



8-1-1938

A Study of High School Commercial Contests

Howard Beecher Hovda

[How does access to this work benefit you? Let us know!](#)

Follow this and additional works at: <https://commons.und.edu/theses>

Recommended Citation

Hovda, Howard Beecher, "A Study of High School Commercial Contests" (1938). *Theses and Dissertations*. 4220.

<https://commons.und.edu/theses/4220>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Theses, Dissertations, and Senior Projects at UND Scholarly Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of UND Scholarly Commons. For more information, please contact und.common@library.und.edu.

A STUDY OF HIGH SCHOOL COMMERCIAL CONTESTS
IN
NORTH DAKOTA

A Thesis
Submitted to the Graduate Faculty
of the
University of North Dakota

by
Howard Beecher Hovda

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the degree of
Master of Science in Commerce

August

1938

T1938
H84

This thesis, offered by Howard B. Hovda as a partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Science in Commerce in the University of North Dakota, is hereby approved by the Committee under whom he has carried his work.

ms
Eds.
Apr. '31
Hertzberg 1.00

Erick Selke
Chairman

E. T. Towne

Sam Hagen

J. L. Sayer

J. W. Breitwieser
Director of the Graduate Division

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The writer wishes to express his sincere gratitude to Dr. Erich Selke, whose guidance and encouragement was deeply appreciated. Special acknowledgement is also due Mr. John A. Page for his assistance in securing important historical data. In addition, the writer wishes to thank the commercial teachers in the state of North Dakota for their splendid cooperation, which made this thesis possible.

Howard Beecher Hovda

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	1
TABLE OF CONTENTS	11
LIST OF TABLES	v
Chapter	
I. INTRODUCTION	1
A. Nature of the Problem	2
B. Reasons for the Study	3
C. Purpose of the Study	4
D. Procedure	6
E. Limitations	7
II. A SURVEY OF RELATED STUDIES	9
A. State Studies	9
B. National Studies	12
III. NATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE OF COMMERCIAL CONTESTS	16
A. Growth of State Commercial Contests	17
B. Subjects Tested in State Commercial Contests	17
C. Sponsors of Commercial Contests	20
D. Types of Commercial Contests Used in United States	22
E. Viewpoints	24
IV. HISTORY AND ADMINISTRATION OF COMMERCIAL CONTESTS IN NORTH DAKOTA	27
A. Historical Background	27
B. First Five Years of Commercial Contests	28
C. Mass Contest Period	33
D. The Recent Period in Commercial Contests	36

TABLE OF CONTENTS
(Continued)

E. Administration of Commercial Contests in North Dakota	41
1. Administrative Work Undertaken by the University	42
2. Administrative Work Undertaken by the District and State Managers.	44
V. AN ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF QUESTIONNAIRE DATA PERTAINING TO HIGH SCHOOL COMMERCIAL CONTESTS. . .	48
A. Teacher Reaction Toward Contest Administration. .	48
1. Commercial Contests Offered in North Dakota.	50
2. Subjects Approved for Commercial Contests. .	52
3. Reasons for Not Entering Commercial Contests	53
4. Distribution of Contest Information.	55
5. Expense of Commercial Contests	56
6. Team Contest	58
7. Mass Contest	59
8. Classification of Schools.	61
B. Teacher Reaction Toward the Testing Procedure in Typewriting.	62
1. Possible Change in Test Material	63
2. Grading of Typewriting Skill	65
3. Writing Time for Typewriting Tests	66
4. Improvements suggested for Typewriting Contests	66
C. Teacher Reaction Toward the Testing Procedure in Shorthand.	68
1. Proper Speed of Shorthand Dictation.	68
2. Limitation of Time for Transcription	70
3. Miscellaneous Factors in the Testing of Shorthand	72

TABLE OF CONTENTS
(Continued)

D. Teacher and Student Reaction Toward the Advantages and Disadvantages of Commercial Contests	74
1. Commercial Contests and the Contestant.	75
2. Commercial Contests and the Class	78
3. Commercial Contests and the Teacher	79
4. Commercial Contests and the School.	80
5. Ranking of Commercial Contest Advantages and Disadvantages	81
E. Teacher and Student Reaction Toward the Continuance of Commercial Contests	84
1. Viewpoints of North Dakota Commercial Teachers.	86
VI. SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS	88
A. Summary.	88
B. Recommendations.	93

BIBLIOGRAPHY

APPENDIX

LIST OF TABLES

Table

1.	Kinds of Subjects Tested by Organizations Sponsoring State Commercial Contests in 1938	18
2.	Number of Subjects Tested by Organizations Sponsoring State Commercial Contests in 1938	20
3.	Number of Questionnaires Returned From Each District in North Dakota	50
4.	Kinds of Inter-School Contests in Which Teachers Have Entered Students.	51
5.	Commercial Contest Subjects in Which Teachers Have Had Students Competing.	52
6.	Reasons Given by Teachers for not Entering Commercial Contests.	54
7.	Teacher Reaction as to the Sufficiency of Contest Information Sent Out.	55
8.	Sources of Expense Money For Students Competing in District and State Contests	58
9.	Suggestions for Administering Mass Contests so as to Provide Accurate Records.	61
10.	The Changing of Test Matter from Straight Copy to Letters and Tabulation.	64
11.	Opinions of Teachers as to the Number of Minutes a Contestant Should Type.	66
12.	Improvements Suggested For Typewriting Contests	67
13.	Types of Dictation Matter Preferred for Shorthand Contests.	72
14.	Kinds of Errors to be Deducted in Grading Shorthand Papers.	73
15.	Suggested Improvements for Shorthand Contests	74
16.	Effect of Contest Preparation and Participation on Student's Work.	75

LIST OF TABLES
(Continued)

17.	Teacher Reaction as to Whether Contest Rates are a True Measure of Student Ability.	77
18.	Amount of Classroom Competition Due to Commercial Contests	78
19.	Amount of Extra Work Done by Entire Class Because of Prospective Contest.	79
20.	Attitude of Superintendents Toward Commercial Contests	81
21.	How Teachers Rank the Importance of the Following Contest Advantages	82
22.	How Teachers Rank the Importance of the Following Contest Disadvantages.	83
23.	Teacher Opinion as to Whether the Present Form of Commercial Contest Should be continued in North Dakota	84
24.	Contestants Suggestions For Improving Commercial Contests	86

CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

"The purpose of the High School Contest," according to the Departmental Bulletin of the University of North Dakota, "is to stimulate high school boys and girls in doing well the things that are really worthwhile." (14)*

"The purpose of education," as Professor Thomas H. Briggs from Columbia University says, "is to teach people to do better the desirable activities they will perform anyway." (3)

Is there this close relationship between education and high school contests? Are such contests educative enough to warrant the time, money, and effort spent in their behalf? If the answer is an unquestioned "yes", this thesis will not serve its complete purpose. If, on the other hand, the answer is questionable, or negative in the mind of any person, this thesis should be quite helpful in clarifying a number of disputed points.

The University Departmental Bulletin goes on to say: "To select the state champion in each of the many events is the means by which thousands of boys and girls throughout the state are encouraged to perfect themselves in doing those things which they individually enjoy doing."

The question raised in this connection is whether the selection of the state champion really is the proper means of

* Numbers in parenthesis indicate a Bibliography reference.

encouragement to the boys and girls of the state. Again this thesis will endeavor to shed a little light on the subject.

Nature of the Problem

Up to this point the questions raised have been generalized to include all types of high school contests. No one study could possibly do justice to such a large number of diverse topics, so this thesis will confine itself strictly to contests in the field of commercial education. Further than that, it will deal with these contests chiefly in the state of North Dakota. The only exceptions will be to devote one brief chapter to a survey of related studies and another chapter in discussing the national significance of such contests as a basis for a better understanding of the state situation.

What is meant by commercial contests? Dr. A. O. Colvin in his article on "The Commercial Contest in Secondary Education" (4) explains it this way:

"The type of commercial contest under discussion in this report is an extra-curricular activity in business education on the secondary school level. The contest may be local, state, regional, or national in scope. The contest programs usually provide for competition in such subject matter fields as bookkeeping, shorthand, type-writing, and other business subjects. Each event is usually open to from one to three of the best students from each school in the community or district. Suitable awards are given to all contestants who are able to achieve certain designated places in the ranking of the contestants."

A number of questions were raised in the first part of this chapter, and mention was made of the fact that the results of this study should be of some help in the better understanding of these questions.

These questions form the basis for a definite statement of the problem, hence are restated from the point of view of commercial contest.

1. Is there a close relationship between education and commercial contests?
2. Are commercial contests worth the time, money, and effort spent in their behalf?
3. Is the selection of a state champion the proper means of encouraging young people to perfect themselves in worthwhile activities?

With these questions in mind a letter and a questionnaire was sent to the commercial teachers of the state asking them to check their reaction to the questions asked. Another questionnaire was distributed to the commercial students at the contest in district six held at Minot, and also to the participants in the state contest at Grand Forks. A copy of the letter and the two questionnaires may be found in Appendix A.

The problem of this thesis, then, is to analyze and interpret the data secured through the questionnaires, so as to draw some conclusions as to the proper answers to the three basic questions involved, and to submit the opinions of teachers as to ways and means of making needed improvements in contest procedure.

Reasons for the Study

The chief reason for this study is the heated controversy

regarding the value of commercial contests which exists among the commercial teachers of the state. These discussions usually have taken place in the recent state meetings of the commercial section of the North Dakota Educational Association.

A few of the leaders of the commercial section are very much opposed to the system of district and state contests as they are now administered. The teachers favoring the present plan are rather passive, except in one or two cases, and so in each of the last two state meetings, a resolution has been passed asking the University Contest Committee to drop this type of contest from their list.

The University Contest Committee, however, each year has disregarded this request because they have felt that perhaps the teachers attending the state commercial section meetings were not a representative group of the teachers in the entire state. They also have felt that the majority of the principals and superintendents were in favor of such contests. Still another reason offered was that these contests were a service rendered to the high schools by the University, and as such, should be acceptable on the grounds that entrance in them was purely voluntary.

Purpose of the Study

Mindful of the fact that the contest committee was not convinced that the request by the commercial section was representative, the writer decided to contact as many as possible of the interested commercial teachers. The letter

and questionnaires referred to previously was the method used to carry out this project.

The principal objective of the entire study is to throw some light on this controversy over the value of commercial contests in North Dakota, by securing the frank opinions of a majority of the commercial teachers of the state.

The specific purposes may be listed as follows:

1. To determine the part played by commercial contests throughout the nation.
2. To secure a detailed description of the history and present status of commercial contests in North Dakota.
3. To discover teacher reaction as to the best procedure to follow in the administration of typewriting and shorthand contests.
4. To ascertain both teacher and contestant reaction on benefits derived from contest experience.
5. To determine relative importance of generally accepted advantages and disadvantages of contest participation.
6. To suggest some desirable changes in contest administration providing they are continued.

It is hoped that the collection and organization of these data will be of some assistance to all those interested in commercial contests whether in North Dakota, or any other state. If it does aid in the settling of any future policy so as to provide a more worthwhile program in commercial education, the thesis will have more than fulfilled its purpose.

Procedure

A great deal of time and thought went into the preparation of the letter and questionnaires, as the results of these were to be used as the source of much of the data for writing the thesis. Many teachers who were contacted at the district and state contests and state educational meetings, offered a number of suggestions that were used in preparing the questionnaires.

Theses of a similar nature were consulted, and they furnished ideas which were very helpful in making the questionnaires as objective and complete as possible.

A preliminary draft of the teacher-questionnaire was first sent to Dr. Selke for constructive criticism. After a revision was made, it was given to a small group of experienced commercial teachers, who answered it and made some additional worthwhile suggestions for improvement. Finally, the finished product was sent out to 150 teachers with a letter asking for their cooperation. A personal note was added to the bottom of some of these letters to encourage a prompt answer. The names of the teachers were obtained from lists provided by the secretary of the commerce section of the North Dakota Educational Association, and from the office of Mr. Lillehaugen, Director of Secondary Education in North Dakota.

The 150 teachers to whom the questionnaires were sent, represented every North Dakota commercial teacher it was possible to contact. The state office listed 134 such teachers in 120 high schools. The remaining sixteen were part-time commercial

teachers with whom the writer was familiar.

Of the 150 questionnaires sent, 104 or 69.3 per cent were returned. This is felt to be a representative return and thus may attract some attention from both the University Contest Committee and the officers of the commerce section of the North Dakota Educational Association.

The student-questionnaire was prepared with the thought in mind that it would be worthwhile to obtain the response of the students actually taking part in commercial contests.

This questionnaire was given to sixty-seven of the contestants in the district contest at Minot, and to seventy of those competing in the state contest at Grand Forks. This was possible due to the cooperation of Mr. Paul Seaman and Miss Viona Hansen who were in charge of the district and state contests respectively.

Historical data pertaining to commercial contests in North Dakota were found in the office of Mr. John A. Page, executive secretary, University Contest Committee. The yearly Departmental Bulletins which were published until December, 1932 and the University of North Dakota News-Letter were the principal sources of information.

Limitations

The value of a study using the questionnaire as its chief source of data is oftentimes questioned. This is because of the difficulty encountered in wording the questions so as to

permit only one interpretation, and the fact that the information received may not be absolutely accurate due to carelessness on the part of the one answering the questions.

However, since the personal investigation procedure was impossible for this study, the questionnaire approach had to be used. The intensive work done to make the questionnaires as accurate and understandable as possible has been described. The result has been that about ninety-five out of the 104 returned teacher-questionnaires have been answered quite fully. The remaining nine have portions missing chiefly because the teacher did not feel fully capable of answering correctly.

It is to be regretted that forty-six teachers failed to fill out and return the questionnaire, however, the many more who did answer all the questions satisfactorily gives a representative sampling of what the commercial teachers of North Dakota want in respect to commercial contests.

CHAPTER II

A SURVEY OF RELATED STUDIES

In order to better appreciate the problems found in connection with commercial contests in North Dakota, it was thought advisable to summarize briefly the work that has already been done in this field by educators of other states.

The work consists chiefly of studies made by graduate students in colleges and universities in the United States. Their theses have been studied and used to prevent duplication of effort, and as a guide to good source material.

Of the five studies found dealing with commercial contests, there are three state and two national surveys. The state studies will be summarized first since they have a more direct bearing on this particular thesis.

State Studies

In 1933, Glen O. Outland at the Ohio State University wrote a master's thesis on "Typewriting Contests in Ohio." (10) He mailed questionnaires to 270 commercial teachers in Ohio, 147 of which were returned. The findings of this thesis were based largely on the data secured from these 147 "jurors", as he calls the teachers answering his questionnaire.

