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## A Study of Teachers' Meetings in North Dakota Secondary Schools

Axel Harry Pedersen

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A STUDY OF TEACHERS' MEETINGS  
IN  
NORTH DAKOTA SECONDARY SCHOOLS

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

by

Axel Harry Pedersen

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
for the  
Degree of  
Master of Science in Education  
June, 1935

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This thesis, offered by Axel Harry Pedersen, as a partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Science in Education in the University of North Dakota, is hereby approved by the Committee under whom the work has been done.

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#### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The writer wishes to thank the members of the Committee. He is particularly indebted to Dr. A. V. Overn, Professor of Education in the University of North Dakota, for encouragement and guidance which have made this study possible.

Acknowledgments are also due the many city and village school executives, who submitted the data and gave valuable suggestions.

To these and to others who have helped in one way or another, the author expresses his sincere appreciation.

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To the North Dakota Teachers:

THE GOLDEN RULE

"There's a golden mean in the midst of life  
If the head and heart will find it;  
And ever the harvest is rich and rife  
If the reaper is quick to find it;  
There's content and cheer and a kind good will,  
A joy in the living of pleasure,  
There are days of toil and rest, and still  
There's time for counting treasure.  
You must not hurry, you must not lag,  
But ever be up and doing;  
You must not strain, you must not fag,  
But a system keep pursuing;  
Just keep right on at the task you set,  
The winner must never waver,  
And the man will seldom have much regret  
Who has no fear or favor,  
There's a golden mean in the midst of life  
But you can not bully or buy it;  
It's away from the burden and the heat of strife  
And you never know until you try it.  
You never know till you come right down  
To humble, honest living,  
With no great or wide renown,  
But the spirit of forgiving."

--Charles W. Stevenson

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## A STUDY OF TEACHERS' MEETINGS IN NORTH DAKOTA SECONDARY SCHOOLS

## CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

Leaders in the field of education, especially school administrators, clearly indicate the need for teachers' meetings and that they should be in the list of outstanding administrative and supervisory functions in a school system. The administrative manual for North Dakota high schools points to carefully planned and democratically conducted professional faculty meetings as a phase of supervision, and emphasizes a number of factors to be observed in directing such meetings.<sup>1</sup> Data obtained from 185 North Dakota public high schools, having five or more teachers in each system, showed that 184 of those schools had teachers' meetings.

The faculty meeting reflects in general the tone of the school. It shows the standing of the principal and superintendent as professional leaders, reveals the attitude of the teachers toward professional development, and offers a measure of the effectiveness of the entire school organization.<sup>2</sup>

## Purpose of the Study

The primary purpose of this study is to assemble data and set forth in detail the status and functions of teachers' meetings in North Dakota secondary schools as they actually are at the present time, and to suggest to what extent these meetings agree with the

<sup>1</sup>Administrative Manual and Course of Study for North Dakota High Schools (Department of Public Instruction, 1931), pp. 35-36.

<sup>2</sup>A. C. Roberts and E. M. Draper, The High-School Principal (D. C. Heath and Company, 1927), p. 104.

practices recommended by outstanding school authorities.

More specifically stated, the aims of this study are to answer the following questions:

1. If teachers' meetings are common in North Dakota secondary schools, how are these meetings planned and what is the general procedure in organizing and conducting them?
2. To what extent is the faculty responsible for the success of these meetings?
3. What is the relative value of various kinds of teachers' meetings in North Dakota secondary schools?
4. What topics are considered at the meetings and what is the relative importance of these topics in order of frequency ranking?
5. Do teachers' meetings in North Dakota agree with the practices advocated by leading educational authorities?

#### Method of Treatment

The problem will be treated under six main divisions as follows:

Introduction.

A review of related studies.

Procedures in planning and conducting teachers' meetings.

Types, number, and relative importance of various types of meetings.

The concern of teachers' meetings.

Conclusions and recommendations.

### Limitations

This study will take into consideration only North Dakota high schools having five or more teachers in the system. Model high schools of various state teachers colleges and of the State Agricultural College are not included. The county agricultural high schools and the private sectarian high schools are not considered in this study.

Although a review of related studies will be included, little attempt will be made to treat the problem historically. Excerpts from leading educational magazines and books will be used, but only when deemed necessary to emphasize a particular point, and to reveal best practices suggested by outstanding school administrative authorities, including E. P. Cubberley, Franklin W. Johnson, John C. Almack, and L. V. Kocs.

### Definitions of Terms

The term superintendent as used in this study refers to the head of the school, the chief executive, of any school system having five or more teachers.

The term principal as here used refers to the administrator and supervisor of the high school, or of the grade school, or of a building, where a superintendent is also employed in the school system.

Secondary schools are those schools that include one or more years of high school work. The terms secondary schools and high schools are synonymously used.

### Sources of Data and Data

The greater part of the data dealing with teachers' meetings in North Dakota secondary schools was secured by means of a questionnaire

mailed to the superintendents of the 300 classified, consolidated, graded, and unclassified high schools of North Dakota, which, according to the high school directory,<sup>3</sup> had five or more teachers in the school system. A limited amount of information was received by direct personal interviews with superintendents, and from letters accompanying the returned questionnaires. Various textbooks, dealing with school administration, and professional magazines were also consulted.

