three activities, and 4 per cent direct as many as four activities. Fifteen per cent have no activity to direct. No enrolment group is exempt from the direction of activities; however, ten of the twenty-one principals in schools of 200 and over do not have extra-curricular duty.

Table 19

Number of Extra-curricular Activities Directed  
by each Principal

Enrolment Group	Number of Activities Directed				
	None	One	Two	Three	Four
I	10	1	8	2	0
II	3	15	14	5	2
III	5	24	19	10	2
All Schools	18	40	41	17	4
Percentage	15	33	34	14	3

The type of activity varies considerably within each group.



The largest number of principals are directing athletics, excluding physical education. In all schools, 39 per cent of the principals, Table 20, are directing athletics, followed in order by dramatics, 30 per cent; speech activities, 18 per cent; band and orchestra, 12 per cent. Here again it can be seen, as in the subject fields, that a large percentage of the principals have the duty of directing activities which require a great deal of time. This is especially true of athletics and dramatics.

Table 20

## Type of Activities Directed by Principals

Type of Activity	Frequency	Per cent
Athletics	47	39.1
Dramatics	36	30.0
Speech	22	18.4
Band and Orchestra	14	11.7
Vocal Music	14	11.7
School Paper	14	11.7
Class Advisor	13	10.8
Clubs and Societies	9	7.5
Library Work	6	5.0
Debate	6	5.0
Student Council	6	5.0
Year Book	4	3.3
Athletic Association	1	0.8
Dormitory Supervisor	1	0.8
School Carnival	1	0.8

## Community Activities

The study also made inquiry concerning the community activity of the principals. Fraternal and civic organizations rank the highest among the activities participated in by principals, 38 per cent of all principals reporting participation in this type. Next to that, 20 per cent took part in Girl or Boy



Scout work, while the three church activities claimed the participation of 47 per cent of all principals. Table 21 shows the type of activities engaged in by principals. It is possible that Parent Teacher Association participation is greater than reported. Although no indication was made, principals may consider it a part of the school work.

Table 21

Types of Community Activity Participation  
by Principals

Type of Activity	Frequency of Listing	Per cent
Fraternal & Civic Organizations	45	37.5
Girl and Boy Scouts	24	20.0
Church Choir	19	15.8
Sunday School	18	15.0
Church Work	19	15.8
Sports	14	11.7
Community Music and Dramatics	12	10.0
Parent Teacher Association	12	10.0
Other	9	7.5

The number of activities claiming the participation of principals is given in Table 22, which shows that 30 per cent of the principals reported taking part in none of the community activities. The average principal participates in at least one community activity. Since data were previously presented in this chapter showing the heavy teaching and study period schedule combined with the extra-curricular assignments, it would be reason enough for not taking part in community affairs. Of the 30 per cent reporting no activity whatsoever, all but two principals are in Group II and Group III. In the other extreme



it might be questioned whether the principals who reported four and five activities were not devoting too much time to community activities, at least in view of their heavy school schedule.

Table 22

Number of Community Activities Principals Participate In

Enrolment Group	Number of Activities					
	None	One	Two	Three	Four	Five
I	2	5	5	6	2	1
II	17	7	8	5	1	1
III	21	15	15	5	3	1
All Schools	40	27	23	16	6	3
Percentage	30	23	23	13	5	3

#### Extent of Initiative Assigned to High School Principals

So far in this chapter the data presented has been concerned with the time the principal has for the performance of administrative and supervisory functions, but, if he is to be more than a nominal head of his school, he must assume important responsibilities. The principal was directed to determine as accurately as possible in whom in the school system the responsibility was placed for initiating twenty-five administrative and supervisory activities in the high school. Space was provided for checking under "principal," "superintendent", "principal and superintendent", "board of education." The list of administrative and supervisory activities was not intended to be complete, the aim in selecting the items being to secure a representation of the extent of initiative assigned the high school principal.

Attention is directed first from the viewpoint of the



activities in which the smallest percentage of principals are assigned initiative. Less than ten per cent of the principals have initiative assigned in the selection of new high school teachers, recommending salary promotion, selecting equipment, preparing financial budget, approving supply lists, determining the type of school organization, directing janitors, assigning teachers and carrying on a public relations program.

