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To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a thesis written by Paul Franklin Gearing entitled "The Role of the Assistant Secondary School Principal." I recommend that it be accepted for nine quarter hours of credit in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science, with a major in Educational Administration and Supervision.

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**THE ROLE OF THE ASSISTANT SECONDARY
SCHOOL PRINCIPAL**

**A Thesis
Presented to
the Graduate Council of
The University of Tennessee**

**In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Science**

**by
Paul Franklin Gearing
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CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM

I. INTRODUCTION

When the Campbell County Board of Education began planning for building additions and expansions to meet the demands of the increased enrollment at the Jacksboro and LaFollette high schools, it felt the necessity for considering in detail the feasibility of a consolidated school. The team approach was taken, involving the administration, board of education, school staff members, and the School Planning Laboratory consultants from The University of Tennessee. The first step was taken in developing a set of educational specifications. These specifications described the school's educational objectives, the activities planned to implement these objectives, and the spaces needed to carry out these activities. The facility needs of each department were presented in the final report of the planning team.

The planning team recommended that the present high schools of Jacksboro and LaFallotte be combined to make a consolidated high school. With a projected enrollment of 1,000 students in grades ten through twelve, this type of

school would offer the broad range of activities needed to serve the Jacksboro and LaFollette area.

It is generally agreed that the status quo cannot and should not be maintained. With the influx of new theories and new knowledge, an educational institution must of necessity change. Since it is the responsibility of secondary education to provide quality education for more and more boys and girls, it becomes quite clear that many changes must take place. Among the most apparent changes are these: the renovation of curricular content and construction; different and varied teaching methods and procedures; placement of more responsibility on the learner for his learning; more adequate use of time and facilities; and reorganization within the schools.

II. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The primary objective of the study was to determine the actual duties and responsibilities of assistant principals in selected high schools. Another goal was to determine whether the assistant principals participating in the investigation believed these duties should be theirs, or if the duties should be the responsibility of someone else. A comparison of the duties as identified with those presented in educational literature was a final objective of the study.

III. NEED FOR THE STUDY

In reviewing data concerning the duties of principals and assistant principals, the writer found very little information in professional literature concerning the assistant principal's responsibilities. With an anticipated enrollment of 1,000 students for the new high school, a full-time assistant principal will be employed. As a result, there is a definite need to describe the duties of the assistant principal so as to provide specific direction for the development of this administrative position. This study attempts to do so, using assistant principals of selected high schools in the immediate general area of Tennessee as sources of information.

IV. LIMITATIONS

This investigation was planned to include seventy different high schools in East Tennessee with the hope that each would have an assistant principal. It is important to keep in mind when reading the findings of the study that the results cannot be applied to each high school in Tennessee. Also certain limitations in the procedures utilized in this study are recognized. Even though machinery was put into operation for the purpose of giving all persons

affected by the policy a chance to have a voice in its development, some assistant principals failed to exercise this privilege.

V. PROCEDURES

The writer reviewed available literature related to the duties and responsibilities of the assistant principal in the secondary school. A study of surveys, polls, and sampling techniques was made.

The next step was to design a questionnaire pertaining to supervisory, administrative, clerical, and miscellaneous duties of assistant principals to be used in the survey for the study. An open-end type questionnaire consisting of four factors in each item was developed; these factors indicated the extent of responsibility for each activity assumed by the assistant principal. A copy of the instrument is included in the Appendix.

The writer next conducted a pilot survey using a small group of assistant principals. Next, the instrument and methodology of the pilot study were corrected to obtain a maximum amount of correct information. The final survey group consisted of assistant principals of seventy high schools in East Tennessee.

The writer analyzed the information as recorded by the assistant principals participating in the survey and presented

it in tabular form. The information was studied, interpreted, and summarized.

VI. ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY BY CHAPTERS

Chapter I includes an introduction, a statement of the purpose of the study, need for the study, limitations, and procedures used in its development.

Chapter II is a review of available literature related to the study.

Chapter III includes the questions used in the pilot study, the method of administering the questionnaire, and the results of the pilot study.

Chapter IV contains the questions that were used for the collection of data in the study, the method of collecting the information, and a numerical recording of the answers collected in the survey.

Chapter V includes the summary and recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

For the past forty years a new position, that of the assistant high school principal, has been emerging in the field of school administration. This role of the assistant principal in some localized areas has taken a more or less definite trend. However, the status and duties of the assistant secondary principal remain a rather nebulous and undefined area of educational administration.

I. DEFINITION AND TITLE

A brief, but seemingly adequate, definition of the assistant principal is given by Pfeffer, who sees the assistant principal as the professional person in a school building who is next in authority to the principal.¹ An expanded definition is provided by Pittinger:

The chief professional assistant of the principal in a large school is usually the assistant principal . . . who will act as a sort of second principal under the direction of the regular head.²

¹Edward I. Pfeffer, "Duties of Vice Principals in New Jersey," The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary-School Principals, 49:56-65, November, 1965.

²Benjamin Floyd Pittenger, Local Public School Administration (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc. 1954), p. 211.

There is little agreement as to the title afforded to the subordinate building administrator.³ However, three title designations, associate principal, vice-principal, and assistant principal, have been commonly used, somewhat interchangeably, to designate a similar function. Gillespie reports that approximately 90 per cent of the persons next in authority to the principal are designated as either assistant principals or vice-principals. The title of assistant principal is used most frequently.⁴

II. THE NEED OF THE ASSISTANT PRINCIPALSHIP

Most writers generally agree upon the need for the position of assistant principal, especially in the larger high schools. Such a need has been created due to the increased responsibility of the principal. Such increased responsibility results from the increased complexity of school populations, school organizations, and school curricula.⁵

³Louis G. Brandes, "The Position of the Subordinate Administrator of the Secondary School," The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary-School Principals, 40:47-52, May, 1956.