Of the 300 questionnaires sent to the various secondary schools 185 were filled in and returned.<sup>4</sup> This represents 61.66 per cent of the number sent. Table 1 shows a comparison of the number of questionnaires sent and returned. Of the total number of questionnaires returned, 67.67 per cent came from classified high schools. Replies were received from every high school in the state having twenty or more teachers. No replies were received from unclassified high schools. The consolidated and graded high schools returned 56.07 per cent of the questionnaires sent to them; and the classified high schools sent back 66.13 per cent of their questionnaires.

Table 1

Comparison of Number of Questionnaires Sent and Returned

Kind of High School	Number Sent	Number Returned	Per Cent Returned
Classified	189	125	66.13%
Graded and Consolidated	107	60	56.07%

<sup>3</sup>North Dakota Educational Directory. (Department of Public Instruction, Bismarck, 1933-34).

<sup>4</sup>See Appendix.

Kind of High School	Number Sent	Number Returned	Per Cent Returned
Unclassified	4	0	0.
Total number	300	185	61.66

Figure 1 is a picture of the distribution of schools contributing data. It shows the random dispersion of these schools in the state. In general the eastern and central counties contributed more data than the western counties, but this is due to the fact that the eastern half is more heavily populated and therefore has a larger number of public high schools than western North Dakota.

Detailed information received from a large number of public high schools, including all such schools having twenty or more teachers, distributed at random all over the state should give a fairly representative sample of teachers' meetings in North Dakota secondary schools.

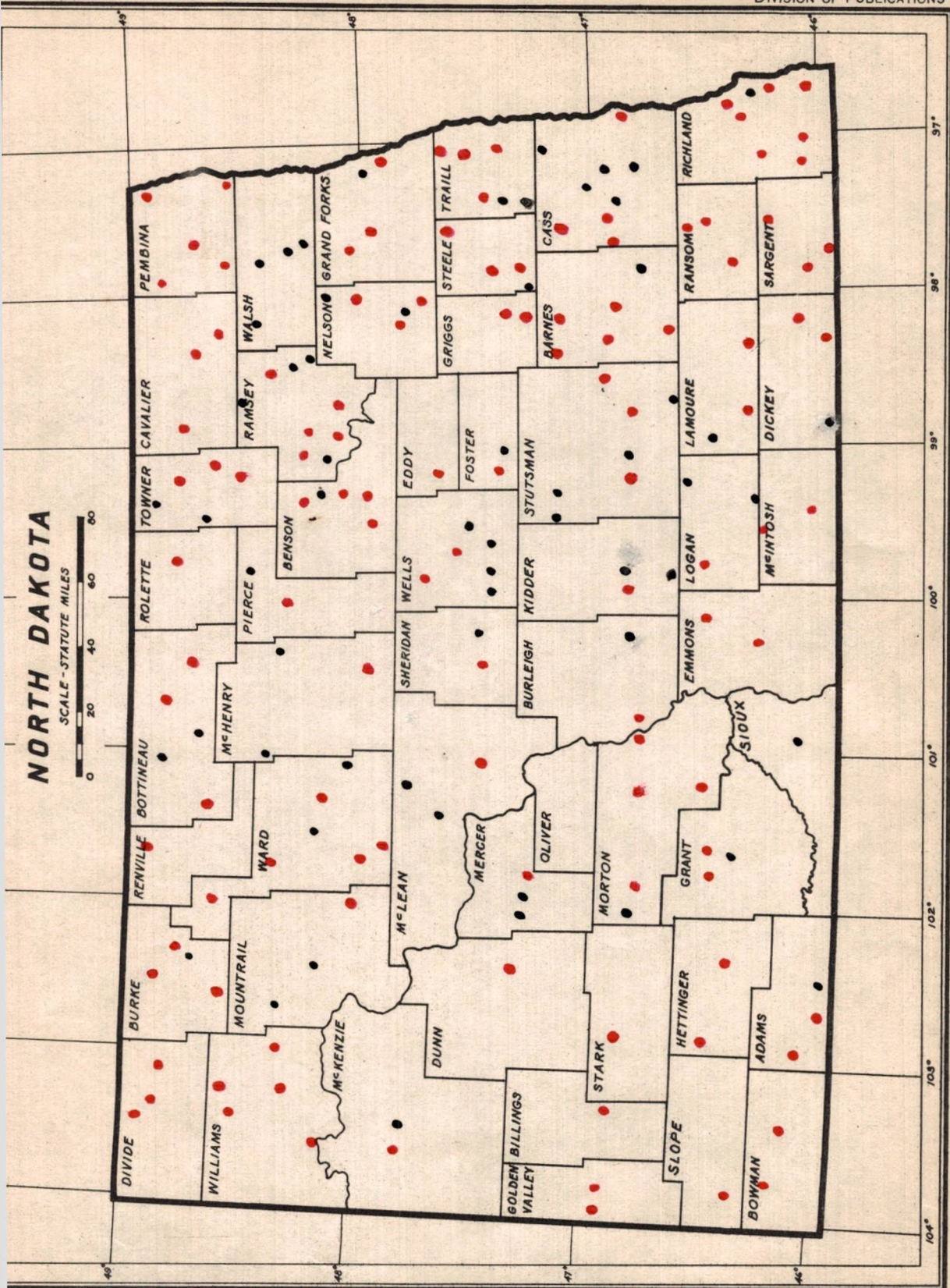


Figure 1

Distribution of Secondary Schools Contributing Data

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

DIVISION OF PUBLICATIONS



Red dots--Classified Schools

Black dots--Graded and Consolidated Schools

## CHAPTER 2

### A REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Certain chapters in later administrative and supervisory textbooks and articles in educational magazines have been devoted to teachers' meetings. The purpose of this chapter is to survey such literature, to bring to the reader a summary of related studies, and to reveal outstanding opinions of some of the most eminent educational writers.