On the other extreme, principals who are assigned initiative receive the highest percentages in exercising ordinary disciplinary control and enforcing attendance. The activity of exercising ordinary discipline control is the only activity in which more than one-half of all principals take the initiative. The activities where more than one-fourth of the principals have initiative assigned are: organizing the class schedule, admitting and registering students, exercising ordinary disciplinary control, keeping records and reports, classifying and promoting pupils, and enforcing attendance.

The principals reported that the superintendent has the initiative in fifteen of the twenty-five activities listed. The activities in which initiative is more frequently placed in the superintendent than in the high school principal are all activities except organizing the class schedule, admitting and registering students, exercising ordinary disciplinary control, keeping of records and reports, and enforcing attendance. It can be seen by inspection of Table 19, that the superintendent has the initiative in all activities of a critical nature, which would make it possible for the principal to be the real head of



Table 23

Location of Initiative in Administrative  
and Supervisory Activities

Activity	Per cent				
	Principal	Supt.	Principal and Supt.	Board of Education	Others
Selecting new high school teachers	0.7	44	5	46	4
Recommending salary promotion	2	49	5	42	0.8
Planning the course of study	10	40	44	4	0.8
Organizing the class schedule	27	17	48	0	2
Admitting and registering students	26	18	55	0	1
Advising concerning courses and curricula	19	23	46	0	2
Visiting classwork for supervisory purposes	10	69	18	0	0.8
Conferring with teachers about classwork	14	58	24	0	0
Calling and holding teachers' meetings	14	74	9	0	0
Exercising ordinary disciplinary control	61	2	31	0	4
Exercising disciplinary control involving suspension and expulsion	11	46	35	4	2
Controlling and promoting extra- curricular activities	21	26	49	0	4
Selecting textbooks	11	39	29	3	11
Selecting equipment	5	53	27	9	5
Approving supply lists	4	74	6	14	2
Preparing financial budget	4	61	3	28	3
Directing janitors	6	62	16	9	2
Conducting testing programs	18	42	29	0	3
Keeping of records and reports	38	16	44	0	2
Classifying and promoting pupils	26	32	37	0	2
Carrying on public relations program	4	37	39	0.8	0.8
Directing office work	11	65	22	0	2
Enforcing attendance	46	16	32	0	3
Assigning teachers	8	67	20	2	2
Determining type of school organization	3	55	26	13	2



the high school. The principals reported in 46 per cent of the cases that the board of education had the initiative in the selection of new high school teachers, while the superintendent has the initiative in the following activities: Recommending salary promotion, visiting classwork, conferring with teachers about classwork, calling and holding teachers' meetings, exercising disciplinary control involving suspension and expulsion, selecting textbooks, selecting equipment, approving supply lists, preparing the financial budget, directing janitors, conducting testing programs, directing office work, assigning teachers, and determining the type of school organization.

It is obvious from the reports that a wide range of policies are in effect as regards the initiative assigned the principal. The responses indicate that for all the activities listed initiative is often located in principal and superintendent working in conjunction. There are eight activities in which this arrangement is most frequently reported. In some instances it may signify a cooperative effort of the principal and superintendent on important procedures or questions of school policy. However, initiative in the activities which the principal and superintendent share most frequently are of the type that could easily be delegated to the principal. Activities that have initiative placed in the principal and superintendent jointly are: Planning the course of study, organizing the class schedule, admitting and registering students, advising concerning courses and curricula, controlling and promoting extra-curricular activities, keeping of records and reports, classifying and



promoting pupils, carrying on a public relations program.

In this study it was reported that the board of education exercised initiative to some extent. Contrary to best practice of restricting the activities of the board of education to matters of legislation, approving, and deliberation, a larger percentage of principals reported that the board took the initiative in selecting new high school teachers more often than the superintendent. Other activities which were reported in notable percentages were recommending salary promotion, selecting equipment, approving supply lists, preparing the financial budget, directing janitors, and determining the type of school organization. Minor percentages were reported in other activities, which were similar to the above in that they should be the functions of the administration and teaching staff, for instance, planning the course of study, selecting textbooks and assigning teachers.