⁴T. Marcus Gillespie, "The Assistant Principal: Status, Duties, and Responsibilities," The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary-School Principals, 45:59, December, 1961.

⁵George A. W. Weiss, "The Duties of the Secondary School Vice Principal," The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary-School Principals, 37:109-16, December, 1953.

Jarrett, therefore, sees the position as having emerged in answer to this need, in much the same way as the position of principal emerged in the mid-nineteenth century.⁶ Edmonson indicates that every school should have a person designated as assistant principal to take over the control of the school in any emergency or absence of the principal.⁷ Barrett lists the following five reasons for the employment of an assistant principal, which should give greater depth to the idea of the need for such a position:

1. The position provides a training opportunity for a future school principal.
2. The position relieves the principal and thus provides him with more time for his more important duties.
3. The position provides an additional facility for contact and communication with parents, students, and teachers.
4. The position provides for more effective supervision of the entire school.
5. The position increases the scope of administrative activities.⁸

⁶Richard W. Jarrett, "The Activities of the Assistant Principal in Secondary Schools," The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary-School Principals, 42:28-30, September, 1958.

⁷J. B. Edmonson, Joseph Roomer, and Francis L. Bacon, The Administration of the Modern Secondary School (fourth edition; New York: The Macmillan Company, 1953), pp. 94-95.

⁸Thomas K. Barrett, "Assistant Principals," American School Board Journal, 137:56, April, 1955.

Laughery sees two general purposes which the assistant principal's position would serve. First, it should promote a more effective administration of the educational offerings of the school. Second, it should provide an in-service training opportunity for the position of the principal.⁹ There are other writers who hold a somewhat different view of the nature of the position, believing that the assistant should complement the principal, being most effective in the areas in which the principal is least so.¹⁰

III. PHILOSOPHICAL BASIS

The position of the assistant principal has evolved without an adequate philosophical basis and without adequate direction.¹¹ Thus, the development of the role of assistant principal has depended upon expediency rather than upon careful planning.¹² Therefore, the present stature of the position in the overall school structure is not entirely clear.

⁹Wayne W. Laughery, "Expedience or Vision in the Assignment of Assistant Principal's Duties," The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary-School Principals, 43:112-13, September, 1959.

¹⁰David B. Austin, Will French, and J. Dan Hull, American High School Administration: Policy and Practice (third edition; New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1962), pp. 164-65.

¹¹Jarrett, op. cit., p. 28.

¹²Gillespie, op. cit., p. 59.

However, studies tend to indicate that considerable growth in stature has occurred for the assistant principalship.¹³ It can be noted that subordinate administrative positions are being added at the various levels of the school system, and are thus becoming more numerous.¹⁴ Edmonson believes that the importance of the position of assistant principal is not as generally recognized as it should be.¹⁵ There is, nonetheless, a great deal of variance in the nature of the position. Bent and McCann point up two poles of this variation. In the small high school, the assistant principal may be a full-time teacher who merely assumes the responsibilities in absence of the principal. In the large high school, the assistant principal may be a highly trained specialist dealing with only one phase of administrative activity such as curriculum, supervision, attendance, or other particular areas.¹⁶

The literature points up certain probable trends in regard to the assistant principal's position. Pfeffer sees

¹³Henry Rappaport, "The Assistant Principal," Overview, July, 1962, p. 14.

¹⁴Laughery, op. cit., pp. 113-114.

¹⁵Edmonson, Roomer, and Bacon, op. cit., p. 95.

¹⁶Richard K. Bent and Lloyd E. McCann, Administration of Secondary Schools (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1960), pp. 32, 61.

a trend toward similarity of duties in the position.¹⁷ This is a major conclusion of several recent studies. A change in the nature of the duties is also in evidence. Gilbert states that the original clerical and disciplinary responsibilities are giving way to general organizational, administrative, and supervisory duties.¹⁸ Austin believes that as the professional preparation of those holding the position is improved, they will be given greater responsibility in performing some of the more critical and significant duties of the principalship.¹⁹ As the complexity of the administrative role increases, and as more assistance is thus added, Brandes believes that there will be a need for a reconsideration of the position and financial allotment of the total administrative function in the secondary school.²⁰

IV. ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL-PUPIL RATIOS

There are basically two types of information dealing with assistant principal-pupil ratios. The first deals with

¹⁷Pfeffer, op. cit., p. 65.

¹⁸Samuel Gilbert, "On Being an Assistant Principal," The Clearing House, March, 1957, p. 423.

¹⁹Austin, French, and Hull, op. cit., p. 165.

²⁰Brandes, op. cit., p. 52.

actual ratios found to exist in various surveys, and the second concerns recommended ratios. A 1939 study made by Wright, of 194 assistant principals, showed a ratio of 1,903 students to each assistant principal.²¹ In 1946, a study was made by Boardman of the assistant principal which showed that 50 per cent of the schools studied, having enrollments of 500 to 1,000 students, had one assistant principal, and that 80 per cent of the schools with over 1,000 pupils had such a position.²² Lillard conducted a survey in Oklahoma in 1955 which showed a ratio of 981 students to each assistant principal.²³ Corbally, Jensen, and Staub state that most high schools with an enrollment of 500 to 1,000 students now have an assistant principal.²⁴ Rappaport in a 1962 study conducted in New York State reports a trend toward hiring

²¹William A. E. Wright, "Educational and Vocational Histories of Vice or Assistant Principals in Senior High Schools," School and Society, 49:553-56, April 29, 1939.

²²Charles W. Boardman, "The Assistant Principal in the Secondary School," The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary-School Principals, 30:3-11, March, 1946.

²³Bill Lillard, "The Status, Duties, and Responsibilities of the Assistant Principal in the High Schools of Oklahoma (unpublished doctoral dissertation, the University of Oklahoma, 1956), abstracted in Dissertation Abstracts, January, 1957, p. 79.