#### Related Literature

No study of a similar nature has been made in North Dakota. Teachers' meetings have been discussed from time to time in educational textbooks and magazines, but surveys of actual conditions are not numerous.

S. T. Dutton made a brief contribution in 1903.<sup>1</sup> Probably one of the earliest compilations of practices which might have been adopted for the improvement of teachers in service appeared in 1911 in the form of a United States Bureau of Education Bulletin prepared by W. C. Ruediger.<sup>2</sup> This bulletin was primarily concerned with recommendatory practices for teachers' meetings in general and in the elementary schools. A report by L. W. Smith giving the results of his study and experience with teachers' meetings in a high school of which he was principal at that time appeared in the *School Review* in

<sup>1</sup>S. T. Dutton, School Management (Charles Scribner's Sons, 1903), pp. 42-45.

<sup>2</sup>W. C. Ruediger, Agencies for the Improvement of Teachers in Service, Department of the Interior, Bureau of Education, Bulletin (1911), No. 3, pp. 65-82.

1919.<sup>3</sup> A brief tabular description, by Earl Hudelson,<sup>4</sup> of certain practices in connection with teachers' meetings in the high schools of West Virginia, and a report by E. L. Saul stating his experiences made their appearances in the School Review in 1922.<sup>5</sup>

L. V. Koos reports a survey of professional teachers' meetings made primarily to determine the teachers' preferences for various types of meetings, their preferences for topics to be considered, and their attitudes toward such meetings.<sup>6</sup> In his introductory remarks, he says:

"The teachers' meeting has long been regarded as having large possibilities. It is the purpose of the study here reported to add to the scant literature on the subject in order to afford more guidance than has so far been available to principals or groups of teachers who are casting about for the best means of developing a series of professionally profitable teachers' meetings."

His method of inquiry was by means of a questionnaire sent to 400 high school teachers employed in twenty-five high schools with staffs ranging in size from two members (exclusive of the principal) to approximately 100. All but one of the high schools were in communities of the Mid-West.

The preferences of high school teachers are reported under two main headings, (1) those bearing on arrangements for or conditions under which the meetings should go forward; e.g., their frequency, days, hours, and duration of meetings; requirement of attendance,

<sup>3</sup>L. W. Smith, "The High School Faculty Meeting," School Review, Vol. 27 (June, 1919), pp. 426-440.

<sup>4</sup>Earl Hudelson, "The Profession of Principal," School Review, Vol. 30 (January, 1922), pp. 15-23.

<sup>5</sup>E. L. Saul, "Professional Teachers' Meetings for the High School," School Review, Vol. 30 (May, 1922), pp. 371-377.

<sup>6</sup>L. V. Koos, "High School Teachers' Meetings," American School Board Journal, Vol. 69 (October, 1924), pp. 35-36.

social features, etc.; and (2) those pertaining to the concern of the meetings as determined by topics considered.

Three hundred ninety-five of the high school teachers replied. In answer to the questions as to how often teachers' meetings should be held, 205 high school teachers, or over fifty per cent, favored monthly meetings, 104 favored bi-weekly meetings, and twenty-six suggested having a meeting once a week. Koos inferred from these replies that high school teachers believe in teachers' meetings and if these meetings are professionally constructive, the teachers are ready to attend them once or twice each month.<sup>7</sup>

L. V. Koos also found in this study that high school teachers predominantly prefer that there be a definite time for opening and closing meetings; that the topics be prearranged and preannounced; that attendance be required; and that the meetings usually be held separately from those for elementary school teachers. He found that there was a dominant preference, but less approach to unanimity, for the assignment of readings to be reported on at such meetings, and that there also was a dominant preference for the principal or superintendent to act as presiding officer. In reply to the question of the desirability to provide time at the meetings for social intercourse, lunch, etc., 301 answers were against and eighty-seven were in favor.

In connection with preferences pertaining to the concern of meetings, Koos found that most teachers favored professional topics, such as "Fixing the policy of the school in the minds of the teachers,"

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<sup>7</sup>L. V. Koos, op. cit., p. 35.

"Considering improvement of classroom teaching," and "Keeping abreast of the best educational thought."

There is . . . . "apparent preference of high school teachers for topics the consideration of which will foster their professional growth and the improvement of the work going forward in the school in which they are employed."<sup>8</sup>

John E. Sutherland made a study of teachers' meetings in Minnesota.<sup>9</sup> The purpose of his study was to bring out the value of various types of teachers' meetings in the supervision of a school. Sutherland made a study of definite teachers' meetings held in high school departments during two months, February and March; and also obtained a large amount of valuable data dealing with actual practices in high school departments of schools in Minnesota. A chapter dealing with training that a College of Education should give superintendents and principals in order that they might make teachers' meetings more effective is also presented.