In his chapter on "Summary and Conclusions" Mr. Outland lists the findings of the "jury" as follows:

1. Social significance seems to be of value because the mingling with students from other parts of the state is beneficial.
2. Contest experience appears to be valuable to the contestant because it tends to make him a better typist.
3. The majority of the jury believe that the nervous strain upon the contestant is a good experience.
4. Evidently contest rates are not a true measure of a student's typewriting ability.
5. Contests are a good means of securing much needed publicity for the commercial department.
6. Seemingly contests do motivate study or work for the entire class.
7. The time spent in preparation varies from none to the hiring of full-time coaches.
8. Most teachers are satisfied with the present classification of schools.
9. It was found that no parents and very few administrators object to students taking part in contest.
10. It seems that contests stimulate a desirable school spirit.
11. The financial significance appears to be an important factor as it is believed that this factor has kept some schools from entering the contests. The expenses are paid in a variety of ways. The jury feels that the school should bear the burden.
12. Employers seemingly do not prefer contest winners although it may be that they know little of typewriting contests.

The other two state surveys were both made in Colorado under the direction of Dr. A. O. Colvin, Professor of Business Education at Colorado State College of Education in Greeley.

The first was finished in 1932 by Audrey V. Dempsey, the

title of which was "Training Methods Used by Commercial Teachers in Preparing Students for the Colorado State Contests in Commercial Subjects." (6) The results she obtained through a questionnaire study were:

1. The consensus of opinion of the teachers reporting was decidedly in favor of conducting the annual contests.
2. Almost twice as many advantages were reported as compared with the disadvantages given.
3. The frequencies of the advantages were much higher than the frequencies of the disadvantages.
4. The largest percentage of the teachers gave no special work to the students immediately preceding the finals of the contest.
5. There was no agreement as to the type of work among those who did spend extra time in coaching.
6. Seventy-one per cent of the students who enter the finals of the contest are selected by class contests.
7. The local contests result in many more advantages to the class as a whole than do the final contests.
8. Teachers who have had from six to fifteen years of teaching experience are more successful in training winning students than those with more or less experience.
9. The teachers with from none to four years of business experience are responsible for more winners than those with more experience in business.

The second survey in Colorado was made by Esther Cline Linstad in 1933. Her subject was "A Study of Winners in the Colorado State Commercial Contests and their Activities." (8) She used three different questionnaires. One form was sent to the state contest winners for the years 1921 to 1930.

Another was sent to the employers of these winners and the third to the superintendents of the schools enrolling these winning students. A brief digest of her findings follows:

1. The winners generally agreed that:
 - a. Other students were not neglected by the teacher because of contests.
 - b. They themselves did not neglect other subjects in preparing for contests.
 - c. The nervous strain was not excessive in contest work.
2. The employers reports show that commercial contest winners as a group have been successful above the average in the business world.
3. From the superintendents, information was obtained that would indicate that contest winners work harder in the commercial subjects, yet their grades show that they do not neglect their other subjects because of this fact.

National Studies

The first study found dealing with commercial contests from a national standpoint, was made in 1927 by the National Commercial Teachers Federation Committee on Research. (1) They contacted 141 high schools and fifty-eight business colleges by sending out about 450 questionnaires to at least two cities in every state in the country. The results showed a much divided opinion as to the values of contests.

One of the most important findings, according to Mr. Clay D. Slinker, committee member who gave the report, was the fact that seventy-seven per cent of the public high schools and

forty-eight per cent of the private schools favored the mass contest, where whole class groups competed against each other, rather than the present eliminative form of contest.

The second in this group of two national surveys, is the one written by Eva Marie Newton which she called "A Nation-Wide Study of State Commercial Contests for High School Students." (9) This also was a questionnaire study. Sixty-one questionnaires were sent to the state contest managers in forty states. Returns covered thirty-five states.

According to Miss Newton, "The principal objective of this study was to survey by states the conditions and circumstances existing relative to state contests in commercial subjects for high school students."

Her conclusions based on the returned questionnaires were:

1. It is evident that state commercial contests directly and indirectly affect a large number of high school students.
2. These contests are approved, assisted, and sponsored in many states by a college or university and other educational organizations.
3. It is likely that many contest programs will be enlarged in the future to include a greater variety of commercial subjects.
4. The objective type of test, rather than the subjective, is favored for contest measuring purposes.
5. It seems evident that the traditional typewriting contest methods, which are used for measuring and grading typewriting skill, result in placing too much emphasis on speed and accuracy of machine operation.
6. In an attempt to reduce the emphasis on speed test

writing and to broaden the testing program there is some indication that future contests will give more attention to measuring of other phases of typewriting skills, such as typing letters, rough drafts, manuscripts, and tabulations.

7. The timed-dictation-transcription test is universally used as a measure for testing shorthand skill in both beginning and advanced groups.
8. There is indication of a trend toward newer types of contest organization, such as the mass, or all-pupil contest and the district, or elimination contest.
9. States that have the team-individual contest organization seem to favor the three-contestant team.
10. The contest eligibility rules show a tendency to restrict participation in state contests to high school students.
11. There is evidence of a trend against the practice of coaching, particularly against professional coaching of a student, for the state contest activity.
12. In an effort to lessen emphasis on prizes and on winning places, it is likely that individual contest awards will increase in number and decrease in value.
13. It is clear that commercial contest influence has been decidedly broadened during the last five years through increased school interest and participation.
14. State commercial contests are justified primarily for their influence in raising standards in Commercial Education, increasing interest in Commercial Education, and motivation classes.
15. Objections to commercial contests center around the belief that they are not a true measure of student ability and too much time is spent in preparation.
16. It appears evident that contest managements are aware of certain defects in the contest program and are making an effort to eliminate them.

These surveys point out the many problems that are closely linked with commercial contests wherever they may be offered. It is hoped that this thesis, too, may bring its state problems into focus. The situation in North Dakota differs, of course, but much valuable information may be secured from the experiences of other states.

CHAPTER III

NATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE OF COMMERCIAL CONTESTS

It can readily be seen by a brief study of the preceding chapter that the commercial contest problem is not confined to North Dakota alone. Such contests were held in many other states long before North Dakota decided to adopt them. National and inter-national commercial contests have also been conducted for a good many years with varying success.

The purpose of this chapter is to briefly discuss the importance of commercial contests throughout the United States in order to provide a clearer understanding of the contest situation in this state.

The Balance Sheet for April 1938 (15) contains the names of thirty-two states who are listed as offering commercial contests for this year. Twelve of these had district contests and all but three had state or final contests. One state, Oklahoma, had five finals, while California, Michigan and Pennsylvania each had two. In addition, this same issue of The Balance Sheet names five other commercial contests as follows:

1. Illinois State Personality Contest
2. International Commercial Schools Contest
3. National Catholic Typing Contest
4. Nation-Wide Every-Pupil Scholarship Contest
5. World-Wide Typing Contest

This gives a brief picture of the commercial contest situation in the United States as it exists in 1938. It should be worthwhile to analyze the features of this set-up more in detail.

Growth of State Commercial Contests

First of all, it is quite evident that commercial contests are growing in number. The Balance Sheet each year lists the states where commercial contests are being held. According to their figures, the number of states having final contests during the last five years have increased from twenty-five in 1934, to thirty-two in 1938.

Miss Newton, in her thesis (9) shows that there is also a general increase in participation within the various state contests. She says, "Over seventy-five per cent of the state managers report an increase in participation in commercial contests." While the popularity of an activity is not proof of its value, it is a significant factor.

Subjects Tested in State Commercial Contests

North Dakota tests two subjects, typewriting and shorthand. What is the practice in other states as to the number and kinds of commercial subjects offered?

The Balance Sheet for April, 1938, once more gives the necessary data to answer this question quite completely. Table 1 presents in tabulated form, a composite picture of the contest

Table 1
 Kinds of Subjects Tested By Organizations Sponsoring
 State Commercial Contests in 1938
 (39 Organizations Listed)*

Subjects	Organizations Reporting Number	Per cent**
Typewriting	39	100.0%
Shorthand	36	92.3%
Bookkeeping	27	69.2%
Commercial Law	7	18.0%
Commercial Arithmetic	6	15.4%
Spelling	2	5.1%
Penmanship	2	5.1%
Rapid Calculation	1	2.6%
Consumer Economics	1	2.6%
Dictating Machine Transcription	1	2.6%
Business Aptitude	1	2.6%
Junior Business Methods	1	2.6%
Industrial Geography	1	2.6%
General Business	1	2.6%
Economics	1	2.6%

* There are thirty-nine organizations in thirty-two states because a few states have more than one final contest.

** The percentages are figured on the basis of the thirty-nine organizations, but since most of these organizations tested more than one subject, the percentages total more than 100 per cent.

offerings of all the states. As might be expected, typewriting leads, but the fact that it is a part of every one of the state contests is worth noting. Shorthand and bookkeeping are a close second and third, but the other subjects listed are tested in only a few of the states.

Evidently the subjects most often tested are the three basic ones of the commercial curriculum. This is to be expected, although some may be surprised at the ranking of bookkeeping. The wide-spread use of the objective type tests in practically all subjects has made it a simple matter to accurately test bookkeeping knowledge.

Another interesting phase of this same question concerns data relative to the most common number of commercial subjects tested. Table 2 shows at a glance that the two and three subject combinations are the most popular. One state tests eight different subjects, while two states offer only one subject, typewriting.

Of the fifteen organizations sponsoring contests which provide competition in three subjects, all but one offer typewriting, shorthand, and bookkeeping as the combination. This exception offers penmanship in place of bookkeeping. Typewriting and shorthand are the two subjects offered in all but one of the ten cases where the sponsoring organization offers the two-subject combination. Bookkeeping replaces shorthand in West Virginia as this one exception.

Table 2
 Number of Subjects Tested by Organizations Sponsoring
 State Commercial Contests in 1938
 (39 Organizations Listed)

Number of Subjects Tested	Organizations Number	Testing Per cent
1	2	5.1%
2	10	25.6%
3	15	38.5%
4	6	15.4%
5	3	7.7%
6	2	5.1%
7	0	----
8	1	2.6%

In conclusion it might be said that the majority of the states provide for competition in either two or three subjects. If they have the two-subject combination, they are usually typewriting and shorthand. If three subjects are tested, which is the most common arrangement, bookkeeping is practically always the third subject.

Sponsors of Commercial Contests

Another feature worth mentioning is an account of the nature of the organizations sponsoring such contests in each state. Through a tabulation of the organizations named as

sponsoring agencies by The Balance Sheet of April, 1938 it was found that nineteen out of the thirty-nine listed were either colleges or universities. That is 48.7 per cent of the entire number. Next, in order of frequency, came the state commercial teachers associations who sponsored ten, or 25.6 per cent of such contests. The state high school leagues took charge in three cases, and the remaining seven contests each had a different organization behind it.

The most significant aspect of this tabulation is that almost fifty per cent of the sponsoring organizations were either colleges or universities. Is this as it should be? Dr. Colvin, in his article on "The Commercial Contest in Secondary Education" (4) says,

"There are excellent arguments for giving the colleges and universities encouragement in sponsoring the commercial contests.

1. They are generally glad to assume the responsibility for several reasons.
 - a. It is good publicity
 - b. It forms a valuable means of contact between the secondary schools of the state and the educational institutions of higher learning.
 - c. It tends to attract high grade students to the college or university.
2. The college or university is generally better qualified to prepare the tests, formulate rules and regulations, secure mailing lists, and manage the details of the contest impartially.
3. The college or university which has a school of business can use its majors as clerical helpers, assistants and conductors of the contest.

4. The college or university business education staff will be just as conscientious about the management of the contest, the preparation of tests, and other details as any other committee or individual could be, because the element of reliability in selection is also important to the institution.
5. Usually a portion of the expenses of the contest and other responsibilities are assumed by the college or university."

It is evident that college or university sponsorship is preferred by most states over any other one type of organization and that there are good reasons for this preference. It must not be concluded, however, that agencies like the state commercial teachers associations and others, do not also have points in their favor.

Types of Commercial Contests Used in the United States

Mr. W. Harmon Wilson, editor of The Balance Sheet, sent a personal letter to the writer, under date of May 28, 1937, in which he said, "Two fundamentally different systems of state contests are now in operation. One of them is the type which is sponsored by Mr. Tilford in New York, and the other is the type sponsored by Mr. Studebaker in Indiana." What are these two systems, and how do they differ?

New York uses what may be called the individual-team contest. In other words, the competition takes place not only between the individual contestants but also between the picked teams of rival schools. This competition is first

confined to schools of a particular district, after which the winners of the district events compete with other district winners in the state finals at Syracuse, New York. This plan is followed in most of the states with some variations. Twenty states, for example, have no district contest for elimination purposes. In these cases the teacher from each school selects the students for the final state contest.

Indiana uses what is usually called the mass contest. Mr. Studebaker, in his own words says, (12)

"A mass contest in which every pupil enrolled in a class must take part, was substituted for the district contest in which teams of three pupils from each class participated. Tests are administered to all pupils in their own school under circumstances that represent their normal school life."

"As a result, teachers that enter the mass contest of any event must train the entire class in the subject that they enter. Since the median score of the entire class is used in determining the schools that are eligible to enter the state event, it is necessary that every pupil be given as much attention as possible."

The schools winning places in the mass contest are then permitted to select a team of three members to represent it at the state contest. Likewise, a specified number of individual students may qualify for the state contest through the records made in the mass contest. A few other states have followed the lead set by Indiana, but they have usually made adaptations to fit their own situations. New York, for example, offers the mass contest in first year typewriting, but it is run independently from the regular district and state contests.

North Dakota tried the mass contest plan for three years, 1933 to 1935, but made no provisions for a state final contest.*

Viewpoints

To conclude this chapter, it was thought worthwhile to cite a few pertinent comments made by leaders in the field of commercial education, to give the reader an idea of what has been written on the subject. Much of significance has been written by state commercial contest managers. A few illustrations of their viewpoints are as follows:

Dr. A. O. Colvin, Professor of Business Education, Colorado State College of Education, Greeley, Colorado says, (5)

"The promotion of commercial contests, the rules and regulations, and the management may be faulty, but certainly no valid objections to the contest "per se" have been substantiated by sound evidence. The weight of evidence on the merit of the commercial contests and the reaction of both the teachers and high school pupils who have experienced the thrills, excitement, and enthusiasm of the contests are arguments enough for a continuation of this type of school activity."

George R. Tilford, Professor of Business Education and Secretarial Science, Syracuse University, Syracuse, New York, makes the following comments: (13)

"Contests seek to discover the superior group of students, to train them and to help them find themselves. To train the fit as well as amply provide for the unfit is the aim of a democracy....The competent student is too frequently run into a pocket and cut off. Everywhere is there the malpractice of centering the subject matter around the average student....Not only this, but the

* See Chapter IV for more details of mass contest in North Dakota

teacher usually gives an overportion of her time and energy to the lowest quartile of the class....The result is that the competent student (the upper quartile) is neglected in a rather hopeless effort on the part of the school administration 'to make them all pass.'.... Contests challenge the energetic and competent student and give him an opportunity to accomplish all he can. Contests insist that democracy by democratic."