²⁴John E. Corbally, Jr., T. J. Jensen, and Frederick Staub, Educational Administration: The Secondary School (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1961), p. 326.

one assistant principal for 850 school population and two assistants for a 1,600 enrollment.²⁵

Recommended ratios are somewhat lower than those found to actually exist. Douglass recommends an assistant principal in schools with over 200 pupils.²⁶ Jarrett suggests that one assistant principal be employed for each 550 to 700 students.²⁷

V. TRAINING AND EXPERIENCE

Most studies which have been conducted concerning the position of assistant principal include some information as to his training and experience. To refer once again to Wright's study of 1939, 35 per cent of the assistant principals surveyed were found to hold a Bachelor's degree, while 62 per cent held the Master's degree. Only 16 per cent had previous administrative experience, while the median number of years of previous teaching experience was fifteen and one-half.²⁸ A study conducted in Minnesota by Holt, in 1946, found that 50 per cent of the assistant principals surveyed

²⁵Rappaport, op. cit., p. 14.

²⁶Harl R. Douglas, Modern Administration of Secondary Schools (second edition; Boston: Ginn and Company, 1963), p. 27.

²⁷Jarrett, op. cit., p. 30.

²⁸Wright, op. cit., p. 556.

held the Master's degree.²⁹ Long, in 1952, conducted a study of 355 assistant principals in New York State. His study showed 84 per cent of the population surveyed had the Master's degree.³⁰ Lillard's 1955 study of the position in Oklahoma schools found 90 per cent of the assistant principals included in the survey to have the Master's degree.³¹

The scope of the assistant principal's function seems to be an ever-widening one. Thus, most authorities hold the previous training and experience of such a person to be of central importance. Brandes thus recommends that the assistant principal's qualifications should be second only to those of the principal, and should include teaching and administrative experience as well as a knowledge of psychology and guidance.³² Gillespie agrees with this position, stating

. . . The effective full-time assistant principal in secondary schools of the present and immediate future must be an educational leader whose

²⁹Agnes F. Holt, "The Status of the Assistant Principal in the Public High Schools of Minnesota," The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary-School Principals, 30:9, March, 1946.

³⁰Charles M. Long, "Duties of Secondary School Vice Principals," The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary-School Principals, 41:36-37, February, 1957.

³¹Lillard, loc. cit.

³²Brandes, op. cit., p. 53.

training and talents will closely approximate those of the principal.³³

Weiss suggests that the training required of the assistant's position should be nearly equal to that of the principal, but that the previous experience of the assistant might be considerably less.³⁴

VI. TRAINING GROUND OR FULL-TIME CAREER

There is a question as to whether the position of assistant principal should be regarded as a training ground for future administrative positions or as a full-time career. Bent observes that the position may serve as apprenticeship training, but that often people prefer to remain in these positions, especially if they are somewhat specialized, rather than to assume greater and more general responsibilities.³⁵ According to Boardman, many younger administrators accept assistant principal positions for the experience and as a stepping stone toward higher positions. If such training is to occur in any measure, the principal must assign the work of the assistant so that supervised experience is obtained

³³Gillespie, op. cit., p. 59.

³⁴Weiss, op. cit., p. 116.

³⁵Bent and McCann, op. cit., p. 61.

in all phases of the principalship.³⁶ Kyte suggests the following procedure for achieving this goal. The assistant principal's training, experience, and personal characteristics should be carefully analyzed to determine the specific activities for which he is prepared to undertake. A sequential delegation of duties and responsibilities should then follow in order to provide experience in every type of major responsibility of the principalship. Thus, the accomplishment of the goal of a planned, sequential program of progressive training experiences could not be achieved by a haphazard dumping of duties into the lap of the assistants.³⁷

VII. AGE

Few of the studies which have been made of the position of assistant principal include information dealing with the age of the persons holding these positions. Such information would, however, seem to be significant to full understanding of the nature of the position. Long's study showed that many assistant principals are young enough upon gaining their position for them to seek advancement.³⁸ More specifically, the assistant principals included in the survey

³⁶Boardman, op. cit., pp. 3-4.

³⁷George C. Kyte, The Principal at Work (Boston: Ginn and Company, 1952), pp. 395-96.

³⁸Long, op. cit., p. 37.

by Wright assumed their position at a median age of thirty-seven years.³⁹

VIII. DUTIES

The degree of teaching responsibility which an assistant principal may have tends to vary according to the size of the school.⁴⁰ Wright's study showed that about 39 per cent of his sample had teaching responsibility.⁴¹ Long's study showed 30 per cent of the assistant principals surveyed were engaged in some teaching.⁴²

An older study by Van Eman in 1926 revealed that assistant principals were concerned chiefly with supervision of extracurricular activities and with clerical tasks. More recent studies show that the nature of the position with respect to its duties and responsibilities has changed considerably.⁴³

In 1939, Wright surveyed 194 assistant principals. The five most common duties revealed by this study were pupil

³⁹Wright, op. cit., pp. 553-56.

⁴⁰Douglass, op. cit., p. 29.

⁴¹Wright, loc. cit.

⁴²Long, loc. cit.

⁴³Charles R. Van Eman, "The Functions of the Assistant High School Principal and Other Assistant Executives," Education Research Bulletin, 5:148-50, March, 1926.

conferences, parent conferences, behavior problems, student educational programs, and attendance. From this, it can be seen that the duties were still concerned largely with pupil control and clerical tasks. Two 1946 studies show some greater variation.⁴⁴ The survey conducted in Wisconsin by Gran showed duties to be concentrated in three fields: pupil accounting, curriculum, and school control.⁴⁵ Weiss, in 1953, found only three general duties for which more than half of the assistant principals held primary responsibility. These duties were: (1) running the school in absence of the principal, (2) representing the school at community functions, and (3) holding parent conferences regarding pupil discipline.⁴⁶ Assistant principals in Oklahoma in 1955, according to Lillard's survey, were primarily responsible for attendance, serving in absence of the principal, discipline, general administration, and direction of extra-class activities.⁴⁷ Pfeffer conducted a study of the duties of assistant principals in New Jersey in 1955 which revealed that all

⁴⁴Wright, loc. cit.

