


6-1933

Activities of County School Superintendents in Kentucky

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1933

ACTIVITIES OF COUNTY SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS IN KENTUCKY

BY

G. R. McCOY

A THESIS

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS

WESTERN KENTUCKY STATE TEACHERS COLLEGE

JUNE, 1933

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PREFACE

When men engage in business for themselves, they do so for the purpose of making a living for their family and also for the purpose of making a profit, such as will add to their material wealth or advancement. In order that they may know from time to time just what wealth or property they possess, and how much profit is being made, it becomes necessary to make an inventory of the stock on hand and to further account for money received and money spent as a result of the transactions connected with that business. Those of us who in our work deal with less material things need also to take an inventory once in a while. We need to take stock to know where we are short. It behooves us to strengthen our weak points.

If one should desire to purchase a business from another, he would not only desire an inventory of the business but would also desire to know what particular jobs or activities were necessary in order to carry on the business successfully. That he might know the activities connected with the business, it would be necessary to find out by means of reports and questionnaires, or by becoming an apprentice in the business and thus study the activities connected therewith. The latter method is the surest way to become familiar with the business and thus to become an efficient business man.

This study is undertaken to find out what activities are actually performed by the county school superintendent in the state of Kentucky. Much theorizing has been done about what he should do and how he should allocate his time, but it seems that no one has done much to find out just what he does. Courses of instruction are being offered in many colleges for the purpose of preparing persons to administer efficiently the office of

county school superintendent. These courses are based mainly on theory and not on facts. It is hoped that this study will aid instructors in formulating a more efficient program for the purpose of training these school administrators. Most county school superintendents in Kentucky must serve as such for several months or perhaps a year or so before they are capable of rendering efficient service. This is the apprentice period, when the benefits of the business are reaped by the superintendent and not by the school system he is serving. It is this period of time we must seek to improve.

School boards and the public have no conception of the many duties performed by the county school superintendent. It is also hoped that this study will enlighten them to such a degree that they may become willing to assign to the superintendent such duties as he should perform. It will be noted that many activities now performed by the superintendent could be done by a clerk or stenographer, whose employment would be a great saving, financially, to the system. This would leave the superintendent free to perform those functions which are the most important. A study of the activities actually performed by the county school superintendent is necessary before either of the above mentioned principles can properly function.

FOREWORD

The following study was made possible by the cooperation of several county school superintendents in Kentucky. These superintendents were asked to keep a daily record of the activities performed for a period of two weeks. The period of time over which these records were kept ranged from October 20, 1931, to January 17, 1933. In addition to these records mentioned, the writer kept a daily record of activities performed during the entire school year 1931-32. Questionnaires, oral and written, were also secured from other superintendents.

The author desires to acknowledge with thanks the assistance rendered by the superintendents furnishing the information sought. Grateful acknowledgment is due Professor A. C. Burton, for his direction and guidance in preparing this study; Dr. L. F. Jones, for his kindly advice and the inspiration received as an aid in planning the work; and also Dr. Gordon Wilson, for his able criticism of the manuscript.

CHAPTER I

GROUPING THE ACTIVITIES

Each county superintendent in Kentucky is an individual possessing a distinct personality, and each county is a geographical area which has certain features and characteristics peculiar to itself. When a particular person is placed in charge of the schools located in a particular county, it is to be expected that he will emphasize or minimize, perform or avoid each of the various activities which make a demand upon his working time. The determination of the extent to which he performs these activities and of just what these activities are is the primary purpose of this study.

When a person who is familiar with the work of county superintendents attempts to prepare a detailed list of all the activities which such officials are supposed to perform, he finds that the number of items proves to be very large. When he secures the list of activities actually performed, he finds again that the number of items is very large. Upon careful analysis, however, he is able to group under comprehensive headings certain activities that are of a similar nature and that require similar abilities. Such a grouping has been attempted, and as a result the following list of 35 basic activities has been established. Under each basic activity are listed the minor activities which go to make up the basic one and to which the superintendent is obliged to give some time and attention.