Since this study included the private and parochial schools, other types of location of initiative might also be explained here. A column was provided for the checking if other persons or groups had initiative placed in them. Among this group we find the teachers, Civil Service Commission, and Provincial Boards. The largest percentage of reporting of other persons were the teachers as subordinates working under the direction of the principal. To the extent that the principal is reassigning the initiative originally placed in him this also might be included with the initiative reported for him.

It is also notable from the reports that there is a lack



of initiative among the persons or group who should be responsible, three per cent reporting that there was no conferring with teachers about classwork, two per cent, no teachers' meetings, three per cent, no directing of janitors, seventeen per cent, no public relations program. Certainly, here are opportunities for the principal to assume leadership, since all of the above activities are of a supervisory nature. It may represent a hesitancy on the part of principals to assume responsibilities not placed in him.

Reviewing the assignment of initiative to the principal in the entire group of activities, it is apparent that the principal is a minor and nominal head of the high school. It might be stated that he is a principal-teacher type, having the greatest amount of work in the teaching field, with the assignment of ordinary disciplinary control and the enforcement of attendance. The factors affecting the greater assignment of initiative to the principal are no doubt several. First, the superintendents teaching in the high school, administering and supervising the high school have shown a hesitancy to delegate any great amount of responsibility. The superintendent has retained full control in all activities of a critical nature. By inspection of the data it can be seen that the superintendent and principal work in conjunction or share responsibility for initiating in a great many activities, but this only complicates the line of authority in that two may be held responsible, instead of the superintendent's holding the principal responsible for his school over which the principal has not been delegated any notable authority.



Further, it is questionable whether the superintendent has been delegated the initiative, especially since the principals reported initiative lay in the board of education. A study of the relationships of the principal and superintendent would be very valuable because of the close relationship existing when sharing the administration and supervision of the high school.

Another factor worthy of consideration would be the lack of training, experience, and stability of the high school principal. There may be good grounds for the hesitancy of initiative placement until the principal has the experience and training necessary for the carrying of larger responsibilities, and until he demonstrates he can and will assume responsibility. But with the professionalization of the position and the requirement of a principal's certificate it would be essential that the principal be assigned more vital responsibilities.

#### Summary

The high school principal is delegated whatever duties and responsibilities he has by the superintendent. In order that the principal may perform the supervisory and administrative duties as head of the high school, he must have time for his work. The average principal spends more than three-fourths of his time in teaching and study-hall duty. Principals in the schools of Group III spend 89 per cent of the school day in teaching and study-hall duty and those of Group II spend 87 per cent of the school day in these duties. The average principal is teaching in subject fields requiring considerable preparation for the classroom teaching. Fifty per cent reported one or



more subjects in the Social Science field, 44 per cent in Natural Science, and 32 per cent in English. The average principal has additional duties of directing one to two extra-curricular activities. Here again he has the type of duties that require a great deal of time; thirty-nine per cent are directing athletics, 30 per cent are directing dramatics. Besides the school duties, the average principal participates in one or two community activities. It is obvious from the compilation of responses that the teaching, study-hall, and extra-curricular activity duties of the average high school principal are so heavy that there is no time available for administrative and supervisory duties.

North Dakota high school principals have not been delegated the responsibility for the administrative and supervisory duties of the high school. Superintendents have retained the initiative in fifteen of the twenty-five administrative and supervisory activities included in this study. Principals had the responsibility for the initiation of activities placed in them in only two activities, exercising ordinary disciplinary control and enforcing attendance. In the remaining eight activities, the principals indicated that initiating was done by the principal and superintendent working in conjunction.



## Chapter V

### Summary and Recommendations

This study has been concerned with the status of the high school principal who is definitely assigned that position and is working under a superintendent of schools. Data for the study were secured by a questionnaire sent to all classified high schools of the state. Responses were received from 124 principals which represents 57 per cent of all the principals in the state. The number of questionnaires returned and the even distribution over the state is a fair and representative sampling of the entire field of high school principals. The principals were placed into three groups according to enrolment size of the school. It was considered that the data would be more valuable if interpreted in terms of the different enrolment size of the schools.