⁴⁵John M. Gran, "The Status of the Assistant Principal in the High Schools of Wisconsin," The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary School Principals, 30:5, March, 1946.

⁴⁶Weiss, loc. cit.

⁴⁷Lillard, loc. cit.

of the major responsibilities of the respondents related to pupil personnel services.⁴⁸

Long surveyed 355 assistant principals in the State of New York in 1957. This study shows a broader scope of activities than earlier studies revealed. The most common duties were concentrated in the areas of pupil personnel, teacher personnel, and relations with parents. In addition, more specific duties such as serving in the absence of the principal, scheduling classes, and analyzing curriculum needs were considered to be inherent to the position.⁴⁹

A nation-wide survey of women serving as assistant principals was conducted by Martin in 1958. She found that their four major duties included discipline, pupil supervision, pupil scheduling, and guidance. Since these duties are almost completely related to pupil personnel, it would seem that women assistant principals have a somewhat more limited role than men in the same position.⁵⁰

⁴⁸Pfaffer, op. cit., pp. 56-57.

⁴⁹Long, op. cit., p. 37.

⁵⁰Evelyn B. Martin, "A Profile of Women as Secondary School Vice Principals," The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary School Principals, 42:83, March, 1958.

A 1958 study of Jarrett included a survey of the duties and responsibilities of assistant principals in the twenty-three largest cities in the country. This study defined the following six major areas of responsibility: pupil personnel services, administration of curricular activities, school management, community relations, professional, and in-service training.⁵¹ Thus, assistant principals in the larger school districts appear to have somewhat broader responsibilities. It should be noted also that many studies point out that a considerable number of the assistant principals' duties are shared with other persons. The study conducted by Weiss showed three duties for which more than 50 per cent of those surveyed had primary responsibility as compared with thirty-two duties for which more than 50 per cent had shared responsibility.⁵² Lillard's study also showed that many of the duties were shared.⁵³

IX. CHANGES

The chronological review of studies dealing with the duties and responsibilities of assistant principals tends to indicate two general changes which are occurring in the

⁵¹Jarrett, op. cit., pp. 28-30.

⁵²Weiss, op. cit., pp. 109-10.

⁵³Lillard, op. cit., p. 79.

position. First, the scope of activities of the position seems to be broadening. Second, the more recent studies show a somewhat greater agreement as to the major responsibilities of the position. Yet, according to Brandes, there is still a significant question as to the nature of the position, the definition of its role in secondary school administration, and the standards of preparation for the position.⁵⁴

X. SURVEYS, POLLS, AND SAMPLES

In Surveys, Polls, and Samples, Parten lists the following as necessary points to know in order to have a survey that will give reliable results:

1. Know what question or questions that are necessary to be answered.
2. Is a survey or poll the best means of securing the needed information?
3. How or by whom will the results be of use or value?
4. Will the facts be out of date or of interest when tabulated?
5. Are you certain that the answer is not already known?

⁵⁴Brandes, op. cit., p. 52.

6. Before deciding on a definite procedure, the surveyor should pretest every plan. The final plan, before adoption, should be tested in a situation comparable to where it will eventually be used. The pilot survey should reveal the shortcomings of all procedures, instructions, and schedules.⁵⁵

Parten also defines an optimum sample as one which fulfills the requirements of efficiency, representativeness, reliability and flexibility.⁵⁶

Adequate quantitative evidence is not available on the effectiveness of various features of questionnaires, but recommendations most often appearing in the literature on the questionnaire state that it should be easy to complete, should involve very little writing by the informant and should not be crowded. The length should be sufficient to gather the data but as short as possible, unless incentive to complete is provided. A letter of explanations is necessary unless the surveyor is administering the questionnaire.

Davis and Barrow found that in educational surveys the most frequent type of approach is "intercession," i.e., the investigator appeals to someone in a position of authority

⁵⁵Mildred Parten, Surveys, Polls, and Samples (New York: Harper and Brothers, Publishers, 1950), pp. 48-55.

⁵⁶Ibid., pp. 293-94.

over the potential respondent. This procedure is not recommended because it is not always accurate due to the pressure upon the informant. Various other types of appeals listed in the order of frequency are: teacher-pupil; personal approach; appeal to interest; waiver of signature; committee or organization; letter preceding the questionnaire to learn whether recipient will agree to cooperate; and promise of a summary.⁵⁷

Tabulation of data is a necessary part of every questionnaire. Parten lists the operations as necessary in hand tabulation as coding data, checking codes, transcribing to hand count cards, verifying transcription, sorting and counting cards, recording the count, verifying the count, preparing blank table forms, typing the table, and checking the typing. Machine tabulation of necessity requires more operations. The greater speed with which the machine sorts, counts, and records the counts may or may not compensate for the extra work involved. One of the major advantages of machine tabulation is that it lends itself readily to cross-classifications. The number of cards to be sorted or counted is a necessary item to consider in machine operation. Other factors that should be considered in machine or hand tabulation are cost, convenience or time and the type of material to be tabulated.⁵⁸

⁵⁷Robert Davis and Edwin Barrow, "Critical Study of the Questionnaire in Education," Educational Administration and Supervision, 21:137-44, 1935.

⁵⁸Parten, op. cit., pp. 373-76.

CHAPTER III

THE PILOT STUDY

The writer's questionnaire was designed to include all the factors that are generally accepted as duties and responsibilities of assistant principals in high schools. Parten states that the questionnaire should be long enough to gather the information but short enough to insure its completion. A letter of explanation should be used unless the surveyor is administering the questionnaire.¹

A four point rating scale was used in the questionnaire for simplicity and ease of tabulation. A five point or three point scale could have been used, but Ghiselli found that more people were willing to respond to a four point scale.² A four point scale, with the assistant principal circling the factor, was set up for the survey so the sequence of numbers 0, 1, 2, and 3 when added, would give a ranking of all the factors.