"The median as to plans and procedures for teachers' meetings in Minnesota is about as follows:

"The purpose for which the meetings are held is to discuss new methods or to make announcements. The superintendent or the principal plans the meetings, and this is done about one week before the meeting is held. Topics are selected as a result of the superintendent's visitations to classrooms and at the suggestions of teachers.

"During February and March one meeting was held by the superintendent; the principal held two. Meetings are held occasionally without any definite set time rather than at definite time. They are about one month apart. After school is the preferable time of the day and the meeting continues for about one hour. In larger school systems, the group meetings are not on a regular predetermined day, but are held after school and last about one hour.

<sup>8</sup>L. V. Koos, The American Secondary School (Ginn and Company (1927), p. 671.

<sup>9</sup>John E. Sutherland, Teachers' Meetings in Minnesota, Master's Thesis, University of Minnesota (1929).

"According to the judgment of superintendents, most teachers are interested in teachers' meetings. A small per cent show no interest.

"The greatest difficulty in organizing teachers' meetings is lack of time or finding a suitable time.

"More general meetings are held than special meetings. Outlines to guide the meetings are not used to a great extent, ordinarily not at all. The procedure at the meeting is discussion of the question or problem under consideration without a prepared talk. The superintendent or the principal is the leader. The topic for discussion is marks and grades or some similar topic like tests and assignments.

"The meeting is followed up by a personal check by the superintendent in his classroom visitation. No special attempt is made to evaluate the teachers' meetings.

"Thirty per cent (twenty-four in number) of the superintendents and principals suggest methods of training that a College of Education should give to help superintendents make teachers' meetings more effective. They suggest more emphasis on teachers' meetings in the present courses in supervision."<sup>10</sup>

Charles E. Gold made a study of teachers' meetings in South Dakota four-year accredited high schools in order to determine some of the current ideals and practices in the organization and conduction of teachers' meetings.<sup>11</sup> Gold in summarizing reveals the following significant facts about teachers' meetings in South Dakota:

"1. Too much time is devoted to routine matters and administrative details. These activities should be taken care of by means of bulletins sent to the teachers.

"2. The entire study indicates that superintendents recognize teachers' meetings as an important factor in the training and guidance of their teaching corps, but other circumstances interfere with the desired ends. Evidently very little attention is being given to the study of professional

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., pp. 54-55.

<sup>11</sup>Charles E. Gold, Teachers' Meetings With Special References to Practices in South Dakota, Master's Thesis, University of South Dakota (1930).

subjects in many of the schools reporting; and little is being accomplished in ascertaining the presence and scope of school problems existing in the various systems. Superintendents need to pay more attention to the consideration of those activities which are of the greatest value to the school. Too many superintendents do not attempt to determine the immediate problems of their school systems, or fear to undertake their solution.

"3. Unprofessionalism exists among teachers just as it does in any other professions.

"4. The two major objectives reported are developing morale, and administrative details."<sup>12</sup>

So far in this chapter the discussion has concerned itself very briefly with some of the early literature dealing with teachers' meetings; and a short resume has been given of three studies where definite information was secured from teachers, principals, and superintendents work in the field. Koos studied the preferences of high school teachers in some of the middle western states;<sup>13</sup> Sutherland surveyed actual practices for two months in Minnesota high schools<sup>14</sup> and Gold made a study of teachers' meetings in South Dakota.<sup>15</sup>

Literature bearing on definite points, and recommendations most frequently advocated by educational leaders will now be reviewed.

#### Needs and Purposes

The principles underlying the need for teachers' meetings are outlined by Carrigan as follows:<sup>16</sup>

"1. The principal (superintendent) is the responsible leader in his district.

<sup>12</sup>

Charles E. Gold, op. cit., pp. 34-36.

<sup>13</sup>L. V. Koos, "High School Teachers' Meetings," American School Board Journal, Vol. 69 (October, 1924), pp. 35-36.

<sup>14</sup>John E. Sutherland, op. cit.

<sup>15</sup>Charles E. Gold, op. cit.

<sup>16</sup>Rose A. Carrigan, "Meeting of Teachers in a School District," Journal of Educational Methods, Vol. 4 (November, 1924), pp. 91-93.

2. The children are entitled to the highest type of educational service which the developed capacities and potential talents of the teachers assigned to serve in the district can be brought to render.

3. Improvement in teaching is secured:

a. When a teacher acquires greater skill by use of a better technique through making a stronger presentation of the subject, or through developing a better relation with the children so that the appeal becomes more effective.

b. When she increases her fund of knowledge either in the field of her subject matter or in the direction of broader information regarding the most highly approved practices.

c. When she lifts her ideals to higher levels.

4. Teachers are most effectively influenced to improve their teaching in these directions:

a. Through inspirational contacts.

b. Through suggestive help offered by one eminently successful in a given field.

c. Through responsibility for personal contributions as a member of a group undertaking a piece of voluntary work.

d. Through observation of exceptionally fine teaching.

e. Through the reading of the best professional literature.

5. The teachers' meetings can be so planned that they will be a strong factor in bringing about improvement in teaching through the influence just mentioned."

By having all members of the faculty contribute in a vital way to a series of thoughtfully planned programs teachers' meetings aim to:<sup>17</sup>

1. Develop and strengthen a spirit of unity and loyalty.

2. To further professional growth both of a theoretical and practical nature.

<sup>17</sup>A. C. Roberts and E. M. Draper, The High School Principal (D. C. Heath and Company, 1927), p. 106.