Basic Activities of County Superintendents in Kentucky

1. Administrative Duties, Unclassified
 - Checking insurance on school buildings
 - Having administration car repaired
 - Seeing about stolen goods (H. S. athletic suits, etc.)
 - Making trip to post office to mail business correspondence
 - Issuing statements for renewal of teachers' certificates

Conferring with sheriff about use of school houses in which
 to hold elections
 Conferring with high-school pupils
 Administering oath of office to subdistrict trustees and
 county board members
 Selling old school buildings
 Authorizing purchase of books for poor children
 Checking boundaries of school subdistricts
 Securing car license for administration car
 Posting sale bills for house and grounds
 Selling transportation wagon
 Applying for state aid for vocational work
 Preparing notes
 Checking school census
 Arranging to have census bound
 Arranging school for colored children
 Planning culvert for ditch in front of school ground
 Investigating light plant for county school
 Purchasing typewriter for superintendent's office
 Fastening typewriter to desk
 Purchasing diplomas for schools
 Preparing and signing diplomas
 Giving directions to secretary and truant officer
 Checking high-school roll
 Ordering stationery for office
 Conferring with committee on use of school buildings
 Preparing trustee election notices and poll sheets
 Preparing book orders
 Dictating instructions to election officers who conduct
 trustee elections
 Talking to road engineer about right-of-way
 Examining books
 Performing office routine
 Conferring with committee on right-of-way on school property
 Planning work
 Securing book dealer for county
 Conferring with principals, teachers, and officials about
 vandalism
 Making plans in regard to school lunch
 Purchasing school site
 Renting school building

2. Attendance

Filing reports
 Considering applicants for truant officer
 Mailing notices to delinquents
 Conferring with truant officer
 Conferring with teachers and patrons

3. Board of Education

Holding individual conferences

Attending board meetings

- (a) Regular
- (b) Call-meetings

4. Budget (County and Subdistrict)

- Studying old budgets
- Studying procedure for new budgets
- Securing certifications of assessment from county court clerk
- Gathering data
- Making final preparation

5. Building Construction

- Conferring with architect
- Inspecting plans
- Securing contractor's bond
- Conferring with contractor
- Considering plans for heating plant
- Conferring with committees
- Making general inspection of building
- Making arrangements for financing construction

6. Clerical Work

- Computing teachers' salaries
- Writing high-school appointments
- Writing deeds
- Checking reports
- Filling in questionnaires
- Writing contracts
- Writing high-school transcripts
- Listing teachers
- Checking bills and entering same
- Preparing orders for pay roll
- Writing and checking minutes
- Writing birth certificates
- Copying age-grade table
- Writing boundaries of school districts
- Writing boundaries of educational divisions
- Writing checks
- Checking financial records
- Preparing financial records
- Checking teachers' reports
- Preparing and checking teachers' service record
- Notifying teachers of their election

In counties having an office clerk most of this work, and other work of a clerical nature, is performed by that employee.

7. Conventions

- Attending teachers' meetings outside own county
- Attending high-school conferences conducted by state superintendent and staff

Attending directors' meetings of district associations and
 sometimes state associations
 Attending superintendents' conferences called by state
 superintendent
 Attending Kentucky Education Association
 Attending the National Education Association occasionally

8. Conferences
 - a. Patrons

Conferring about books, seats, teachers, children,
 discipline, transportation, district boundaries,
 promotions, etc.
 - b. Teachers
 - (1) Individual

Conferring about records, promotions
 discipline, certificates, credits,
 attendance
 - (2) Group meetings
 - c. Trustees (Subdistrict)
 - (1) Individual

Conferring about repairs, complaints,
 teachers, supplies, discipline, elections,
 district boundaries, high-school children,
 census, books for needy, janitor
 - (2) Group meetings

Discussing duties and powers
 - d. Outside school officials

Conferring with city superintendents, state
 department of education officials, and independent
 district boards of education
9. Consolidation

Studying projects
 Preparing boundaries
 Making arrangements for elections
10. Correspondence

Opening and reading mail
 Answering letters by dictation or by own writing
11. Curriculum

Making revisions
 Preparing programs
 Outlining courses of study
 Interpreting to teachers
12. Equipment and Supplies

Giving out supplies to teachers and trustees

Receiving supplies and equipment in store-room
Purchasing desks, stoves, office equipment, bookcases,
chairs, etc.
Purchasing chalk, brooms, buckets, mops, floor oil, erasers,
fuel

13. Examinations

Selecting tests
Preparing tests
Purchasing tests
Grading tests
Explaining tests to teachers
Checking tests in and out
Administering tests

14. Extra Activities

Visiting college chapel
Attending basket ball tournament
Conferring with health doctor
Conferring with expression class director
Conferring with county home agent
Conferring with county judge in regard to health unit
Conferring with county health nurse
Conferring with Rotary Club committee
Talking to 4-H Club representative
Conferring with illiteracy committee
Attending school picnic
Attending ball game
Attending Rotary Club luncheon
Attending Schoolmaster's Club
Visiting circuit court
Attending funeral

15. Fiscal Affairs

Conferring with tax assessor, sheriff, and treasurer
Checking franchise taxes, tax accounts, tax lists,
exonerations, and financial reports
Preparing financial statement for publication
Checking settlement with sheriff
Auditing finance books
Checking records for omitted taxes
Preparing special tax lists for districts having a special
tax
Checking refund of taxes
Arranging for bond of treasurer