The questionnaire was answered by six assistant principals in January, 1966. These assistant principals were

¹Mildred Parten, Surveys, Polls, and Samples (New York: Harper and Brothers, Publishers, 1950), pp. 385-86.

²Edwin E. Ghiselli, "All or None Versus Graded Response Questionnaire," Journal of Applied Psychology, 23:405-13, 1939.

used to test the survey on the basis that these assistant principals were similar to those who would complete the final questionnaire. The writer distributed the questionnaires by mail and/or by hand to the designated assistant principals, and they completed and returned them. Six assistant principals were contacted in the pilot study. A copy of the questionnaire as administered is found in the Appendix.

When the answers to the pilot study were tabulated, it was found that two duties, "represent the school at community functions," and "direct or supervise secretary's work," had been added. These duties were included, therefore, in the final questionnaire. Questions appearing in the introduction were not adequately phrased in order to get complete responses. These errors were corrected in the final questionnaire used in the survey.

The results of the pilot study as the assistant principals ranked the duties are shown in Table I. The rank of each factor was determined by adding the numerical rating that the assistant principals circled on the rating scale preceding each question on the questionnaire. An example of the method of calculation of the rank is shown below:

	<u>Reply 1</u>				<u>Reply 2</u>				<u>Reply 3</u>			
Teach classes	0	1	(2)	3	0	1	2	(3)	0	(1)	2	3

TABLE I

DUTIES PERFORMED BY ASSISTANT PRINCIPALS SELECTED FOR
THE PILOT STUDY AND AMOUNT OF RESPONSIBILITY
FOR EACH DUTY

Duty	Numerical Rank	Sum of Scores
Run the school when the principal is absent	1	16
Pupil conferences	2	13
Represent the school at community functions	3	13
Pupil registration	4	13
Orient new teachers	5	12
Deal with records which will aid in becoming better informed on school conditions	6	12
Check attendance	7	11
Discipline students	8	11
Help teachers with discipline problems	9	11
Parent conferences	10	11
Inspect building and grounds	11	10
Handle traffic problems (corridors, streets, assemblies, etc.)	12	10
Pupil program adjustments	13	10
Make master class schedule	14	10
Teach classes	15	9
Maintain records of daily absences	16	9

TABLE I (continued)

Duty	Numerical Rank	Sum of Scores
Approve excuses for absences	17	9
Analyze curriculum needs	18	9
General disciplinary control	19	8
Administer the public-relation program (e.g., PTA)	20	8
Manage free textbook program	21	8
Vocational guidance	22	8
Notify parents of student's suspension	23	7
Direct or supervise the janitor's work	24	7
Assume leadership in a program of curricu- lar development	25	7
Educational guidance	26	7
Classroom observation	27	6
Act as dean of boys or girls	28	6
Direct the extra-class activities	29	6
Supervise collection of records for the registrar's office	30	6
Administer corporal punishment	31	5
Suspend students	32	5
Locker management	33	5
Manage the cafeteria	35	5

TABLE I (continued)

Duty	Numerical Rank	Sum of Scores
Direct or supervise the secretary's work	36	5
Manage finances of student activities	37	5
Make master class schedule	38	5
Direct the assembly program	39	4
Supervise charitable services (such as: Red Cross drive, tuberculosis seals, etc.)	40	4

By adding the three replies of the factors together, one arrives at a total of six. Each reply for the factor was tabulated in this manner to find the total or sum of all the replies. The sum of the replies to each factor was then used to determine the numerical rank of the factor.

CHAPTER IV

THE FINAL SURVEY

I. PREPARATION OF THE SURVEY

The preparation of the final survey was begun as soon as the information on the pilot study was tabulated. The introductory questions on the questionnaire were reworded and rearranged so that they would be easier for the assistant principals to complete. The final questionnaire was distributed in very much the same manner as the pilot study. The questionnaires were distributed by mail and/or by hand to the designated high schools, and they were completed and returned. Another major factor in the distribution and return of the forms was due to the effort of Mr. Joe Clyde Goins who is employed by the Tennessee State Department of Education. During his visits to the schools in his district, he talked with the assistant principals about the survey and was instrumental in seeing that the questionnaires were completed and returned.

II. ADMINISTRATION OF THE SURVEY

Complete coverage of all the high schools in East Tennessee was not attempted, but those high schools

strategically located in the major geographical areas were selected since they represented a better cross-section for the study. The survey was planned to include schools with enrollments ranging from 196 to 2,050 students. Comprehensive high schools, county high schools, and city high schools were used in the study. Of the seventy high schools contacted, forty-two had no assistant principals, while one failed to reply. The remaining twenty-seven completed and returned the questionnaire.

III. TABULATION OF THE SURVEY INFORMATION

The survey was arranged for tabulation by machine. The introductory information and the answers to the questions were coded for transfer to IBM cards. The coded information was then punched into the cards. A check of the punched information was made to correct any errors in the transmission from the survey sheet to the IBM card. After the check was completed, the cards were ready for listing in various sequences by machine.

The method of computing the replies was the same as used in the pilot study. The rating scale allowed the assistant principal to select one of four choices. The scale was arranged so that the amount of influence of a factor increased in the same manner as the number of the scale. Therefore, the compilation of the answers was actually the

addition of the assistant principals' replies to each of the factors.

IV. THE SURVEY RESULTS

In presenting the results of the survey, it was necessary to show them in two tables in order to present a complete picture of the situation.

The actual rank, which is determined by the degree of responsibility, for each of the duties performed by the twenty-seven reporting assistant principals is presented in Table II. The duties are ranked in this manner to show at a glance how the assistant principals rated each as a factor within his job classification.

"Run the school when the principal is absent" headed the list of duties. Checking it with related duties dealing with school control such as "check attendance," "general disciplinary control," and "approve excuses for absences," rated three, six, and thirteen respectively, adds more weight to its first position.