3. To inspire improvement of various school activities and relationships.

4. They should also serve as one of a number of means of effective supervision.

#### Time and Number of Meetings

The most popular days of the week for teachers' meetings are Monday and Tuesday; and Friday is the poorest of all days.<sup>18,19</sup> It is also recommended that the day should be decided by faculty vote.<sup>20</sup> The time of the day most often indicated is in the afternoon immediately after school hours.<sup>21,22</sup> A statement adverse to these practices is made by Barr and Burton, when they write:

"Teachers' meetings should not as a rule be held after school, when time is short and every one is tired. If possible also Monday and Friday should be avoided. School may be dismissed early or an occasional evening may be taken. This is a difficult point, and no satisfactory solution seems yet to have emerged. It has been suggested by some that one of the best things that could happen to the teaching profession would be the inauguration of a Saturday morning school for teachers."<sup>23</sup>

The duration of meetings will vary according to type of meeting, but the range generally is from forty-five minutes to ninety minutes, with one hour the most common for length of meeting.<sup>24,25</sup>

<sup>18</sup>L. V. Koos, The American Secondary School (Ginn and Company, 1927), pp. 668.

<sup>19</sup>J. C. Almack and J. P. Bursch, Administration of Consolidated and Village Schools (Houghton Mifflin Company, 1925), p. 364.

<sup>20</sup>Franklin W. Johnson, Administration and Supervision of the High School (Ginn and Company, 1925), p. 99.

<sup>21</sup>A. C. Roberts and E. M. Draper, op. cit., p. 111.

<sup>22</sup>L. V. Koos, op. cit., p. 668.

<sup>23</sup>A. S. Barr and W. H. Burton, The Supervision of Instruction (D. Appleton and Company, 1926), p. 414.

<sup>24</sup>A. C. Roberts and E. M. Draper, op. cit., p. 110.

<sup>25</sup>L. V. Koos, op. cit., p. 668.

Meetings should have a definite opening and closing time.<sup>26,27</sup>

The number of meetings held varies a great deal, but a regular meeting every two weeks or once a month probably is the most common practice.<sup>28</sup> The frequency of meetings is dependent upon the size and the type of organization of the school. A general rule is to have meetings often enough to provide for prompt consideration of urgent problems, yet not often enough to occasion unnecessary meetings.<sup>29</sup>

#### Place and Attendance

For minor conferences the classroom and very often the superintendent's office is found most convenient; while for group meetings and general meetings it may be advisable to use some other place. The library or the school board's room might be found most satisfactory.<sup>30</sup>

High school teachers believe that attendance should be required.<sup>31</sup> Only those teachers that are vitally interested in the meeting should be asked to attend.<sup>32</sup> Attendance at teachers' meetings is sometimes required and sometimes voluntary.<sup>33</sup> There is no question of compulsion when teachers' meetings are of the right type.<sup>34</sup> Probably the most common rule is that the prompt attendance of those teachers for whom the meeting is scheduled should be expected.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., p. 668.

<sup>27</sup>Franklin W. Johnson, op. cit., p. 99.

<sup>28</sup>A. C. Roberts and E. M. Draper, op. cit., pp. 109-110.

<sup>29</sup>H. H. Foster, High School Administration (The Century Company, 1928), p. 457.

<sup>30</sup>John S. Thomas, "Encouraging Discussion in Teachers' Meetings," Elementary School Journal, Vol. 30 (February, 1930), p. 445.

<sup>31</sup>L. V. Koos, op. cit., p. 668.

<sup>32</sup>A. S. Barr and W. H. Burton, op. cit., p. 412.

<sup>33</sup>Rose A. Carrigan, "Meeting of Teachers in a School District," Journal of Educational Methods, Vol. 4 (January, 1925), p. 185.

<sup>34</sup>John G. Fowlkes, "Your Every-day Problems," The Nation's Schools, Vol. 2 (September, 1928), p. 75.

### Leadership

Teachers believe that the principal or superintendent generally is the most suitable presiding officer. The responsibility of the success of meetings falls upon the superintendent.<sup>35</sup> Teachers are sometimes selected to lead the meetings.<sup>36</sup> Cubberley advises keeping the meeting within the group, and ordinarily not to bring in outside speakers. This tends to insure local emphasis and practical application.<sup>37</sup>

### Types of Meetings

Barr and Burton divide teachers' meetings into five groups:<sup>38</sup> namely (1) general meetings attended by all teachers in a building or district; (2) grade meetings attended by the teachers working in one grade only; (3) intergrade meetings attended by the teachers of two or three adjacent grades; (4) departmental meetings attended by teachers of the same subject; and (5) conventions or associations.

E. P. Cubberley cleverly discusses five types of meetings which should be avoided.<sup>39</sup> (1) The bulletin-board type, where a large part of the time is taken for making announcements and for giving information by the principal or superintendent which could be better presented to the teachers by the use of an official bulletin board, or by sending mimeographed copies to each teacher if the announcement or other information required little or no explanation.

<sup>35</sup>E. P. Cubberley, The Principal and His School (Houghton Mifflin Company, 1923), p. 525.

<sup>36</sup>John E. Sutherland, op. cit., p. 41

<sup>37</sup>E. P. Cubberley, op. cit., p. 528.

