

THE PROBLEMS OF FIRST-YEAR TEACHERS IN
KANSAS WHO WERE 1966 GRADUATES OF
KANSAS STATE TEACHERS COLLEGE

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CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM

I. INTRODUCTION

During recent years there have been numerous changes in teacher education programs throughout the United States. In addition, there have been changes and improvements in school orientation programs and faculty in-service programs. Most of them have served to assist the first-year teacher in becoming oriented to his new role of teaching.

Beginning with those of the early 1930's, many research studies have been made to determine the fears and problems encountered by first-year teachers. Emphasis has been placed on assisting them in having a satisfying and rewarding first-year teaching experience.

Probably the broadest of the recent studies has been that of the Teacher Education and Professional Standards Committee of the National Education Association. Results of the study, in which many colleges and universities across the nation participated, were made available in The Real World of the Beginning Teacher. Excerpts were published in the NEA Journal.

Although a segment of this broad study was conducted by the University of Kansas School of Education, very little comprehensive research has been made on this topic in the

State of Kansas. This study was designed to fill part of that void.

II. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROBLEM

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to conduct a follow-up study of the teaching problems encountered by 1966 graduates of Kansas State Teachers College of Emporia who completed their first year of teaching in May, 1967.

Specific answers were sought for the following questions:

1. To what extent do first-year teachers in Kansas see themselves as having problems?
2. What are the major problem areas encountered by first-year teachers?
3. What differences in problem areas are found in:
 - a. Urban and rural responses
 - b. Male and female responses
 - c. Elementary and secondary responses
4. In what areas do school systems fail to meet the needs of first-year teachers?
5. In what ways could the teacher education program at Kansas State Teachers College be improved in order to eliminate or reduce specific problems faced by first-year teachers?

Significance of the Study

Teacher turnover is a serious problem faced by most school systems. Various studies have shown that more than half of those first-year teachers across the nation who receive certificates are not teaching two years later. More than half of those teaching in their first year do not intend to be teaching five years later. Many of them leave for reasons such as marriage, pregnancy, transfer of spouse, and military service. However, many of these first-year teachers leave because of dissatisfactions and disillusionments with the profession.

This study may assist them in facing their problems through the realization that others have similar problems. They may come to realize that they are not the only ones who become discouraged at the difficulties that arise.

A knowledge of the problems to be faced by teachers assists students to evaluate the advisability of entering the field of teaching. They may be better prepared for the realities and disillusionments which are certain to come to basically idealistic youth.

The entire curriculum of professional preparation and selection of potential teachers may be advanced by identifying the problems of first-year teachers. Weaknesses of the teacher education program at Kansas State Teachers College may be detected and ideas as to how to strengthen

it advanced by those who have struggled in the crucible of first-year experience. In addition, in-service programs may be strengthened and weaknesses detected.

The implications of the study may be valuable to administrators and supervisors in Kansas schools in meeting the needs of first-year teachers. One of the main functions of supervisors and administrators is to help first-year teachers make necessary adjustments. When the supervisors are made aware of the problems they will be in a better position to lend a hand to those needing assistance.

This study may serve to point out problem areas which are peculiar to elementary and secondary levels. This knowledge will, in turn, strengthen the teaching effectiveness on these levels and in the various disciplines.

Limitations of the Study

The results of this study are useful only in studying a limited number of problems of first-year teachers as perceived by them, rather than the way that they may actually exist. A teacher may have a tendency to under-estimate or to over-estimate his problems. The validity and reliability of the opinion scale have not been established.

Because of the semi-closed nature of the questionnaire, significant problem areas may have been overlooked. The time involved in conduction of an open-ended survey

precluded essay or interview type methods. An exception is the one general question as to how the teacher education program at Kansas State Teachers College could be improved.

Teachers and young people may be idealistic in nature, and many of the problems reported may be the result of a disillusionment on the part of those who have worked long and hard to become teachers. How much of this can be directly attributed to weaknesses of our educational system cannot be measured.

Definition of Terms

First-year teachers in Kansas. First-year teachers will be considered to be those who, regardless of age, have had no previous experience as a classroom teacher, who completed their first year of teaching in Kansas during the 1966-67 school year, and who were 1966 graduates of Kansas State Teachers College of Emporia.

Problem areas. Problem areas in this study are defined as the seven major groupings of problems faced by first-year teachers. The myriad specific problems may usually be grouped under these broad areas.

III. METHOD OF PROCEDURE

To obtain the data for this survey a questionnaire was sent to each first-year teacher in Kansas who was a 1966 graduate of Kansas State Teachers College of Emporia.

Analysis of the data was handled by means of weighted problem area and percentage methods. This method of procedure is explained in greater detail in Chapter 3.

CHAPTER II

A REVIEW OF THE RELATED RESEARCH

A review of the related research on the problems of first-year teachers reveals that there are many sources and techniques which have been utilized in surveying the problems. These include administrator observation, supervisor observation, objective analysis, and self-appraisal.

Self-appraisal by the first-year teachers is the most prevalent of the techniques utilized. For that reason, it will be the most thoroughly reviewed here.

I. SELF-ANALYSIS BY THE TEACHERS

In order to lend creditability to this method of survey, and overcome the limitations previously outlined, the first study to be cited is that conducted by Dropkin and Taylor¹ at Queens College, New York, in 1961.

In this study, a questionnaire with seven problem areas and ten categories in each area was sent to 100 elementary first-year teachers who were graduates of the June, 1960, class. Each of the seventy items was rated by the 78 respondents on a six-point rating scale with

¹Stanley Dropkin and Marvin Taylor, "Perceived Problems of Beginning Teachers and Related Factors," The Journal of Teacher Education, XIV (December, 1963), pp. 384-390.

lessening degrees of difficulty. The internal consistency reliability was computed and an analysis of variance was used to prove the null hypothesis that the means of the seven population areas were from the same population. The results indicated that teachers' perceptions of their problems can be assessed with a high degree of reliability. It appeared that teachers respond to an inquiry about their problems in a highly consistent fashion.

Discipline, teaching methods, and materials and resources were the major problem areas reported. First-year teachers needed greatest assistance in areas of discipline and teaching methods.

A comprehensive review of the research on this topic from 1930-1950 was included in a doctoral dissertation by Dr. Harry L. Wellbank at Northwestern University in 1951.² His review reported that instructional methods, lack of professional preparation, subject matter deficiencies, discipline, classroom organizational problems, and meeting individual learning differences were the major problems.

In Wellbank's follow-up survey of all beginning high school teachers in Illinois in 1951, with a 40 per cent return and fifty personal interviews, he was able to

²Harry L. Wellbank, "An Analysis of the Problems of Beginning High School Teachers in Illinois," Northwestern University, 1951, p. 13.

summarize that caring for individual differences was the major problem confronting them. Over 71 per cent of the respondents reported this as a problem of major concern to them. Following in order were motivating students (67.9%), securing and using teaching aids (67.53%), planning instruction (67.53%), maintaining discipline (64.95%), helping pupils develop initiative (60.15%), developing methods of evaluation (58.3%), classroom management (56.83%), heavy teaching load (53.15%), classroom presentation (52.4%), making meaningful assignments (51.29%), and using supplementary materials (50.55%).

In a study of female first-year teachers graduating from Syracuse University in 1945 and 1946, Smith³ found that failure to understand and be sympathetic to the nature of students was the major problem area. However, the teachers expressed some dissatisfaction with their social acceptance in the community.

This study was not included in Wellbank's summary of significant research. Perhaps this was due to its psychological analysis in that Smith concluded that the problems reported were attributes of the individual rather

³Henry P. Smith, "A Study of the Problems of Beginning Teachers," Educational Administration and Supervision, XXXVI (May, 1950), pp. 257-264.

than of the immediate environment. In this survey, opportunity for contact with other adults and problems with administrative officials rated high on the list of problems.

By now it is apparent that problems in handling pupils and meeting individual differences rate high on almost any survey, Bennie⁴ reported that the problem of meeting individual differences was also the major problem in a follow-up study of 171 first-year teachers who had been student teachers at the University of Texas in the spring of 1964. Bennie's survey contained a listing of twelve facets of teaching commonly reported as problem areas. Meeting individual differences was reported by 50.2 per cent of the respondents as a problem. After this came problems of classroom control, motivation of pupil interest and response, evaluating pupil progress, and lack of subject matter knowledge.

Ranked in descending order, Wey⁵ reported that handling problems of pupil control and discipline, adjusting to deficiencies in school equipment, physical conditions

⁴William A. Bennie, "Problems of New Teachers and What Student Teaching is Doing to Minimize Them," The Texas Outlook, IL (September, 1965), pp. 30-31.

⁵Herbert W. Wey, "Difficulties of Beginning Teachers," The School Review, LIX (January, 1951), pp. 32-37.

and materials, adjusting to the needs and abilities of pupils, motivating pupil interest and response, keeping records and making reports, handling the broader aspects of teaching techniques, and being able to establish and maintain proper relations with supervisors and administrators were the major problems.