Discipline plays a paramount role in the activities of these assistant principals. "Discipline students," "help teachers with discipline problems," "general disciplinary control," and "handle traffic problems" ranked second, fourth, sixth, and eighth, respectively. These duties were linked closely in rank and meaning, which made their position so

TABLE II

DUTIES PERFORMED BY ASSISTANT PRINCIPALS IN SELECTED
SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN EAST TENNESSEE AND THE
AMOUNT OF RESPONSIBILITY FOR EACH DUTY

Duty	Numerical Rank	Sum of Scores
Run the school when the principal is absent	1	77
Discipline students	2	61
Check attendance	3	58
Help teachers with discipline problems	4	55
Pupil conferences	5	53
General disciplinary control	6	52
Maintain records of daily absences	7	50
Handle traffic problems	8	50
Parent conferences	9	49
Represent the school at community functions	10	48
Pupil registration	11	47
Orient new teachers	12	46
Approve excuses for absences	13	45
Analyze curriculum needs	14	43
Teach classes	15	41
Deal with records which will aid in be- coming better informed on school conditions	16	40

TABLE II (continued)

Duty	Numerical Rank	Sum of Scores
Notify parents of student's suspension	17	37
Inspect building and grounds	18	36
Education guidance	19	35
Pupil program adjustments	20	34
Administer corporal punishment	21	34
Direct or supervise the janitor's work	22	33
Vocational guidance	23	32
Suspend students	24	31
Assume leadership in a program of curricular development	25	30
Administer the public relations program (e.g., PTA)	26	27
Make master class schedule	27	25
Locker management	28	23
Direct the assembly program	29	22
Manage free textbook program	30	21
Direct or supervise secretary's work	31	21
Act as dean of boys or girls	32	20
Classroom observation	33	19
Direct the extra-class activities	34	18

TABLE II (continued)

Duty	Numerical Rank	Sum of Scores
Supervise collection of records for registrar's office	35	16
Supervise charitable services (such as Red Cross drive, tuberculosis seals, etc.)	36	15
Manage athletics	37	14
Manage cafeteria	38	13
Manage finances of student activities	39	12
Plan homeroom programs	40	11

near the top of the duties with their apparent extent of responsibility easily understood.

The duties related to attendance, also, were found to be an important part of the responsibilities of the surveyed assistant principals. Many of them reported "major" and "shared" duties for the following: "check attendance," "maintain records of daily absences," and "approve excuses for absences," which were ranked within the top thirteen of the forty duties.

The duties and responsibilities pertaining to administration of pupil personnel and clerical tasks and responsibilities seemed to be an important part of the activities of the assistant principals participating in the study. "Pupil conferences" was rated fifth and "pupil program adjustments" was the median. Within this gap, duties such as parental conferences, behavior problems, student educational programs, and attendance were found. From this, it can be seen that the duties were still concerned largely with pupil control and clerical tasks.

A majority of the assistant principals related at least "some" responsibilities in certain aspects of the administration of the school plant as shown by "inspect building and grounds," ranked eighteenth, and "direct or supervise the janitor's work," ranked twenty-second.

In the area of miscellaneous duties and responsibilities, most of the assistant principals indicated they attended professional meetings, were active in PTA, and helped to interpret the school program to the community. These were represented by the tenth and twenty-sixth rankings, which are "represent the school at community function" and "administer the public relations program."

After considering the duties and responsibilities discussed above, the picture became nebulous. The study revealed that the other duties of these assistant principals were so diverse that it was useless to attempt to group them. However, those duties ranked at the bottom of the survey should not be interpreted as lacking of importance. Any one of these duties could be the most important for a single principal or group of assistant principals.

Table III shows whether the assistant principals participating in the investigation believed the duties, which are listed in the same order as they appear in Table II, pages 33-35, should really be theirs. The results formulated from the opinions of the assistant principals concerning the duties and responsibilities were:

1. Those duties relating to overall direction of the school program were more appropriate than those of a managerial nature.

2. Supervisory activities relating to professional

TABLE III

ASSISTANT PRINCIPALS WHO FEEL THAT THE DUTIES THEY
PERFORM ARE THEIRS, AND THOSE WHO FEEL
THAT THE DUTIES ARE NOT THEIRS

Duty	Yes	No
Run the school when the principal is absent	27	
Discipline students	27	
Check attendance	23	4
Help teachers with discipline problems	25	2
Pupil conferences	26	1
General disciplinary control	23	4
Maintain records of daily absences	20	7
Handle traffic problems	24	3
Parent conferences	25	2
Represent the school at community functions	25	2
Pupil registration	23	4
Orient new teachers	23	4
Approve excuses for absences	21	6
Analyze curriculum needs	23	4
Teach classes	10	17
Deal with records which will aid in becoming better informed on school conditions	24	3

TABLE III (continued)

Duty	Yes	No
Notify parents of student's suspension	17	10
Inspect building and grounds	22	5
Education guidance	20	7
Pupil program adjustments	22	5
Administer corporal punishment	16	11
Direct or supervise the janitor's work	16	11
Vocational guidance	16	11
Suspend students	14	13
Assume leadership in a program of curricular development	20	7
Administer the public relations program	14	13
Make master class schedule	13	14
Locker management	11	16
Direct the assembly program	9	18
Manage free textbooks program	9	18
Direct or supervise secretary's work	14	13
Act as dean of boys or girls	11	16
Classroom observation	10	17
Direct the extra-class activities	11	16
Supervise collection of records for registrar's office	9	18

TABLE III (continued)

Duty	Yes	No
Supervise charitable services (Red Cross, etc.)	6	21
Manage athletics	8	19
Manage cafeteria	5	22
Manage finances of student activities	6	21
Plan homeroom programs	5	22

and pupil personnel, instruction, and guidance were appropriate.

3. Those related directly to control, attendance, and educational programs of pupils were appropriate, but routine clerical tasks were not.