The typical high school principal in North Dakota is single, and about 30 years of age. Although women hold principalships in 29 per cent of the schools, they cannot look for much encouragement to the holding of a principalship in the larger schools where only 9.5 per cent are women. The average principal has been recruited from the high school teaching staff. Principals in the schools of Group II and Group III have had three years of teaching experience previous to the principalship, those of Group I have had five years of experience previous to the principalship. Fifty per cent of



the principals have three years or less experience as a high school principal and 23 per cent are in the principalship for the first year.

Salaries must be considered as an important factor in professionalizing the position of high school principal. Two-thirds of the principals receive an average yearly salary below \$1156. If the position is to attract capable young people and to retain those already in the position a satisfactory remuneration for the service must be made. Principals of Group I receive an average salary of \$1625. The greater number of principals are located in Group II and Group III, 82 per cent of all principals fall in these two groups. The principals of Group II receive an average salary of \$1166 and those of Group III an average salary of only \$976 yearly. It is not likely that principals will make the profession their life work if adequate salaries are not in view.

Another factor which influences the professionalization of the principalship is that of tenure or the length of service in the principalship. Forty-six per cent of the principals have been in their present position two years or less, while 23 per cent are in their present position for the first year. The data indicate that in the larger schools, Group I, principals have reasonable tenure, since 82 per cent have been in their present position three years or more. This is not the situation in the smaller schools, Group II and Group III, where 43 per cent of the principals have been in their present position two years or less. The length of service in the



principalship is a factor which will also influence the professionalization of the position of high school principal. The data are similar to that of the principals service in his present position. Fifty per cent of the principals have three years of less experience in the high school principalship, while 23 per cent are in the principalship for the first year. In Group III, the principals have 3.2 years of service in the principalship, in Group II, 5.3 years of service, and in Group I, 6.8 years of service in the principalship.

In order to perform the supervisory and administrative duties of a principal, more time must be granted than now is allowed for this work. The average principal spends 77 per cent of his time in teaching and study-hall duty. The principals of Group I spend 56 per cent of the school day in teaching and study-hall duty, but the principals of Group II spend 87 per cent, and those of Group III spend 89 per cent of the school day in teaching and study-hall duty. The average principal directs one to two extra-curricular activities in addition to the teaching and study-hall assignments. Principals in the schools of Group II and Group III are heavily loaded with teaching, study-hall and extra-curricular assignments. It is apparent that in the smaller high schools where the teacher may need more supervision, the principal has less time available for supervising her teaching.

The subjects taught by the principals are of such a nature that they require more outside preparation for the classroom teaching than mathematics, languages, or commerce subjects



require. The principals are found teaching history and social science in 50 per cent of the responses, natural science in 44 per cent, and English in 32 per cent. The extra-curricular assignment of the principals also indicates that they are directing the type of activity requiring a great deal of time. The principal is found directing athletics in 39 per cent of the responses, dramatics ranks next with 30 per cent, and speech activities follow with 18 per cent.

Not only must the principal have time available for supervisory and administrative duties, but he must exercise leadership and initiative in the performance of those activities. High school principals are now the nominal heads of the high school. The initiative assigned to them has been in the less important supervisory and administrative activities. The principals have not been delegated the responsibility for the administrative and supervisory duties. Either that is true, or if the responsibility was delegated they lacked the leadership, training, and experience necessary to handle the problems. For example, while speaking to one of the superintendents of Group II, he remarked that the high school principal of his school was relieved of sufficient teaching load to provide time for the administrative and supervisory duties, but the principal showed no responsibility for initiative or leadership in performing the activities. Whenever problems and duties confronted the principal, they came back to the superintendent for solution. Superintendents have retained the initiative in fifteen of the twenty-five administrative and supervisory



activities included in this study. In only two minor activities was initiative placed in the principal in greater proportion than in the superintendent. The two activities are, exercising ordinary disciplinary control, and enforcing attendance. In the remaining eight activities, the principals indicated that initiating was done by the principal and superintendent working in conjunction. Although in some cases placement of initiative in both superintendent and principal would represent a cooperative working on important policies and questions, to a large extent it complicates the line of authority. It places two officials in charge of the high school instead of placing definite responsibility in the principal. Best practice indicates that the principal should be delegated the authority and he should be held responsible for the instruction within his school. The line of authority also indicates that he should have the responsibility delegated by the superintendent and therefore he should be held responsible for his school by the superintendent and indirectly to the board of education and the people.

