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A Study to Determine the Effectiveness of the Business Education Curriculum at the Epping Public School Epping, North Dakota

Gary D. Bickel

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A STUDY TO DETERMINE THE EFFECTIVENESS
OF THE BUSINESS EDUCATION CURRICULUM
AT THE EPPING PUBLIC SCHOOL
EPPING, NORTH DAKOTA

by

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B. S. in Business Education, Minot State College

Minot, North Dakota, 1964

An Independent Study
Submitted to the Faculty
of the
University of North Dakota
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the Degree of
Master of Science

Grand Forks, North Dakota

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This independent study submitted by Gary D. Bickel in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Science in Business Education at the University of North Dakota is hereby approved by the Advisor under whom the work has been done.

John Peterson
(Advisor)

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(Department Chairman)

(Dean of the Graduate School)

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The follow-up study will result in a worth-while contribution to business education if it is conducted in a careful and systematic manner. Although the conclusions drawn and the recommendations offered will, in many instances, be applicable only to a single institution; nevertheless, the values realized may be of more practical worth than studies of wider scope. The conclusions and recommendations of this study will hopefully enable the Epping Public School to evaluate the business education program and to make curriculum revisions in order to better prepare the graduates for the jobs of tomorrow.

Statement of the Problem

This problem is a follow-up study of the graduates of Epping High School, Epping, North Dakota, from 1965-1969 to determine the effectiveness of the business education curriculum in meeting the needs of the students and the demands of their employers.

Purposes of the Study

The purposes of this study are:

1. To determine the specific duties and skills most commonly required of Epping High School business education graduates, and the extent to which these graduates are prepared to perform these skills on their job.
2. To determine the types of office machines used by the Epping High School graduates at their jobs.

3. To determine what high school courses the students felt were beneficial to them in seeking employment and helping them do satisfactory work.
4. To determine any improvements or changes necessary in training future business education students at Epping High School.
5. To obtain general information regarding the graduates of Epping High School.
6. To secure general employment information regarding the graduates.

Need for the Study

In order to continuously up-date and improve a business education program, it is necessary to determine ways of evaluating the effectiveness of past business education classes. This evaluation will help in learning much about the activities in which former graduates have engaged and about the problems they have encountered.

This evaluation will be made through a follow-up study of all former graduates. No follow-up study of Epping High School business education graduates has been completed in the past five years; therefore, the need for one does exist.

Through this study it is hoped that some information will be obtained which will be of value to the present business education instructor at Epping and also in any other school in which he teaches. This study should also be of help to future business education instructors in Epping and other schools as well.

Delimitations of the Study

This study is delimited to the graduates of Epping High School for the years 1965-1969. These five years were chosen because the writer has been the business education instructor there during that time and he felt that responses of graduates from those five successive years would provide sufficient and adequate data for the purposes of this study.

Limitations of the Study

This study is limited to the availability of graduates and to their responses to the questionnaire.

Description of the Community and School

Epping, North Dakota, population of 160, is located 22 miles northwest of Williston, North Dakota, on Old Highway 2. Epping is also located on the Great Northern Railroad line and is considered the highest point of elevation for trains between the Rocky Mountains and Minneapolis. The majority of the population is made up of area farmers many of whom live in town. The main occupation of the area is farming. There are eight business establishments and two museums located in Epping. The two museums were built through community action with funds supplied by the Office of Economic Opportunity. Both museums depict the life of the early pioneer and the Indians of that area.

The Epping Public School consists of two brick structures. One structure was completed in 1925 and one in 1967. The enrollment during the 1968-1969 school year was 112: 66 students in the elementary grades and 46 students in the secondary grades. The faculty consisted of four full-time grade teachers, four full-time secondary teachers, and two part-time secondary teachers.

The business education department consists of one classroom and is staffed by one teacher. The classroom contains five electric typewriters, four manual typewriters, one transcription machine, two key-punch simulators, one ten-key adding machine, one printing calculator, one fluid duplicator, one stencil (mimeograph) machine, and one overhead projector. The department also has access to a Thermofax machine which is located in the superintendent's office. Typewriting is the only business education class which is taught every year. Shorthand, general business, bookkeeping, office practice, office machines,

business law and business math are taught every other year. None of the business courses are required; however, all students except one have completed typing during the past five years.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

In order to become acquainted with the findings, conclusions, and recommendations of other follow-up studies and to gain knowledge of how to complete a follow-up study, the researcher reviewed writings and follow-up studies in the field of business education. The following constitute a sampling of the studies that have been completed.

Among them is a follow-up study completed by Hopman of Esmond High School graduates, Esmond, North Dakota. Based on his findings Hopman made the following recommendations: (1) A beginning typewriting course should be offered in the junior high school so that students will be able to take more advanced training in senior high school. (2) A one-semester comprehensive filing and record keeping course should be incorporated in the curriculum. (3) Students should be encouraged to take Business English. (4) Current telephone techniques should be taught to all basic business students. (5) More practical work should be given on business machines and more equipment should be purchased. (6) Shorthand should be retained in the curriculum because there is a definite need by these students who do not further their training to have this skill to secure employment.¹

¹Dennis Hopman, "A Follow-Up Study of the Graduates of Esmond High School, Esmond, North Dakota for the Years 1959, 1960, 1961, and 1962" (unpublished Master's thesis, University of North Dakota, Grand Forks, North Dakota, 1965).

In a survey of the Victoria High School, Edmonton, Alberta, Dublanko found that most graduates obtained their positions in the following order: through the school, National Employment Service, direct application, recommendations of a friend or relative, application letter, and by telephone. Two-thirds of the graduates were still employed on their initial jobs. Employment tests were not given by a majority of the employers. Business courses indicated as being the most valuable to the graduates on the job were in order: typewriting, shorthand, office practice, business machines, and bookkeeping. Filing and typewriting were the most common clerical duties performed by the respondents on the job. The six office machines most often used, listed in order were, the manual typewriter, ten-key adding machine, electric typewriter, full-keyboard adding machine and stencil duplicator.