<sup>38</sup>A. S. Barr and W. H. Burton, op. cit., p. 410.

<sup>39</sup>E. P. Cubberley, op. cit., p. 514.

(2) The grievance day type. (3) The grumbling type. In these two types the principal and teachers engage in setting forth their "bad luck" stories, the poor conditions of books and equipment, of playgrounds, etc. (4) The lecture-by-the-principal type. In this case the superintendent or principal takes all of the period for lecturing to the teachers. This is unfavorable for several reasons. The lecture method does not leave time for discussion and expression of opinions by members of the group, and probably only one point of view is revealed when there might be others of much greater value. It leaves little room for cooperation and participation as far as the teacher is concerned. Taking part in the meeting and having activity tends to create interest. (5) The routine business type. Teachers can not be expected to attend this form of meeting because they have other matters that are of greater interest. This is especially true if the meeting is held after school hours or on Saturday. Much of the routine business matter can be better taken care of through the principal's office and by the use of circulars. It does however become necessary occasionally for the teachers to meet as a group to adjust routine business. In that case it is better to have a short meeting, probably fifteen to twenty minutes, during the noon lunch hour, and then there is no waste of time and teachers are in the building anyway.

#### Topics for Meetings

The essential principle is that the topic should have much value and be of vital interest to the teachers.<sup>40</sup>

<sup>40</sup>Rose A. Carrigan, op. cit.

"The topic, or series of topics, should deal with live issues with which the group is vitally interested."<sup>41</sup>

Saul reports the following topics for professional meetings held once a month:<sup>42</sup> October--marks; November--class management; December--study suggestions; January--the assignment; February--the question as a part of the recitation; March--supervised study; April--textbooks; May--extra-curriculum activities.

Other authors suggest a large number of somewhat similar topics.<sup>43,44,45</sup>

### Results

What results should be expected from a thoughtfully planned and well conducted teachers' meeting?

"The meeting should end with a summary, plus a look to the future. It should not merely come to an end. The problem may be restated, progress already made outlined, and important discussion for the next meeting stated."<sup>46</sup>

"Teachers' meetings, if properly handled, can be made a vital force in welding a group of teachers together, maintaining unity of purpose in a school, and building up professional ambition and spirit."<sup>47</sup>

The aims of teachers' meetings should be fulfilled.<sup>48</sup>

<sup>41</sup>A. S. Barr and W. H. Burton, op. cit., p. 410.

<sup>42</sup>E. L. Saul, "Professional Teachers' Meetings for the High School," School Review, Vol. 30 (May, 1922), pp. 371-377.

<sup>43</sup>L. V. Koos, The American Secondary School (Ginn and Co., 1927), pp. 669-671.

<sup>44</sup>W. S. Gray, "Work of the Elementary School Principal," Elementary School Journal (September, 1918), pp. 24-35.

<sup>45</sup>E. P. Cubberley, op. cit., pp. 519-525.

<sup>46</sup>A. S. Barr and W. H. Burton, op. cit.

<sup>47</sup>E. P. Cubberley, op. cit., p. 513.

<sup>48</sup>See page 13 in this chapter.

## CHAPTER 3

## PROCEDURES IN PLANNING AND CONDUCTING TEACHERS' MEETINGS

Procedures practiced in planning and conducting teachers' meetings in North Dakota secondary schools are presented in this chapter. Methods of procedure in arranging and directing meetings are evaluated. These procedures in North Dakota public schools are compared with methods advocated by nationally prominent school administrative authorities.

## Prevalence of Meetings

Before considering any other phase of teachers' meetings in North Dakota secondary schools a brief survey of the prevalence or extent of meetings is necessary. How common are teachers' meetings in North Dakota public high schools?

Data obtained from 185 superintendents indicate that teachers' meetings are quite widespread in public high schools in all parts of the state. On the other hand, the number of meetings scheduled during the year and methods of planning and conducting such meetings vary a great deal.

Table 2 indicates that teachers' meetings are almost universal in the schools that submitted data.

Table 2

Prevalence of Teachers' Meetings in  
North Dakota Secondary Schools

		Classified Schools		Consolidated and Graded Schools	
		Number	Per Cent	Number	Per cent
Are teachers' meetings held in your school?	Yes:	124	99.20%	60	100%
	No:	1	.80%		

Table 2 Continued

	Classified Schools		Consolidated and Graded Schools	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
Number of schools reporting data	125		60	
Total		100%		100%

## Departmental Study Clubs

Do North Dakota high schools have departmental study clubs? Replies from fifty-nine consolidated and graded schools showed that only two of these schools had departmental study clubs; and replies from 122 classified high schools indicated that only six of these had departmental study clubs. That departmental study clubs are not numerous in North Dakota high schools is illustrated in Table 3.

Four of the eight schools reporting departmental study clubs had less than ten teachers in the system, three schools had between eleven and thirty teachers in each system while only one of the larger schools in the state reported departmental study clubs. This larger school had such clubs in the primary grades and in high school.

Table 3<sup>1</sup>

## Departmental Study Clubs

		Classified Schools		Consolidated and Graded Schools	
		Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
Do you have departmental study clubs?	Yes:	6	4.84%	2	3.33%
	No:	116	95.55%	57	95.00%
Number of schools reporting		122		59	

<sup>1</sup>Of the 185 schools replying 184 reported that teachers' meetings were held. Therefore, when reading tables (Table 3, for example) let 184 represent 100 per cent.