Dr. E. G. Knepper, Head of Department of Business Education, State University, Bowling Green, Ohio, sent the writer a letter under date of June 22, 1938, which reads in part:

"We have conducted the state commercial contests in this institution for fourteen years. However, the past year, we did not have charge of these contests....We reached the conclusion that the contests had served the original purpose, and that at least the type which we were then giving were no longer justifiable.

.....
 "We feel that the contests did definitely two or three things which were valuable for commercial education in this state. In the first place, there is no question but what they raised the general standard, for the three subjects offered, second, they aroused much interest in commercial work as a result of which commercial departments have been started in many schools largely through the influence of the interest which was aroused through the contests; third, through the contests, a number of young and promising commercial teachers have been brought into positions of leadership in our state, and they are developing a strong state organization for commercial teachers.

"It is the plan in Ohio at the present time, to develop some very definite and comprehensive tests for our state department to use in measuring the attainment of commercial teachers, and of commercial students in high schools....We feel that this probable offers a better solution to the problem of testing the competency of stenographers and typists than do the contests.

An editor and a commercial teacher in a state teachers college also show an interest in this controversy. Mr. Harold H. Smith, Assistant Editor, Gregg Publishing Company, New York,

a typewriter speedist and former teacher says: (11)

"Typing contests have always encouraged teachers and students to take keener interest in and to improve the major aim of any typist, his ability to use the typewriter as a basic writing tool....Show me a classroom in which there is no competition, and I will show you a teacher whose teaching technique has crystallized mainly into the assignment of 'jobs' and students working at less than their best."

Frances Botsford, Department of Commerce, Ball State Teachers College, Muncie, Indiana, comments as follows: (2)

"Another of the devices depended upon for creating interest in typewriting is the contest, which undoubtedly has been a force contributing to more efficient teaching. The greatest weakness of this method of motivation is that the motivation appeals mainly to those who are naturally gifted with nervous systems that respond to an effort to increase speed, but it does not appeal to the entire class. The majority of the class soon joins the ranks of interested observers."

CHAPTER IV
HISTORY AND ADMINISTRATION OF COMMERCIAL
CONTESTS IN NORTH DAKOTA

Historical Background

Commercial contests are just one of many types of contest activity, encouraged and sponsored by the University of North Dakota for the high schools of the state.

From a modest beginning back in 1903, when a few surrounding high schools met at the University for a track and field meet, to the present size and importance of the contest program, is indeed an interesting story.

At the present time, the contests include practically all phases of extra-curricular activities as well as certain curricular subjects which lend themselves readily to the contest idea. This rapid growth has placed North Dakota in the front ranks of the many states who now sponsor high school contests.

Each new event was added as some interested person or persons expressed the need for it, and the University Contest Committee approved. Beginning with the Track and Field Meet in 1903, these other contests have been added in the following order:

1904 Declamation

1910 High School Debate

- 1919 State High School Music Contest
- 1921 Tennis Tournament
- 1922 High School Publications Contest
- 1922 Junior Playmaker Festival
- 1928 Typewriting Contest
- 1929 Golf Tournament
- 1930 Shorthand Contest
- 1932 Industrial Arts Competition

First Five Years of Commercial Contests

(1928-1932)

Thus it was on May 16, 1928, that the first state typewriting contest was held in North Dakota. The contest was inaugurated by the state association of commercial teachers under the leadership of Miss Lois H. Wolff of the Devils Lake High School.

This first typewriting contest was held in connection with the 1928 High School Contest, but under the separate management of the state commercial teachers with Miss Wolff in charge. At the request of Miss Wolff, and other interested teachers, however, the University decided to make this event a part of their annual contest beginning in 1929. In this way credit points were given for honors won in the state typewriting contest in the same way that they are awarded in all other University contests.

There were two events listed for the contest. One was

for first year or novice typists, the other for second year or amateur typists. The eligibility rules in Appendix B contain exact definitions of novice and amateur typists. The competition was between individual contestants, who had earned the right to enter the state contest by winning either first, second, or third places in their respective districts. For the first two years these elimination contests were held in only six of the twelve district centers set up by the University Contest Committee. This made it necessary for one district center to take charge of all registered contestants for the typewriting contest in two districts. Each school was permitted to enter three students in each of the two events at the district contest.

The prizes offered to stimulate more interest consisted of gold, silver, and bronze medals for individual winners of first, second, and third places in each event in the state contest. To the school having the winner of first place in each typewriting event, there was awarded a silver loving cup, given by the Grand Forks Herald. This cup was to remain the property of the school for a period of one year, when it was to be returned to the University. The school winning the cup three times was to gain permanent possession of it. In addition to these awards, the winner of the amateur contest, using an Underwood Typewriter, was given a free trip to compete in the International Contest, usually held in New York City. This was given through the courtesy of the

Underwood Typewriter Company.

The fee charged for registration was fifty cents for each contestant in the district contest, and another fifty cents for those entering the state contest. The general eligibility requirements for the first contests were very similar to those now used which are given in Appendix B, hence will not be listed here.

The winners of this first state contest were Leila Christen, Devils Lake, who typed 54.6 net words per minute in the novice class, and Rose Kupper, Dickinson, who typed 69.5 net words per minute in the amateur class. They typed for 15 minutes on straight copy material supplied by J. N. Kimball, manager of the International Typewriting Contest. The conduct of the contest, and grading of papers followed the rules of the International Typewriting Contest.

On May 18, 1929, the second annual typing contest was held. At the request of the University, Miss Wolff again took charge. Except for the fact that the University sponsored it this year, no important changes were made in contest administration. There was an increase in registrations from 124 to 176 contestants in the six district centers.

At a conference of the commercial teachers, two major changes were recommended for the 1930 contest. These changes were: (1) The addition of a contest in shorthand in two sections as in typewriting, and (2) that preliminary trials be held in the twelve established contest districts. These

two recommendations were accepted by the University Contest Committee and put into effect for the 1930 contest. Formerly a total of six students from each school, or three in each of the two typewriting events, were eligible to compete in the district contest, but with the addition of both novice and amateur shorthand events, each high school was permitted to enter eight students or two in each of the four events. Because of twelve district elimination contests, instead of six, and because of the two added shorthand events, only the first and second place winners at the district contests were eligible to enter the state meet.

The rates of dictation for the novice and amateur groups in the shorthand contest were sixty and eighty words per minute, respectively, for both the district and state contests. This dictation lasted for five minutes, and consisted of two selection which included both a business letter and some literary material. There was no time limit set for the transcription of shorthand notes.

A request to permit the contestants in the novice shorthand contest to submit their transcription in handwriting was granted. This change was justified on the grounds that most students in first year shorthand had failed to master the typewriter sufficiently to be able to use it to accurately transcribe their notes. In most respects, however, the shorthand contests were governed by the rules set up for the Standard Gregg Shorthand Tests, published by the Gregg Publishing Company.

All the teachers entering contestants in either the district or state contest were urgently requested to assist in grading the papers. They were also asked to make sure that their contestants either brought their own typewriters, or made provisions for borrowing them at the place of the contest.

In addition to the regular University awards for first, second, and third places in all events, the Gregg Publishing Company offered prizes to first and second place winners in the state shorthand contest.

The third annual state commercial contest took place on May 17, 1930. Due to the changes mentioned, the number of contestants that came to the state meet was tripled. In 1929, only twenty-six entered, while in 1930 seventy-eight took part.

The fourth and fifth state annual commercial contests again took place during the third week of May in 1931 and 1932. Only one important change was made. In the 1932 shorthand contest, the dictation rate for the state contest was raised from sixty, to seventy words per minute in the novice class, and from eighty to ninety words in the amateur class.

An article in the University of North Dakota News-Letter for November 1, 1932 entitled "Commercial Contests Make Good Showing" is of interest. It says in part, "In the High School Typewriting Contest* for 1932, North Dakota's first and

* The name "Typewriting Contests" was still used despite the fact that shorthand was now included.

second place winners compared favorably with the winners of similar contests in other states." The facts substantiating this statement were taken from the compiled reports for both shorthand and typewriting contests published by The American Shorthand Teacher for October 1932. North Dakota's winners in both novice and amateur typewriting events, placed within the upper one-fourth of about forty contestants listed from all over the United States.

In the shorthand contest, the report shows that in the novice event, North Dakota's winners placed third, fourth, and fifth in a list of twenty-five, and in the amateur events, they placed fifth and fifteenth in a list of forty-two state winners.

The Mass Contest Period

(1933-1935)

At the North Dakota Educational Association, in Grand Forks in 1932, the commercial teachers of the state in their sectional meeting, adopted a resolution recommending that the high school commercial contests be discontinued. According to the University Extension Bulletin for December, 1932, the general feeling was that the type of contest then held had served its purpose, and conditions called for a contest which would stimulate greater effort and achievement among all the commercial students rather than the few exceptional ones.

With this thought in mind, the University decided to replace the district and state commercial contests by offering to the schools, group or mass tests covering the same subjects to be given in the home classrooms to all the students enrolled in the course. The returns were to be filed with the University Extension Division and made the basis of state awards both for the best class averages, and the best individual record established in each event.

The fees were first fixed at five cents per student enrolled with a minimum fee of fifty cents, and a maximum fee of five dollars for each school entered. Later, the fees were reduced to one cent per enrolled student plus a minimum fee of fifty cents for the class entry. This reduction was made possible through the cooperation of publishers who furnished the tests at a very small expense to the University.

The eligibility requirements and grading rules for the mass contest were the same as for the previous individual contest. The test materials were sent to the principals of the high schools entering, and they were held responsible for the proper handling of the contests. Papers were to be scored first by the students, then by the teaching staff, after which the papers, together with the tabulation of scores, were to be sent to the University.

The regular medal awards were given to the three highest individuals in each of the four events. The Novice and Amateur

Typewriting Cups were awarded to schools making the highest class average in these two typing events, and silver loving cups, bearing the University seal, went to the school making the highest class averages in the two shorthand events. The class average was found by dividing the total of all the individual scores by the number of students enrolled.

Of course, the most important single change brought about by the mass contest was the fact that all members in every class of each subject were required to take part. This rule was absolutely necessary in order to provide a fair means of comparing class averages. However, one modification was made in the first year typewriting event. This modification permitted teachers to exempt those students who had failed in typewriting the first semester, but were continuing the course the second semester for their own personal benefit, without expectation of credit.

The following statement appeared in the University of North Dakota News-Letter for May, 1933: "The reorganized contests in typewriting and shorthand were conducted in the commercial departments of thirty-one high schools throughout the state on Thursday, April 20, 1933." The News-Letter further reported that these thirty-one high schools entered a total of seventy-one classes and 1,292 students in the contest.

On April 19, 1934, the second mass contest was held. The enrolment, instead of increasing as was expected, decreased from

a total of 1,292 in 1933, to only 993 in 1934. This year, framed Certificates of Award were presented to winners of first place, and in addition winners in shorthand received the Gregg medals for first and second place.

The third and last mass contest in North Dakota came on April 11, 1935. That year 1,550 contestants participated, which was a new high in enrolment for commercial contests.

Before passing to the recent period in North Dakota Commercial contest history, it might be worthwhile to explain briefly why the University Contest Committee decided to eliminate the mass contest after only three years of experience with it. According to Mr. John Page, executive secretary of the Contest Committee, the major reason was that the contest papers he received were not marked correctly, and the expense of remarking them at the University was prohibitive. The inaccuracies may have been caused, he said, either by carelessness on the part of the teachers and pupils or plain dishonesty. In either case, he felt that the results were not authentic enough to be worth much consideration, and for that reason, the contest itself had lost much of its value.

The Recent Period in Commercial Contest History

(1936-1938)

These major defects of the mass contests that were held in 1933, 1934, and 1935 led the University Contest Committee to make a change in 1936. They decided, after a thorough study

of the situation, to return to the old district and state plan of contest organization. The one new feature that they offered was the inauguration of a team event in both novice and amateur typewriting. Three students constituted a team. The average of the net speed of three typists determined the ranking of the team.

On the whole, the rules and regulations for the 1936 contest were similar to those used in 1932. However, some very important changes were made which may best be explained by listing them in the following order:

1. The University Contest Committee reduced the number of districts from twelve to nine in the 1936 contests.
2. Each school was permitted to enter either two single contestants or one single contestant, and one team in each typewriting event. The single contestant could not be a member of the team.
3. Competing schools were required to have a representative at hand to assist with the correcting of papers, otherwise the student's papers from that school were disqualified.
4. Novice shorthand dictation rates were set at sixty and seventy words per minute in the district and state contests respectively. Transcripts could be in handwriting if preferred.

5. Amateur shorthand dictation rates were set at eighty and ninety words per minute in the district and state contests respectively. Transcripts had to be typewritten.
6. Entrance fees were fixed at fifty cents for each individual entry and one dollar for each team entry in the typewriting events, and twenty-five cents for each entry in the shorthand events in the district contest.
7. Winners of first and second places in all events including team entries were eligible to enter the state contest.
8. Only standard typewriters were permitted which excluded the use of portables.

Miss Viona Hansen and Miss Ann Monson of the Grand Forks Central High School cooperated in taking charge of the first state contest under the new rules, which was held on May 15, 1936.

On Friday, May 14, 1937, the state commercial contests were again held in Woodworth Hall at the University of North Dakota beginning at 10:00 A. M. and continuing through the rest of the morning. No changes in rules or regulations were made in either the district or state contests. Miss Viona Hansen had been given full charge of the state contest, and was made a member of the University Contest Committee.

Many teachers expected that there would be no commercial contest in 1938, because the commercial section of the North Dakota Educational Association had passed resolutions in both the 1936 and 1937 meetings requesting that such contests in North Dakota be discontinued.

The University Contest Committee, however, decided to try them another year. They hoped to make them more satisfactory through a thorough revision and reorganization, which was to be undertaken by the teachers themselves. This revision took place in a committee meeting of eight commercial teachers in February, 1938, at Fargo. The meeting included the executive committee of the commerce section of the North Dakota Educational Association and a group of Fargo High School commercial teachers. The change was approved by Professor John A. Page, executive secretary of the University Contest Committee.

Some of the more important changes incorporated in the 1938 contest revision were as follows:

1. The inauguration of a five minute "Accuracy-Write" as a new feature at the state contest. Any typing contestant was eligible to compete, but a novice writer had to type at least thirty words a minute and an amateur fifty, to qualify.
2. The reduction in the time of typewriting tests from fifteen minutes to ten minutes on straight copy material.

3. The basing of the final score in typewriting on both speed and accuracy. The percentage of accuracy was added to the net words per minute to determine the final rating. An example of this computation may be found in Appendix C.
4. The grading of shorthand papers to include a consideration of the mailability of the letters transcribed. A total of five possible points deductable for letter arrangement.
5. The awarding of certificates of recognition rather than medals to individuals winning either first or second place in each event at the state contest. The schools represented by the winners received honor certificates.