4. The importance of school-community relations was recognized, but opinions differed as to the scope of activities.

5. Teaching assistant principals should be relieved of classroom duties to provide time for proper functioning in administrative and supervisory responsibilities.

6. Duties were great in number and varied in nature.

Information pertaining to the sex, enrollment, and experience was gathered in the survey, but complete analysis of this information was not attempted because these data were not a pertinent part of the study. However, when this information was reviewed, the findings agreed with those set forth in professional literature. Approximately 93 per cent of those replying were men, and 7 per cent were women. The schools involved had a median enrollment of 1,200 students while those without assistant principals had a median enrollment of 478 students. Approximately 81 per cent of the assistant principals were teaching in the same high school at the time of promotion to the position of assistant

principal. Those holding the various degrees were:
Bachelor's degree, 41 per cent; Master's degree, 55 per cent;
Ed.S., 4 per cent; doctorate, none. Approximately 52 per
cent of the respondents taught classes; the number of classes
taught ranged from one to five.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

I. SUMMARY

The purpose of this study was to list and describe the duties of the assistant principal so as to provide specific direction for the development of this administrative position. This study attempted to do so, using assistant principals of selected secondary schools in East Tennessee as a source of information, which was to be compared with the theoretical duties of the assistant principal as presented in professional literature.

The procedures used in the study were: (1) a review of available literature related to the duties and responsibilities of the assistant principal in the secondary school; (2) a study of surveys, polls, and sampling techniques; and (3) the design of a questionnaire to be used in the survey for the study, which would indicate the extent of responsibility for each activity assumed by the assistant principal.

A study of professional literature indicated that the assistant principal's duties and responsibilities have developed, not from adequate planning, but from various duties too often delegated on the basis of expedience rather than sound principles of organization and personnel administration.

Little was written before 1953 concerning the role and status of the assistant principal. Increased attention to the topic has been given in the literature since 1953, but there is a need for more comprehensive information, including greater attention to the philosophical aspects of the position. The responses of the assistant principals participating in this project indicated that, other than in the areas of attendance and discipline, there is no similarity of duties and responsibilities in their positions in East Tennessee. Almost all of the surveyed administrators reported that they had responsibilities concerning discipline. They acknowledged "major" and "personal" duties for the following: (1) discipline students, (2) help teachers with discipline problems, (3) general disciplinary control, (4) confer with parents concerning student problems, (5) notify parents of a student's suspension, (6) administer corporal punishment, and (7) suspend students. Discipline played a paramount role in the activities of these assistant principals. In fact, the results of this study concerning discipline concurred with the findings in the professional literature concerning discipline.

Student attendance was an important part of the responsibilities of the surveyed assistant principals. Many of them reported "major" and "personal" duties for the following: (1) check attendance, (2) maintain records of daily absences, (3) contact parents concerning pupil

absences, and (4) approve excuses for absences.

Those duties and responsibilities pertaining to administration of pupil personnel and clerical duties and responsibilities seemed to be an important part of the activities of the assistant principals participating in the study. Again the findings concurred with points-of-view set forth in professional literature.

The remaining duties were great in number and varied in nature. A majority of the respondents related either "shared" or "some" administrative responsibilities in the areas of pupil accounting, curriculum, and school control. Some cooperative activities were of a supervisory nature, but specific duties in supervision were negligible.

The degree of teaching responsibility tended to vary according to the size of the school, program of services attempted, and wealth of the district. The findings of this survey seemed to agree with that statement. Sixty-one per cent of the schools surveyed had no assistant principal. Of the remaining 39 per cent, the assistant principal of the small high school was usually a full-time teacher who merely assumed the responsibilities in the absence of the principal. In the large high school, the assistant principal was usually a trained specialist with no teaching responsibility, dealing with only one phase of administrative activity such as curriculum, supervision, attendance, or other particular areas.

Again the findings agreed with those set forth in professional literature. Over all, the scope of duties and responsibilities seems to have changed from a narrow range of clerical and routine duties toward a somewhat broader range of administrative and supervisory functions, although there is a great deal of variance in the nature of the duties and responsibilities between the small and the large high school.

After considering the responsibilities discussed above, the picture becomes nebulous. The study revealed that the other duties of these assistant principals were so diverse that it was useless to group them.

II. RECOMMENDATIONS

It seems evident from the investigation that each assistant principal in the secondary schools studied had varying responsibilities. The survey results indicate that the following recommendations are pertinent:

1. Individual school systems ought to examine their philosophy and provide a definite direction for the development of the administrative position called the assistant principal.

2. State associations of secondary school principals ought to examine the role of the assistant principal and provide a definite direction for the development of this administrative position throughout the state.

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APPENDIX

February 9, 1966

Dear Assistant Principal,

I am trying to gather some information to determine the actual duties and responsibilities of assistant principals in secondary schools. Another goal is to determine whether the assistant principals participating in this investigation believe these duties to be theirs or someone else's. To determine these duties, I am asking you to answer the questions on the sheet that is attached. (It is recognized that the total responsibility for the school rests with the principal. No remark made at any point is meant to disregard this fundamental criterion.) You should feel free to express your own thoughts, suggest any means to improve the questions or to add any items that are not presently included.