These conclusions were the result of a study of 95 secondary school teachers who had graduated from Appalachian State Teachers College in 1948 and were first-year teachers in 1948-49. These teachers reported at three regular intervals during their first year of teaching. The information collected was classified into seventeen major categories and fifty-five specific categories.

Whitman⁶ reported that understanding the school philosophy, interpretation and understanding of materials, becoming adjusted to teaching facilities, adjusting to the teacher load, establishing a good relationship with the principal, organizing class work, and securing living conditions were major problems. His survey also revealed that 80 per cent of the first-year teachers felt more effort should be put into the orientation program, and only 30 per cent felt that the principal had oriented them fully.

⁶Robert L. Whitman, "Fears of Beginning Teachers," Ohio Schools, VII (September, 1966), pp. 23, 44.

The survey undertaken at the University of Kansas by Swartz and Richardson⁷ was oriented toward answering specific student opinions of their expectations, quality of college preparation, the quality of orientation and in-service programs, and the role of school district personnel. However, results are applicable to this study in that almost half of the respondents believed that their professional preparation was inadequate or weak. At the same time, a majority also indicated that, instead of seeking help from administrators and consultants, they first asked other teachers. This would serve to indicate that orientation programs resulted in confusion as to the role of administration and supervision on the part of the first-year teacher.

In summarizing responses of first-year teachers themselves, the research indicates that handling of students and meeting individual differences, relationships with supervisory personnel, and methods of teaching are the most frequently cited problems. First-year teachers appear quite willing to report and discuss their problems.

⁷M. Evelyn Swartz and Donald Richardson, "The Beginning Teacher: Problems and Pressures," The University of Kansas Bulletin of Education, XXI (November, 1966), pp. 1-6.

II. ANALYSIS OF TEACHERS BY ADMINISTRATORS AND SUPERVISORS

A review of the research of analysis of problems by administrators and supervisors indicated that less research has been done in this area than in the area of self-appraisal.

Wellbank⁸ reported that discipline, lack of judgment, deficiencies in instructional methods, deficiencies in scholarship, problems of instructional planning, lack of sympathy for students, study habits of students, and classroom management are the major problems perceived by administrators.

This study supported the work of Stout⁹ who, in 1951, conducted an essay inquiry of problems of first-year teachers as perceived by eighty school administrators. Two thirds of the respondents indicated that discipline was the major problem. Inadequate and ineffective planning, unwillingness to give one's best, lack of understanding of children to be taught, lack of cooperation, and inability to adjust to the slow learner were problems of major concern to the administrator. Stout's conclusion was that first-

⁸Wellbank, op. cit., p. 19.

⁹John B. Stout, "Deficiencies of Beginning Teachers," The Journal of Teacher Education, III (March, 1952), pp. 43-46.

year teachers who have major problems have them, not because they are deficient in command of subject matter, but because they lack adequate understanding of their students and so are unskillful in their efforts within the complex processes of human relations. He also concluded that they have problems because they lack understanding and appreciation of the significance of their chosen work, and so lack those personal qualities and emotional drives that will make them worthy members of the teaching profession.

In summarizing the research in the area of administrator and supervisor appraisal it is apparent that discipline is the major problem, with deficiencies in teaching methods and lack of understanding of children following closely behind.

II. ANALYSIS OF TEACHERS BY OBJECTIVE MEANS

Research in this area is very limited. However, Turner¹⁰ has reported a study of beginning non-experienced teachers of grades one to six in thirteen Indiana school systems in 1961 and 1962. Three instruments were used. They were (1) Mathematics Teaching Tasks, Intermediate Grades,

¹⁰Richard L. Turner, "Characteristics of Beginning Teachers: Their Differential Linkage with School-System Types," The Journal of Teacher Education, LXXVIII (Spring, 1965), pp. 48-58.

which diagnoses pupil learning difficulties and ability to organize materials for instruction in arithmetic, (2) Reading Tasks for Teachers related to difficulties in teaching reading, and (3) Teacher Characteristics Schedule.

Through the use of pre-tests and post-tests, the research indicated that in schools containing children of predominately middle socio-economic class less problems were encountered than in schools containing children of a lower socio-economic class. First-year teachers in schools containing these middle-class children had fewer problems in areas of diagnosis of learning difficulties and organization of materials than in the schools containing the lower socio-economic classes. These skills appeared to be necessary in the schools with economically poorer students, while developing favorable attitudes toward pupils, the ability to maintain friendly relationships, and favorable attitudes toward democratic pupil processes were valued more by the middle socio-economic students in the contemporary American society.

This study has also been cited to indicate that the same teacher with the same background and preparation will be faced with different problems when placed in varying teaching situations.

IV. SUMMARY

The research on this topic would seem to indicate that first-year teachers themselves and their administrators see the problems differently. However, there are many areas of overlap.

Administrators see more problems of discipline than the first-year teachers are perhaps willing to report. Administrators are also more harsh in criticism of personal characteristics and personal deficiencies.

However, both recognize deficiencies in meeting pupil differences, preparation of materials, providing adequate motivation, and solving deficiencies in facilities and equipment.

CHAPTER III

METHOD OF PROCEDURE

As stated in the previous chapter, there are basically three sources which may be used to determine the problems of first-year teachers. Each of the three sources may be tapped by means of closed questionnaires, essay type opinionnaires, and interview techniques. Various combinations of these have also been used.

This survey was of the combined closed questionnaire and essay type. Provision was allowed in each problem area for additional comments by the respondents.

I. THE GROUP STUDIED

A list of all 1966 graduates of Kansas State Teachers College teaching in Kansas elementary and secondary schools in the 1966-67 school year was involved in the survey. Their names and addresses were obtained from files in the Placement Office at Kansas State Teachers College of Emporia.

II. THE EVALUATION INSTRUMENT

A questionnaire as shown in Appendix B was devised by incorporating the most prevalent problems reported in previous surveys of this type. Like problems were organized

into seven problem areas with five problems in each area.

The seven problem areas were "Methods of Teaching," "Planning and Preparation," "Materials and Resources," "Evaluation," "Discipline," "Teaching Routines," and "Personal Relations." Space was provided in each problem area for additional comments by the respondents.

Columns headed "Major Problem," "Difficult Problem," "Minor Problem," and "No Problem" were provided and each of the respondents was encouraged to place a check in the appropriate column. The following criteria was suggested:

1. Major problem. This is a serious problem which you have not been able to solve.

2. Difficult problem. This problem is present, but is not a serious handicap.

3. Minor problem. This problem is present, but is solveable.

4. No problem. There are no problems in this area.

An open-ended question was provided at the end of the questionnaire requesting information as to how the teacher education program at Kansas State Teachers College could be improved in order to eliminate or reduce specific problems faced by first-year teachers.¹¹

¹¹The questionnaire is reproduced in Appendix B.

III. PROCESSES USED FOR THE STUDY

An initial questionnaire was designed by the writer, assisted by Dr. Carol Marshall of the Division of Teacher Education at Kansas State Teachers College. Copies of this questionnaire were then given to the Analysis of Research class at the Teachers College by Dr. Marshall for critique and appraisal. In addition, copies were provided ten students who had been first-year teachers during the 1965-66 school year. Consideration was given to the comments made, and the final questionnaire was devised.

The group involved in the study was mailed a copy of the questionnaire, preceded by an explanatory cover letter, on March 1, 1967. The letter was signed by the writer and Dr. Carol Marshall. A follow-up letter and another copy of the questionnaire were mailed on April 1, 1967, for those not responding the first time.

IV. ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

The returned questionnaires were tabulated as to overall problem areas on master tabulation sheets. Results were broken down into male-female, marital status, elementary-secondary, and urban-rural categories after initial analysis had been made of the whole group. A breakdown of salary levels was also included. This was done in order

to draw further comparisons and obtain a deeper insight into the problem areas.

Responses to the open-ended question were analyzed and summarizations and conclusions as to similarity of responses made. Comparisons were made as to how well these recommendations would assist in providing solutions to the problem areas advanced by the survey.

With the assistance of individual item analysis, conclusions were drawn as to the significant problems faced by first-year teachers and how the pre-service education program at Kansas State Teachers College could be altered to prevent them. In addition, conclusions were advanced as to how school districts can assist in reducing problems of first-year teachers.

CHAPTER IV

THE PROBLEMS OF FIRST-YEAR TEACHERS

The major purpose of this study was to analyze the problems of first-year teachers on the basis of seven major problem areas and on the basis of the specific problems. Analysis of the data will be considered in this order.

A list of 381 first-year teachers in Kansas who were 1966 graduates of Kansas State Teachers College was obtained from the Placement Office of the Teachers College. Questionnaires were mailed to 376 of the 381 graduates. An up-to-date address could not be obtained for five of them. Replies totaled 291 or 77.4 per cent of the questionnaires mailed and 76.4 per cent of the total group. Of these, 33 were not first-year teachers, and thus were not included in analysis of the data. This left a total of 258 first-year responses for analysis or 68.6 per cent of the 376 in the original population.