16. Holidays Observed

July 4, Armistice Day (two hours), Thanksgiving Day,
Christmas Day, January 1

17. Instruction to Teachers

Preparing letters of direction
Giving personal instructions

18. Janitorial Work in Own Office
 - Brushing and mopping floor
 - Dusting furniture
 - Arranging books
 - Cleaning shelves and bookcases
19. Janitors in County School Buildings
 - Selecting and employing janitors
 - Giving instructions
20. Legal Matters
 - Reading school laws, court decisions, opinions of attorney general
 - Attending suit by teacher for position
 - Conferring with circuit judge and county attorney
 - Giving attention to tax suit
 - Acknowledging deeds
 - Discussing suit of patron against teacher
21. Library
 - Making list to purchase for county teachers' library
 - Checking books in and out
 - Purchasing books
 - Selecting record cards for high-school library
 - Making arrangements for cataloging high-school library
22. Mimeographing
 - Making blanks for read-a-book-a-month, inventory, applications, and truancy reports
 - Mimeographing letters to teachers, trustees, etc.
(When there is a secretary employed, she usually does most of this.)
23. Personal Business
 - Most superintendents spend some time attending to personal business, during time supposed to be used in connection with their offices.
 - The following have been noted: going to barber shop, buying groceries, mailing Christmas cards to teachers, visiting bank, purchasing real estate, moving
24. Publicity
 - Writing news articles for county paper
 - Talking to news reporter
 - Giving report of board meetings to paper
 - Making addresses
25. Records
 - Preparing record books for teachers
 - Filing teachers' transcripts and credit cards
 - Checking organization roll of students for teachers
 - Preparing records of educational divisions
 - Checking and preparing financial records
 - Filing teachers' records, etc.

26. Reports to State
 - Making statistical reports, which include teachers employed, their certificates, salaries, school enrollment, attendance, etc.
 - Making special reports
 - Making annual audit reports
 - Filling in questionnaires
27. Repairs
 - Having buildings, pumps, heating plants, stoves, fences, locks, etc., repaired
 - Purchasing paint
28. Salary Schedule
 - Gathering data
 - Making final preparation
29. Self-improvement
 - Reading newspapers, bulletins, magazines, and journals
 - Studying and preparing for recitations
 - Conferring with professors and administrators
 - Studying surveys (state and others)
30. Selection of Teachers
 - Talking to applicants and subdistrict trustees
 - Employing substitute teachers
 - Filling vacancies
 - Employing supply teachers
 - Recommending and nominating teachers in high-school districts
31. Supervision
 - Arranging curriculum
 - Preparing book list by grades
 - Classifying high-school students
 - Considering text books
 - Helping principals on high-school programs and schedules
 - Supervising pupil programs in high schools
 - Explaining courses of study to teachers
 - Preparing score cards for teachers
 - Giving instructions for spelling bee
 - Explaining use of record books
 - Checking daily schedules
 - Checking record books
 - Checking and mailing supervisory letters
 - Giving instructions to principals
 - Selecting and explaining attendance charts
 - Checking read-a-book-a-month schedules
 - Talking to outside supervisor
 - Conferring with supervisor
32. Talking to Callers
 - Talking to agents, solicitors, ticket sellers, book salesmen, superintendents, school officials, social callers

33. Telephone Calls
 Making calls on numerous items of business
 Answering questions
34. Transportation
 Talking to bidders
 Preparing advertisements for bids
 Establishing routes
 Inspecting trucks
 Filling in contracts
 Conferring with drivers
 Inspecting routes
 Talking to truck agents
 Receiving bids
 Settling disputes
 Preparing drivers' bonds
 Considering the problem of discipline on trucks
35. Visiting Schools
 Making inspection of building and grounds
 Making suggestions relative to classroom instruction
 Visiting with agriculture director and supervisor
 Visiting with high-school supervisor

The activities which county superintendents perform may be further divided into statutory duties and customary duties. Since all duties noted in this study have been listed under basic activities, the following classification is made of the statutory duties, with the understanding that all others are customary duties. Statutory duties are those which are required or permitted by the school laws of Kentucky. Customary duties, or activities, are those which superintendents perform from time to time as they present themselves in the ordinary routine of business.