Table 3 Continued

	Classified Schools		Consolidated and Graded Schools	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
Number of schools not reporting	2	1.61%	1	1.67%
<b>Total</b>		<b>100.00%</b>		<b>100.00%</b>

Table 4

## Size of Schools Reporting Departmental Study Clubs

Number of Schools	Number of Teachers in Each System
1	5
1	6
1	7
1	9
1	11
1	19
1	29
1	84
<b>Total</b> 8	<b>Arithmetic average size</b> 21

The average size of the eight schools reporting departmental study clubs was approximately twenty-one teachers in each school system, but, with only eight schools reporting, the average size probably is of little significance.

## Teachers' Bulletins

How extensively are mimeographed or printed copies of announcements or other information requiring little or no explanation made use of in North Dakota high schools? The data obtained from 121 classified



high schools and fifty-eight consolidated and graded schools relative to the use of teachers' bulletins are presented in Table 5.

Table 5

## Mimeographed and Printed Teachers' Bulletins

	Classified Schools		Consolidated and Graded Schools		
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent	
Do you send mimeographed or printed copies of announcements, etc. to teachers?	Yes:	76	61.29%	15	25.00%
	No:	45	36.29%	43	71.66%
Number of superintendents reporting	121		58		
Number of superintendents not reporting	3	2.42%	2	3.34%	
Total		100.00%		100.00%	

The tabulated answers from these schools show that classified high schools make greater use of written teachers' bulletins than consolidated and graded high schools do. Over sixty-one per cent of the classified high schools make use of such bulletins as compared with twenty-five per cent of the consolidated and graded schools making use of teachers' bulletins.

One reason why classified schools make greater use of such materials probably is that equipment, mimeograph machines, and typewriters are more apt to be supplied in classified schools than in consolidated and graded schools.

School administrative authorities state that meetings should not be called for the purpose of giving out announcements, directions, or other information to teachers which could as well be given to them

in typewritten or mimeographed form. It is well to supply each teacher with copies of such matters and details as are likely otherwise to escape their attention and be forgotten. Instructions and suggestions pertaining to general policies and such matters as the keeping of records and making of reports, methods of grading and promoting pupils, and the use of planbooks, notebooks, and other material should be given to each teacher in typewritten form.<sup>2</sup>

Franklin W. Johnson, when discussing the use of bulletins for teachers, makes the following statement:

"No time (during teachers' meetings) should be given to routine announcements. These should be distributed in duplicate form from the office. It is well to have for this purpose a faculty exchange with individual boxes for all. Teachers can be held as strictly responsible for compliance in this manner as when announcements are made by the spoken word."<sup>3</sup>

#### Teachers' Bulletin Boards

Information about various phases of supervision, notices about athletic events, music contests, play day activities and meetings of different societies, programs and various other materials are often posted on bulletin boards fixed especially for those purposes. How extensively are bulletin boards used for teachers in North Dakota public high schools?

Table 6

#### Use of Teachers' Bulletin Boards

		Classified Schools		Consolidated and Graded Schools	
		Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
Is a bulletin board used for teachers in your school?	Yes:	56	45.16%	25	41.67%
	No:	68	65.84%	35	58.33%

<sup>2</sup>W. N. Anderson, A Manual for School Officers (The Century Co., 1925), p. 319.

<sup>3</sup>Franklin W. Johnson, The Administration and Supervision of the High School (Ginn and Co., 1925), p. 99.

Table 6 Continued

	Classified Schools		Consolidated and Graded Schools	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
Number of schools reporting	124		60	
Number of schools not reporting				
Total		100%		100%

Approximately forty-three per cent of the superintendents from whom replies were received stated that they made use of a bulletin board for teachers. The percentage of schools having bulletin boards chiefly used for and by students was not determined.

#### Teachers' Contributions at Meetings

Do the teachers make definite contributions (present model lessons, report on current educational literature, and take active part in discussions) at the meetings? Tabulations of 184 replies from superintendents in answer to this question are shown in Table 7.

Table 7

#### Direct Participation of Teachers in Meetings

		Classified Schools		Consolidated and Graded Schools	
		Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
Do the teachers make definite contributions at meetings?	Yes:	63	50.81%	17	28.33%
	No:	61	49.19%	43	71.67%
Number of superintendents reporting		124		60	
Number of superintendents not reporting					
Total			100.00%		100.00%

According to Table 7 the teachers in classified high schools are taking more direct part in teachers' meetings than are the teachers in graded and consolidated schools. Of the 124 classified schools reporting, approximately one-half, 50.81 per cent, showed direct participation of teachers in meetings while replies from sixty graded and consolidated schools showed that a little over one-fourth, 28.33 per cent, of these schools had direct participation of teachers in meetings.

If teachers' meetings are to fulfill their objectives, all members of the faculty must contribute in a vital way to a series of thoughtfully planned programs.<sup>4</sup> Provision should be made for giving the teachers personal responsibility for certain parts of the meeting.<sup>5</sup>

John S. Thomas presents the following method for encouraging the teachers to take an active part in meetings:<sup>6</sup>

- "1. Freedom of discussion
  - a. Short meetings at noon suffice for the routine-business type.
  - b. Bulletin board used.
  