I. PROBLEMS AS SHOWN BY WEIGHTED PROBLEM AREA RESPONSES

The 258 responses were divided into sixteen categories on the basis of personal and teaching status as shown in Table I. The responses for each question were weighted on the basis of 3 points for a major problem, 2

TABLE I

WEIGHTED PROBLEM AREA RESPONSES FOR FIRST-YEAR TEACHERS IN KANSAS
 CLASSIFIED AS TO ELEMENTARY-SECONDARY, SEX, MARITAL STATUS,
 AND URBAN-RURAL CATEGORIES

Category	Methods of Planning & Materials & Teaching Preparation Resources Evaluation Discipline Routines Relations						
	Methods of Planning	Materials & Teaching Preparation	Resources Evaluation	Discipline	Routines	Relations	
Single, Male, Urban, Elem.	.80	.85	.95	1.25	1.15	.80	.70
Single, Male, Urban, Secon.	.98	.73	.98	.86	1.18	.81	.69
Single, Male, Rural, Elem.	.30	.20	.20	.10	.50	.00	.00
Single, Male, Rural, Secon.	.90	.75	.97	.87	1.00	.78	.65
Married, Male, Urban, Elem.	.54	.54	.58	.66	.96	.60	.28
Married, Male, Urban, Secon.	1.08	.97	1.01	1.11	1.43	.67	.62
Married, Male, Rural, Elem.	1.10	1.25	1.00	.90	.85	1.16	.35
Married, Male, Rural, Secon.	1.09	.96	.82	.89	1.14	.94	.48
Single, Female, Urban, Elem.	.95	.90	.58	.86	.76	.69	.54
Single, Female, Urban, Secon.	.67	.82	.73	.93	1.21	.63	.44
Single, Female, Rural, Elem.	.83	.71	.74	.66	.88	.94	.34
Single, Female, Rural, Secon.	.96	.82	.78	.71	1.22	.58	.54

TABLE I (Continued)

Category	Methods of Planning & Materials &				Teaching Personal		
	Teaching	Preparation	Resources	Evaluation	Discipline	Routines	Relations
Married, Female Urban, Elem.	.78	.78	.51	.71	.79	.59	.38
Married, Female, Urban, Secon.	1.01	.89	.58	.89	1.04	.66	.52
Married, Female, Rural, Elem.	.80	.51	.58	.68	1.13	.57	.49
Married, Female, Rural, Secon.	.97	.92	1.38	.97	1.39	1.03	.43

points for a difficult problem, 1 point for a minor problem, and 0 points for a response indicating no problem. All of the question responses in each area were then added together and a mean response for each area was obtained. It was felt that such a weighting would provide a reflection of the degrees of difficulty in each area. In addition, ease of analysis is obtained as the greater the difficulty that was reported, the higher the number would appear.

It is apparent from the table that for all except single, male, urban, elementary; single, female, urban, elementary; single, female, rural, elementary; and married, male, rural, elementary first-year teachers, discipline is the major problem. The problems of evaluation, planning and preparation, methods of teaching, and teaching routines were, respectively, the greatest problems for these four groups. This would seem to indicate that elementary teachers may experience less discipline problems than do secondary teachers.

The area of "Methods of Teaching" also seems to score rather high in almost all groups except single, male, rural, elementary first-year teachers where there were only a total of five responses.

The whole area of "Personal Relations" has low problem responses for all groups.

The above conclusions are also borne out by the next

TABLE II

WEIGHTED PROBLEM AREA RESPONSES FOR MALE FIRST
YEAR TEACHERS IN KANSAS WHO WERE 1966
GRADUATES OF KSTC

Problem Area	Response
Discipline	1.15
Methods of Teaching	1.04
Materials and Resources	.98
Evaluation	.92
Planning and Preparation	.89
Teaching Routines	.76
Personal Relations	.58

TABLE III

WEIGHTED PROBLEM AREA RESPONSES FOR FEMALE FIRST
YEAR TEACHERS IN KANSAS WHO WERE 1966
GRADUATES OF KSTC

Problem Area	Response
Discipline	1.06
Methods of Teaching	.91
Planning and Preparation	.87
Materials and Resources	.85
Evaluation	.85
Teaching Routines	.74
Personal Relations	.48

four tables. Table II is a summary of weighted responses for male first-year teachers, and Table III is a summary of weighted responses for female first-year teachers.

Discipline is again the leading problem with the males indicating a slightly greater difficulty. The weighted responses fell between a minor and difficult problem breakdown. "Methods of Teaching" was the second greatest problem for both groups. However, the females rated "Planning and Preparation" third at .87 while the males rated it fifth at .89--about the same degree of difficulty. They felt that "Materials and Resources" and "Evaluation" were greater problems to them. "Teaching Routines" and "Personal Relations" were rated sixth and seventh, respectively, by both groups. The responses for "Personal Relations" were .58 and .48, indicating that little difficulty was experienced in this area.

From responses in each of the areas, it appears that females either experience slightly fewer problems or are willing to admit less problems than their male counterparts.

When the weighted responses were categorized into rural and urban areas, as shown in Tables IV and V, "Discipline" and "Methods of Teaching" were again ranked in first and second place. However, the rural teachers at .98 indicated somewhat more of a problem in "Methods of

TABLE IV

WEIGHTED PROBLEM AREA RESPONSES FOR RURAL FIRST
YEAR TEACHERS IN KANSAS WHO WERE 1966
GRADUATES OF KSTC

Problem Area	Response
Discipline	1.00
Methods of Teaching	.98
Materials and Resources	.93
Evaluation	.91
Planning and Preparation	.86
Teaching Routines	.85
Personal Relations	.42

TABLE V

WEIGHTED PROBLEM AREA RESPONSES FOR URBAN FIRST
YEAR TEACHERS IN KANSAS WHO WERE 1966
GRADUATES OF KSTC

Problem Area	Response
Discipline	1.09
Methods of Teaching	.88
Evaluation	.86
Planning and Preparation	.85
Materials and Resources	.72
Teaching Routines	.69
Personal Relations	.54

Teaching" than did the urban teachers at a weighted response of .88.

There was also a noticeable difference in the responses to "Materials and Resources." The urban teachers ranked it fifth at .72 while the rural teachers ranked it third at a .93 weighted response. It would appear that a greater shortage of teaching supplies, equipment, textbooks, and supplementary reading materials exists in rural areas as these were the topics covered in this area. At any rate, rural teachers are experiencing some difficulty in obtaining necessary teaching aids and feel somewhat handicapped in the use of those presently available.

Both urban and rural teachers ranked "Teaching Routines" in sixth place with responses of .69 and .84 respectively. This difference of .15 would seem to indicate that rural teachers experience more additional duties and extracurricular activities and receive less help from administrators and supervisors than do the urban first-year teachers. These are the items that were included in this area.

Once again the area of "Personal Relations" rated seventh on both lists. Urban responses at .54 were slightly higher than rural responses at .42. This would seem to indicate that urban teachers had a slightly harder time becoming adjusted to their teaching role, the

realities of teaching, and their particular teaching environment.

II. PERCENTAGES OF TEACHERS REPORTING EACH PROBLEM CATEGORY

After the male-female and urban-rural weighted response breakdowns, the next step was to divide the total responses into elementary and secondary categories. There were 134 elementary and 124 secondary responses. This data is reflected in Tables VI and VII.

Again "Discipline" and "Methods of Teaching" rated in first and second place for each group with "Personal Relations" ranking seventh in order of difficulty.

Percentages on the specific problems indicated that, for secondary first-year teachers, the problem "My pupils seem to be more interested in obtaining a grade than in learning" was considered a major problem by 21 per cent of the respondents with a total of 84 per cent indicating some difficulty. To them, motivation seemed to be the number one problem. However, for elementary first-year teachers, it ranked twenty-third, with only 3 per cent considering it a major problem, and only 39 per cent indicating that it involved some difficulty.