Statutory Duties

1. Attendance
 Giving attention to absentees from school
2. Attendance officer
 Must recommend and approve his appointment
3. Board of Education Meetings
 Must attend all meetings
4. Budget Making

5. Census
Must supervise census taking
6. Clerical Work (Some of these duties are not statutory)
7. Contracts
Must approve in writing all contracts
8. Equipment and Supplies
Purchase by approval of board
9. Examinations for County Teachers Certificates
Must supervise all such examinations
10. Fiscal Affairs (Some of these duties are not statutory)
11. Records
Must prepare or supervise preparation of all records
12. Repairs
Must recommend all repairs
13. Reports to State Department of Education
Must prepare or supervise preparation of all such reports
14. Salary Schedule
Must prepare salary schedule subject to approval of county
and state boards of education
15. School Sites
Must approve purchase of all sites
Must recommend sale
16. Selection of Teachers in High-school Districts
May recommend or nominate all teachers in such districts
17. Trustees and Board Members
May administer oath of office
18. Visiting Schools

CHAPTER II

TIME DEVOTED TO EACH ACTIVITY AND RANK OF SAME

It has been stated in the preface to this study that its purpose is to find out what activities the county superintendents in Kentucky perform. It is also desirable to know how much time superintendents devote to the various activities. A request was made of each superintendent keeping a record of the various activities engaged in, to make also a record of the amount of time devoted to each. This was done by all superintendents reporting. Those records, which were kept for a period of two weeks, were analyzed and the average time given to each activity noted. These are listed in Table I, showing the amount of time given to each activity, the percentage of time, and the rank in importance according to the percentage of time devoted to each. A similar table is presented on the following page (Table II), showing the same items as taken from the record of one county, which was kept during a whole school year, July 1, 1931, to June 30, 1932. A study of the findings noted in these two tables reveals several interesting facts. It will be noted that the percentage of time devoted to several activities is approximately the same, while that devoted to others varies greatly. This is due mainly to the fact that one record is for a two weeks' period only and the other is for the entire year. The reaction of the individual superintendent to his work is another reason. Locality is a third. It is of further importance to note that some activities which claim the superintendents' attention and time did not appear in the record which was kept for a period of two weeks. This, of course, was naturally to be expected. For instance, making a budget and salary schedule would not be a part of the superintendents' work during the months of October, November, and December; hence these items would not appear

in a record kept during these months.

These tables show that about one half of the superintendents' time is devoted to seven or eight activities; namely, fiscal affairs, visiting schools, correspondence, board meetings, conferences, clerical work, and talking to individual teachers and patrons. Visiting schools, which may be considered a phase of supervision, and conferences are about the only two in this group which, according to expert opinion,¹ are entitled to the time given them.

¹ Milton G. Nelson, "A Study of District Superintendents' Activities," Bulletin No. 890, University of the State of New York, Albany, 1927, p. 13.

TABLE I

NUMBER OF HOURS DEVOTED TO EACH ACTIVITY BY THE COUNTY SUPERINTENDENTS DURING THE TWO WEEKS REPORTED

	Average		Average	Per cent
	Number	hrs. min.	per cent	rank
			of hours	Number
1. Administrative duties, unclassified	1	7	1.24	20
2. Attendance		27	.50	25
3. Board of Education				
Individual	1	15	1.40	18
Group	4	4	4.50	8
4. Budget				
5. Building construction	1	50	2.30	12
6. Clerical work	9	15	10.20	4
7. Conventions	7	12	8.00	5
8. Conferences				
(a) Patrons	5	2	5.60	6
(b) Teachers				
Individual	4	30	5.00	7
Group	1	52	2.07	13
(c) Trustees				
Individual	1	26	1.60	16
Group				
(d) Outside school officials		45	.80	23
9. Consolidation				
10. Correspondence	9	17	10.30	3
11. Curriculum				
12. Equipment and supplies	1	32	1.70	15
13. Examinations	9	27	10.40	2
14. Extra activities	3	20	3.70	9
15. Fiscal affairs	1	10	1.30	19
16. Holidays				
17. Instruction to teachers		11	.20	27
18. Janitorial work		20	.40	26
19. Janitors in county school buildings				
20. Legal Matters		25	.40	26
21. Library	1	0	1.10	21
22. Mimeographing				
23. Personal business	1	20	1.50	17
24. Publicity		20	.40	26
25. Records		3	.05	28
26. Reports to state		37	.70	24
27. Repairs	1	11	1.30	19
28. Salary schedule				
29. Self-improvement		52	.96	22
30. Selection of teachers	1	51	2.05	14
31. Supervision		40	.70	24
32. Talking to callers	2	52	3.10	10
33. Telephone calls	2	24	2.60	11
34. Transportation	1	20	1.40	18
35. Visiting schools	11	10	12.30	1

TABLE II

NUMBER OF HOURS DEVOTED TO EACH OF THE 35 ACTIVITIES BY ONE COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR 1931-32