The state contest for 1938 took place at the University on May 13. The elimination contests were held in the nine established districts on dates ranging from April 19 to April 30.

In this, the eleventh state commercial contest, 124 students took part. When this figure is compared to the twenty-five that came to Grand Forks for the state final in 1928, it can readily be seen that the eleven years have shown a remarkable growth in participation.

The Administration of Commercial Contests

In North Dakota

The success of any activity is largely dependent upon the effectiveness of its administration. With this thought in mind, the purpose of this section is to explain the administration behind commercial contests in North Dakota.

The University Contest Committee is at the head of all contest work in this state that is sponsored by the University of North Dakota. Each member of this committee is appointed by the president of the University, and is usually a faculty member interested in one of the various contests. The only member of the committee outside of the University faculty is Miss Viona Hansen, a commercial teacher in the Central High School in Grand Forks who takes charge of the commercial contests.

The entire committee for the 1938 contest was as follows:

John E. Howard-----Acting Chairman and Instrumental Music

John A. Page-----Executive Secretary

Viona Hansen-----Commercial

Richard Beck-----Debate

E. D. Schonberger--Declamation, Playmakers

A. W. Gill-----Industrial Arts

Hywel C. Rowland---Vocal Music

G. Bjorn Bjornson--Publications

Mr. Page is in general charge, handling all matters of policy, and seeing to it that the necessary details are taken care of before, during and after every contest.

In 1919, the University Contest Committee divided the state into twelve districts, appointed district managers, and inaugurated elimination contests in each.

In 1936, they changed the number of districts from twelve to nine. Figure 1 is a map showing the counties included in each of the nine districts, the district centers, and the location of the state contest.

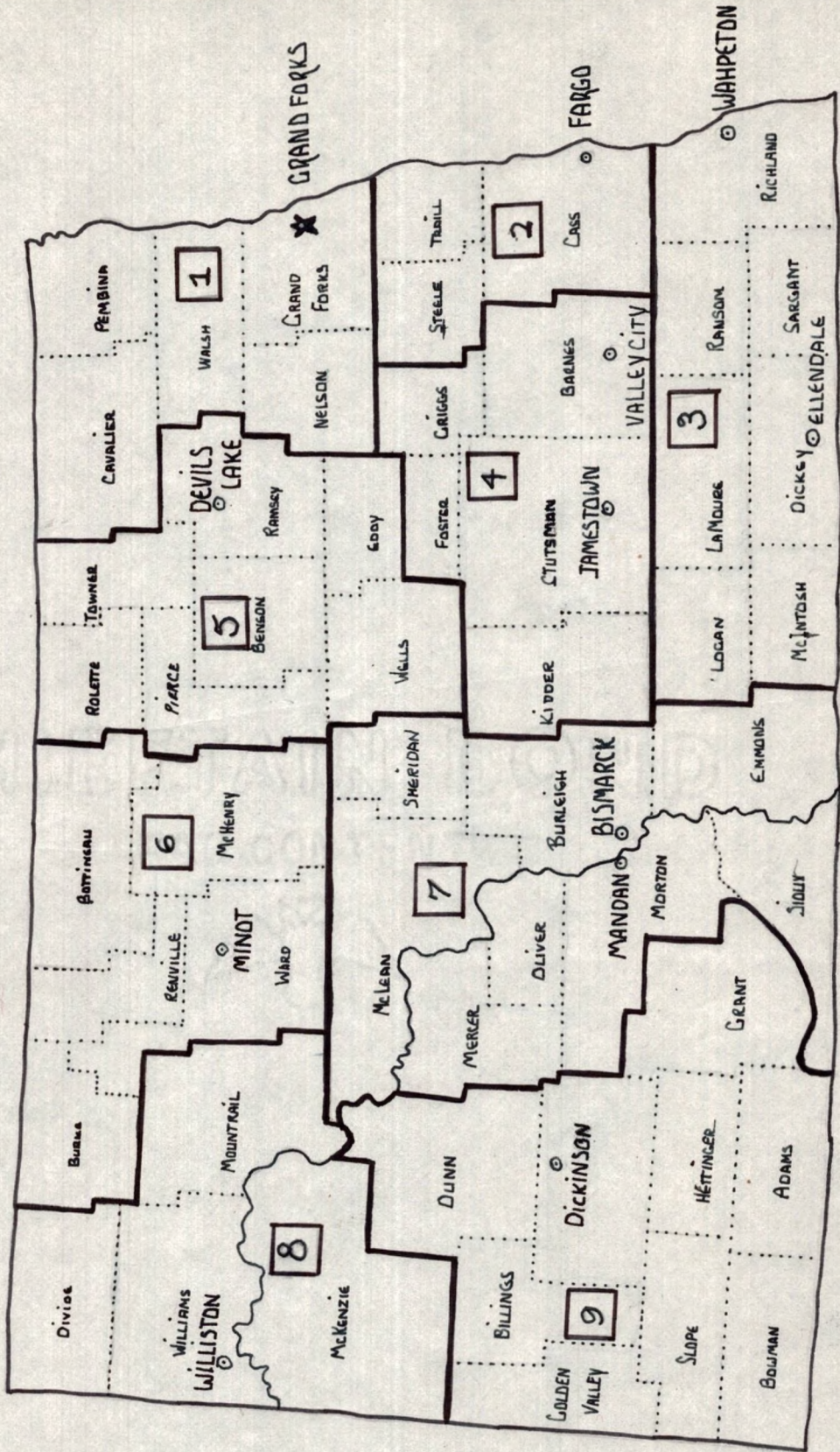
A further study of the map shows that districts three, four, and seven have two district centers instead of the conventional one. This is due, no doubt, to the rivalry of neighboring cities in districts four and seven, and to the size of district three. Contests in these three districts are held in alternate centers each year.

Administrative work undertaken by the University

The University, as sponsor and host of the commercial contests, has many duties to perform in order to make these contests possible. A list of these duties is as follows:

1. Mimeographed copies of instructions for all events are sent to the commercial teachers of the state during the latter part of February. These instructions are also included in one issue of the News-Letter published and sent out three times a year by

COMMERCIAL CONTEST DISTRICTS AND DISTRICT CENTERS IN NORTH DAKOTA



★ STATE CONTEST CENTER
 ○ DISTRICT CENTER

Figure 1

- the University. This News-Letter is the chief means used for publishing data pertaining to all contests.
2. Official lists of contestants are sent to the district managers immediately following the close of registration.
 3. All necessary contest material is sent to the district managers in sealed envelopes which may not be opened until the contest is about to begin. This material includes everything necessary for both the typewriting and shorthand events except the note paper used by the shorthand contestant for his or her dictation.
 4. The University accepts registrations for the state contest from all who have qualified by winning either first or second place in any commercial event at the district contest.
 5. At the state contest the University provides board and lodging for all contestants during their stay in Grand Forks.

Administrative work undertaken by district and state managers

A large portion of the burden of administering the commercial contests falls on the shoulders of the district and state managers. In the various districts it is the usual practice for the district manager to appoint a person to take charge of the commercial contests. At the state contest, Miss Hansen, as state chairman, officiates. The administrative duties at

both the district and state contests are identical, so they will be considered together. Again it is thought best to make a list of the various duties:

1. The scheduling of events so that there will be no conflict. It is recommended that all events be finished in the morning, which will leave the afternoon free for checking and scoring.
2. The collection of the identification tabs that have been properly filled out by the contestants and separated from their envelopes containing the required contest material. This procedure prevents the scorers from knowing whose papers they are checking. The tabs are put back on the envelopes only after all scoring and final ranking has been completed to the satisfaction of all.
3. The organization of the sponsors to act as checkers as soon as possible after the particular event is over. Each paper must be checked at least twice, unless disqualified. Sometimes a third checking is necessary if the two previous results are different.
4. The provision that the best possible working conditions should be furnished for the contestants. This is to include ample time for "warm-up" drills, a practice test to acquaint students with the signals for starting and stopping, and definite instructions to any

non-contestant in the room that absolute quiet must prevail.

5. The securing of a competent but disinterested person to act as dictator in the shorthand event, and another to take charge of the timing in typewriting unless this is done by the manager, himself.
6. The carrying out of the new 1938 shorthand contest rules which require the dictator to:
 - a. Select only letter material
 - b. Introduce himself, and if convenient, write his name on blackboard to be used by contestants for their identification initials.
 - c. Inform the contestants that a deduction of five points is possible for letter arrangement.*
 - d. Dictate a short letter or paragraph so as to enable the contestants to know something of the voice.
 - e. Preface the timed dictation with an appropriate heading and inside address.
 - f. Indicate paragraphs in the dictation.
 - g. Dictate a complementary closing and an official title.
 - h. Warn the contestants that they must use but one

* See Appendix C for an explanation of these deductions.

of their initials with those of the dictator in order that the checkers do not recognize the papers when scoring the test.

This chapter has been written in order to bring together all the available data on the subject of commercial contests in North Dakota. The historical approach was used to develop the rules and regulations of these contests. The section on administration outlined the duties of the University and contest managers in order to show the planning and organization needed to stage these contests. And finally, Appendices B and C have been included to set forth the eligibility requirements and 1938 rules for checking and scoring the contest papers. With this information in mind, the reader should be in a position to better understand the discussion to follow in the next chapter.

CHAPTER V

AN ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF QUESTIONNAIRE DATA PERTAINING
TO HIGH SCHOOL COMMERCIAL CONTESTS IN NORTH DAKOTATeacher Reaction Toward Contest Administration

Up to this point in the thesis, the purpose has been to give the reader a better understanding of the commercial contest situation as it exists, not only in North Dakota but throughout the entire nation.

This chapter contains the information which is the very "heart" of the study. It sets forth the frank opinions of teachers dealing with the many important phases of commercial contest activity in North Dakota.

These contests have unquestionably aroused more controversy among the commercial teachers of this state than has any other one issue for some time. Some teachers have gone so far as to say that they believe commercial contests have absolutely no value at all. Others agree with Mr. Louis C. Leslie who says, (7) "Anything that will stir up so much interest must be good. The very controversy that rages around the commercial contest is one of the best arguments in favor of them. What wouldn't the Latin teachers give to have something like that to fight about?" Still another group of teachers feel as does Mr. George R. Tilford, New York State Contest

Manager, in a personal letter to the writer under date of June 23, 1937, in which he suggests: "Those teachers in your state who seem to be opposed to contests should drop out quietly, but let the contest go on. There are some teachers who just cannot be 'Contest Minded.' Why should they try to kill the contest for other people? As I say, the thing for them to do is retire from the contest."

How do the majority of the commercial teachers in the state of North Dakota feel toward this form of activity? The answer lies in a correct analysis and interpretation of the data received from 104 questionnaires, answered and returned by commercial teachers of the state.

Table 3 shows that these returns represent teacher-reaction from each of the nine districts in North Dakota. There were but six returns from District Two, no doubt due to the fact that it is the smallest district in the state with the population largely centered in one city, Fargo. District Six, leads with twenty-one returns because it was possible for the writer to make personal contacts with almost all of the commercial teachers in the district.

Sixty-seven of the 104 returned questionnaires were from teachers who had contest experience, that is, at some time they had entered students in some form of inter-school contest. The remaining thirty-seven were answered by those who had no contest experience at all. In a few of the tables to follow,

Table 3
 Number of Questionnaires Returned From
 Each District in North Dakota
 (104 Teachers Reporting)

District Number	Teachers Answering	
	Number	Per cent
One	15	14.4
Two	6	5.8
Three	12	11.5
Four	7	6.7
Five	10	9.6
Six	21	20.2
Seven	11	10.6
Eight	13	12.5
Nine	9	8.7

a distinction will be shown between the responses of the two groups, but only if the differences are of special significance.

The Commercial Contests Offered in North Dakota

High school students in North Dakota participate in four different kinds of commercial contests, according to the response made by the sixty-seven teachers who had entered students in some form of inter-school contest. Table 4 indicates the ranking of the participation in each of these. Questionnaire returns show that the school-to-school contest is not popular in North Dakota as only three teachers reported having entered students in them.

Table 4
 Kinds of Inter-School Contests in Which
 Teachers Have Entered Students
 (67 Teachers Reporting)

Kinds of Contests	Teachers Answering Number	Per cent
State	32	47.8
District	57	85.1
County	18	26.9
School-to-School	3	4.5

County contests show a rather surprising degree of participation, since they are in no way connected with University supervision. This would seem to indicate that there is more than the usual amount of interest in commercial contests shown in some counties than in others. The counties in District One are especially active in county contest work according to questionnaire returns.

For a majority of the teachers and pupils in the state, however, the district and state contests, sponsored by the University, are the chief contacts they have with commercial contests. The district events give a great many more students an opportunity to compete at a minimum expense than would be the case if the University sponsored only the final state contest. The district contests are elimination events, from which the winners are selected for the state finals. It is

interesting to note at this point that North Dakota is one of only twelve states that do have elimination contests.

The Subjects Approved for Commercial Contests

North Dakota offers two contest subjects, typewriting and shorthand. Each of these are divided into two events, one for first year and the other for second year students.

The teachers were asked to check on the questionnaire the contest subjects in which they had entered students. The results of the tabulation of this information is given in Table 5, and shows, as might be expected, that typing I is the most popular event. The fact that typing II ranks a strong second, leading shorthand I by a good margin, may be surprising to a few readers. It shows clearly that two years of typewriting are common in even the smaller schools of the state.

Table 5

Commercial Contest Subjects in Which Teachers
Have Had Students Competing
(64 Teachers Reporting)

Subjects	Teachers Answering Number	Per cent
Typing I	61	95.5
Typing II	51	76.1
Shorthand I	37	55.2
Shorthand II	25	37.3
Others	2	3.0

Two teachers reported having entered students in contest subjects other than typewriting and shorthand. These teachers, no doubt, have taught in states which offer contest subjects differing from those in North Dakota.

It is significant to note in this connection, the reaction of teachers to the question as to whether they would approve of the addition of bookkeeping to commercial contests in North Dakota. Seventy-eight teachers responded as follows:

Approved of the addition-----44 or 56.4 per cent

Disapproved of the addition----34 or 43.6 per cent

It is to be regretted that twenty-six teachers did not answer the question. However, it may be safely assumed from questionnaire returns, that in case the University should add bookkeeping as a third contest subject many teachers would be pleased.

Other subjects suggested by a few teachers as desirable additions to commercial contests in this state include commercial law, commercial arithmetic, business English, and general business training.

Reasons for not Entering Commercial Contests

Thirty-seven teachers who answered the questionnaires, said that they had no contest experience. This raised the question as to why they had not taken part. The answer is indicated in Table 6 which lists the reasons for not entering students in commercial contests, as given by thirty-three of these teachers.