Elementary first-year teachers felt that meeting individual learning differences was the main problem with 11 per cent considering it as a major problem and 73 per

TABLE VI

PERCENTAGES OF RESPONSES FOR EACH ITEM FOR ELEMENTARY
FIRST-YEAR TEACHERS IN KANSAS

Problem	Problem Response			
	Major	Difficult	Minor	No
<u>AREA I. METHODS OF TEACHING</u>				
I do not feel adequately prepared in the subjects which I am teaching.	2	8	46	44
I quite often have difficulty in formulating stimulating questions and obtaining enthusiastic class discussion.	1	10	40	49
Meeting individual learning differences of pupils gives me trouble.	11	23	39	27
Teaching methods which I learned at KSTC could have been more practical.	6	17	38	39
The methods of teaching I learned at KSTC often cannot be used because other teachers are somewhat traditional.	5	10	18	67
<u>AREA II. PLANNING AND PREPARATION</u>				
I often do not have adequate time in which to prepare my lessons.	6	10	40	44
I have trouble finding out just what I am expected to cover in my classes.	10	15	23	52
Organizing presentations and preparing lesson plans is more work than I had expected.	3	15	32	50
My preparation is often handicapped by lack of pupil initiative and interest.	2	10	28	60
I am expected to teach more students than I feel I can and this reduces my effectiveness.	15	9	15	61
<u>AREA III. MATERIALS AND RESOURCES</u>				
I do not have the necessary audio-visual aids which I had anticipated.	5	6	16	73
I cannot obtain materials and supplies which I need.	8	9	16	67
My classroom is too small for group work and this gives me difficulty.	4	15	12	69
Textbooks and supplementary materials for use by my classes are inadequate.	5	15	21	59

TABLE VI(Continued)

Problem	Problem Response			No
	Major	Difficult	Minor	
I have difficulty getting my students to use available supplementary materials.	3	6	25	66
<u>AREA IV. EVALUATION</u>				
Evaluation of pupil progress and assigning grades is difficult for me.	8	11	44	37
I have to spend too much of my time grading papers.	10	22	27	41
Reporting pupil progress to parents is difficult and time-consuming.	2	10	41	47
Construction of tests is hard for me.	0	6	18	76
My pupils seem to be more interested in obtaining a grade than in learning.	3	9	27	61
<u>AREA V. DISCIPLINE</u>				
The students often try to take advantage of me and become too friendly.	2	10	31	57
I sometimes don't know what to do in a situation requiring discipline.	6	20	44	30
My pupils had not learned discipline prior to entering my class.	11	20	27	42
I don't seem to be very effective with the more-trying students.	7	19	33	41
Setting of practical standards for student conduct is rather difficult.	5	11	33	51
<u>AREA VI. TEACHING ROUTINES</u>				
Extracurricular activities after school take too much of my time.	2	4	15	79
I feel that my principal is not giving me enough help.	6	4	18	72
I find myself in a rut with an unvarying classroom method.	2	6	27	65
I have too many special duties such as hall patrol, collecting monies, cafeteria supervision, etc.	10	14	23	53
Time spent in teacher's meetings is often wasted.	16	15	30	39
<u>AREA VII. PERSONAL RELATIONS</u>				
The people of the community make little effort to make me feel at home.	3	5	10	82
It took me a long time to get to know many of the other faculty members.	1	3	17	79
People are often critical of my teaching.	1	2	15	82
I had trouble at first adjusting to the teaching role.	4	5	25	66
The realities of teaching are harsher in many aspects than I had anticipated.	5	14	30	51

TABLE VII

PERCENTAGES OF RESPONSES FOR EACH ITEM FOR SECONDARY
FIRST-YEAR TEACHERS IN KANSAS

Problem	Problem Response			
	Major	Difficult	Minor	No
<u>AREA I. METHODS OF TEACHING</u>				
I do not feel adequately prepared in the subjects which I am teaching.	3	13	43	41
I quite often have difficulty in formulating stimulating questions and obtaining enthusiastic class discussion.	3	20	51	26
Meeting individual learning differences of pupils gives me trouble.	7	29	44	20
Teaching methods which I learned at KSTC could have been more practical.	18	31	30	21
The methods of teaching I learned at KSTC often cannot be used because other teachers are somewhat traditional.	6	5	23	66
<u>AREA II. PLANNING AND PREPARATION</u>				
I often do not have adequate time in which to prepare my lessons.	16	22	33	29
I have trouble finding out just what I am expected to cover in my classes.	5	7	22	66
Organizing presentations and preparing lesson plans is more work than I had expected.	4	16	37	43
My preparation is often handicapped by lack of pupil initiative and interest.	10	21	41	28
I am expected to teach more students than I feel I can and this reduces my effectiveness.	12	13	23	52
<u>AREA III. MATERIALS AND RESOURCES</u>				
I do not have the necessary audio-visual aids which I had anticipated.	12	13	29	46
I cannot obtain materials and supplies which I need.	9	19	26	46
My classroom is too small for group work and this gives me difficulty.	15	11	26	48
Textbooks and supplementary materials for use by my classes are inadequate.	19	22	27	32

TABLE VII (Continued)

Problem	Problem Response		
	Major	Difficult	Minor No
I have difficulty getting my students to use available supplementary materials.3	30	36	31
<u>AREA IV. EVALUATION</u>			
Evaluation of pupil progress and assigning grades is difficult for me. 4	13	41	42
I have to spend too much of my time grading papers. 15	17	31	37
Reporting pupil progress to parents is difficult and time-consuming. 4	10	30	56
Construction of tests is hard for me.1	11	29	59
My pupils seem to be more interested in obtaining a grade than in learning.21	29	34	16
<u>AREA V. DISCIPLINE</u>			
The students often try to take advantage of me and become too friendly. 4	19	51	26
I sometimes don't know what to do in a situation requiring discipline. 10	27	45	18
My pupils had not learned discipline prior to entering my class. 15	23	43	19
I don't seem to be very effective with the more-trying students. 6	24	46	24
Setting of practical standards for student conduct is rather difficult. 5	24	43	28
<u>AREA VI. TEACHING ROUTINES</u>			
Extracurricular activities after school take too much of my time. 13	15	29	43
I feel that my principal is not giving me enough help. 11	10	14	65
I find myself in a rut with an unvarying classroom method. 4	11	42	43
I have too many special duties such as hall patrol, collecting monies, cafeteria supervision, etc. 11	4	23	67
Time spent in teacher's meetings is often wasted. 19	19	27	35
<u>AREA VII. PERSONAL RELATIONS</u>			
The people of the community make little effort to make me feel at home. 7	6	21	66
It took me a long time to get to know many of the other faculty members.4	4	15	77
People are often critical of my teaching. 1	3	19	77
I had trouble at first adjusting to the teaching role. 3	12	34	51
The realities of teaching are harsher in many aspects than I had anticipated.4	18	35	42

cent indicating some difficulty in this area. Secondary first-year teachers rated it fourth with 7 per cent indicating it as a major problem and 80 per cent responding to it as a minor or more serious problem.

The problem that they sometimes didn't know what to do in situations requiring discipline was rated second by both elementary and secondary first-year teachers with 70 per cent and 82 per cent, respectively, admitting some problems in this area. Secondary respondents followed this with their third greatest problem from the same area. That pupils had not learned discipline prior to entering their class was the complaint registered by 81 per cent. Only 58 per cent of the elementary teachers felt this to be a problem.

Elementary respondents indicated that evaluation of pupil progress and assigning of grades was a problem for some 63 per cent. This was the third greatest problem for them. At the same time, 58 per cent of the secondary first-year teachers showed concern with this. Following in order for elementary first-year teachers were dissatisfaction with teaching methods learned at KSTC (61%), waste of time in teachers meetings (61%), ineffectiveness with the more-trying students (59%), having to spend too much time grading papers (59%), the fact that pupils had not learned discipline prior to entering their class (58%),

not being adequately prepared in subject matter (56%), lack of time for preparing lessons (56%), and difficulty involved and time spent in reporting pupil progress to parents (53%).

Following the responses mentioned above in order of difficulty for secondary first-year teachers were dissatisfaction with teaching methods at KSTC being impractical (79%), lack of effectiveness with the more-trying students (76%), difficulty in formulating stimulating questions and obtaining enthusiastic class discussion (74%), students taking advantage of them and becoming too friendly (75%), difficulty in preparation because of lack of pupil initiative and interest (72%), and setting of standards for student conduct (72%).

It is apparent from the above percentages that secondary teachers either experience more difficulty or are willing to admit greater problems than elementary first-year teachers. On thirty-one of the thirty-five questions a greater percentage of secondary respondents indicate that they have major, difficult, or minor problems. Only in amount of difficulty in finding out what they are to cover in their classes, in evaluation of pupil progress, in reporting of pupil progress, and in performing special duties such as hall patrol, collecting money, cafeteria supervision, and the like does a greater percentage of elementary teachers

admit that a problem exists to a degree.

Perhaps some of this is due to overweighting of the questionnaire with secondary items. However, every attempt was made to prevent this, both before and after the pilot study. It would be difficult to logically contribute such a large discrepancy to this alone.

When only the "Major Problem" responses were considered, on only 7 out of the 35 questions did elementary first-year teachers experience greater difficulty. These were meeting individual learning differences, finding out what they were to cover in their classes, having to teach too many students, evaluation of pupil progress, ineffectiveness with the more-trying students, adjusting to the teaching role, and facing the realities of teaching.

This may be partially explained by referring to Tables I, II, and III again. From these tables it was concluded that female first-year teachers either have less problems or are willing to admit less. Because there are more females than males in elementary teaching the responses for elementary teachers will logically be lower. Which of these responses, if either, is correct in reality cannot be concluded here, and would be an interesting avenue for further and more scientific research.

III. PERCENTAGES OF TEACHERS REPORTING EACH PROBLEM

Table VIII reflects the percentages for each specific problem and the degrees of difficulty for each problem area. These are placed in rank order in Table IX. The percentages in Table IX reflect a total for all the "Major," "Difficult," and "Minor" responses for each question.