	Number of hrs. min.		Per cent of hours	Per cent rank Number
1. Administrative duties, unclassified	157	20	6.50	4
2. Attendance	60	5	2.50	14
3. Board of Education				
Individual	30	25	1.30	23
Group	140	45	5.80	5
4. Budget	26	10	1.08	24
5. Building construction	20	20	.80	26
6. Clerical work	119	45	5.00	7
7. Conventions	54	30	2.30	16
8. Conferences				
(a) Patrons	72	25	3.02	13
(b) Teachers				
Individual	125	35	5.20	6
Group	46	40	1.95	19
(c) Trustees				
Individual	57	45	2.40	15
Group	3	0	.10	33
(d) Outside school officials				
9. Consolidation	2	0	.10	33
10. Correspondence	165	45	6.90	3
11. Curriculum	2	45	.10	33
12. Equipment and supplies	74	45	3.10	12
13. Examinations	44	25	1.80	20
14. Extra activities	55	10	2.30	16
15. Fiscal affairs	229	25	9.50	1
16. Holidays	38	0	1.60	21
17. Instruction to teachers	19	45	.80	26
18. Janitorial work	103	35	4.30	9
19. Janitors in county school buildings	1	30	.06	34
20. Legal matters	13	25	.56	27
21. Library	7	55	.35	29
22. Mimeographing	2	35	.10	33
23. Personal business	47	55	2.00	18
24. Publicity	5	30	.23	32
25. Records	10	15	.43	28
26. Reports to state	24	30	1.02	25
27. Repairs	6	50	.30	30
28. Salary schedule	6	20	.26	31
29. Self-improvement	114	10	4.70	8
30. Selection of teachers	59	35	2.50	14
31. Supervision	98	15	4.10	10
32. Talking to callers	52	15	2.20	17
33. Telephone calls	34	10	1.40	22
34. Transportation	78	25	3.20	11
35. Visiting schools	182	15	7.60	2

CHAPTER III
ESTIMATES OF IMPORTANCE, DIFFICULTY, AND TIME
DEVOTED TO ACTIVITIES

When we consider the importance and time given to each activity in making such a study as this, we are obliged to base these items on actual performance. It will probably be interesting to include here the estimates of importance, difficulty, and time made by 108 district superintendents in New York State, devoted to 36 basic activities. While all the basic activities shown in Table III are not exactly the same as in Tables I and II, yet by comparing these figures with Tables I and II it will be found that very few of the activities rank the same. The rankings given by the 108 district superintendents may be considered a very valuable criterion by which to prepare persons to become county or district superintendents. If this study is to be of any value at all, it would certainly be that of showing what the superintendent actually does and, perhaps, what he ought to do. In order to secure these estimates, care was taken to give the superintendents making the reports directions and explanations that would secure uniform consideration of their activities; yet one can never be certain that any two individuals will secure the same idea from identical written or spoken instructions, or that they will use equal care and insight. Of course it is understood that all past experiences, such as education and other environmental conditions, will influence all estimates. The estimates of the number of hours given to each activity may be expected to be influenced by the amount of actual records of work kept by each superintendent.

The reader may conclude from the statements just made that the

presentation of material containing inaccuracies tends to make all of the material presented of little value. This point of view will not be opposed or defended, but attention is called to the fact that as yet the subjective elements of the individual can not be accurately measured and compensated for. The writer is of the opinion, however, that such estimates as these are far superior to pure guessing or conclusions arrived at through casual observation.

In presenting an indication of the reaction of the superintendent to his environment by means of a tabulation based upon the amount of time spent upon the various activities, it is advised that the reader keep in mind that personal and physical characteristics alone do not influence the superintendent's activities. It is conceivable that demands of the education law and of the state education department might influence the amount of time that the superintendent can give to a certain activity. Past experiences in the life of the superintendent and the character of the Kentucky state administrative unit undoubtedly do influence the activities of this official. Because it is not possible to measure every influence, it should not be reasoned, however, that no measurements should be attempted. Measurement made as accurately as conditions permit is far better than no measurement at all, and each successive attempt will probably approach more closely accurate analysis.

TABLE III

SUMMARY OF 108 DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENTS' ESTIMATES OF IMPORTANCE, DIFFICULTY
AND TIME DEVOTED TO 36 BASIC ACTIVITIES²