Dublanko made the following recommendations based on his study: (1) All students should be given a chance to become thoroughly acquainted with the electric typewriter. (2) Alphabetic and numeric filing should be taught on the skill level through the use of suitable filing kits or other media of equal value. (3) Further follow-up studies should be made periodically to keep abreast of new developments in business and for the purpose of improving the business education curriculum. (4) A survey of businesses should be made periodically to give the businessman an opportunity to express his opinions on the high school business curriculum and the employment qualifications of the graduates. (5) A follow-up study of business education dropouts was also mentioned with their reasons for leaving school, the types of positions in which they were employed and the types of duties they were performing.²

Tofen Dublanko, "A Follow-Up Study of the Victoria Composite High School, Edmonton, Alberta Business Education Graduates for the Years 1956, 1957, and 1958" (unpublished Master's thesis, University of North Dakota, Grand Forks, North Dakota, 1960).

Roser found in her follow-up study of the clerical specialist graduates of Elyria High School, Elyria, Ohio, that (1) 75.8 per cent of the graduates had secured their initial positions through personal applications; (2) filing and telephoning ranked first and second respectively in regard to general duties performed; (3) the typewriter (non-electric) outranked all other machines used followed by the ten-key adding machine, the full keyboard, and the electric typewriter; (4) typewriting, clerical procedures and business machines in that order were found to be of greatest value to the graduates; (5) the greatest difficulties encountered by the respondents were in the areas of penmanship, spelling, and English grammar; (6) approximately one-third of the graduates seeking employment were required to take an employment test ranging in scope from simple mathematics tests to civil service tests as well as comprehensive clerical examinations.

Based on these findings, Roser made the following recommendations;

(1) The business machines course and office practice course should be strengthened by replacing any out-dated equipment with modern equipment and by enlarging the variety of machines on which training can be offered. (2) All students enrolled in the clerical specialist program should be required to take Business English to help prevent deficiencies in penmanship, spelling and English grammar. (3) A greater amount of time should be allotted to the teaching of telephone techniques. (4) A more comprehensive and intensive course in filing should be developed. (5) There should be a survey of the businessmen in the community as an aid in developing the school curriculum.³

³Carol M. Roser, "Follow-Up Study of the Elyria High School Clerical Specialist Graduates From 1954 Through 1960 For the Purpose of Learning How Effective Their Training Has Been," (unpublished Master's thesis, University of North Dakota, Grand Forks, North Dakota, 1961).

Zandi in a survey of the J. P. Jacobs High School business graduates of Stevens Point, Wisconsin, found that 50 per cent of the respondents were employed full time, 17 per cent were classified as housewives and almost 11 per cent of those replying were attending college. (2) Twenty-eight per cent were presently employed in the general clerical or secretarial field. (3) The majority of graduates had been employed from 6 to 12 months, and 49 per cent were still employed in their first jobs obtained after graduation. (4) Forty-nine per cent of the graduates obtained their present positions by direct applications, 17 per cent through the school placement service, and 14 per cent through a friend. (5) A clerical aptitude test was required of 58 per cent of the graduates seeking employment. (6) The Business courses most valuable on the first position in order of value were typewriting, clerical office practice, general business, shorthand, bookkeeping, business economics, and business law. (7) Approximately one-fourth of the 77 graduates presently employed full time were using shorthand on the job. (8) Fifty per cent of the respondents who had taken shorthand in school ranked requirements harder on the job than in school. (9) Over 50 per cent of the graduates who had taken bookkeeping in school were using it on the job. (10) Filing and typing were the most common clerical duties performed by the graduates on their jobs. (11) The most common office machines contained in offices listed in order were the electric typewriter, ten-key adding machine, manual typewriter, transcription machine, and full keyboard adding machine.

Based upon the survey the following recommendations were made: (1) A separate business machines course should be taught. (2) All students should be exposed to the correct use of the telephone through the Clerical Office Practice Course. (3) Some instruction time should be devoted to teaching basic Business English with emphasis on composition of letters, punctuation, spelling and sentence structure. (4) Students should be encouraged to take shorthand because

it is an asset in obtaining employment. (5) Further follow-up studies should be conducted periodically in order to keep abreast of new developments in business and for the purpose of improving the business curriculum. (6) A periodic survey of businesses should be conducted in order to give businessmen a chance to express their opinions concerning the high school curriculum and the employment quality of graduates. (7) A follow-up study of the dropouts should be conducted to determine their reason for leaving school and their job.⁴

Based upon the preceding findings and recommendations of business educators who have done similar follow-up studies, the author was able to draw the following conclusions: (1) A one-semester filing course should be offered to all business education students. (2) All business education students should be encouraged to take Business English. (3) More time should be spent in developing telephone techniques. (4) More practical work should be given on business machines. (5) Shorthand should be retained in the business curriculum. (6) The most valuable course in business education is typewriting. (7) Machines most often used in the office are the typewriter and the ten-key adding machine. (8) The most common clerical duties performed in the office are filing and typewriting. (9) More follow-up studies should be made periodically to keep abreast of new developments in business and for the purpose of improving the business education curriculum. (10) Surveys of businesses should be made in order to give businessmen an opportunity to express opinions on the curriculum and employment qualifications.

Donald F. Zandi, "A Follow-Up Study of the P. J. Jacobs High School, Stevens Point, Wisconsin, Business Education Graduates for the Years 1959, 1960, and 1961," (unpublished Master's thesis, University of North Dakota, Grand Forks, North Dakota, 1961).