Although the problem area of "Discipline" has the highest weighted response with an average of 1.01, the specific problem of meeting individual learning differences from the "Methods of Teaching" area was the most frequently mentioned specific problem. Some degree of difficulty in this area was reported by 78 per cent of the respondents. This is in harmony with the previous research cited in Chapter II. The conclusions in the Summary to Chapter II also stated that the first-year teachers themselves and their administrators and supervisors see the problems differently. Administrators had seen discipline as a greater problem than had the first-year teachers themselves in the previous surveys. This is not the case here as the first-year teachers themselves see both discipline and meeting individual learning differences as major problems.

Second on the list of specific problems was the concern that 76 per cent of the first-year teachers felt in

TABLE VIII

PERCENTAGES OF RESPONSES FOR EACH ITEM FOR
FIRST-YEAR TEACHERS IN KANSAS WHO WERE
1966 GRADUATES OF KSTC

Problem	Problem Response			
	Major	Difficult	Minor	No
<u>AREA I. METHODS OF TEACHING</u>				
I do not feel adequately prepared in the subjects which I am teaching.	3	10	45	42
I quite often have difficulty in formulating stimulating questions and obtaining enthusiastic class discussion.	2	15	41	42
Meeting individual learning differences of pupils gives me trouble.	9	27	42	22
Teaching methods which I learned at KSTC could have been more practical.	12	25	33	30
The methods of teaching I learned at KSTC often cannot be used because other teachers are somewhat traditional.	5	8	21	66
<u>AREA II. PLANNING AND PREPARATION</u>				
I often do not have adequate time in which to prepare my lessons.	12	17	33	38
I have trouble finding out just what I am expected to cover in my classes.	8	11	22	59
Organizing presentations and preparing lesson plans is more work than I had expected.	4	16	35	45
My preparation is often handicapped by lack of pupil initiative and interest.	7	20	35	38
I am expected to teach more students than I feel I can and this reduces my effectiveness.	11	12	20	57
<u>AREA III. MATERIALS AND RESOURCES</u>				
I do not have the necessary audio-visual aids which I had anticipated.	10	10	23	57
I cannot obtain materials and supplies which I need.	8	15	21	56
My classroom is too small for group work and this gives me difficulty.	10	13	19	58
Textbooks and supplementary materials for use by my classes are inadequate.	12	19	24	45

TABLE VIII (Continued)

Problem	Problem Response		
	Major	Difficult	Minor No
I have difficulty getting my students to use available supplementary materials. ³	19	32	46
<u>AREA IV. EVALUATION</u>			
Evaluation of pupil progress and assigning grades is difficult for me. 6	12	43	39
I have to spend too much of my time grading papers. 9	19	29	43
Reporting pupil progress to parents is difficult and time-consuming. 3	10	35	52
Construction of tests is hard for me. ¹	9	24	66
My pupils seem to be more interested in obtaining a grade than in learning. 11	20	30	39
<u>AREA V. DISCIPLINE</u>			
The students often try to take advantage of me and become too friendly. 3	15	40	42
I sometimes don't know what to do in a situation requiring discipline. 8	24	44	24
My pupils had not learned discipline prior to entering my class. 12	22	33	33
I don't seem to be very effective with the more-trying students. 7	22	40	31
Setting of practical standards for student conduct is rather difficult. 6	18	38	38
<u>AREA VI. TEACHING ROUTINES</u>			
Extracurricular activities after school take too much of my time. 7	10	23	60
I feel that my principal is not giving me enough assistance. 9	7	16	68
I find myself in a rut with an unvarying classroom method. 3	8	36	53
I have too many special duties such as hall patrol, collecting monies, cafeteria supervision, etc. 10	9	25	56
Time spent in teacher's meetings is often wasted. 18	17	29	36
<u>AREA VII. PERSONAL RELATIONS</u>			
The people of the community make little effort to make me feel at home. 5	5	16	74
It took me a long time to get to know many of the other faculty members. ²	3	16	79
People are often critical of my teaching. 1	2	17	80
I had trouble at first adjusting to the teaching role. 3	9	29	59
The realities of teaching are harsher in many aspects than I anticipated. 5	16	33	46

TABLE I
 PERCENTAGES OF FIRST-YEAR
 EXPERIENCING SOME
 IN EACH A
 DIFFICULTY
 OFFERED IN KANSAS

Problem	Percentage
1. Meeting individual learning differences of pupils gives me trouble.	78
2. I sometimes don't know what to do in a situation requiring discipline.	76
3. Teaching methods which I learned at KSTC could have been more practical.	70
4. I don't seem to be very effective with some of the more-trying students.	69
5. My pupils had not learned discipline prior to entering my class.	67
6. Time spent in teacher's meetings is often wasted.	64
7. I often do not have adequate time in which to prepare my lessons.	62
8. My preparation is often handicapped by lack of pupil initiative and interest.	62
9. Setting of practical standards for student conduct is rather difficult.	62
10. Evaluation of pupil progress and assigning grades is difficult for me.	61
11. My pupils seem more interested in obtaining a grade than in learning.	61
12. I do not feel adequately prepared in the subjects which I am teaching.	58
13. I quite often have difficulty in formulating stimulating questions and obtaining enthusiastic class discussion.	58
14. The students often try to take advantage of me and become too friendly.	58
15. I have to spend too much of my time grading papers.	57
16. Organizing presentations and preparing lesson plans is more work than I expected.	55
17. Textbooks and supplementary materials for use by my classes are inadequate.	55
18. I have difficulty getting my students to use available supplementary materials.	54
19. The realities of teaching are harsher in many aspects than I had anticipated.	54

TABLE IX (Continued)

Problem	Percentage
20. Reporting pupil progress to parents is difficult and time-consuming.	48
21. I find myself in a rut with an unvarying classroom method.	47
22. I cannot obtain materials and supplies which I need.	44
23. I have too many special duties such as hall patrol, collecting monies, cafeteria supervision, etc.	44
24. I am expected to teach more students than I feel I can, and this reduces my effectiveness.	43
25. I do not have the necessary audio-visual supplies which I had anticipated.	43
26. My classroom is too small for group work and this reduces my effectiveness.	42
27. I have trouble finding out just what I am expected to cover in my classes.	41
28. I had trouble at first adjusting to the teaching role.	41
29. Extracurricular activities after school take too much of my time.	40
30. The methods of teaching which I learned at NSTC often cannot be used because other teachers are somewhat traditional.	34
31. Construction of tests is hard for me.	34
32. I feel that my principal (or supervisor) did not give me enough help.	32
33. The people of the community make little effort to make me feel at home.	26
34. It took me a long time to get to know many of the other faculty members.	21
35. People are often critical of my teaching.	20

not knowing what to do in situations requiring discipline. The fourth and fifth ranked problems were, respectively, lack of effectiveness with the more-trying students (69%) and the fact that pupils had not learned discipline prior to entering their class (67%). This brought a total of three out of the first five problems originating from the area of "Discipline."

Suggestions for correction of these two major problems are discussed in the next chapter. However, there appears to be a definite and genuine concern on the part of first-year teachers in these two areas. Specific comments on each of the problems may be found in Appendix C. Six of the first-year teachers blamed weak administration for their discipline problems. This is not a great number except that only 11 first-year teachers made comments in this area that could not be included in other specific problems.

The third problem, criticism of teaching methods at KSTC as lacking practicality (70%), received much more individual comment than did meeting individual learning differences. They seemed to feel that these two went together and that the reason for the first one originated from this lack of practicality. As is shown later, few actual specific suggestions for making the training more realistic were made.

The teachers' concern with time was found in the sixth and seventh rated problems. Wasted time spent in teacher's meetings was indicated by 64 per cent of the respondents. Lack of time to adequately prepare lessons was reported by 62 per cent. One teacher evidently kept a record of time spent beyond class time and reported it as "950 hours so far." However, the problem of having to spend too much time with extracurricular activities after school ranked twenty-ninth with only 40 per cent reporting a problem. Time spent in grading papers ranked fifteenth with 57 per cent showing concern.

The problem area of "Materials and Resources" fell near the middle of the list of problems with complaints of inadequate textbooks and materials ranking sixteenth at 55 per cent. Other problems in the area ranked eighteenth, twenty-second, twenty-fifth, and twenty-sixth.

"Planning and Preparation" ranked third in difficulty of problem areas. Specific items in the area ranked seventh, eighth, sixteenth, twenty-fourth, and twenty-seventh. Difficulty in preparation being handicapped by lack of pupil initiative and interest was considered a problem by 62 per cent. Yet only 43 per cent felt that they had too many students.

In the broad field of "Evaluation" which ranked fourth, specific questions again fell in the middle part of the list. Sixty-one per cent reported that evaluation

of pupil progress and assigning grades was difficult for them. Sixty-one per cent also reported concern with their pupil's greater interest in obtaining a grade than in learning. Two teachers reported that their students were neither interested in grades nor learning. The comments in this area, reproduced in Appendix C, are many and varied. They range from blame on weak administration and weak college preparation to the parents of the students.

With the exception of the complaint on teacher's meetings, the problems of the "Teaching Routines" area rated very low. Only 44 per cent reported that they had too many special duties, and only 32 per cent felt that they had not received enough help from their principal or supervisor.