Activity	Rank No. in importance	Rank No. in difficulty	Rank No. in time
1. Examinations	14.0	11.0	7.0
2. Tests	10.0	5.5	8.0
3. Instructions to teachers	6.0	25.5	9.0
4. Conferences	1.5	10.0	5.0
5. Extra activities	16.0	7.5	10.5
6. Supervision	1.5	7.5	1.0
7. Curriculum	9.0	5.5	22.0
8. Equipment	7.0	21.0	18.0
9. Teaching	15.0	16.5	28.5
10. Training class	27.0	27.0	32.0
11. Attendance	20.0	14.5	13.5
12. Labor law	30.0	34.0	21.0
13. Budget	34.0	30.0	35.0
14. Fiscal	22.0	14.5	13.5
15. School boards	28.0	35.0	32.0
16. Selecting teachers	3.0	1.0	16.0
17. School meetings	18.5	24.0	28.5
18. Trustee conferences	4.5	13.0	12.0
19. Consolidation	24.0	2.0	24.5
20. Addresses	25.5	9.0	15.0
21. Bulletins	31.0	22.0	28.5
22. Construction	12.0	4.0	20.0
23. Building inspection	18.5	28.0	19.0
24. Reports	11.0	3.0	4.0
25. Expense accounts	35.0	36.0	28.5
26. Correspondence	13.0	16.5	3.0
27. Travel	21.0	31.5	2.0
28. Mimeographing	29.0	31.5	24.5
29. Records	23.0	19.0	17.0
30. Committees	25.5	25.5	24.5
31. Conventions	4.5	29.0	10.5
32. Correspondence courses	33.0	23.0	32.0
33. Summer school	17.0	12.0	24.5
34. Reading	8.0	20.0	6.0
35. Articles	36.0	18.0	36.0
36. Visits out	32.0	33.0	34.0

2

Ibid.

CHAPTER IV

CLERICAL ASSISTANCE

The county superintendent in Kentucky may be provided with professional and clerical assistance. However, the majority of counties do not employ any assistants at all, clerical or otherwise. Of the thirteen county superintendents reporting, four reported clerical help. This indicates that the average county superintendent rather generally relies upon his own efforts for the performance of clerical and other office tasks. This is poor economy on the part of a board of education. A superintendent should be relieved of the clerical work in connection with his office, so that he could spend his time directing work which requires the services of a more highly paid person. From the records furnished by the four county superintendents reporting clerical assistance the various activities performed by these clerks, or stenographers, have been tabulated below in order to show what clerical tasks the superintendent is obliged to perform when he has no such assistance, and to show further what is actually done by these assistants. It will be noted that these activities have been divided into fourteen groups, and each group contains the various items to which the clerk or secretary devotes a part of her time.

Activities Performed by Clerical Assistants

1. Attendance
 - Mailing notices to truants
 - Checking lists and posting percentage of attendance each month for each school
2. Answering Telephone
3. Arranging Flowers for Office
4. Budget
 - Collecting and listing data

5. Callers
 - Talking to agents, W. C. T. U. representative, patrons, teachers, trustees, visitors

6. Dictation and Transcription
 - Correspondence
 - Circular letters
 - Calls, meeting of board
 - Drivers' notification of contracts
 - Instruction to trustees
 - Instruction to teachers
 - Instructions on items of salary schedule
 - Orders for tests, diplomas, supplies, and equipment
 - Truancy notices

7. Filing
 - Correspondence
 - Subdistrict boundaries
 - Insurance policies
 - Teachers' certificates
 - Teachers' programs
 - Teachers' acceptance cards
 - Teachers' credits
 - Teachers' record books and inventories
 - Teachers' reports
 - Trustee election ballots
 - All other records of permanent nature

8. Fiscal Affairs
 - Preparing information on financial balance
 - Making settlements for districts having special tax
 - Checking sheriff's reports
 - Checking treasurer's reports
 - Checking Smith-Hughes allowance
 - Preparing data on school costs

9. Mimeographing
 - Time schedules
 - Score cards
 - Circular letters
 - Lists of teachers
 - Blanks
 - Teacher contracts
 - Driver contracts and specifications
 - Pupil accounting
 - Read-a-book-a-month
 - Attendance reports
 - Truancy notices
 - Application blanks
 - Trustee election notices
 - Inventories
 - Book lists
 - Tests

10. Office Routine

- Cleaning typewriter
- Arranging desk supplies
- Waiting on teachers
 - Courses of study
 - Reports
 - Report cards
 - Supervision letters
 - Supplies
- Securing signatures to contracts
- Preparing items on publicity and advertisements
- Receiving teacher applications
- Answering inquiries
- Looking up records
- Receiving bills
- Receiving transportation bids
- Receiving Craddock Fund book orders and signing same
- Writing checks
- Caring for teachers' library
- Issuing high-school appointments
- Checking insurance policies
- Scoring achievement tests
- Writing diplomas

11. Records

- Listing subdistrict trustees
- Writing minutes
- Recording salary payments
- Preparing teacher service record
- Preparing teacher certificate record
- Listing elementary school graduates
- Recording high-school appointments
- Recording drivers' reports
- Preparing financial record
- Checking teachers' monthly reports and record books
- Auditing books
- Indexing minutes and bills
- Listing high-school credits