A nation-wide trend is underway in the professionalizing of the position of high school principal. Evidence of this can be seen by the requirement of a principal's certificate by thirty-two states. Seventeen states require a master's degree for the position of high school principal. North Dakota ranks among the ten states that require the bachelor's degree only, which is the same as the state certification requirement for all high school teachers. If this state is



to follow the nation-wide trend of requiring special qualifications for the high school principalship, then a proposal of higher standards for high school principals in North Dakota would be worthy of consideration by the State Department of Public Instruction. The principals would not find it too difficult to meet higher standards, since about one-half or 53 per cent, have already completed fifteen hours of graduate work, while 12 per cent hold master's degrees. The general requirements for the principal's certificate include courses in school administration or supervision of instruction or both and in other professional courses. From the compilation of responses, 67 per cent have had training in school administration, 41 per cent in school supervision, 63 per cent in tests and measurements, 22 per cent in curriculums, and smaller percentages in other professional courses. In order to professionalize the position of high school principal to a greater extent than now is found in North Dakota, it would be essential that greater professional preparation be required before entering the principalship. Included in the requirement for the principalship should be at least two years of high school teaching experience previous to entering the principalship. The principal will in that way receive good experience as a teacher and he will understand the principal's relationship to the teacher. During the summer of the two years he must attend a school of education, making special preparation by studying professional courses. At the end of this time of preparation he will be granted the principal's certificate. Employing



agencies will have a standard to guide them in their selection of a principal by the requirement of a special certificate. The principal's certificate should not represent the highest standard, but it should represent a minimum standard that could be accepted by employing agencies.

The problem of further professionalizing the high school principalship is four fold: First, the minimum standard of requirement, before entrance to the principalship is permitted, should be raised. Special preparation should be required for the principal. Second, the responsibility for the administration and supervision of the high school should be delegated to the principal by the superintendent. Third, he should be relieved of enough teaching, study-hall, and extra-curricular assignments to permit him to perform the responsibilities of administration and supervision. Fourth, the salary of the profession should be adequate. It should appeal to the capable young men and women to the extent that they will make special preparation and make the principalship their life work.



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## APPENDIX A

## Location of Respondents

Ashley	Egeland	Northwood
Bismarck	Elbowoods	Oberon
Carrington	Ellendale	Omeme
Casselton	Enderlin	Page
Dickinson	Epping	Pembina
Elgin	Esmond	Plaza
Fessenden	Fairmount	Portland
Grand Forks	Finley	Powers Lake
Kenmare	Flasher	Ray
Langdon	Forman	Reeder
Lisbon	Fort Totten	Reynolds
Mandan	Fort Yates	Rhame
New Rockford	Garrison	Rock Lake
Oakes	Glenburn	Rolette
Park River	Gwinner	Sheldon
Rugby	Hannah	Sheyenne
Valley City	Havanna	Souris
Wahpeton	Hebron	St. John
Watford City	Hillsboro	Steele
Williston	Hunter	Streeter
Grafton	Inkster	Surrey
Alexander	Kensal	Taylor
Ambrose	Kindred	Towner
Aneta	Kulm	Turtle Lake
Bathgate	LaMoure	Underwood
Berthold	Lansford	Velva
Beach	Larimore	Walhalla
Bowbells	Lidgerwood	Webster
Bucyrus	McClusky	Westhope
Buffalo	McGregor	Willow City
Buxton	McVille	Wimbledon
Calvin	Marion	Wyndmere
Cando	Marmarth	York
Carpio	Michigan	Mott
Columbus	Milnor	Milton
Courtenay	St. Mary's, Devils Lake	Minnewaukan
Cooperstown	St. John's, Jamestown	Minto
Crary	St. James, Grand Forks	Noonan
Donnybrook	Oak Grove Seminary, Fargo	Christine
Douglas	Assumption Abbey,	Edmore
Hankinson (Academy of St. Francis)	Richardton	
State Teacher's College High School (Dickinson)		
State Teacher's College High School (Minot)		
State Teacher's College High School (Valley City)		