Once again the problem of "Personal Relations" rated at the bottom. Only 20 per cent felt that people were often critical of their teaching. A possible reason for this is that teachers have not been made aware of the criticism which may actually exist. In addition, first-year teachers may be hesitant to admit this as a definite problem. The questions in this area were personal in nature. It is human nature to look outside of one's self for the source of problems. No one wants to consider himself as inadequate or inefficient. The determination as to how significant this may be in reality cannot be

made here as it would require a different approach--a psychological one. However, its effect cannot be overlooked.

The results are not in harmony with the findings of Stout¹² who concluded that first-year teachers lacked skill in the complex processes of human relations. They appeared to adjust well to the teaching role and got along quickly and satisfactorily with the people of their respective communities and their fellow faculty members. This is also not in agreement with Smith's¹³ conclusion that the problems encountered are attributes of the individual rather than of the immediate environment.

Only three teachers registered complaints against their supervisor or principal. An interesting comment in this area was made by one of the respondents who stated that "too many teachers complain about everyone and everything--they just think too dictatively."

IV. SALARIES OF FIRST-YEAR TEACHERS

No study of the problems of first-year teachers would be complete without a mention of salary levels. Table X reflects the first-year teachers in each salary group.

¹²Stout, loc. cit.

¹³Smith, loc. cit.

TABLE X
NUMBER OF FIRST-YEAR TEACHERS IN KANSAS
WHO WERE 1966 GRADUATES OF KSTC
IN EACH SALARY GROUP

	Under \$5000	\$5000- \$5200	\$5200- \$5400	Over \$5400
Male	6	40	21	32
Female	34	95	14	10
Total	41	135	35	42

Although no particular opportunity was provided for comment on satisfaction with salary levels, it is apparent that many of the teachers are receiving low salaries, especially the females. Almost all of those receiving over \$5400 had special assignments such as coaching, music, or special education.

A complaint was made that "teaching is certainly not what I expected ... My work is never done." A complaint was made that "A course should be offered to show a student the triteness of teaching ... Then the intelligent people could enter another profession before they encountered unhappiness as a teacher." However, it was noticeable that not a single complaint was registered pertaining to inadequate salaries.

V. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The entire problem area of "Discipline" was the major difficulty reported by the 258 first-year teachers. Three of the specific problem items in this area rated in the top five of the problems. However, the problem of meeting individual learning differences was the most frequent difficulty reported by 78 per cent of the respondents. Because of this, and the 70 per cent response to the lack of practicality of the teaching methods learned at KSEC, the area of "Methods of Teaching" rated second.

This was followed in turn by "Planning and Preparation," "Materials and Resources," "Evaluation," "Teaching Routines," and "Personal Relations." The latter area scored very low in per cent of difficulty.

When broken down into categories, basically the same results were obtained. Male teachers reported more problems than did female teachers. Rural teachers had a greater weighted problem response than did the urban teachers, and elementary teachers reported fewer problems than did secondary teachers.

First-year teachers in Kansas who were 1966 graduates of Kansas State Teachers College reported difficulties in harmony with those in previous research. They appeared to be more perceptive of discipline problems than those in previous surveys of this type.

Salaries reported by first-year teachers were low with 52.4 per cent reporting salaries between \$5000 and \$5200. However, not a single complaint of low salaries was mentioned on any of the returned questionnaires.

CHAPTER V

SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVING THE TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM AT KSTC

The second purpose of this study was to obtain suggestions for improving the teacher education program at Kansas State Teachers College of Emporia in order to eliminate or reduce specific problems faced by first-year teachers.

Of the 258 respondents, 211 placed a comment on this open-ended question. These comments were tabulated and summarized into seventeen categories as shown in Table XI. Other replies, which were not easily definable or especially pertinent, are reproduced in Appendix D.

I. IMPROVING THE TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM

An expressed desire for more student teaching was made by 49 of the 211 respondents to this question. The comments in this area suggested that through more student teaching the students could learn more of the practical aspects of teaching. Of the 49 teachers suggesting this, 31 felt that at least a semester should be required, and 10 suggested a requirement of one year. Ten first-year teachers suggested that the campus laboratory schools be abolished. The complaint was that these schools are too

TABLE XI

SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVING THE TEACHER EDUCATION
PROGRAM AT KSFC MADE BY FIRST-YEAR TEACHERS
IN KANSAS WHO WERE 1966 GRADUATES OF KSFC

Suggestion	Number
1. More student teaching	49
2. Make education courses more realistic	47
3. Include more emphasis on how to discipline students	31
4. Have problem-oriented methods courses in each subject area	29
5. Include more direct work with actual content of curriculum on public school levels	29
6. Provide more work in assisting the slow and the fast learner	21
7. Include more instruction on assigning grades, making reports, handling money, and ordering supplies	20
8. Place greater emphasis on meeting reading problems	19
9. Make more charts, bulletin board displays, and exercise sheets	17
10. Do away with methods courses and have more work in subject area	13
11. Do away with laboratory schools	10
12. Nothing--you learn by experience	9
13. Have more problem-oriented workshops and have first-year teachers talk to education classes	9
14. Place greater emphasis on administration and school-board relationships	8
15. Require more psychology courses	7
16. Require an audio-visual aids course	3
17. Start over--the program is "in bad shape"	2

idealistic, and thus were not providing enough of the "harsh realities" of teaching.

This quest for realism in preparation was the second most frequently mentioned suggestion. Forty-seven of the first-year teachers felt that the education courses were not realistic enough. They indicated that the Teachers College should teach less theory, do away with methods courses, have more realistic discussions, and unify teaching theories.

This is by no means peculiar to graduates of Kansas State Teachers College of Emporia. The following comments were made by Dr. Robert N. Bush at the Nineteenth National Teacher Education and Professional Standards Conference in New York City on June 22, 1965:

The main charge leveled by those who stay in teaching and those who leave is that the two worlds, that of the college and that of the schools are different, often contradictory, and that what happens during preparation does not fit what he finds in practice. The theme has infinite variations. A popular one just now is that prospective teachers, all of middle class, are trained only on middle-class, quiet, conforming youngsters (Where are they?) and cannot stand the shock of reality when they land in a slum school in the decaying part of the city.

Another image is that of the new teachers coming from the preparing institutions, their "Dewey" eyes filled with dreams of innovation: ungraded schools, teams of teachers working harmoniously dividing up the labor, offering the new curriculum in carpeted, wall-less schools filled with acoustical perfume. Then they suddenly go to pieces when confronted with the reality of overcrowded, self-contained classrooms, with only meager teaching

materials, limited budgets, seniority practices, and heavy extra-class and playground duties.¹⁴

His final comments on this problem were that only members of the profession--administrators and fellow teachers--acting with professional competence, can meet these harsh realities and disappointments and overcome them. The disillusionments of idealistic youth are often severe, but always certain. Preparing institutions can take steps toward alleviating this problem, but probably cannot solve it entirely. This adjustment process appears to be the heart of the problem. Almost all of the other suggestions in Table XI are geared toward solving it. Some, but not all, of the blame can be placed on the preparing institution.¹⁵

In agreement with the problem response that discipline is a problem of major concern to many first-year teachers, 31 of the respondents suggested that more emphasis be placed on this in the college curriculum. Just how this was to be done was largely left unsaid. Most of them indicated that more practical experience in this area could be achieved through more student teaching.

¹⁴Robert N. Bush, "The Formative Years," The Real World of the Beginning Teacher (Washington: National Education Association, 1965), pp. 7-8.

¹⁵Ibid.

The suggestion was also made that more realistic, problem-centered discussions be held in order to provide a greater knowledge of what to do in specific situations requiring discipline. Lists of disciplinary guidelines made by various educational writers could be utilized.

It was also mentioned that self-discipline often did not work. They felt that it was a good idea, but lacked proficiency in obtaining it. Specifically, they requested help in developing their own personality so that it would be conducive to developing an environment of self-discipline. One first-year teacher desired to know how to originate this concept from within the mind of the child, rather than forcing it upon him from the outside. This teacher's comment was typical of the group.

The inclusion of problem-oriented methods courses in each subject area was suggested by 29 of the first-year teachers. In this area they seemed to be asking for a conference-type course in which students of a particular discipline could get together and discuss problems peculiar to their field. The majority of them felt that actual elementary and high school teachers could be brought in to field and answer questions. However, 13 first-year teachers felt that the methods courses should be abolished entirely so that they could receive more work in their own subject area.

This carried over into the fifth most frequently mentioned suggestion--that teacher education students should have more direct work with the actual content of the curriculum on the elementary and secondary levels on which they would be teaching. Junior high teachers were especially concerned with this. They seemed to be saying, "I know how to teach calculus, but can't teach general math." A need was expressed for greater familiarization with high school textbooks and curricular materials. In addition, one teacher requested a complete review of subject matter on the high school level.

Providing more work in assisting the slow and the fast learner was suggested by 21 of the first-year teachers. No specific suggestions for achieving this were mentioned. This again is the problem of meeting individual differences, and is one of the most difficult challenges remaining in education.