12. Reports to State

- Preparing annual statistical report
- Preparing annual financial report
- Preparing monthly financial report
- Preparing census report

13. Salary Schedule

- Collecting data
- Assisting superintendent in preparation

14. Typing

- School district boundaries
- Salary schedule
- Lists of needed fuel

Addresses on envelopes
Transcripts
Book orders
Deeds
Budget
Orders to treasurer
Information for county attorney
Copy of minutes
Contracts
Questionnaires
Reports listed in item 12 and other miscellaneous work

CHAPTER V

OPENING AND CLOSING TIME OF OFFICE

The office of county superintendent in Kentucky has long been considered a position which almost any politician who could obtain a special certificate, do the greatest amount of handshaking, tell the most lies, and then secure a majority of the popular vote could fill either to the detriment of the children or to the credit of himself. He could spend his time reading newspapers, talking to callers, visiting, writing insurance, farming, playing politics, and getting votes for his re-election a few years hence; and most people thought him a great fellow. He could be at his office one or two days per week and care for its needs. He could open the office at eight, nine, or ten o'clock in the morning and close at two, three, or four o'clock in the afternoon and still be well thought of.

Today things are different. The county superintendent in most counties is expected to open and close his office regularly at the proper hours, attend to the business of the office, direct and supervise the teachers in the county schools, and perform many other activities, such as have been noted in this study.

In analyzing the reports of the county superintendents who have had a part in this study, it has been found that the time of opening, closing, and time for lunch varies slightly. The time of opening was listed at approximately eight o'clock. However, a few superintendents stated that they very often open the office and begin work as early as seven o'clock. The time of closing the office, according to reports, ranged from four o'clock to five o'clock, in most cases at about 4:30 o'clock. The time for the lunch hour ranged from 11:30 to 12:30, each requiring approximately one hour. In some cases the reports show that the superintendent opened his

office early and, leaving his clerical assistant in charge, spent part of the day visiting the schools in his system. Some reports also show that the superintendent performs many school activities before and after office hours; e. g., giving instructions to repair men for the day's work, checking building construction, conferring with drivers on transportation, securing substitute teachers, etc. It may also be noted that the superintendent observes only four full holidays; namely, Independence Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, New Year's Day, occasionally a few hours on Christmas Eve, and probably a few others. He very seldom gets a vacation, according to the reports.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

It has been previously stated in this study that we are concerned with the result of the behavior of the superintendent toward the activities engaged in and not in the cause. This means that only two variables have been considered for measurement: the first is the number of activities performed, and the second is the amount of time that he gives to each activity. Both of these variables are subject to the same limitations, namely, the accuracy with which the superintendent reports the amount of time that he has given to each activity. This limitation, of course, should be kept in mind, but owing to the care with which most of the superintendents kept their records, it is doubtful if the probable error is large enough to affect seriously our conclusions.

The opportunity to perform, to some degree, each of the thirty-five basic activities is a possibility that presents itself to every superintendent. Consolidation may be an exception. Tables I and II indicate the degrees of variation which exist in the percentages of time devoted to each of the activities and certainly point out that something causes wide divergencies in time expenditure. For example, some superintendents give 10 per cent of their time to clerical work, while others give less than 5 per cent; and some very little, if any. This variation is due, mainly, to whether or not clerical assistance is employed. Variations are found to exist to some degree for every activity listed. Although the extent of variation in each instance may be great or small, yet these tables show that there is a tendency for a great portion of the superintendents' time to be centered in a few activities.

The thirty-five basic activities may be arranged into many groups, each tending to indicate the existence of some trait or traits in the individual concerned with their performance. One group might be the scoring of tests, the inspection of school buildings, the formulation of reports, and like activities which may be more or less mechanical in nature and may be performed without the making of many personal contacts or the use of very detailed analytical thinking. A second group might be those activities which require face-to-face contacts with teachers and pupils, while a third group might include face-to-face contacts with persons who are outside the actual school room. If the work of a superintendent is influenced chiefly by environmental factors and his own power of volition curtailed, we may expect to find that he emphasizes certain very insistent activities, each from several unlike groups, such as visiting schools, dealing with trustees, some form of clerical work, and other unlike activities. On the other hand, if he is found to emphasize many of the activities belonging to one or two similar groups and neglects several of the items contained in other groups, then we may conclude that either the educational demands of his county are abnormal, or he has been governed by his personal inclinations. Attention is called to the following list of activities which, according to reports received, claim the major portion of the superintendents' time, and also those which receive little time.