These follow-up studies and others like them can prove to be of great value to not only the business education department but to the entire school as well. The graduates can ascertain the strengths and weakness' of the school's program and offer suggestions for improving the curriculum if it is found to be unsatisfactory. They can therefore insure future graduates of the school a better foundation from which to build a career.

CHAPTER III

PROCEDURES

In conducting the follow-up study of the graduates of Epping High School, Epping, North Dakota, for the years 1965 through 1969, the following procedures were used: (1) Permission to make the study was secured by the writer from the superintendent of the Epping Public School on July 3, 1969. (2) A list of the addresses of the graduates was formulated through contacts with the parents, relatives, and friends of the graduates. (4) A questionnaire (see Exhibit A) was prepared in Introduction to Research during the summer session of 1969. (5) During the month of October, a letter (see Exhibit B) explaining the purpose of the study, a stamped, addressed envelope for the convenience of the respondent, and the questionnaire was mailed to each of the 50 graduates. (6) If all questionnaires were not received by the writer in three weeks, a follow-up letter (see Exhibit C) and another questionnaire was sent to each graduate who did not respond to the first questionnaire. (7) If no response was received from this follow-up letter, a personal contact was made when it was possible. (8) As the questionnaires were received, a complete list of the names of the respondents was made and checked against the original mailing list. (9) Upon receipt of all the questionnaires, tally sheets were prepared to classify the data. (10) When the data was carefully tabulated, the findings were analyzed. (11) On the basis of the findings of the study, the summary and recommendations were prepared.

EXHIBIT A

A FOLLOW-UP STUDY OF THE GRADUATES OF THE
EPPING PUBLIC SCHOOL, EPPING, NORTH DAKOTA FROM 1965-1969.

Name _____ Class of _____

Address _____

1. Please list the colleges, business schools, evening schools, etc., that you have attended or are now attending since graduating from high school.

<u>College or School Attended</u>	<u>Dates Attended</u>	<u>Field Of Study</u>
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

2. Please indicate by a check what you are doing at the present time. (Check as many blanks as needed)

Working full time	<input type="checkbox"/>
Working part time	<input type="checkbox"/>
Attending school part time	<input type="checkbox"/>
Attending school full time	<input type="checkbox"/>
Unemployed	<input type="checkbox"/>
Housewife	<input type="checkbox"/>
Military Service	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. If you have been employed since graduation from Epping Public School, please indicate the source from which you learned of your first job.

Relative or friend	<input type="checkbox"/>
Newspaper advertisement	<input type="checkbox"/>
Employment Service	<input type="checkbox"/>
Personal Application	<input type="checkbox"/>
Private Agency	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (Specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. Please check the typewriting duties you performed or are regularly performing on your first job. If typing was not performed, check "None."

Make carbon copies	<input type="checkbox"/>	Type bills and invoices	<input type="checkbox"/>
Address envelopes	<input type="checkbox"/>	Type from rough drafts	<input type="checkbox"/>
Type letters	<input type="checkbox"/>	Type statistical data	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fill in printed forms	<input type="checkbox"/>	Type telegrams	<input type="checkbox"/>
Type cards	<input type="checkbox"/>	Type manuscripts	<input type="checkbox"/>
Type from letters	<input type="checkbox"/>	Type stencils	<input type="checkbox"/>
Type statements	<input type="checkbox"/>	Type masters	<input type="checkbox"/>
Others	<input type="checkbox"/>	None	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. Please check the bookkeeping duties you performed or are regularly performing on your first job.

Making out payroll
 Writing customers' accounts
 Making journal entries
 Posting to ledgers
 Handling cash payments
 Taking care of petty cash

Making bank deposits
 Making out checks
 Proving bank balance
 Making out financial statements
 Checking and figuring invoices
 Others (Please list)

6. Please check any duties other than those already listed which you performed or are regularly performing on your first job.

Filing
 Handwriting
 Telephoning
 Stockkeeping
 Messenger work
 Taking shorthand
 Letter composition
 Payroll clerk
 Sorting papers

Switchboard operator
 Receptionist
 Cashier
 Demonstrating
 Clerking
 Buyer
 Advertising
 Using Reference books
 Handling incoming and outgoing mail
 Others (Please list)

7. Please check the machines you used or are regularly using on your first job.

Typewriter (manual)
 Typewriter (electric)
 Full-keyboard adding-listing machine
 Ten-key adding-listing machine
 Key-driven calculator
 Rotary calculator
 Billing machine
 Transcribing machine

Stencil duplicator
 Fluid duplicator
 Mimeoscope
 Key punch
 Sorter
 Tabulator
 Collator
 Computer
 Bookkeeping machine
 Others (Please list)

8. Rank in order of importance (1, 2, 3), the three subjects taken in high school which have been of the most value in the jobs you have held since graduation.

General business
 Shorthand
 Business math
 Bookkeeping

Typing
 Office machines
 Office practice
 Business law

9. Rank in order (1, 2, 3), the three subjects which you took in high school which have been of the least value in the jobs you have held since graduation.

General business
Shorthand
Business math
Bookkeeping

Typing
Office machines
Office practice
Business law
Others (Please list)

10. The type of business in which my present firm is engaged is:

Financial (banks, savings & loan, real estate, etc.)
Insurance
Marketing
Service industries (laundry, advertising, etc.)
Transportation (trucking, railroad, etc.)
Utilities (electric, gas, telephone, etc.)
Agriculture (farming, ranching, feed & grain products)
Mining (minerals, petroleum, etc.)
Construction, engineering
Education

11. Did you apply for a job you did not get?

Yes
No

If you know why you did not get the job, please give the reason.

12. If you received training on the job which you feel could have been acquired in school, please list the specific duties which you feel should have been taught in school.

13. Did you have to take any tests to secure your job?

Yes
No

If your answer is "Yes," what is the name, type, and/or description of the test?