THE STATUS OF THE PRINCIPAL IN NORTH DAKOTA CLASSIFIED HIGH SCHOOLS  
QUESTIONNAIRE

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

SCHOOL \_\_\_\_\_ CITY \_\_\_\_\_

AGE \_\_\_\_\_ MALE \_\_\_\_\_ FEMALE \_\_\_\_\_ MARRIED \_\_\_\_\_ SINGLE \_\_\_\_\_ CHILDREN \_\_\_\_\_

TYPE OF SCHOOL ORGANIZATION: 6-6 \_\_\_\_\_ 8-4 \_\_\_\_\_ 6-3-3 \_\_\_\_\_ OTHER \_\_\_\_\_ ENROLMENT \_\_\_\_\_

WERE YOU DEFINITELY ASSIGNED AS PRINCIPAL \_\_\_\_\_ ANNUAL SALARY \_\_\_\_\_

EDUCATION:

COLLEGE GRADUATE FROM \_\_\_\_\_ DEGREES HELD \_\_\_\_\_

MAJOR \_\_\_\_\_ MINORS \_\_\_\_\_ YEARS PREPARATION \_\_\_\_\_

BEYOND BACHELOR'S DEGREE \_\_\_\_\_ LIST UNDERGRADUATE COURSES IN \_\_\_\_\_

EDUCATION: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

LIST GRADUATE COURSES IN EDUCATION: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

NUMBER OF SEMESTER HOURS OF GRADUATE WORK \_\_\_\_\_

EXPERIENCE:

YEARS OF TEACHING EXPERIENCE IN GRADES \_\_\_\_\_ JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL \_\_\_\_\_ HIGH SCHOOL \_\_\_\_\_

YEARS EXPERIENCE AS PRINCIPAL INCLUDING PRESENT \_\_\_\_\_

YEARS IN PRESENT POSITION (INCLUDING PRESENT) \_\_\_\_\_ SUBJECTS YOU TEACH \_\_\_\_\_

HOW MANY PERIODS DO YOU SUPERVISE STUDY HALL \_\_\_\_\_ LENGTH OF PERIODS \_\_\_\_\_

NUMBER OF PERIODS IN SCHOOL DAY \_\_\_\_\_ LIST EXTRA\* \_\_\_\_\_

CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES YOU DIRECT \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

LIST COMMUNITY OR OUT-OF-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



Direction: Indicate by marking a ✓ check in the appropriate column for each activity. Determine as accurately as possible in whom the responsibility for initiating is placed.

INITIATED BY

REMARKS

ACTIVITY

Principal

Superintendent

Principal & Supt.

Board of Education

Other persons or groups

LIBRARY  
CITY OF HOUSTON

1. Selecting new high school teachers.
2. Recommending salary promotion.
3. Planning the course of study.
4. Organizing the class schedule.
5. Admitting and registering students.
6. Advising concerning courses and curricula.
7. Visiting classwork for supervisory purposes.
8. Conferring with teachers about classwork.
9. Calling and holding teachers' meetings.
10. Exercising ordinary disciplinary control.
11. Exercising disciplinary control involving suspension and expulsion.
12. Controlling and promoting extra-curricular activities.
13. Selecting textbooks.
14. Selecting equipment.
15. Approving supply lists.
16. Preparing financial budget.
17. Directing janitors.
18. Conducting testing programs.
19. Keeping of records and reports.
20. Classifying and promoting pupils.
21. Carrying on Public Relations Program.
22. Directing office work.
23. Enforcing attendance.
24. Assigning teachers.
25. Determining type of school organization.