Table 6
Reasons Given by Teacher For Not Entering
Commercial Contests
(33 Teachers Reporting)

Reasons	Teachers Answering Number	Per cent
First year of teaching	7	21.2
Too expensive to enter contests	6	18.2
Had no student who might be expected to succeed	5	15.2
Was not sufficiently informed of contests	4	12.1
First year of Commercial course	4	12.1
Administrative department considered contest impractical	4	12.1
Entered in too many contests of all kinds	2	6.1
Taught bookkeeping for which there is no contest	1	3.0

Eleven teachers said that they had not as yet had an opportunity to enter such contests because it was their first year of teaching, or the first year that the commercial courses had been offered in their schools. The other reasons differ widely in character and are traceable in most cases to the varying conditions existing throughout the state.

It is interesting to note that out of the thirty-three answers given, only four teachers made definite criticisms of the contest itself, by stating that their school administration considered contests "impractical."

Table 7
Teacher Reaction as to the Sufficiency of Contest
Information Sent Out

	<u>Sufficient Information</u>		<u>Not Sufficient Information</u>	
	Teachers Answering Number	Per cent	Teachers Answering Number	Per cent
Teachers Having Contest Experience	47	71.2	19	28.8
Teachers Having <u>No</u> Contest Experience	16	48.5	17	51.5

The Distribution of Contest Information

One of the chief problems in connection with the success of an activity is its need for wide-spread publicity. Whether or not North Dakota commercial teachers receive enough information about contests to feel familiar with them is shown by Table 7. In the formation of this table, it was thought advisable to distinguish between the responses of those teachers who had contest experience, and those without this experience. The most interesting feature in this connection is the fact that over fifty per cent of the teachers who had never entered students in commercial contests, reported that they had not received sufficient information. From this it might be concluded that this lack of information may have played an important part in their failure to enter students in the contests.

Table 6 shows that four teachers made the definite statement that this was their reason for not taking advantage of contest opportunities.

More than a third of the entire group of teachers indicated that they had not received sufficient contest information. It may be that the school superintendents are at fault in that they have failed to inform the teachers. In any case, it would appear that some steps ought to be taken by the University to remedy this situation.

The Expense of Commercial Contests

The expense of an activity is always a factor that must be considered by both the school and students who are planning to participate in it. What is the situation in North Dakota in regard to the cost of entering commercial contests? The registration fees are twenty-five cents per student in shorthand, fifty cents for each single contestant in typewriting, and one dollar for the team entry consisting of three students. The total possible expense of any one school if they compete in all events is four dollars, or thirty-three and one third cents per individual taking part. It would not appear that this small amount for enrolment fee should keep any school from entering contestants.

A more serious problem is the transportation expense to and from these contests. The teachers reported that such costs ranged from twenty-five cents to five dollars for each contestant

in the district contest, and from fifty cents to ten dollars for each student who participated in the state contest. The average cost reported was between one and two dollars for the district, and between two and five dollars for the state contest. For schools a great distance from the contest centers, the expense of transportation does, no doubt, prevent some from entering. However, Table 6 shows that only six or 18.2 per cent of the teachers considered it too expensive to enter contests. Further than that, twenty-one or 72.4 per cent of twenty-nine teachers reported that the expense factor was not their reason for failing to enter the commercial contests.

Another important point in connection with this discussion is the problem of who pays these expenses. Table 8 shows that in many cases the school alone is the source of this expense money. Usually, however, the student must pay at least part of the cost, and sometimes all of it. Eight teachers indicated that money was obtained from the student activity fund, which appears to be a good way of providing for not only commercial contests, but other projects as well.

The trip to and from Grand Forks is the only expense necessary for contestants at the state contests. This is because the University provides free meals and lodging for the contestants during their stay in Grand Forks.

It would seem that the expenses in connection with commercial contest participation in North Dakota are moderate and can hardly be regarded as a serious drawback to those who wish to compete.

Table 8
Sources of Expense Money For Students Competing In
District and State Contests
(54 Teachers Reporting)

Sources of Expense Money	Teachers Answering Number	Per cent
School	19	35.2
Student and School	10	18.5
Student	10	18.5
Student Activity Fund	8	14.8
Board of Education	2	3.7
Student and Teacher	2	3.7
Commercial Department	2	3.7
Commercial Department and Student	1	1.9

The Team Contest

The team event in typewriting was first adopted by North Dakota in 1936. It was an added feature in that the competition between individuals still existed as a separate event. Most of the other states provide for competition between teams not only for typewriting but for shorthand and bookkeeping as well. In North Dakota, as in other states, the team consists of three students, whose respective scores are averaged to find the ranking of the team.

Like the other phases of contest activity, the team event

has come in for its share of criticism. A few teachers advocate varying the size of the team according to the size of the school. This procedure would have the effect of classifying the schools to some degree, and may be a worthwhile invocation. Still other teachers would like to see the individual and team events combined, so that the fastest typist would win even though a member of the team. As it is now, the team members are not eligible for individual awards.

Up to this time three contests have included the team event feature. The question as to how satisfactory it has been was answered by ninety-one teachers as follows:

Favored Team Contests-----66 or 72.5 per cent

Did not Favor Team Contests----25 or 27.5 per cent

It would seem that such an event is quite satisfactory.

It might even be advisable to extend this feature to the shorthand contest, since it does give more students an opportunity to participate.

The Mass Contest

For three years, from 1933 through 1935, the type of commercial contest held in North Dakota was changed to what is commonly known as the mass contest. It was not as successful as many hoped it would be, primarily because there was no positive method for checking the work of the teacher in the administration of the contest.

There are some very worthwhile values in a mass type of

commercial contest, however, since it tends to benefit all the students rather than a select few. It also tests the progress of the whole class, rather than the ability of a teacher to coach a few excellent students. Because of these values it was thought best to secure the reaction of the present group of North Dakota commercial teachers toward this type of contest. The question asked was whether or not the teacher would like to return to the system of mass contest. The answers received from ninety-four teachers follow:

Favorable to Mass Contest-----30 or 31.9 per cent

Unfavorable to Mass Contest----64 or 68.1 per cent

Evidently only a few teachers feel that the mass type of commercial contest is the solution to the problem in North Dakota.

Those teachers who did favor the mass contest were asked to make suggestion for ways of administering the contest to avoid the falsifying of records by dishonest teachers. Twenty-one of these answers are found in Table 9. The first two suggestions listed appear to have the support of most of these teachers. It sounds logical that the appointment of the teacher of one school to preside at the contest held in another school might help a great deal toward the solution of this one major defect of the mass contest. A still better plan might be to have an administrator sent out from the state office to take charge of the contests in every school.

Table 9
 Suggestions For Administering Mass Contests so as
 to Provide Accurate Records
 (21 Teachers Reporting)

Suggestions	Teachers Answering Number	Per cent
Teacher appointed to preside at another school's contest, witnessed by its superintendent	7	33.3
Have an administrator go from school to school, using entry fees for expenses	6	28.6
Administered by teacher and witnessed by principal, business man, and school board member	5	23.8
Administered by a disinterested person	2	9.5
Certified by a Notary Public	1	4.8

The preceding discussion indicates that fully two-thirds of the commercial teachers in North Dakota are unfavorable to the mass contest. However, it may be safely assumed that should the University be able to develop a plan whereby the mass contest would be accurately administered and scored, the majority of teachers would favor this type of test.

The Classification of Schools

A few other states have found it advisable to classify their schools in such a way that those of approximately the same size compete with each other. In North Dakota, there is

no such classification in commercial contests.

The question that naturally follows is whether or not it would be worthwhile to suggest to the University that some kind of classification be provided. The reaction of 101 teachers to just this sort of question follows:

Favored classification-----55 or 54.5 per cent

Did not favor classification----46 or 45.5 per cent

This tabulation indicates only a slight majority opinion, but it does show that there is a problem here to be considered. Those who favor this classification, base their cases on the inequality of opportunities that exist between the small and large schools. Those that see no reason for classification point to the fact that past records show that small schools have won their share of state awards.

A North Dakota superintendent who is also a commercial teacher, made this statement: "Probably there should be classification in contests, although there is none in business. When the student applies for a job, it is the best man who wins. Let the school teach no false ideas."

Teacher Reaction Toward the Testing Procedure in Typewriting

In North Dakota, the standard of measurement for all events in typewriting, is the speed and accuracy test on straight copy material. The popularity of this kind of test in typewriting is due to the influence of the International

Typewriting Contests which were sponsored by the Underwood Typewriter Company from 1906 to 1930 as a means of advertising. The International Contest used the speed test exclusively, and since the state winners were offered a free trip by the Underwood Company to this big event, the states naturally followed the International Contest rules and regulations for their state meets.

Possible Change in Test Material

One of the most often heard criticisms of typewriting contests is the fact that they test only one skill, the ability to type from straight copy. Its critics say that it focuses the attention of teacher and pupil on practically nothing but the pure mechanical skill necessary to operate the typewriter. As a substitute, they recommend the adoption of tests which would require the contestant to type such practical material as business letters, tabulations, rough drafts, manuscripts and the like. Through the change in material they claim that that there will develop a change in emphasis which will better the teaching of typewriting immeasurably.

On the other hand, there are teachers who say that the development of a high degree of straight copy typing is necessary, before the various practical skills can be developed properly. They go on to say that the winner of a straight copy test is nearly always the winner of any other type of test

that may be given.

With these facts in mind, it is interesting to note the reaction of ninety-six teachers in North Dakota toward a change of this kind in contest material. Table 10 points out the fact that a big majority of the teachers with contest experience approved of changing test material from straight copy to practical business material. The teachers who were without contest experience showed a majority opinion against such a change. Nevertheless, the total reaction of both groups show that most of the teachers favor this change, which would seem to indicate that some serious consideration ought to be given this matter by those in charge of the contests.

Table 10
The Changing of Test Matter from Straight
Copy to Letters and Tabulation

	<u>Favorable to Change</u>		<u>Unfavorable to Change</u>	
	Teachers Answering Number	Per cent	Teachers Answering Number	Per cent
Teachers Having Contest Experience	39	60.9	25	39.1
Teachers Having <u>No</u> Contest Experience	14	43.8	18	56.2

One North Dakota commercial teacher expressed the belief that "The second year typewriting event should be a test of

stenographic or office ability--not just plain copy." Certainly if such a change were made, it should be tried out first in the amateur or typing II event.

The International Commercial Schools Contest held in Chicago each year, uses a plan whereby the ranking in typing is based on an average net speed of both letters and straight copy. A plan of this nature might be a worthwhile step in advance for typewriting contests in North Dakota.

Grading of Typewriting Skill

A discussion of testing must necessarily include a few comments on the technique of grading. Every commercial teacher who has taught typewriting should be familiar with the International Typewriting Contest Rules. These rules have become the standard of measurement in typing throughout the United States.

In North Dakota, the International Contest Rules are used with certain minor revisions. Are they satisfactory as a grading device from the standpoint of the commercial teacher? One hundred two teachers replied as follows:

Approved Rules-----96 or 94.1 per cent

Disapproved Rules-----6 or 5.9 per cent

Evidently the grading of the present form of typewriting tests is considered very satisfactory.

Writing Time for Typewriting Tests

The 1938 revision of the commercial contest rules included a change in the writing time of typing tests from fifteen minutes. The thought behind the change was that a ten minute test measures straight copy typing skill as well as a fifteen minute test, and took less time to administer and score. The teachers were asked to check the writing time they preferred and Table 11 indicates that the majority agree with the change that was made.

Table 11

Opinions of Teachers as to the Number of Minutes
a Contestant Should Type
(103 Teachers Reporting)

Time in Minutes	Teachers Answering Number	Per cent
5	2	1.9
10	63	61.2
15	34	33.1
20	2	1.9
More	2	1.9

Improvements Suggested for Typewriting Contests

It is important to note the specific suggestion made by teachers for the improvement of the testing procedure in typewriting. It is quite evident that if contests are to continue,

the details of their organization should be constantly improved to meet the changing conditions.

Table 12 lists the changes recommended by forty-five commercial teachers. The fact that nearly fifty per cent of all the teachers reporting suggested that the test include practical office material such as letters, etc., supports the conclusions made in connection with Table 10. Many teachers expressed their approval of the 1938 revision dealing with the scoring of typing tests. Under the miscellaneous group the changes suggested were: providing a typewriter mechanic to inspect the machines the pupils bring to the contest; a relaxation speech or device of some sort before the actual contest;

Table 12
Improvements Suggested For Typewriting Contests
(45 Teachers Reporting)

Suggestions	Teachers Answering Number	Per cent
Make the test of office ability using letters, tabulation and rough draft	22	48.9
Percentage of accuracy combined with net rate for final score	10	22.2
Accuracy tests for first year students; speed tests for second year students	3	6.7
Allow students to correct errors under a set time for all	2	4.4
Double penalty for errors over a certain number	2	4.4
Miscellaneous suggestions	6	13.4

use of carbon copies that can be studied by the schools; straight copy for novice group, and letters for the amateurs; stricter supervision; and sending of practice material to competing schools, similar to the contest work.

Teacher Reaction Toward the Testing

Procedure in Shorthand

The standard of measurement for shorthand ability is the combined dictation and transcription test. This type of test measures both important phases of shorthand skill, the ability to take dictation and the ability to transcribe. The question as to how well these two abilities are tested depends on such factors as speed of dictation, time allowed for transcription, and the like. A discussion of these important factors is the purpose of this section.

Proper Speed of Shorthand Dictation

The practice in this state has been to dictate at different speeds in the district and state contests. In the district event, the rates have been set at sixty and eighty words per minute for the novice and amateur groups respectively. At the state contest, the rates are raised to seventy and ninety words per minute for the two groups.