Twenty first-year teachers requested more instruction on the practical duties of assigning grades, making out reports, handling money, and ordering supplies. Although this was not reported as a major problem, they seemed to desire more of this included in their preparation. The suggestion was made to have a unit in one of the methods classes on keeping attendance records, calculating Average Daily Attendance, establishing and

maintaining cumulative record books, preparing requisitions, knowing what to request, recommending students for remedial work and special education, and maintenance of simple monetary accounting records. Although this was most prevalent on the elementary level, it was mentioned by six of the secondary teachers.

The placing of greater emphasis on meeting reading problems was suggested nineteen times. All but one of these were elementary teachers. Genuine concern was apparent from the intensity of the replies. However, again no specific suggestions were made as to how this problem could be solved other than additional course work on solving particular reading problems and individualized reading.

The next item was much more specific. Seventeen of the respondents (again mostly elementary) felt that they should make more charts, bulletin board displays, and exercise sheets while still in college so that they would have them when they started teaching. Suggestions were also made to start collecting more free and inexpensive materials and to teach more on how to use the resources available in the community. One first-year teacher expressed this with the statement, "less talking and more doing, not with fancy equipment, but everyday scraps."

Nine teachers felt that nothing could be done to

improve the program and that the problems can be overcome only through experience. Two of the respondents felt that the college should start over as the program is "in bad shape."

The final item for consideration is the suggestion that greater emphasis be placed on administrative and school board relationships. This was not a request for more assistance on getting along with the administration. Rather it was a desire for more understanding of school board policies, salary schedules, assignments of special duties, and clerical responsibilities.

II. SUMMARY

The inclusion of more student teaching in the teacher education program at Kansas State Teachers College of Emporia, Kansas, was the most frequently made suggestion for improving the program. Forty-nine of the 211 respondents felt that this would be desirable.

The suggestion that the education courses should be made more realistic was made by 47 of the first-year teachers. This recommendation is not at all peculiar to graduates of Kansas State Teachers College, and it was pointed out that few specific suggestions were provided as to how this can be accomplished. Often it is a symptom of adjustment or loss of some of the idealism of youth.

Many of the other suggestions were for more practical assistance in particular areas. Forty-nine of them felt that the inclusion of more student teaching in the program would be of most benefit in meeting this challenge.

The first-year teachers felt that more problem-oriented emphasis on meeting discipline problems would help to alleviate many of the problems they had reported in the first part of the survey.

Following in order of frequency of mention were the following suggested improvements: more problem-oriented methods courses in specific subject matter areas, more direct work with the actual content of the curriculum on the various levels, assistance in meeting problems of the slow and fast learners, more instruction on clerical responsibilities, greater emphasis on meeting reading problems, and the making of more displays and exercise sheets.

CHAPTER VI

VI. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The primary purpose of this study was to conduct a study of the teaching problems encountered by 1966 graduates of Kansas State Teachers College of Emporia who completed their first year of teaching in the 1966-67 school year. Specific answers were sought as to the problems which first-year teachers saw themselves as having, the extent of these problem areas, the areas in which school systems failed to meet the needs of first-year teachers, and ways the teacher education program at the Teachers College might be improved.

Questionnaires were mailed on March 1, 1967, to 376 first-year teachers in Kansas who had been 1966 graduates of Kansas State Teachers College. Of these 376, a total of 258 first-year responses was received for a return of 68.6 per cent.

Analysis of the data revealed that first-year teachers were quite willing to report the difficulties which they had encountered with 20 per cent being the lowest amount of difficulty reported on a specific problem. The entire problem area of "Discipline" was the major difficulty reported when considered both by weighted response and percentage methods.

The problem of meeting individual learning differences was the most frequently mentioned specific problem with 78 per cent of the respondents indicating some difficulty. This was followed by lack of knowledge of what to do in a situation requiring discipline (76%), complaints of impracticality of teaching methods learned at the Teachers College (70%), and lack of effectiveness with the more-trying students (69%).

In terms of decreasing difficulty the areas of "Methods of Teaching," "Planning and Preparation," "Materials and Resources," "Evaluation," "Teaching Routines," and "Personal Relations" followed "Discipline." Male teachers reported more difficulty than female first-year teachers and secondary teachers reported more problems than did their elementary counterparts. A slight difference in urban and rural responses was reported with the rural first-year teachers reporting more difficulty in each area.

The first-year teachers expressed little dissatisfaction with the school systems in which they were teaching. Less than half reported any difficulty with materials, facilities, supplies, or the administrator. Waste of time in teachers meetings was reported by 64 per cent.

In the reporting of salaries, 52.4 per cent reported salaries between \$5000 and \$5200, although no

specific dissatisfaction with salary levels was encountered.

When it came to making suggestions for improving the teacher education program at Kansas State Teachers College, the following suggestions in order of frequency were made: have more student teaching (49), make education courses more realistic (47), include more emphasis on how to discipline students (31), provide more subject area problem-oriented methods courses (29), and include more direct work with the actual curriculum content on elementary and secondary school levels (29).

It was suggested that dissatisfaction with the teaching methods learned at the Teachers College was a normal phenomenon. Part of this problem can be alleviated by the preparing institution itself. However, part of it will have to be resolved in the process of adjustment. Certainly increased student teaching would reduce some of the dissatisfaction by providing practical experience in more of the phases and duties of teaching.

The conclusions advanced suggest that further research in securing more specific recommendations for improving the teacher education program at Kansas State Teachers College might be profitable. Additional information is needed as to how this vast array of suggestions can be integrated into the present, time-limited curriculum,

The problems reported and the recommendations advanced would seem to point more and more in the direction of an extended program, or a fifth year. First-year teachers feel that there is a definite need for additional assistance. What this assistance should include has not been definitely defined.

For these first-year teachers there have been problems, and there have been disillusionments. They have many dissatisfactions, but, for the most part, they feel that they have been able to resolve most of them. A comment made by one of them would seem to represent this whole feeling. "This has been a very good year. I have had troubles, but I have learned much. Most of all, I enjoy what I am doing and plan to continue in this field."

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APPENDIX A

Correspondence

Kansas State Teachers College
Emporia, Kansas

March 1, 1967


Dear First-Year Teacher:

A study is being conducted to determine the problems of first-year teachers who were graduates of the 1966 classes at Kansas State Teachers College of Emporia. Secondary purposes of the study are to identify the problem areas where school systems fail to meet the needs of first-year teachers, and to suggest ways that the teacher education program at KSTC could be improved. It is felt that teachers themselves are the best judges of this.

According to records of the Placement Office at the Teachers College you were a 1966 graduate. For that reason, your cooperation in completing the inclosed inquiry form and returning it in the inclosed envelope is requested. Your early attention to this will be appreciated.

Your responses will be treated confidentially. It is not required that you sign your name. However, if you desire an account of the results of the study, please so indicate on the form in the space provided. The results should be available some time in the next three months.

Sincerely,



Edward H. Gerhardt
Graduate Student

1 Incl
as



Dr. Carol Marshall
Elementary Education

Kansas State Teachers College
Emporia, Kansas

April 1, 1967

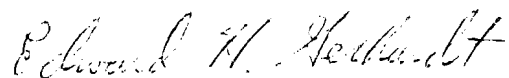
Dear First-Year Teacher:

Recently you received an inquiry pertaining to problems encountered by first-year teachers. The general response to the inquiry has been good, and it would be desirable to include your reply in the data.

Another inquiry form has been enclosed because the information you can provide is very important in assessing the problems of first-year teachers. If you have not mailed the previous form within the past few days, it will be appreciated if you would fill out this form and return it in the enclosed envelope which requires no postage.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,



Edward H. Gerhardt
Graduate Student

1 Incl
as

APPENDIX B

The Questionnaire

Kansas State Teachers College
Emporia, Kansas

March 1, 1967

SURVEY OF PROBLEMS OF FIRST-YEAR TEACHERS

Your responses to the questions below are necessary in order to determine the problems encountered by first-year teachers.

Are you a first-year teacher? Yes Teaching Field: Elementary
 No Secondary (specify subjects) _____

Approximate size of your school: _____ Students _____

Composition of the student body of the school: Mostly urban Salary: Under \$5000
 Mostly rural \$5000-\$5200
 \$5200-\$5400

Marital status: Married Single Divorced Over \$5400

If you desire a record of the results of this study when completed please list your name and summer address on the blank below:

DIRECTIONS:

1. Place a check in the column marked "Major Problem" if you feel that this is a serious problem which you have not been able to solve.
2. Place a check in the column marked "Difficult Problem" if you feel that the problem is present, but is not a serious handicap.
3. Place a check in the column marked "Minor Problem" if you feel that the problem is present, but that you are able to solve it.
4. Place a check in the column marked "No Problem" if you feel that you are having no problems in that area.
5. You are encouraged to list any additional problems or comments and place a check in the appropriate column.

	Major Problem	Difficult Problem	Minor Problem	No Problem
I do not feel adequately prepared in the subjects which I am teaching.				
I quite often have difficulty in formulating stimulating questions and obtaining enthusiastic class discussion.				
Meeting individual learning differences of pupils gives me trouble.				
Teaching methods which I learned at KSTC could have been more practical.				