14. Please check any definite difficulty you have experienced through the lack of a specific skill or qualification such as:

Arithmetic
English grammar
Penmanship
Spelling
Work habits
Neatness in work
Accuracy
Speed and skill

Business ethics
Good grooming
Initiative
Interest
Co-operation
Punctuality
Self-evaluation of work
Others (Please list)

15. Of the following statements, the one which best describes my attitude toward my job is:

I enjoy this work and desire to remain in it

--

I enjoy this work but would like a different position

--

I do not enjoy this work but plan to remain

--

I do not enjoy this work and plan to get another job

--

16. What suggestions do you have for the improvement of the business education program at the Epping Public School?

EXHIBIT B

Box 32
Epping, North Dakota
January 5, 1970

Miss Carol Ellingson
7701 Reseda Blvd., #17
Reseda, California

Dear Carol,

Will you help me evaluate the business education curriculum at Epping High School?

I am writing to all of you who have graduated from Epping High School within the past five years in order to determine strengths and weaknesses of the training you received at Epping High School. This study will help in future planning to offer business education students of this school a superior program of study.

Will you assist by answering and returning the enclosed questionnaire in the enclosed self-addressed envelope as soon as possible. Your reply will be treated in a confidential manner and you will in no way be identified by name.

Thank you.

Yours very truly,

Gary D. Bickel
Principal

Enclosures

EXHIBIT C

Box 32
Epping, North Dakota
October 22, 1969

Mr. Sherman H. Smith
Springbrook
North Dakota

Dear Mr. Smith:

Three weeks ago you were mailed a questionnaire concerning an evaluation of the Business Education Department at the Epping Public School. Your cooperation is needed for the successful completion of this study. Would it be possible for you to return the completed questionnaire within the next ten days (by November 1)?

Another questionnaire and self-addressed envelope are enclosed for your convenience. Your responses will be appreciated.

Yours very truly,

Gary D. Bickel
Principal

Enclosures

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

The findings in this study are based upon information secured from graduates of Epping High School, Epping, North Dakota, for the years 1964 through 1969. Of the questionnaires sent out, 42, or 84 per cent, were returned. Questionnaires were sent to all graduates whether or not they had taken any of the following business courses: Typing I, Shorthand I, Bookkeeping I, Office Practice, Office Machines, General Business, Business Law and Business Math.

The information obtained has been summarized in the following tables. Table 1, page 19, analyzes the actual returns on the questionnaire. It shows the actual number of questionnaires sent out by classes, the number of returns, the percentage of returns, and the overall total for the years 1964 through 1969.

Questionnaires were returned by twelve, or 80 per cent, of the 1965 graduates; by eight, or 88.8 per cent, of the 1965 graduates; by two, or 40 per cent, of the 1967 graduates; by eleven, or 92.5 per cent, of the 1968; by nine, or 100 per cent, of the 1969 graduates. The writer was indeed gratified with the 84 per cent response on the part of the participants.

Table 2, page 20, lists the names of the schools attended by the graduates as well as indicating the number of graduates who have taken further training beyond high school.

TABLE 1
RETURNS ON THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Class	Number Sent Out	Number of Returns	Per Cent of Returns
1965	15	12	80.0
1966	9	8	88.8
1967	5	2	40.0
1968	12	11	92.5
1969	9	9	100.0
Total	50	42	84.0

Thirty-three, or 78.6 per cent, of the 42 graduates who participated in the study reported having had training beyond high school. For nine, or 21.4 per cent, of the graduates high school proved to be the culmination of their formal education.

The employment status of the graduates is shown in Table 3, page 21. At the time of this study 16 respondents, or 38.1 per cent, were working full time; seven, or 16.6 per cent, checked that they were working part time; and one, or 2.4 per cent, stated that he was unemployed.

Table 4, page 22, indicates the sources through which the graduates secured their first position.

Seventeen, or 40.5 per cent, of the graduates obtained their initial position through personal application; while fourteen, or 33.3 per cent, of the graduates secured their first position through the aid of a relative or friend. Six, or 14.3 per cent, of the graduates were placed on their initial

positions through the North Dakota State Employment Service. One, or 2.4 per cent, of the respondents obtained his first position through newspaper advertisements and one other, or 2.4 per cent, was placed by a school placement bureau. None of the respondents named the private agency service as a means for obtaining their first position.

TABLE 2

SCHOOLS ATTENDED BY THE GRADUATES FOLLOWING HIGH SCHOOL

Name of School	Number of Graduates
UND - Williston Center*	13
State School of Science	6
Minot State College	3
University of Irvine	1
North American School of Drafting*	1
Acme Beauty College	1
Concordia College	2
Deaconess Hospital School of Nursing*	1
Jamestown College	1
Harvard University*	1
Lutheran Brethren Schools	1
Wesley Bible College	2
UND*	3
Trinity Hospital School of Nursing	2
Bay City College	1
Moorhead State College	1

*Refers to transfer students

TABLE 3

EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF THE GRADUATES AT THE TIME OF THE STUDY

Employment Status	Number	Per Cent of Returns
Working Full-time and Attending School Full-time	1	2.4
Working Part-time and Attending School Full-time	6	14.3
Working Full-time and Attending School Part-time	1	2.4
Working Full-time	12	28.6
Attending School Full-time	11	26.2
Housewife and Working Full-time	2	4.8
Housewife	3	7.1
Military Service and Working Part-time	1	2.4
Military Service	4	9.5
Unemployed	1	2.4
Total	42	100.0

Because typewriting is one of the most frequently used skills of the business education student, the writer was interested in finding out which typewriting duties were performed regularly by the graduates in their first position. Table 5, page 23, tabulates the typewriting duties regularly performed as well as the frequency of performance as indicated by the 42 respondents.