Figure 2 is a line graph which shows the reactions of North Dakota teachers to this question of shorthand dictation speed for both novice and amateur contestants at the state contest. The solid line indicates that the majority of teachers

OPINIONS OF TEACHERS AS TO PROPER SPEED OF SHORTHAND DICTATION IN STATE CONTEST

NUMBER OF
TEACHERS
ANSWERING

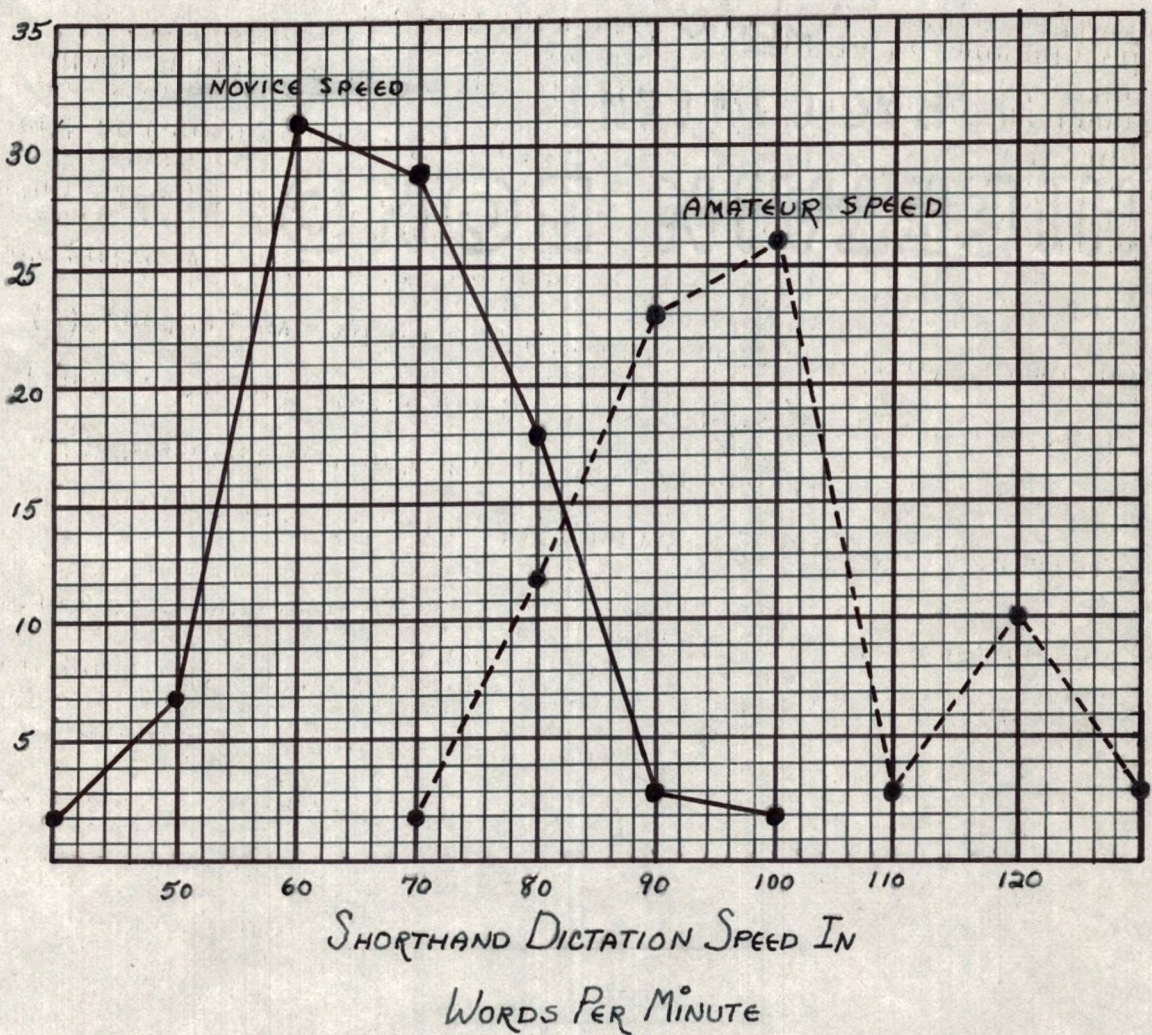


FIGURE 2

advocate speeds of sixty, seventy, or eighty words per minute for the novice group. The average is found to be sixty-eight words per minute. The dotted line shows that rates of ninety and one hundred words per minute are considered the best dictation speeds for amateur contestants at the state contest. In this case the average words per minute is ninety-seven.

It would appear that the majority of teachers are satisfied with the novice speed, but would be in favor of raising the amateur dictation rate to one hundred words per minute. A higher dictation rate for both groups might be the spur needed to encourage teachers to do better work with their students.

Limitation of Time for Transcription

No time limit has ever been set for the transcription of shorthand notes in North Dakota Commercial Contests. But, according to the nation-wide study made by Eva Newton, (9) most states do have definite transcription times varying from thirty minutes to an hour. The question that naturally arises from these two conflicting practices, is whether or not the teachers of North Dakota would be in favor of such a plan.

The answers of eighty-six teachers follow:

Favorable----67 or 77.9 per cent

Unfavorable--19 or 22.1 per cent

Evidently some steps should be taken in North Dakota to adopt a plan for limiting the transcription time.

Assuming that a time limit is to be set for future shorthand contests, the next question is whether the time factor should enter into the final score of the shorthand papers. Or, as one teacher expressed it, "Should the fastest transcriber receive points on his final rating for his speed." If so, the following plan is an interesting example of how this may be done.

In New York, the transcribing of shorthand notes is timed to the nearest one-fourth of a minute. This is done in order to determine the time percentage which is found in the following manner:

1. The median rank for time is ninety per cent
2. The median time is thirty minutes
3. For each minute less than thirty, the median rank is increased by one per cent
4. For each minute more than thirty the median rank is decreased by one per cent
5. The maximum time allowed is thirty-seven minutes

The final score of the shorthand paper is found by multiplying the accuracy percentage by three, adding the time percentage, and dividing the total by four. In this way, the accuracy percentage is given three values and the time percentage one.

At this point it is interesting to note the reaction of teachers toward the advisability of requiring students to use the typewriter in transcribing. All the teachers answering,

recommended that this requirement be applied to the amateur contestants, while less than fifty per cent of them would apply it to the novice group. The chief reason given by teachers for not requiring novice contestants to use the typewriter is that ordinarily, they do not possess the required typing skill. It is for this reason that the North Dakota contest rules permit novice transcripts in handwriting.

Miscellaneous Factors in the Testing of Shorthand

A few of the other phases of testing shorthand ability include such points as the kind of matter to be dictated, the type of errors to be considered in grading, and general improvements suggested by the teachers.

A majority of the teachers favored letters as the best type of dictation matter, although a great many recommended the combination of letters and straight copy. Table 13 lists the types of shorthand dictation matter in order of preference.

Table 13

Types of Dictation Matter Preferred for Shorthand Contests
(92 Teachers Reporting)

Types of Matter	Teachers Answering	
	Number	Per cent
Letters	49	53.3
Combination of Letters and Straight Copy	37	40.2
Straight Copy	6	6.5

The results are especially interesting in view of the fact that according to the 1938 revision of the commercial contest rules, only letters can be used for contest purposes. This provision was necessary because the revision called for the deduction of points for incorrect letter arrangement, in addition to the other errors that usually are factors in ranking shorthand. These other factors are listed in Table 14, which shows that the majority of teachers consider spelling the most important kind of error to be checked in grading shorthand papers. This is interesting because prior to 1938 spelling errors were not deductible. Dictated punctuation and shorthand errors, which rank a close second and third, are quite evidently the kind of error that have always been charged against the contestant.

Table 14

Kinds of Errors to be Deducted in Grading Shorthand Papers
(83 Teachers Reporting)

Errors to be Deducted	Teachers Answering Number	Per cent
Spelling	71	85.5
Dictated Punctuation	70	84.3
Shorthand	65	78.3
Placement	46	55.4
Typing	40	48.2
Miscellaneous	20	24.1

The improvements suggested for the shorthand contest are listed in Table 15. It will be noted that only fourteen teachers made recommendations which would seem to indicate that most of the teachers have no desire for a major change in the shorthand event.

Table 15
Suggested Improvements For Shorthand Contests
(14 Teachers Reporting)

Suggestions	Teachers Answering Number	Per cent
Aim more closely at office standards-- mailable material	7	50.0
Set a reasonable time for transcription	3	21.4
Grammatical errors should not count as much as shorthand errors	2	14.3
Two sets of matter dictated, but only one transcribed	2	14.3

Teacher and Student Reaction Toward the Advantages
and Disadvantages of Commercial Contests

For a proper understanding of this section, it is necessary to begin with the assumption that there are both advantages and disadvantages to commercial contests. With this thought in mind, the discussion that follows centers around the issues that have been proclaimed by both sides of the controversy. The teachers and contestants expressed their viewpoints through

the questionnaires, and the tabulation of their opinions form the basis for deciding whether the advantages outweigh the disadvantages or vice-versa.

Commercial Contests and the Contestant

The importance of the connection between commercial contests and the students taking part can readily be seen. First, it might be well to note the effect of contest preparation and participation on the work of the student in his or her contest subject. Table 16 indicates that the great majority of teachers are quite convinced that contests do better the typing work of students who participate in them.

Table 16

Effect of Contest Preparation and Participation On Student's Typing Work

Results	Teachers Answering Number	Per cent
Better	66	66.0
No different	27	27.0
Worse	7	7.0

The contestants themselves, were equally enthusiastic over the improvement they had noticed due to the extra time spent in contest work. The report of 133 of these students, which include both district and state contestants, is as follows:

Much improvement----59 or 44.4 per cent

Some improvement----62 or 46.6 per cent

No improvement-----12 or 9.0 per cent

It should be noted that fully ninety-one per cent of the contestants felt that they had increased their skill in preparing for the contest.

Another important aspect of the relationship between contests and the contestant is whether or not the nervous strain of a contest is bad for a student. This question was answered by ninety-one teachers as follows:

Bad for Student-----47 or 51.6 per cent

Not Bad for Student--44 or 48.4 per cent

Many of those who answered that the nervous strain was bad for a student qualified it by saying, "for some." Five additional teachers gave no definite answer one way or the other, saying that it depended on the student. One teacher from the western part of North Dakota expressed herself in this way: "I feel that it has both good and bad points. It gives the students an idea of how they will feel when they go out on their first assignment or job. That is good."

Evidently a good many teachers do feel that the nervous strain which is naturally a part of all contest work, is bad for at least some students. It is doubtful whether any teacher would claim that all students are affected adversely, or that any one student is hurt permanently by the nervous strain, but

it is a factor that must be considered. Teachers in charge can ease the situation at the contest by a relaxation speech, and a practice test to acquaint the students with all the necessary signals for starting and stopping.

Another much advocated disadvantage of commercial contests is the belief that contest work is not a true measure of a student's ability. The tabulation in Table 17 indicates that North Dakota teachers agree with this assumption. The chief reason behind this belief is that the students will not ordinarily do as good work at the contest as he will in his home classroom. For example, one teacher said, "Contests are a good measure, but many students go to pieces." Another teacher said, "Some students cannot work under pressure." A partial answer to this criticism is that the student who can "come through" under the stress of contest conditions usually deserves to win, and often will continue to win in the competition of life.

Table 17

Teacher Reaction as to Whether Contest Rates are a True Measure of Student Ability

	<u>A True Measure</u>		<u>Not a True Measure</u>	
	Teachers Answering Number	Per cent	Teachers Answering Number	Per cent
Typewriting	10	10.3	87	89.7
Shorthand	14	16.7	70	83.3

Commercial Contests and the Class

One of the most serious criticisms directed against the present form of commercial contest, is that it benefits only the few exceptional students. In order to determine the validity of this assumption, the teachers were asked to answer two questions, and the contestants one, based on the benefits derived by the entire class because of contests. Table 18 contains the answers of the teachers to the question as to whether contests induce competition between the members of the class. The results indicate that the majority felt that at least some classroom competition was due to the influence of commercial contests.

Table 18

Amount of Classroom Competition Due to Commercial Contests
(95 Teachers Reporting)

Amount of Competition	Teachers Answering	
	Number	Per cent
Much	16	16.9
Some	67	70.5
None	12	12.6

Do members of the class work harder to gain speed and accuracy because of the prospects of competing in the contests? This question was answered by both teachers and contestants and their replies are found in Table 19. It is interesting to note

that while 27.4 per cent of the teachers felt that much extra work was done by the entire class, only 14.6 per cent of the contestants believed this to be the case. As might be expected, the largest percentage of both teachers and contestants felt that some extra work was done by the whole class.

It may be concluded from the preceding discussion that the entire class receives some benefit from the contest even though only a few of the best students are given the opportunity to compete. A wise teacher will make sure that this is the case by class contests and pep talks throughout the year.

Table 19
Amount of Extra Work Done by Entire Class
Because of Prospective Contest

Amount of Extra Work	Teachers Answering Number	Answering Per cent	Contestants Answering Number	Answering Per cent
Much	26	27.4	19	14.6
Some	65	68.4	88	67.7
None	4	4.2	23	17.7

Commercial Contests and the Teacher

The major purpose of contests may not be to educate or inspire the teachers, yet there can be no question but that the teacher learns something in the process of developing the contestants, and in attending the contests.

Teacher-reaction in this case is directed toward themselves.

The question asked was whether the contest encouraged the comparison of teaching methods. The answers of ninety-five teachers follow:

Does encourage-----74 or 77.9 per cent

Does not encourage--21 or 22.1 per cent

From this response it would appear that the majority of teachers are improving their teaching methods by exchanging ideas with other teachers at the contests.

Commercial Contests and the School

The position of the school in the commercial contest program is of vital importance because without their cooperation, contests could not exist.

The attitude of the superintendent toward contests is perhaps the most significant problem, since it is he who largely determines the policy of the school. In the first chapter of this thesis, it was suggested that one reason why the University Contest Committee decided to continue contests despite their opposition, was because they felt that the majority of school superintendents were in favor of them. This was merely an opinion according to Mr. Page, but Table 20 indicates that the opinion was well founded. The table indicates that, according to the teachers, almost seventy per cent of their superintendents were distinctly favorable toward commercial contests, while only about seven per cent were listed as being actually opposed to them.

Table 20
Attitude of Superintendents Toward Commercial Contests
(89 Teachers Reporting)

Attitudes	Teachers Answering Number	Per cent
Favorable	61	68.5
Indifferent	22	24.7
Unfavorable	6	6.8

Another issue connected with the school and commercial contests, is the problem of their advertising value. In other words, are commercial contests a good or bad form of advertising for the school and department? The ninety-seven teachers who answered the preceding question reported as follows:

Good advertising----70 or 72.2 per cent

Bad advertising-----27 or 27.8 per cent

Evidently most teachers do feel that contests are worthwhile as a means of advertising. One teacher qualified his answer by saying that it depended upon whether you won or lost, and another said that there were too many losers in proportion to winners.

Ranking of Commercial Contest Advantages and Disadvantages

Table 21 lists five advantages of commercial contests in the order of importance in which they were ranked by ninety-one teachers. This ranking was obtained by asking the teachers

Table 21
How Teachers Rank the Importance of the Following
Contest Advantages

<u>Advantages</u>	<u>Total</u>
Development of student's poise and confidence through contest experience.	312
Increased interest of student due to competitive element.	307
Value of new contacts made by both pupil and teacher.	270
Better teaching through discussions of methods with other teachers at contest.	250
Raising of standards in Commercial Education through contests.	232

to indicate their first preference by the numeral "one", their second preference by the numeral "two", their third preference by the numeral "three", and so forth. These numbers were then weighted by giving five points to numeral "one", four points to numeral "two", three points to numeral "three", two points to numeral "four", and one point to numeral "five". The weights were then multiplied by the frequency to obtain the total cumulative score for each advantage.