AREA I. METHODS OF TEACHING (Continued)

Major Problem Difficult Problem Minor Problem No Problem

The methods of teaching I learned at KSTC often cannot be used because other teachers are somewhat traditional.

Other _____

AREA II. PLANNING AND PREPARATION

I often do not have adequate time in which to prepare my lessons.

I have trouble finding out just what I am expected to cover in my classes.

Organizing presentations and preparing lesson plans is more work than I expected.

My preparation is often handicapped by lack of pupil initiative and interest.

I am expected to teach more students than I feel I can, and this reduces my effectiveness.

Other _____

AREA III. MATERIALS AND RESOURCES

I do not have the necessary audio-visual aids which I had anticipated.

I cannot obtain materials and supplies which I need.

My classroom is too small for group work and this gives me difficulty.

Textbooks and supplementary materials for use by my classes are inadequate.

I have difficulty getting my students to use available supplementary materials.

Other _____

AREA IV. EVALUATION

Evaluation of pupil progress and assigning grades is difficult for me.

I have to spend too much of my time grading papers.

Reporting pupil progress to parents is difficult and time-consuming.

Construction of tests is hard for me.

My pupils seem to be more interested in obtaining a grade than in learning.

Other _____

AREA V. DISCIPLINE

Major Problem Difficult Problem Minor Problem No Problem

The students often try to take advantage of me and become too friendly.

I sometimes don't know what to do in a situation requiring discipline.

My pupils had not learned discipline prior to entering my class.

I don't seem to be very effective with some of the more-trying students.

Setting of practical standards for student conduct is rather difficult.

Other _____

AREA VI. TEACHING ROUTINES

Extracurricular activities after school take too much of my time.

I feel that my principal (or supervisor) is not giving me enough assistance.

I find myself in a rut with an unvarying classroom method.

I have too many special duties such as hall patrol, collecting monies, cafeteria supervision, etc.

Time spent in teacher's meetings is often wasted.

Other _____

AREA VII. PERSONAL RELATIONS

The people of the community make little effort to make me feel at home.

It took me a long time to get to know many of the other faculty members.

People are often critical of my teaching.

I had trouble at first adjusting to the teaching role.

The realities of teaching are harsher in many aspects than I had anticipated.

Other _____

AREA VIII. COMMENTS

How could the teacher education program at KSTC be improved in order to eliminate or reduce specific problems faced by first-year teachers?

APPENDIX C

Problems of First-Year Teachers in Each Problem Area
Which Could Not Be Included in
Specific Problem Statements

Problems of First-Year Teachers in Each Problem Area Which Could Not Be Included in Specific Problem Statements

AREA I. METHODS OF TEACHING

No real help given on motivation--never any practical help

Need help for the slow learner

Teachers of subjects at KSTC often are traditional and thus not having any experiences outside of the education department teachers using the new methods it becomes a problem to really understand how it actually works.

Lack of training in practical-everyday situations

Principal and others fail to see value in new methods

We need practice in more than one method of teaching reading.

AREA II. PLANNING AND PREPARATION

Textbooks must be covered sequentially by first-year teachers.

Forced to teach physical education with 2 hours training or quit

The amount of time or emphasis put on certain subjects has not been clarified.

I am an elementary school librarian and no definite guidelines have been established.

Too many different levels at once

I teach 16 classes a day in physical education--one every 20 minutes.

AREA III. MATERIALS AND RESOURCES

This system places more emphasis on economy than adequate education.

I have no classroom of my own. (2 responses)

Outdated textbooks (2 responses)

AREA IV. EVALUATION

I have trouble justifying my theory of evaluation to other teachers.

Administrative head doesn't believe in failing lazy students. Therefore, you are taking a risk to grade as you see things.

I think parents are often more concerned about grades than what is learned.

What scale can you compare your students against, as concerned with the amount of work and progress they should be making?

Most students just don't care about grades or learning either one.

They don't care if they get a low grade.

Principal would rather a teacher send home a good grade rather than the deserved grade in order to avoid arguments.

My pupils for the most part seem neither interested in grades nor learning.

Too much emphasis is put on grades.

Need more emphasis on evaluation in college.

AREA V. DISCIPLINE

Weak administrator

Some students have no respect for anyone in authority.

Some students get no discipline at home.

I was not trained to handle discipline in emotional children.

Sup't demands almost nothing from the students in self-discipline.

No back-up and no approval of forms of discipline.

No example set by upper grades

No discipline back-up from the administration

No principal backing

Hands-off policy by parents

I have trouble finding enough for non-readers to do to keep them out of trouble.

AREA VI. TEACHING ROUTINES

The amount of time required beyond class time has been 950 hours so far.

There is a definite lack of teacher's meetings and cooperation.

I would rather have gotten my degree in extra-curricular activities because that's where my time is spent.

Too many meetings for first-year teachers that are of no value.

Supervisor and principals give too much assistance.

In order to get 3 grades of subject matter in one day it is a rut.

My principal gives too much assistance. He allows me no responsibility.

Students out of classroom on principal's errands

AREA VII. PERSONAL RELATIONS

Who has time for personal relations?

In a small community there is often one person who creates plenty of trouble. This problem is seldom solved, just ignored!

The people of the community couldn't care less about their schools.

In the beginning I was so tired. It was a big adjustment from college life.

Parents aren't interested in their child's work.

They do not prepare you for the relationships with parents.

A negative parental attitude in this particular school is a problem. The principal has failed to protect the teacher from the brunt of such verbal attacks by a few unhappy parents.

No cooperation from the administration.

Too many teachers complain about everyone and everything--they just think too dictatively.

Principal and supervisor do not comment on good--only bad and wrong.

APPENDIX D

Comments on Improving the Teacher Education Program
at KSTC Which Could Not Be Included
in the Tabular Analysis

Comments on Improving the Teacher Education Program at Kansas State Teachers College Which Could Not be Included in the Tabular Analysis

If a suggested teacher's guide on curriculum would be available it would help ... The state puts out a curriculum guide, but it is too brief.

I have found teaching very rewarding--especially with the slower children who need more help and guidance than anyone. And I'm grateful to KSTC for my training. I'm proud to be one of its graduates.

I have enjoyed this year a great deal and I'm already looking forward to and planning for next year.

All the knowledge we have is useless unless we can relate it to children.

Discipline is the only area I was totally unprepared for ...

I have many, many times felt lucky to be a graduate of KSTC. I think KSTC has a very complete and practical approach to training teachers.

Methods classes don't give an idea of the small school problems.

I feel that I was not prepared to teach on the junior high level. We study far more advanced ideas in college and forget what we really need. I had no idea what junior high students could learn.

Do away with methods courses.

Don't teach prospective teachers to think of themselves as "professionals." In real situations that's malarky! It may be something to work for, but it does not yet exist.

The area in which I teach is not typical or average. The students don't care, because their parents, if they have any, couldn't care less.

Teaching is certainly not what I expected. I spend 10-11 hours at school every day. My work is never done. The first year has been very hard for me.

I would suggest that the teacher education program and subject fields at KSTC review the results of this study quite seriously and take action in the areas of weakness.

The only way it could be improved would be to have the student do some teaching before they take some of their methods classes. Then they might realize the importance of them.

They should get off their idealistic high horse and become more practical. Unification of teaching theories in regard to instruction would help a great deal. They lose solidity and point of view by employing too many opinions toward what teaching is.

A course should be offered to show a student the triteness of teaching. It should tell about administration, attending meetings, filling out reports, etc. Then the intelligent people could enter another profession before they encountered unhappiness as a teacher.

I think the teacher education program at KSTC is adequate. In order to eliminate or reduce specific problems I feel the College would have to screen their teachers by personality as well as by ability.

Many problems and routine jobs associated with teaching are never mentioned.

We need some ideas on what to expect of groups. It should vary, but we do need some ideas.

I don't feel like a first-year teacher--all A-OK here!

Discipline must be met with definite ideas.

My student teaching proved very valuable; however, I don't feel that I got much out of observation.

Gestalt theory and other information sounds impressive, but is quite worthless right at first.

Teach less theory and more realistic application. Less talking and more doing, not with fancy equipment, but everyday scraps!

I believe Emporia State has an excellent elementary program and nothing needs to be changed.

No comment! They're doing fine!

My only real problem is that I have too many students (30 first graders).

My student teaching done in the core situation at the college laboratory school was in far too many aspects too idealistic. My teaching load is 36, 32, and 37. That is not even realistic. Some days it's almost punishment as far as class preparation and grading are concerned. As a result of such a heavy class load, I often feel that I haven't enough time to effectively and personally interact with my students. It's disappointing.

Stress that there's more to teaching than the classroom.

This has been a very good year. I have had problems, but I have learned much. Most of all, I enjoy what I am doing and plan to continue in this field.

I lack ideas on what to do with bright students while keeping slower ones up with the class.

Have realistic discussions about discipline with solutions offered by those who actually have taught in public schools.