Activities Emphasized

- Fiscal affairs
- Visiting schools
- Correspondence
- Clerical work
- Talking to teachers
- Talking to patrons
- Examinations
- Attendance
- Routine

Activities Minimized

- Consolidation
- Curriculum
- Publicity
- Records
- Instruction to teachers
- Supervision
- Self-improvement
- Janitors for school buildings
- Legal matters
- Library
- Budget
- Salary schedule

To the county superintendent interested in analyzing and improving his work the results shown by this study should have some value. He should be able to determine whether or not he is stressing those activities which the educational demands of his county require, and, if not, he should busy himself making the proper adjustments. The significant thing to the schools of his county is not his ideas about the various supervisory and administrative problems alone, but whether he devotes a just share of his time to putting these ideas into operation. At present the only person who can ultimately decide this question is the superintendent himself.

It is a difficult task to estimate the amount of time which should be used for the performance of each needed activity. This estimate, to be of greatest value, must be as highly objective as possible. That is, the superintendent must, so far as he is able, minimize the influences which tend to be exerted by his feelings, likes, and dislikes. For example, he may be opposed to the idea of consolidation; but if his information indicates that consolidation is a necessity in a particular instance, he should prepare himself for the exercise of this function.

It is true that estimates have been made on the amount of time superintendents should give to the various activities performed, but no one

is certain that these estimates are true. However, these estimates are the best criteria we have at present upon which to base the time devoted to each activity. Conditions are continually in a state of fluctuation, and this constant change should be reflected in the estimated standard.

The data gathered and treated in this study indicate that the county superintendent emphasizes some activities and minimizes others, welcomes some and avoids others. They show that there is a tendency for a group of similar activities to be emphasized, while an opposing group is minimized. They show that he emphasizes clerical and routine work, fiscal affairs, correspondence, talking to teachers and patrons, and does quite a bit of visiting schools. The data further show that the number of different activities which the county superintendent performs is very great.

Conventions rank high in reports from the twelve county superintendents, Table I, but ranked 16 in the one county where the record was kept for the entire year. The high rank occupied by this item is due to the records being kept by some of the superintendents during a two weeks' period when the Superintendents' Conference of the Kentucky Education Association was in session for two days.

Recommendations

1. A more desirable condition would exist if real professional preparation were required of the county superintendent. Before entering upon the duties of his office, he should have a good knowledge of such activities as classroom supervision, curriculum construction, standardized tests, budget making, office practice, and a variety of such activities. To make sure that his knowledge of these activities will continue, we are recommending that some effort be made toward self-improvement each year. According to the

estimate of 108 district superintendents, Table III, at least 7 per cent of the superintendent's time should be devoted to self-improvement. The reports in this study, Tables I and II, show that less than 5 per cent of his time is devoted to this activity. We recommend that at least 7 per cent of the superintendent's time be spent in self-improvement.

2. The relative importance of, and time expended on, the various activities may be used as a basis for determining the type of training a superintendent should have. To this end it is recommended that prospective superintendents study these activities for the purpose of giving to each the time and efficient consideration which it deserves. It is further recommended that institutions offering instruction to county superintendents with a view toward preparation for efficiency base such courses on the actual work of the superintendent and on the accepted principles of good school administration.

3. It is recommended that the county superintendent make a survey of his county to determine what activities are to be performed outside of the regular office routine and then budget his time to meet the needs of the system.

4. In budgeting the superintendent's time, we are suggesting that more time than is shown in Tables I and II be given to the curriculum, supervision, records, and a few other activities which now receive little attention. In order that this may be done, there should be employed clerical assistance for every superintendent. An efficient clerical assistant will take care of much of the office routine, records, correspondence, etc. This clerical assistance can be secured at a much less expenditure for this work than it is costing without it. When the superintendent performs the clerical work, it is costing too much; and the children in the school system are suffering the

results of a poor system, because the superintendent must necessarily neglect the other important activities which directly affect these children. It should be noted that correspondence ranks 3 in amount of time given to it in Tables I and II, and 13 in importance in Table III. Surely the need of clerical help is apparent.

5. Supervision, conferences, and instruction to teachers rank 1, 5, 9, respectively, in estimates of the 108 superintendents, Table III, and should occupy about 26 per cent of his time according to these same superintendents.³ Tables I and II show that 12 per cent of his time and less is devoted to these activities in Kentucky. Since these activities have to do with improving instruction, it is evident that county superintendents in Kentucky should devote more time to these.

6. Attendance ranks 14 according to Table II; 13.5 in estimates, Table III; and 25 in Table I. We believe that our greatest waste in Kentucky is in poor attendance. Then, surely more time should be devoted to this phase of work than was devoted to it by the twelve county superintendents reporting. However, some of these counties employ an attendance officer, which probably accounts for the low rating in Table I.

3

Ibid.