It is interesting to note that the highest rankings go to those values that benefit the student rather than commercial education in general. A few other advantages listed by the teachers were:

1. Recognition of outstanding work by students.
2. Singles out teaching ability

3. Provides opportunity for comparing quality of work being done in schools.

Table 22 is a list of five outstanding disadvantages ranked by the teachers in the same way as were the advantages. A few teachers listed additional disadvantages as follows:

1. Concentration of teachers time in training students.
(In some instances)
2. Discourages the other students
3. Creates bad feeling between the teachers

Table 22

How Teachers Rank the Importance of the Following
Contest Disadvantages
(99 Teachers Reporting)

<u>Disadvantages</u>	<u>Total</u>
Contests apply only to the very best students	391
Contests are not a true measure of a student's ability	372
Large schools have the advantage over small schools in winning	282
Contests are expensive	248
Superintendents over-estimate the importance of winning, and thus put too much pressure on teacher.	177

A brief analysis of most of these alleged disadvantages shows that they could be removed with the adoption of a few improvements in the testing and administration of commercial contests. For example, the disadvantage ranked first in importance states that contests apply only to the best students. This

could be removed by the adoption of an improved mass contest. It is also interesting to note in this connection that the opponents of commercial contests who stress the fact that contests apply to only the very best students, are admitting that contests are valuable. Their plea is that more students should be given the opportunity for contest participation

Teacher and Student Reaction Toward the Continuance
of Commercial Contests

It is only fitting that this last section should deal with the problem of whether the teachers and students do or do not favor the continuation of commercial contests in North Dakota. The opinions of the teachers are listed in Table 23, which shows that the majority of both the experienced and inexperienced teachers favor the continuation of commercial contests as they

Table 23

Teacher Opinion as to Whether the Present Form of Commercial
Contests Should be Continued in North Dakota

	<u>Favor Continuation</u>		<u>Favor Discontinuation</u>	
	Teachers Answering Number	Per cent	Teachers Answering Number	Per cent
Teachers Having Contest Experience	32	55.2	26	44.8
Teachers Having <u>No</u> Contest Experience	16	55.2	13	44.8

are now conducted. While the majority is not large, it must be remembered that the thirty-nine negative responses were made against the present form of commercial contests, and not necessarily against all forms of such contests. In fact, twelve of the thirty-nine teachers favoring the discontinuation of the present contests, indicated definitely that if some changes were made, commercial contests would be more suitable to them. In view of this evidence, if the title of Table 23 were changed to include the teacher reaction toward any form of commercial contests, the data for all eighty-seven teachers might read as follows:

Favor continuation-----60 or 69.0 per cent

Favor discontinuation---27 or 31.0 per cent

These data represent an unquestioned majority of teachers favoring future contests.

What is the reaction of the contestants themselves toward the advisability of continuing commercial contests in North Dakota? The 137 who were contacted at the district and state contests in 1938 replied as follows:

Favor continuation-----126 or 92.0 per cent

Favor discontinuation--- 11 or 8.0 per cent

There can be little doubt but that the contestants enjoy these contests, and do feel that they are worthwhile.

It might be appropriate at this point to list the improvements suggested by these contestants who showed such an interest in commercial contests. The information is contained in Table

Table 24
 Contestants Suggestions For Improving Commercial Contests
 (28 Students Reporting)

Suggestions	Students Answering Number	Per cent
Start on scheduled time	5	17.9
Elimination of the percentage of accuracy in grading	5	17.9
Give a person two chances	3	10.7
Include tabulating with speed tests	3	10.7
More warning to begin--count off last few seconds	3	10.7
Classify schools	2	7.1
Provide paper holders	2	7.1
No people in room that are not necessary	1	3.6
Better ventilation	1	3.6
Have commercial contest the first day	1	3.6
Miscellaneous suggestions	2	7.1

24, and shows that there was quite a diversity of opinion. The following expressions are worth of special mention:

"Duck this accuracy business."

"Make 'em so you don't get so nervous."

"Better sleeping quarters--am dead tired."

Viewpoints of North Dakota Commercial Teachers

In order to conclude this study with an unbiased an attitude as possible, it was thought advisable to include comments made

by six teachers with widely diverging points of view. Two comments represent the reaction of teachers favoring commercial contests; two others represent those teachers who are undecided; and the final two are typical viewpoints of those teachers who are opposed to any form of commercial contests. They are as follows:

"I do feel that contest work keeps a teacher on her toes, and without it there would be something decidedly lacking."

"Commercial contests have their faults but many of these faults are common to all contests. I think they can be measured more objectively than music, etc. Commercial students have as much right to go to a state contest as other groups."

"For my part, I am very much in favor of contests, if they can be organized and conducted in an efficient manner. In my opinion, however, contests as they are now conducted in North Dakota are very inadequate."

"Immaterial as to whether contests are continued. Am better satisfied with them this year since rewriting the rules, and comparing with other states."

"Contests are unfair to students, teachers, and the school in general. It does not improve the weaker students, nor the average student. Too much teacher time is used for the contest entries in proportion to the time given a majority of the class."

"Contests in shorthand and typing are very inconvenient as conducted now. Because they are not conducted in your own school it necessitates taking typewriters to the contest place. They are often then out of order, and the atmosphere is not the kind the student has been accustomed to having."

CHAPTER VI
SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

This study was made for the purpose of throwing some light on the controversy over the value of high school commercial contests in North Dakota. The principal findings of the study were obtained from data received from questionnaires answered by 104 teachers and 137 contestants.

Chapter II consists of a brief survey of five related studies. Three of these were state studies and two were national in scope. They served to indicate the nature of the problem, and were very helpful as a guide to good source material.

In Chapter III the national significance of commercial contests was considered. It was found that the number of contests have increased year by year until in 1938 there were thirty two state and four national or international commercial contests. The subjects most often tested are typewriting, shorthand, and bookkeeping, with a few states offering some of the other commercial subjects as well. Commercial contests in the majority of states are sponsored by colleges and universities, although in a few cases other organizations have taken charge. The two types of commercial contests found in the United States, are the individual-team, and mass contest. Some states are

using both by modifying them in certain respects.

Chapter IV describes the history and administration of commercial contests in North Dakota. The first state typewriting contest was held in 1928 at the University of North Dakota. In 1930 shorthand was added, and elimination contests were held in twelve districts of the state. From 1933 to 1935 a mass type of commercial contest was offered by the University, but this proved unsatisfactory so that in 1936 the district and state plan of organization was again adopted. It was at this time that the team event in typewriting was adopted. For the 1938 contest some major changes were made in the rules by a committee of commercial teachers.

The University Contest Committee directs all the contest work in the state of North Dakota. Mr. John A. Page, as executive secretary of the committee, sends out all the necessary information to the nine district centers, and with Miss Hansen, arranges for the commercial events at the state contest.

The information contained in Chapter V has been described as the "heart" of the study. This information includes the reactions of teachers and students toward such topics as contest administration, testing procedure in typewriting and shorthand, contest advantages and disadvantages, and suggestions for improvement. The following list summarizes the findings of this chapter:

1. The district and state commercial contests, sponsored by the University of North Dakota, are the most popular kinds of high school commercial contest, although there does seem to be a growing interest in county contests.
2. The greatest number of contestants take part in the typewriting events. Bookkeeping, as a third contest subject, would be a worthwhile addition to the contest program according to many teachers.
3. Many teachers are not receiving enough information about commercial contests to feel familiar with them.
4. The expense of participating in commercial contests is not enough to be considered a serious drawback to contest participation.
5. The team contest in typing seems to have proven itself to be quite satisfactory.
6. The mass type of contest is not favored by many teachers no doubt because of the difficulty encountered in proving the accuracy of the returns.
7. A slight majority of the commercial teachers favor the classification of schools according to size.
8. A slight majority of the commercial teachers favor a change of test matter from straight copy to letters and tabulation.
9. The International Typewriting Contest Rules for grading

typewriting tests are highly approved of by the teachers.

10. The present ten minute straight copy test is considered more satisfactory than one of fifteen minutes.
11. The improvement suggested most often for typewriting is the inclusion of letters, tabulations, and rough draft in the test.
12. The majority of teachers favored the present dictation speed for novice contestants, but recommended a higher speed for the amateur group.
13. The limitation of transcription time was approved by a big majority of the commercial teachers as a desirable addition to the testing program in shorthand.
14. Letters were preferred by the majority of teachers as the best type of dictation matter.
15. The majority of teachers consider spelling the most important kind of error to be deducted in grading shorthand papers.
16. Both teachers and contestants express the opinion that contest preparation and participation does better the contestant's typing skill.
17. Many teachers feel that the nervous strain of a contest is bad for a student.
18. The majority of teachers were of the opinion that contest rates are not a true measure of student ability.

19. Most teachers thought that some classroom competition was due to the influence of commercial contests.
20. Both teachers and contestants feel that a prospective contest stimulates all students to do more work.
21. The majority of teachers feel that contests encourage them to compare teaching methods.
22. According to the teachers, the majority of their superintendents favor contests.
23. Most teachers feel that commercial contests are worthwhile as a means of advertising.
24. The outstanding advantage of commercial contests according to the teachers is that such contests develop student's poise and confidence.
25. The major disadvantage is that contests apply only to the best students.
26. The majority of teachers and contestants feel that contests should be continued in North Dakota.

It would appear from this summary that most teachers and contestants believe that commercial contests are educative and worthwhile and should be continued in North Dakota.

Recommendations

The following recommendations for improvement are made in the hope that they may be of some assistance to those interested in the commercial contest activity in North Dakota.

1. Revise the second year typewriting test so as to include five minutes of work on an unarranged letter plus a five minute speed and accuracy test on straight copy. The final grade to be a composite of the scores in the two parts of the test.
2. Set a definite time limit for the transcription of shorthand notes in both novice and amateur events. It may also be worthwhile to adopt a plan similar to the one discussed on page 71 of this thesis in which the fastest transcriber is awarded points for his speed.
3. Increase both the novice and amateur dictation speeds by ten words a minute at the district and state contests
4. In shorthand transcripts, deduct only half as much for typing, spelling, and capitalization errors as for errors due to mistakes in recording the dictation.
5. Extend the team event to shorthand.
6. Include bookkeeping as both an individual and team event.
7. Classify schools by requiring Class A schools to enter teams of five individuals; for Class B schools, teams consisting of three individuals.
8. All schools to enter either one or two single contestants, or one or two teams. If one or two teams are entered by a school, their single contestants shall be members of the team.

9. Rules and information sent to commercial teacher of all eligible high schools soon after school opens in the fall.
10. University to provide checkers on request of teachers who are unable to attend the state contest.
11. Grant certificates of proficiency to all who attain a minimum requirement of speed and accuracy in all events to remove some of the emphasis from the winning places.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Blackstone, E. G., Research Studies in Commercial Education, University of Iowa Monographs in Education, 3:57-9, University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa, 1928.
2. Botsford, Frances R., "Guidance as Motivation in Typewriting", The Balance Sheet, 14:60, February, 1933.
3. Briggs, Thomas H., The Junior High School, Houghton Mifflin Company, Chicago, Illinois.
4. Colvin, A. O., "The Commercial Contest in Secondary Education", The National Contest Journal, 4:28-9, April, 1937.
5. "High School Commercial Contests", The Business Education World, 17:781-2, June, 1937.
6. Dempsey, Audrey V., Training Methods Used by Commercial Teachers in Preparing Students for the Contests in Commercial Subjects, Unpublished Master of Arts Thesis, Colorado State Teachers College, Greeley, Colorado, 1932.
7. Leslie, Louis A., "Wondering and Wandering", Business Education World, 17:795-7, June, 1937.
8. Linstad, Esther C., A Study of the Winners in the Colorado State Commercial Contests and their Activities, Unpublished Master of Arts Thesis, Colorado State Teachers College, Greeley, Colorado, 1933.
9. Newton, Eva M., A Nation-Wide Study of State Commercial Contests for High School Students, Unpublished Master of Science Thesis, Oregon State Agricultural College, Corvallis, Oregon, 1936.
10. Outland, Glen O., Typewriting Contests in Ohio, Unpublished Master of Arts Thesis, Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio, 1933.
11. Smith, Harold H., "Why Typewriting Contests", The Contest Journal, 1:9, April, 1934.

12. Studebaker, M. E., "Enriching Methods and Materials Through The Mass Contest", Business Education Digest, 1:35, March, 1937.
13. Tilford, George R., "The Psychology of Educational Contests", National Contest Journal, 4:7-8, April, 1937.
14. "History and Purpose of the High School Contest", Departmental Bulletin, University of North Dakota, 14:3, November, 1930.
15. "State and District Contests--Spring 1938", The Balance Sheet, 19:366-9, April, 1938.

APPENDIX A

PART

- I Letter
- II Teacher Questionnaire
- III Student Questionnaire

APPENDIX B

PART

- I Eligibility of High Schools
- II Eligibility of All Contestants
- III Eligibility of Commercial Contestants

APPENDIX C

PART

- I Rules for Checking and Scoring
Typewriting Tests
- II Rules for Checking and Scoring
Shorthand Transcripts

APPENDIX A--PART I

Minot High School
Minot, North Dakota
March 26, 1938

Miss Viona Hansen
High School
Grand Forks, North Dakota

Dear Miss Hansen:

I wonder if you would help me out of a little difficulty?

"Sprig has Cub"--remember the sign? For many teachers that means preparing students for the coming contests. Are you commercial teachers believers in such contests for our struggling-but-hopeful business men and women of the future?

My problem for which I need your assistance, is to write an account of your reactions toward this question of commercial contests. A check mark will be all that is needed in most cases to fill in the answers to the enclosed questionnaire.

No commercial teacher is barred from expressing his or her opinion, regardless of contest experience. The success of my Master's thesis depends upon you.

Would it be possible for you to return the questionnaire in the enclosed, self-addressed envelope this week? I thank you kindly for your assistance in this matter.