TABLE 4

SOURCES THROUGH WHICH THE GRADUATES
SECURED THEIR FIRST POSITION

Source	Number	Per Cent of Returns
Relative or Friend	14	33.3
Newspaper Advertisement	1	2.4
North Dakota State Employment Service	6	14.3
Personal Application	17	40.5
Private Agency	0	0.0
School Placement Bureau	1	2.4
No Answer	3	7.1
Total	42	100.0

All young people who seek to be successful office workers should be fast, accurate typists. It is imperative that they be able to type a letter in an attractive style, to address the envelope that goes with the letter, to type from rough drafts, and to type any number of the many business forms that are in everyday use in virtually all business offices.

As shown by Table 5, page 23, filling in forms was the most frequently named typewriting duty performed regularly by the graduates. Typing letters, with a frequency mention of 9, ranked second. The preparation of carbons and the typing of envelopes were each named 8 times, thereby giving third place to each of these typewriting duties. The typing of cards, with a frequency of 7, ranked fourth.

TABLE 5

TYPEWRITING DUTIES PERFORMED REGULARLY BY THE
GRADUATES IN THEIR FIRST POSITION

Duties Performed	Frequency of Performance
Filling in Printed Forms	11
Typing Letters	9
Making Carbon Copies	8
Addressing Envelopes	8
Typing Cards	7
Typing Statistical Data	6
Typing Form Letters	5
Typing Bills and Invoices	5
Typing From Rough Drafts	4
Typing Statements	4
Typing Stencils	3
Typing Masters	2
Typing Manuscripts	2
Typing Telegrams	1
Typing Newspaper Copy	1

Because bookkeeping can be one of the widely used skills of the business education graduate, the researcher was interested in learning which bookkeeping duties were performed regularly by the graduates in their first position.

Table 6, page 24, summarizes the bookkeeping duties as reported by the graduates. In comparing Tables 5 and 6 the writer finds that the bookkeeping duties were performed much less frequently than the typewriting duties.

TABLE 6

BOOKKEEPING DUTIES PERFORMED REGULARLY BY THE
GRADUATES IN THEIR FIRST POSITION

Duties Performed	Frequency of Performance
Handling Cash Payments	8
Taking Care of Petty Cash	7
Checking and Figuring Invoices	7
Writing Customers' Accounts	5
Making Out Payroll	4
Making Bank Deposits	4
Making Journal Entries	3
Making Out Checks	3
Making Out Financial Statements	3
Posting to Ledgers	2
Proving Bank Balance	1
Figuring Commissions	1
Pricing Customer Invoices	1
Posting Statements	1

To handle cash payments competently, the business education graduate must have a firm knowledge of office arithmetic. The findings also show the necessity of having acquired sufficient training in neat, legible handwriting, especially figures.

Table 7, page 25, shows the wide variety of duties--other than those already listed--which the graduates performed regularly. Telephoning ranked

first while the second most frequent activities of filing and handwriting were each named 14 times. Handling incoming and outgoing mail ranked third; messenger work and letter composition were fourth and sorting papers was ranked fifth.

TABLE 7

DUTIES--OTHER THAN THOSE ALREADY LISTED--WHICH THE GRADUATES PERFORMED REGULARLY IN THEIR FIRST POSITION

Duties Performed	Frequency of Performance	Rank
Telephoning	15	1
Filing	14	2
Handwriting	14	2
Handling Incoming and Outgoing Mail	8	3
Messenger Work	7	4
Letter Composition	7	4
Sorting Papers	6	5
Receptionist	5	6
Stockkeeping	5	6
Cashier	4	7
Using Reference Books	4	7
Taking Shorthand	3	8
Payroll Clerk	3	8
Clerking	3	8
Switchboard Operator	2	9
Demonstrating	2	9
Advertising	1	10

Table 8, page 26, shows the number of different office machines used by the respondents in their first positions. The results are tabulated according to frequency of mention and rank. Twenty-two different machines were named. The ten-key adding-listing machine outranked all other machines mentioned, with the typewriter (non-electric) ranking second. The typewriter (electric) was third and the full-key adding-listing machine and the fluid duplicator were fourth.

TABLE 8

OFFICE MACHINES USED BY THE GRADUATES IN THEIR FIRST POSITION

Machine	Frequency of Mention	Rank
Ten-Key Adding-Listing Machine	11	1
Typewriter (Non-electric)	9	2
Typewriter (Electric)	6	3
Full-Key Adding-Listing Machine	3	4
Fluid Duplicator	3	4
Key-Driver Calculator	2	5
Rotary Calculator	2	5
Stencil Duplicator	2	5
Transcribing Machine	1	6
Sorter	1	6
Collator	1	6
Compter	1	6
Addressograph	1	6
Proofmachine	1	6

TABLE 8--Continued

Machine	Frequency of Mention	Rank
Encoding Machine	1	6
Justowriter	1	6
Cash Register	1	6
Xerox	1	6
Marasawa-Typesetter	1	6
Postage Machine	1	6
Plainemeter	1	6
Photocopier	1	6

Table 9 shows that 14, or 33 per cent, of the 42 respondents were refused a position at some time in their business careers. Likewise, 27, or 64 per cent, of the same respondents were not, on any occasion, ever refused a position. One of the respondents did not reply to the question.

TABLE 9

RESULTS OF THE GRADUATES' APPLICATION FOR POSITIONS

	Frequency of Reply	Per Cent
Refused Position	14	33.0
Not Refused Position	27	64.0
No Answer	1	2.4
Total	42	99.4

The reasons for fourteen graduates being refused a position for which they had applied are summarized in Table 10.