I will appreciate your efforts in furthering my study and wish to express my appreciation for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Paul F. Gearing

Please fill in the following blanks:

Age (years) _____ Approximate school enrollment _____
 Sex _____ Teaching experience _____ Administrative
 experience _____

Did you hold teaching position within the same high school before becoming an assistant principal? Yes _____ No _____

Training: Doctors _____ Ed.S. _____ Masters _____ Bachelors _____

(Please circle one factor in each item below by the following scale. Also circle yes or no to indicate whether you believe the activities listed should be yours or not):

- 0--not a responsibility
 1--minor responsibility (some)
 2--shared responsibility
 3--major responsibility (primary)

<u>Extent of Responsibility</u>					<u>Opinion Relative to Responsibility</u>	
0	1	2	3	Teach classes (If so, how many? _____)	yes	no
0	1	2	3	Orient new teachers	yes	no
0	1	2	3	Maintain records of daily absences	yes	no
0	1	2	3	Approve excuses for absences	yes	no
0	1	2	3	Administer corporal punishment	yes	no
0	1	2	3	Discipline students	yes	no
0	1	2	3	Help teachers with discipline problems	yes	no
0	1	2	3	General disciplinary control	yes	no
0	1	2	3	Suspend students	yes	no
0	1	2	3	Notify parents of student's suspension	yes	no

<u>Extent of Responsibility</u>					<u>Opinion Relative to Responsibility</u>	
0	1	2	3	Inspect building and grounds	yes	no
0	1	2	3	Classroom observation	yes	no
0	1	2	3	Pupil conferences	yes	no
0	1	2	3	Parent conferences	yes	no
0	1	2	3	Locker management	yes	no
0	1	2	3	Direct the assembly program	yes	no
0	1	2	3	Handle traffic problems (corridors, streets, assemblies, etc.)	yes	no
0	1	2	3	Act as dean of boys or girls	yes	no
0	1	2	3	Direct the extra-class activities	yes	no
0	1	2	3	Plan home-room programs	yes	no
0	1	2	3	Manage the cafeteria	yes	no
0	1	2	3	Supervise collection of records for the registrar's office	yes	no
0	1	2	3	Supervise charitable services	yes	no
0	1	2	3	Direct or supervise the janitor's work	yes	no
0	1	2	3	Administer the public-relations program (e.g., PTA)	yes	no
0	1	2	3	Manage free textbooks program	yes	no
0	1	2	3	Manage finances of student activities	yes	no
0	1	2	3	Manage athletics	yes	no
0	1	2	3	Analyzing curriculum needs	yes	no
0	1	2	3	Assume leadership in a program of curricular development	yes	no

<u>Extent of Responsibility</u>				<u>Opinion Relative to Responsibility</u>	
0	1	2	3	Education guidance	yes no
0	1	2	3	Vocational guidance	yes no
0	1	2	3	Pupil registration	yes no
0	1	2	3	Pupil program adjustments	yes no
0	1	2	3	Make master class schedule	yes no
0	1	2	3	Deal with records which will aid in becoming better informed on school conditions	yes no
0	1	2	3	Run the school when the princi- pal is absent	yes no

Note: Please feel free to express your own thoughts, suggest any means to improve the questions or to add any items that are not presently included, on the back of this page.

SURVEY SHEET

Please fill in the following blanks:

Age (years) _____ Approximate school enrollment _____
 Sex _____ Previous teaching experience _____ years
 Previous administrative experience _____ yrs.

Did you hold teaching position within the same high school
 before becoming an assistant principal? yes _____ no _____

Training: Doctors _____ Ed.S. _____ Masters _____ Bachelors _____

(Please circle one factor in each item below by the
 following scale. Also circle yes or no to indicate
 whether you believe the activities listed should be
 yours or not):

0--not a responsibility
 1--minor responsibility (some)
 2--shared responsibility
 3--major responsibility (primary)

Extent of
 Responsibility

Opinion Relative
 to Responsibility

0	1	2	3	Teach classes (If so, how many? _____)	yes	no
0	1	2	3	Orient new teachers	yes	no
0	1	2	3	Maintain records of daily absences	yes	no
0	1	2	3	Approve excuses for absences	yes	no
0	1	2	3	Administer corporal punishment	yes	no
0	1	2	3	Discipline students	yes	no
0	1	2	3	Help teachers with discipline problems	yes	no
0	1	2	3	General disciplinary control	yes	no
0	1	2	3	Suspend students	yes	no

<u>Extent of Responsibility</u>					<u>Opinion Relative to Responsibility</u>	
0	1	2	3	Notify parents of student's suspension	yes	no
0	1	2	3	Inspect building and grounds	yes	no
0	1	2	3	Classroom observation	yes	no
0	1	2	3	Pupil conferences	yes	no
0	1	2	3	Parent conferences	yes	no
0	1	2	3	Represent the school at community functions	yes	no
0	1	2	3	Locker management	yes	no
0	1	2	3	Direct the assembly program	yes	no
0	1	2	3	Handle traffic problems (corridors, streets, assemblies, etc.)	yes	no
0	1	2	3	Act as dean of boys or girls	yes	no
0	1	2	3	Direct the extra-class activities	yes	no
0	1	2	3	Plan home-room programs	yes	no
0	1	2	3	Manage the cafeteria	yes	no
0	1	2	3	Supervise collection of records for the registrar's office	yes	no
0	1	2	3	Supervise charitable services (such as: Red Cross drive, tuberculosis seals, etc.)	yes	no
0	1	2	3	Direct or supervise the secretary's work	yes	no
0	1	2	3	Direct or supervise the janitor's work	yes	no
0	1	2	3	Administer the public-relations program (e.g., PTA)	yes	no
0	1	2	3	Manage free textbooks program	yes	no

<u>Extent of Responsibility</u>					<u>Opinion Relative to Responsibility</u>	
0	1	2	3	Manage finances of student activities	yes	no
0	1	2	3	Manage athletics	yes	no
0	1	2	3	Analyzing curriculum needs	yes	no
0	1	2	3	Assume leadership in a program of curricular development	yes	no
0	1	2	3	Education guidance	yes	no
0	1	2	3	Vocational guidance	yes	no
0	1	2	3	Pupil registration	yes	no
0	1	2	3	Pupil program adjustments	yes	no
0	1	2	3	Make master class schedule	yes	no
0	1	2	3	Deal with records which will aid in becoming better informed on school conditions	yes	no
0	1	2	3	Run the school when the principal is absent	yes	no

NOTE: Please feel free to express your own thoughts, suggest any means to improve the questions or to add any items that are not presently included, on this page.