Sincerely yours,

Howard B. Hovda

PART II

COMMERCIAL CONTESTS IN NORTH DAKOTA

1. Have you ever entered students in inter-school commercial contests of any kind? Yes___;No___.
2. If so, which kind please? School-to-school___;County___.
3. If not, please give reasons. _____
4. Do you receive enough information about contest plans, requirements and results to feel familiar with them? Yes___;No___.
5. In which subjects have you had students competing? Typing I___
Typing II___;Shorthand I___;Shorthand II___;Others_____
6. Do you approve of the International Typewriting Contest Rules for grading typing tests? Yes___;No___.
7. Would you be in favor of changing customary contest procedure in typewriting by requiring contestants to type actual business letters and tabulation exercises instead of straight copy for only speed and accuracy? Yes___;No___.
8. Would you like to return to a system of Mass contest where the whole class is tested in their own schoolroom? Yes___;No___.
9. If so, how would you suggest that it be administered to avoid falsifying of records by dishonest teachers? _____
10. For how many minutes at one time should the contestant be required to type? Five___;Ten___;Fifteen___;Twenty___;More___.
11. Do you approve of team contests in typewriting, assuming that there must be contests of some kind? Yes___;No___.
12. What improvements would you suggest in the form, grading, or administration of typewriting tests used in contests to make them more worthwhile? _____
13. Novice (first year) shorthand students should be dictated to at what speed in the STATE contest? Below 50___;50___;60___;70___;80___;90___;100___;Above 100___. (Words per minute)
14. Amateur (second year) shorthand students should be dictated to at what speed in the STATE contest? Below 70___;70___;80___;90___;100___;110___;120___;Above 120___.
15. In shorthand, what kind of matter should be dictated to contestants? Letters___;Straight Copy___;Others_____

16. Should first year students be required to use the typewriter in transcribing? Yes___;No___. Second year students Yes___No__
17. In grading shorthand papers which of the following points should be deducted as errors? Typing Errors___;Shorthand errors___;Spelling errors___;Dictated punctuation errors___;Placement on page___;Others_____
18. In shorthand, do you favor limiting the time for a contestant to transcribe his notes? Yes___;No___.
19. What improvements would you suggest in the form, grading, or administration of shorthand tests used in contests to make them more suitable?_____
20. Many states have objective tests in bookkeeping as a contest subject. Would you approve of such an addition? Yes___;No___. Would you like any other subject added?_____
21. Would you favor classification of schools as to size in commercial contests? Yes___;NO___.
22. Are commercial contests a good form of advertisement for the school and department? Yes___;No___.
23. How much does it cost you in all to take each student to the DISTRICT CONTEST? \$_____. STATE CONTEST? \$_____.
24. Who pays the expenses?_____
25. If you have not entered contests is it because of this expense factor? Yes___;No___.
26. Are contest rates a true measure of a student's ability to use TYPEWRITING? Yes___;No___. SHORTHAND? Yes___;No___.
27. Is it true that the members of the class work harder to gain speed and accuracy because they feel that they have a chance to make the "team"? Most___;A few___;None___.
28. Is the nervous strain of a contest bad for a student? Yes___; No___.
29. Contest preparation and participation tends to make a student's typing Better___;Worse___;No Different___.
30. How does your superintendent feel toward commercial contests? Favorable___;Unfavorable___;Indifferent___.
31. Does the contest encourage you to compare you teaching methods with those of other teachers? Yes___;No___.
32. Does the contest induce competition between the members of your class? Much___;Some___;None___.

33. How do you rank the following suggested contest ADVANTAGES in importance? (Please write the numeral one (1) for the item considered most important; numeral two (2) for the item second in importance; (3) for third; (4) for fourth; (5) for fifth.

- Value of new contacts made by both pupil and teacher.
- Better teaching through discussions of Methods with other teachers at the contest.
- Increased interest of student due to competitive element.
- Development of student's poise and confidence through contest experience.
- Raising of standards in Commercial Education through contests.
- Any others? _____

34. How do you rank the following suggested contest DISADVANTAGES in importance? (Again please write the numerals 1,2,3,4,5, in front of the items listed, in order of importance.)

- Contests are expensive.
- Large schools have the advantage over small schools in winning the various contest events.
- Contests apply only to the very best students.
- Contests are not a true measure of a student's ability.
- Superintendents over-estimate the importance of winning and thus put too much pressure on teacher.

35. Would you like to see commercial contests continued in North Dakota as they are? Yes ___; No ___.

36. If not, do you think that ratings made at DISTRICT contests should determine State Champions, and thus do away with the necessity for the STATE contest? Yes ___; No ___.

37. Do you approve of County contests in commercial subjects? Yes ___; No ___. School-to-school contests? Yes ___; No ___.

38. If you do not approve of the above-mentioned types of contests could any changes be made that would make contests more suitable to you? Yes ___; No ___.

39. Finally, assuming that there will be contests regardless of our individual reactions, please check the points you would like to see changed:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Contest Organization | <input type="checkbox"/> Kinds of awards given |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Testing Methods | <input type="checkbox"/> Any Others? _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grading Methods | _____ |

40. Do you approve of this year's contest rules? Yes ___; No ___.

Note: Would you list on the reverse side of this page any suggestions or criticisms you may have?

THANK YOU!

PART III

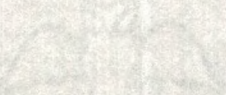
COMMERCIAL CONTESTS IN NORTH DAKOTA
(Student Questionnaire)

1. What subject are you competing in? Typing I___; Typing II___;
Shorthand I___; Shorthand II___.
2. Have you entered this type of contest before this year?
Yes___: No___ . Last year? Yes___; No___.
3. How were you chosen to represent you school in this contest?
By teacher___; By a class contest___; Any other way? _____

4. Did you work harder in your contest subject this year
because of this contest than you would have done had there
been no contest? Much___; A little___; None___.
5. If so, have you noticed any improvement due to the
extra time spent? Much___; A little___; None___.
6. Did the other students in you class work harder in the
hopes of being chosen for the contest? Most___; A few___;
None___.
7. Would you say that these contests are worthwhile, and
should be continued as they are? Yes___; No___.
8. Could you suggest any improvements that might be made
in the form of these contests? _____

CHIEFTAIN BOND

FRANKLIN



APPENDIX B

PART I

ELIGIBILITY OF HIGH SCHOOLS

All public and private schools in the state offering four years of high school work and having two full-time high school teachers are eligible to participate in the contests.

Any school entering contestants must be a member of good standing in the North Dakota University High School Conference and Interscholastic Contest Association. This requires the payment of an annual fee of one dollar and applies to all schools entering the contest whether or not the school avails itself of the special railroad rates.

Every high school in the state, eligible under the above rules, shall have the right to send one contestant to the state meet at the University. This rule is designed to enable any high school to be represented at the state meet regardless of having failed to win a place in a district elimination contest. Nevertheless a contestant coming to the state contest as a winner in a district contest or as a direct entry in tennis, golf, track and field or otherwise fulfills the privilege of this rule. The term contestant is here construed to mean one individual person. Such contestant is privileged to compete in more than one event upon payment of the nominal registration fee for each event entered. The student must comply with all of the above rules and be duly certified.

Questions arising regarding the division to which a school belongs shall be determined upon the data in the Educational Directory, as substantiated by the Director of Secondary Education.

Permission for a school to change from one district to another should be obtained from the district manager of the district in which the school wishes to participate. Permission must also be obtained from the High School Contest Committee at the University.

PART II

ELIGIBILITY OF ALL CONTESTANTS

(North Dakota High School League Rules)

1. A student shall have been in attendance as many school days as he missed at the opening of the semester, should his enrolment not have been made the first day of the semester.
2. He shall not compete for more than four seasons in any one branch of inter-high school contests, provided that competition for one year while in the eighth grade or below shall not constitute one of the four seasons.
3. He shall not have participated in a similar contest during the same school year as a member of any other than a high school team.
4. He shall not have been at any time a member of a team representing an institution of higher rank than a secondary school.
5. He shall be doing passing work in at least fifteen hours per week, the passing grade to be computed from the opening of the semester and relate to such subjects as have a credit value of one-half unit per semester.
6. He shall not be a graduate of a four year high school course nor a graduate of a senior high school offering three year courses comprehending the 10th, 11th and 12th grades. Neither shall he compete after having earned credits sufficient to meet the graduating requirements in any course of study prescribed by the school he is to represent unless such credits have been secured in less than eight semesters of school attendance.
7. He shall not be over 20 years of age.
8. After attending the first semester of the ninth grade, he shall have credit on the school records in unit-per-year or half unit per semester subjects of at least three half units earned and recorded at the close of the last semester in which he was enrolled as a student, ten days or more being sufficient to constitute enrolment in any semester.

9. He shall always have contested under his own name.
10. He shall have been in attendance in the school he represents for one semester upon transferring from another school unless his parents have become residents of the school district to which he is transferred or the school from which he is transferred does not offer work of the corresponding year in which he is ranked; and in the instance of a pupil transferring from a public high school to any other high school, in the same city, or vice versa, he shall not be eligible to represent the new high school in the same school year.
11. "High School League Recommended Standards of Eligibility," wherein the administration shall be left entirely to the local schools. The four standards are:
 - a. Every athlete shall be given a thorough physical examination before the opening of the athletic season.
 - b. Parental consent should be secured before the participation of any athlete.
 - c. Proof in advance should establish the birthdate of any 9th semester student before participation.
 - d. Every student participating in inter-scholastic contests must abstain from the use of tobacco and alcoholic beverages.
12. No student having attained the eighteenth anniversary of his birth shall participate in any interscholastic contest after his eighth semester in high school, or after his seventh if his eighth does not follow consecutively after his seventh.

PART III

ELIGIBILITY OF COMMERCIAL CONTESTANTS

1. Typewriting Novice Class: Any student who has not had instruction or personal use of the typewriter, prior to September first, of that same year, is eligible to contest in this division.
2. Typewriting Amateur Class: Any student who has had not to exceed 400 hours in instruction or professional use of the typewriter is eligible to enter this division.
3. Shorthand Novice Class: Any student who has had no instruction in shorthand prior to September first of that same year, is eligible to enter the contest in this division.
4. Shorthand Amateur Class: Any student who has had not to exceed 400 instruction hours of shorthand is eligible to compete in this division.

APPENDIX C

PART I

RULES FOR CHECKING AND SCORING TYPEWRITING TESTS

Checking Papers

1. All papers must be checked twice by different checkers, winning papers must be checked three times.
2. Each word omitted, inserted, misspelled, or in any manner changed from the printed copy as hereinafter set forth, shall constitute one error.
3. But one error shall be penalized in any word save in the case of rewritten matter.
4. If errors are found in the printed copy, contestants may correct same or may write as per copy, but in no case shall an error be charged against such words unless omitted, in which case they must be penalized.
5. All writing must be double spaced between lines. Single spacing or irregularly spaced lines are penalized one error in addition to other errors in said line.
6. If paper $8\frac{1}{2}$ x 13 is used, each page excepting the last must have at least 33 lines; $8\frac{1}{2}$ x 11 pages, at least 26 lines. Penalty for short page, one error.
7. Except at end of paragraph, lines which have less than 61 characters, including spaces, or more than 76, shall be penalized one error, in addition to all other errors in said line.
8. Paragraphs should be indented five spaces. (However, if indenting is the same number of spaces all through the test no error will be charged.) An error in paragraphing is penalized in addition to all other errors in same line.
9. All spaces and punctuation points are considered as part of the preceding words. (Either one or two spaces may be used after the colon.) Any error in punctuation shall be penalized unless the preceding word has already been penalized.

10. Every punctuation point incorrectly made, inserted, omitted, or in any manner changed from the printed copy, is an error and must be penalized as such unless it falls under Rules 3 and 9.
11. Two spaces should follow the period, interrogation point, and exclamation point--one space after all other points, excepting the colon, which may be followed by either one or two spaces. Spacing after a colon, however, must be uniform on each paper.
12. An error must be charged against every incorrect shift key operation. If parts only of the proper character appear it is an error; if the complete character is plainly discernible it is no error.
13. One error shall be charged for any word wrongly divided at end of line; but no error shall be charged for incorrectly hyphenated word because of being hyphenated at end on printed copy.
14. Dashes must be written with two hyphens, without space before or after.
15. If the outline of any character is discernible there is no error--otherwise it must be penalized if lightly struck.
16. Letters transposed in any word constitute an error. Errors in words transposed are correct as though no transposition existed, and one error is charged for the transposition.
17. Strike-overs, erasures, X-ing are errors and shall be penalized as such. Papers containing erasures will be disqualified.
18. In rewritten matter, every error, whether in the first writing or rewriting, shall be penalized and one error added as a penalty for the rewriting. Rewritten matter is not counted in the gross.
19. Any word written so close to top, bottom, or sides of sheet that a portion of any letter is cut off, shall be penalized one error.
20. If a word occupies less than its proper number of spaces, it shall be penalized one error. When two characters or a space and a character are so crowded that any portion overlaps or would overlap were a character typed in the adjoining space, one error shall be deducted for the "piling."

21. Irregular spacing of letters at beginnings of lines are common faults of operators who do not return the carriage correctly, and shall be penalized. (If error occurs repeatedly and can be proved due to the margin, it shall not be penalized.)
22. Each error shall be indicated by drawing a circle around the error.
23. For every error, ten words shall be deducted from the gross number of words written.
24. Identification tabs may be affixed only after all scoring and final ranking has been completed to the satisfaction of the chairman and qualified checkers.

Scoring Papers

1. The gross strokes are divided by five; ten words are deducted for each error; divide that result by 10 (minutes) to determine net words per minute. Always carry out the computation two places.

Example:

```

5) 3015--gross strokes
   603-- " words
less 40--10 x the number of errors (4)
10) 563--net words correctly written
    56.30--net words per minute

```

2. The final rating, however, shall be based upon both speed and accuracy. Add to the net words per minute the percentage of accuracy to determine the final score.

Example:

```

Total words written--603) 563--net words correctly written
                          .9338 or 93.38--percentage of
                              accuracy

```

```

56.30 net words per minute--speed
93.38 percentage of accuracy

```

149.68 contestant's final score.

3. The final score of a typewriting team (three members) is computed by averaging the records made by the members of the team.

PART II

RULES FOR CHECKING AND SCORING SHORTHAND TRANSCRIPTS

Checking Transcripts

1. Every word omitted, inserted, or transposed, or in any way changed from the printed copy shall be penalized.
2. Misspelled words and failure to paragraph as dictated will be charged as errors in the transcript.
3. Hyphenated compound words shall be counted as two or more words.
4. Figures are counted as they are read--"38" is counted as two words. A mistake on one of the figures, therefore, shall constitute but one error.
5. Errors are not charged both for the transcribing of wrong words and for the insertion of others on the same construction. For instance, the checker should count the number of words incorrectly transcribed and that will be the total of errors on that construction; but if the number of incorrect words the student transcribes on a particular construction exceeds the number of those he should have transcribed, he is charged with the greater number.
6. Parts of the letter will be considered in the checking, that is, the letter must be in mailable form. Therefore, one error shall be charged for an error in any of the following five points:
 - a. Heading (date, placing, etc.)
 - b. Inside address
 - c. Salutation
 - d. Body--includes margins, line spacing, placing of entire letter on page.
 - e. Closing--including identification initials, enclosures, etc., necessary to complete form of letter.

Scoring Transcripts

1. For the percentage of accuracy, deduct number of errors from total number of words dictated and divide by the total number of words dictated.

Example:

$$\begin{array}{r} 300 \text{ words dictated} \\ \text{less } 8 \text{ errors} \\ \hline 300 \overline{) 292} \end{array}$$

97.33 percentage of accuracy--final score

2. Ties in shorthand scores will be recognized.