TABLE 10
REASONS FOR 14 GRADUATES BEING REFUSED A POSITION
FOR WHICH THEY HAD APPLIED

Reason	Frequency of Mention
Lack of Experience	3
No Vacancy Existed at the Time Application Was Made	2
Possibilities of Being Drafted	1
Curtailment of Employment Shortly After Application Was Made	2
Not Qualified	3
No Reason Given	3

Each of the following reasons were named three times: lack of experience and not qualified. Two respondents mentioned no vacancy existed at the time application was made and two mentioned curtailment in employment shortly after application was made. The possibilities of being drafted was mentioned once. No reason was given by three respondents.

On-the-job training which the graduates felt could be incorporated into the business education curriculum is given in Table 11, page 29. Instruction in telephone technique was named two times. The following were each named once: more instruction in the operation of the dictaphone, duplicator, switchboard, copying machines, adding machines, and thermofax; more instruction in mathematics, marketing, management, filing, and the typing of business forms.

TABLE 11

SPECIFIC ON-THE-JOB TRAINING WHICH THE GRADUATES FELT COULD BE
INCORPORATED INTO THE BUSINESS EDUCATION

Suggested On-The-Job Training	Frequency of Mention
Instruction in Telephone Technique	2
Instruction in the Operation of the Dictaphone	1
Instruction in the Operation of the Duplicator	1
Instruction in the Operation of the Switchboard	1
Instruction in the Operation of Copying Machines	1
Instruction in the Operation of the Adding Machine	1
Instruction in the Operation of the Thermofax	1
More Instruction in Math	1
More Instruction in Marketing and Management	1
More Instruction in the Typing of Business Forms	1

Table 12, page 30, shows the respondents' rank, in the order of importance, of the three subjects taken in high school which were, or have been, of the most value in their work. Typewriting ranked first; bookkeeping, second; and general business, third.

The respondents were asked to name the business subject or subjects which they felt were of least value in their work. Table 13, page 30, shows the results of this tabulation.

Shorthand, business law, and business mathematics outranked the other subjects which had been designated as being of least value in the respondents' work.

TABLE 12

THREE SUBJECTS WHICH THE GRADUATES FELT WERE MOST
VALUABLE IN THEIR WORK

Subject	Frequency	Rank
Typewriting	15	1
Bookkeeping	8	2
General Business	6	3

TABLE 13

THREE SUBJECTS WHICH THE GRADUATES FELT WERE THE LEAST
VALUABLE IN THEIR WORK

Subject	Frequency	Rank
Shorthand	7	1
Business Law	5	2
Business Math	3	3

The definite difficulties which the graduates have experienced through the lack of a specific skill or qualification are listed in order of frequency of mention and rank in Table 14, page 31. Greater emphasis and care will need to be given to the teaching of English grammar and spelling since the lack of skill in these areas had caused the greatest amount of difficulty for the respondents. Penmanship and neatness in work ranked in second place; arithmetic and work habits were third. Other skills and qualifications named were accuracy, speed and skill, business ethics, good grooming, initiative, cooperation, punctuality, self-evaluation of work, syllabication, interest, and vocabulary.

TABLE 14

ANY DEFINITE DIFFICULTY GRADUATES HAVE EXPERIENCED THROUGH THE LACK
OF A SPECIFIC SKILL OR QUALIFICATION

Skill or Qualification	Frequency of Mention	Rank
English Grammar	8	1
Spelling	8	1
Neatness in Work	7	2
Penmanship	7	2
Arithmetic	6	3
Work Habits	6	3
Self-Evaluation of Work	4	4
Speed and Skill	3	5
Punctuality	3	5
Interest	3	5
Accuracy	2	6
Business Ethics	2	6
Initiative	2	6
Good Grooming	1	7
Syllabication	1	7
Vocabulary	1	7

Twelve, or 28.6 per cent, of the 42 respondents reported that they were required to take an employment test; 27, or 64.3 per cent, said that they had not been required to meet this employer requirement. Three, or 7.1 per cent, did not answer the question or had not sought employment yet. Table 15, page 32, summarizes the findings.

TABLE 15

THE ADMINISTRATION OF EMPLOYMENT TESTS TO THE GRADUATES

	Number	Per Cent
Required to Take Test	12	28.6
Not Required to Take Test	27	64.3
No Answer	3	7.1

The 12 respondents who stated that they had taken an employment test briefly described the tests as follows:

1. A typewriting test for speed and accuracy;
2. A State test consisting of the anatomy of the body, office practice and chair assisting procedures;
3. An aptitude test for speed, math, and association;
4. A general math and English aptitude test;
5. A physical fitness test;
6. A political knowledge test;
7. A general knowledge test;
8. A power to reason and penmanship test;
9. A shorthand test;
10. A memory test;
11. A word test--definitions;
12. A coding, filing, and clerical ability test.

Table 16, page 33, shows the types of business in which the graduates' present employer is engaged. Marketing firms, which were mentioned nine times, ranked first. Service industries, mentioned seven times, ranked second.

TABLE 16

TYPE OF BUSINESS IN WHICH GRADUATES PRESENT FIRM IS ENGAGED

Type of Firm	Frequency of Mention	Rank
Marketing	9	1
Service Industries	7	2
Financial	2	3
Utilities	2	3
Education	2	3
Medical	2	3
Construction, engineering	1	4

Seventeen, or 40.5 per cent, of the respondents stated that they enjoyed their work and desired to remain in it. Eight, or 19 per cent, indicated that they enjoyed their work but would like a different position. Table 17 summarizes these attitudes.

TABLE 17

STATEMENT WHICH BEST DESCRIBES GRADUATES' ATTITUDE TOWARD THEIR JOB

	Frequency of Mention	Per Cent
I enjoy this work and desire to remain in it	17	40.5
I enjoy this work but would like a different position	8	19.0
I do not enjoy this work but plan to remain	2	4.8
I do not enjoy this work and plan to get another position	3	7.1
No reply to question	13	28.6

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary and Conclusions

The purpose of this research study was to determine, by means of a follow-up study, how effective the training of the business education graduates has been and to secure data which will be used as a basis for recommending possible revisions in this immediate area of the business education curriculum as well as in methods of instruction.

Questionnaires were received from 42 of the 50 graduates of Epping High School. From these returned questionnaires pertinent information has been compiled and tabulated. The following constitutes a summary of the major findings:

1. For 9 of the 42 respondents, or 21.4 per cent, high school proved to be the terminal point in their formal education.
2. Sixteen of the 42 respondents stated that they were working full time while ten were attending school full time.
3. It was significant to learn that seventeen, or 40.5 per cent, of the graduates had secured their initial position through a personal application.
4. Filling in forms was the most frequently named typewriting duty performed regularly by the graduates. Typing letters was named second, while making carbon copies and typing envelopes received third mention.

5. In the area of bookkeeping duties regularly performed by the respondents, handling cash payments ranked first while taking care of petty cash and checking and figuring invoices ranked second. Writing customers' accounts ranked third in frequency of performance.

6. An extensive list of duties--other than those in the areas of typewriting and bookkeeping--were mentioned by the respondents. Telephoning ranked first while filing and handwriting ranked second.

7. The ten-key adding-listing machine outranked all of the other office machines used, with the typewriter (non-electric) ranking second. The typewriter (electric) was third, and the full-key adding-listing machine, fourth.

8. The findings indicate that fourteen, or 33 per cent, of the respondents were refused a position at some time or other in their business careers.

9. Three of the eleven respondents stated that they had been refused employment because of lack of experience, while three others stated that they had been refused a position because they were not qualified at the time they applied.

10. Certain types of on-the-job training which the graduates felt could be incorporated into the business education curriculum were: instruction in correct telephone technique; a greater variety of machines in the business machines course; a more extensive, as well as intensive, filing, mathematics, marketing and management program. More instruction in the typing of business forms was also mentioned.

11. The three subjects taken in high school which were of the greatest value to the graduates in their work are listed as follows in their order of rank: (1) typewriting, (2) bookkeeping, and (3) general business.

12. The respondents listed shorthand, business law, and business mathematics as the subjects in the high school business education curriculum which they felt were of least value in their work.

13. The greatest difficulty has been encountered by the respondents in the areas of English grammar and spelling.

14. Twelve of the 42 respondents indicated that they were required to take an employment test of some type or another.

15. Seventeen of the 42 respondents, or 40.5 per cent, indicated that they enjoyed their work and desired to remain in it.

16. Nine of the 42 respondents indicated that marketing was the type of business in which their present firms were engaged.

Recommendations

As a result of the findings and conclusions of the study, as well as comments expressed by the respondents (see Appendix), the following recommendations are made:

1. The school administration and the chairman of the business education department should confer in regard to strengthening the business machines office practice course by replacing out-of-date equipment with modern equipment and by enlarging the variety of machines on which training can be offered.

2. It is recommended that the business education department of Epping High School schedule a business English course for all business education graduates in their senior year rather than permitting them to choose English IV. This may help to prevent deficiencies in penmanship, spelling, and English grammar from being so prevalent.

3. A more comprehensive and intensive course in filing should be made a part of the business education curriculum so that the filing needs of the business education graduates can be adequately met.

4. Greater emphasis as well as more careful and thorough consideration must be given to the topic of personal application at the time the subject of employment opportunities is presented and discussed in the office practice class. In this connection, it is also suggested the school guidance facilities and administration assist with the placement of business education graduates. In this way their abilities could, perhaps, be more adequately aligned with job opportunities.

5. From four to six weeks of instruction should be devoted in the office practice course to the teaching of correct telephone techniques. It would be wise to use all of the effective devices which are made available through The Northwestern Bell Telephone Company in teaching this unit.

6. A survey type of research study should be made in which the businessmen of the surrounding area would participate in order to determine how effective they believe the high school training of the business education graduate has been in relation to their on-the-job standards.

7. It is recommended that the business education students be permitted to visit for one day, if possible, an office or a place of business. Prearranged planning would have to meet with the approval of the school administration and the businessmen of the community.

8. Greater emphasis should be given to the instruction of filling in forms in the typewriting and office practice classes.

9. Greater emphasis should be given in the general business class to the understanding of insurance policies, automobile title transfers and income tax forms.

10. It is recommended that all students be encouraged to study harder and to improve their study habits in order for the students to make an easier adjustment to their college classes.

11. A more comprehensive letter writing program is recommended for the general business and office practice classes. More time should be given to the writing of the letter of application since 40.5 per cent of the respondents obtained their first position through a personal application.

12. Correct spelling should be stressed by all teachers in all classes in order to make the students aware of its importance not only in school but also in future employment.

13. It is recommended that accuracy in typing be stressed more than speed.

APPENDIX

UNEDITED COMMENTS

LIST OF GRADUATES

Unedited Comments

I think it would be good to allow the students to relax. It is very important in today's business world to be able to remain calm and relaxed while under pressure.

I think that the business education program has improved greatly since I took typing there. Since I have not taken any great amount of business courses there and have not really noticed what the business students are doing after high school, I do not feel I have any suggestions to offer that would be of any value. Typing, I have found, is necessary and accuracy is more important than speed. I wish I would have been taught more skill in typing.

It is a very good business education program. When I was there it was thorough and has helped me in my present job, especially the filing since I work with the records and also as receptionist. It does get monotonous though.

The students now days don't really know how nice they have it while they are in school. They should take advantage of it and do the best they can. I stress that the school should try harder and push more on all the subjects that are taught to the students. Because I know if I had to do it over again, I would apply myself a lot harder and a lot more.

I personally think that the school should stress more in math than anything else. Because, there is more of a challenge to it and I wish that I would of taken more math and even tried a lot harder when I was in school. So, just press the students more and let them know who's boss.

I think that the Business Education Department at Epping High School is good. I learned a lot. I think the subjects were taught well. My difficulties don't have much to do with the business courses offered. In my job it takes time and experience.

I think the kids in business education should observe and learn about the offsetter, justowriter and other office machines which aren't taught about now, but which they might run across. I also think everyone should take a tour of a newspaper because it's really interesting and educational.

I think the business education program in Epping is excellent. Without your constant push to improve, Mr. Bickel, I wouldn't have the job I've got. I'm sure there's probably ways to improve it, but I can't think of any.

I have no complaints on the business education program. In fact, I think that I learned as much and possibly a lot more in that program than I did in any other line of courses that I took in Epping.

Being such a small school, I think Epping has a good program.

I think it has a very good business education program.

I feel that Epping Public School has a fine business education program. At the present time, I am attending Minot State College and am familiar with many students taking business. I have seen much of the work they are doing and compared to my business education at E.H.S., I feel I almost received a 1-year secretarial college education in high school. I worked as a secretary for the Head Start Program in Williston this summer, and I realized how beneficial the business courses I had taken in high school were for me. The only improvement in the business program at E.H.S. would probably be in the machines available. They are all so expensive and difficult for a smaller school to obtain.

One thing that should be stressed a great deal is good English and spelling. I think a Business English course would be beneficial to offer. Teachers should be strict about spelling in all subjects. One of my "golden rules" is--"Look up a word if you are not sure before you type it." It sure saves loads of work and retyping. I feel that the business training I received at Epping has been of great value to me. I'm thankful, Mr. Bickel, that you stressed neatness and accuracy so much. They are very important assets to have in any field a person would enter.

Not enough time was allowed for writing of letters. When applying for jobs, I was asked by almost all if I had typing and other business courses. From what I had in high school, it was sufficient to be accepted.

I think for a small school we have a good business education program. When I first came to the UND - Williston Center, I thought I wouldn't be as good as other students from bigger schools. I was surprised to find out I knew just as much and sometimes a lot more than they did. For example, they didn't know how to set up tables, manuscripts, etc., but my teacher had stressed this very much in class so I knew how and had to explain to the students who sat next to me.

I can't say that I am a very good source for this information because I didn't take that many business courses. Somehow you have to convince the kids that they have to study and have to learn good study habits. I think that is the biggest downfall of freshmen college students. I know that is my biggest problem. In high school you can get by without much studying but there is no way you can do that in college. If I were teaching, I would pile the work on them so they learn to work for their grades. As far as the business education department is concerned, I think Epping has one of the best departments in the state for the size of the school and it has to have one of the best business teachers in the state.

I feel the business courses I took at Epping High School were taught very well. I found the classes extremely interesting and very challenging. We were not allowed to be content with being just average (if we were capable) and we were pushed to be more than that. I feel this was very valuable in that it made you strive to do each new assignment a little better and with just a little more skill. I apply this same attitude in much of what I do now. My opinion is that the business education program at Epping High School is one of the tops and that the skills I acquired in my business courses in high school are equivalent and may surpass those of any beginning college student.

I am quite satisfied with the education I received in the business program at E.H.S. I only wish I had taken more business courses. I use the knowledge I learned about business in my role as housewife. I am the one who files and writes the business letters, etc., so typing, shorthand and general business has been a great help to me. Too often the students take a business course because they think it's easy. If they would take it seriously and get involved with it, they would find it rewarding. As to the teaching of the courses in business, I had a teacher who put everything he had into his classes. That adds a lot to a class. Because of the lack of school rooms and a limited budget, E.H.S. doesn't have all the machines that are needed. There is often a collision of two people who want to use the same machine and can't. Therefore, many have to use the machines at night or after school. For such a small school, the students are lucky to have a very wonderful teacher who cares about his students and their work.

In referring to a high school education, I believe Epping Public School has an adequate business program and is making the necessary improvements as the need arises at this level of education.

I have had just a few business courses but the one I feel should be mandatory is typing. The people who can type are much better off than those who can't.

The only thing I took was general business. I wish I knew more about understanding insurance policies, automobile title transfers, and filling out income tax forms.

From what I've heard, it's already tops. I'm kicking myself for not taking advantage of it.

I would suggest a disbandment of your business courses since we who will soon be the majority will have no uses for those skills necessary to succeed in the capitalistic system.

LIST OF GRADUATES

1965

Bernard Arcand
 Eldon Erickson
 Donald Halseth
 Dale Hannegrefs
 Dennis Hodnefield
 Emily Johnson
 John Johnsrud
 Phyllis Lindquist

Judy Melland
 Harvey Stevens
 Michael Thorness
 Marvin Thorness
 Betty Rose Wegleitner
 LaVerne Wegleitner
 Betty Ann Young

1966

Connie Arcand
 Gerald Backen
 Michael Bingeman
 Janet Hannegrefs
 Larry Johnsrud

Theodore Peterson
 Derald Syverson
 Margaret Thorness
 Susan Vandeberg

1967

Bonnie Garaas
 Douglas Jacobson
 Laverne Stevens

Patricia Stevens
 Dianne Syverson

1968

Leon Arcand
 Mary Lou Christopherson
 Carol Ellingson
 Maryln Farver
 Peggy Halseth
 Laurel Hannegrefs

David Hodnefield
 Kathryn Langager
 Derry Long
 Douglas Melland
 Beverly Thorness
 Kathleen Wegleitner

1969

Sheila Arcand
 Pamela Cote
 Daniel Garaas
 Dennis Johnsrud
 Judy Halseth

Sherman Smith
 Stephen Thorness
 Leon Vandeberg
 Donna Wegleitner

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