- "2. Meetings planned in advance
  - a. Meetings are related to each other.
  - b. The general subject of the meeting is planned in advance over a period of one semester.
  - c. General professional meetings once a month.
  - d. Time is at the close of school on the third Tuesday of the school month.
  - e. Usually in library.
  - f. "Round tables" used.
  - g. Last about an hour (time is determined in advance).
  - h. Teachers may meet in smaller groups during the month.

<sup>4</sup>A. C. Roberts and E. M. Draper, The High School Principal (D. C. Heath and Co., 1927), p. 106.

<sup>5</sup>H. H. Foster, High School Administration (The Century Co., 1928), p. 456.

<sup>6</sup>John S. Thomas, "Encouraging Discussion in Teachers' Meetings," The Elementary School Journal, Vol. 30 (February, 1930), pp. 444-449.

- i. Notice of meeting placed on bulletin board in office one week before meeting. It shows time, place, purpose, and probably presents questions. If notice is long, it is mimeographed and sent to the teachers.
  - j. Lunch served.
  - k. Principal acts as chairman and introduces topic.
- "3. Discussion groups
- a. Teachers are divided into groups with a chairman at the head and topics are discussed.
  - b. After about twenty minutes a report is accepted from each group. Each chairman reports.
  - c. Questions.
  - d. Principal summarizes main points of reports and presents them to the group.
  - e. Written reports are given to the principal at close of meeting.
  - f. Either come to conclusion or carry on further investigation until next meeting."

#### Providing Teachers Copies of Topics for Meetings

A mimeographed brief of points or topics to be considered at the meeting should be mailed out in advance to those who will be present.<sup>7</sup> Such a brief probably would be an outline of the important points to be considered at the meeting; it might take the form of a lesson plan; or it might be a check list to be used in judging classroom and teaching standards.

Is each teacher provided with a copy of points or topics to be considered at the meeting? Replies to this question from 181 superintendents in North Dakota public high schools are tabulated in Table 8.

<sup>7</sup>A. S. Barr and W. H. Burton, The Supervision of Instruction (D. Appleton and Co., 1926), pp. 411-412.

Table 8  
Providing Teachers Copies of Points or Topics  
to be Considered at the Meeting

	Classified Schools		Consolidated and Graded Schools	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
Is each teacher provided with a copy of points or topics to be considered at the meeting?				
-Yes:	58	46.77%	20	33.33%
-No:	64	51.61%	39	65.00%
Number of superintendents reporting	122		59	
Number of superintendents not reporting	2	1.61%	1	1.67%
Total		100.00%		100.00%

A fact brought out in Table 8 is that only about forty per cent of the superintendents in the schools surveyed provided their teachers with copies of points or topics to be considered at the meetings. Saul states that teachers should be provided with topical outlines,<sup>8</sup> and that these outlines should be given to the teachers two or three weeks before the meeting so that there is adequate time for preparation. If teachers are to take an active part in the meeting they must be given opportunity to become intelligently informed on the topic for consideration before the meeting is called. Superintendents in North Dakota secondary schools should give more attention to this one factor when planning teachers' meetings.

<sup>8</sup>E. L. Saul, "Professional Teachers' Meetings for the High School," School Review, Vol. 30 (May, 1922), pp. 371-377.

## Attendance

Attendance of teachers at meetings varies according to the size of the school, type of meeting, and topics to be considered. Meetings may be called for all teachers in the system, for those in a building, or for smaller groups. Barr and Burton state that only those teachers that are vitally interested in the meeting should be asked to attend.<sup>9</sup>

"The prompt attendance of all should be expected. It is well for the secretary to keep a record of those present, although this should not be read as a part of his report."<sup>10</sup>

Fowlkes says that there is no question of compulsion when meetings are of the right type.<sup>11</sup>

Table 9

## Attendance at Teachers' Meetings

		Classified Schools		Consolidated and Graded Schools	
		Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
Is attendance at meetings compulsory?	Yes:	108	87.10%	52	86.67%
	No:	16	12.90%	8	13.33%
Number of schools reporting		124		60	
Number of schools not reporting					
Total			100.00%		100.00%

Table 9 shows that the percentage of schools having compulsory attendance at teachers' meetings is about the same, approximately eighty-seven per cent, for both classified schools and consolidated and graded schools. Table 9 should not be interpreted to mean that

<sup>9</sup>A. S. Barr and W. H. Burton, *op. cit.*

<sup>10</sup>Franklin W. Johnson, *op. cit.*

<sup>11</sup>John G. Fowlkes, "Your Every-day Problems," *The Nation's Schools*, Vol. 2 (September, 1928), p. 75.

all of the schools that reported compulsory attendance would not allow exceptions to the rule, but rather that unless teachers have a valid excuse they must attend. On the other hand, superintendents reporting that attendance is not compulsory very likely expect that when a meeting is called the teachers will attend. Therefore, Table 9 must not be too rigidly interpreted.

#### The Recording of Teachers' Meetings

Are records kept of teachers' meetings held in North Dakota secondary schools? Table 10 is a tabulation of data submitted by 181 such schools.

Table 10  
Recording Meetings

		Classified Schools		Consolidated and Graded Schools	
		Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
Are the meetings recorded?	Yes:	15	12.09%	10	16.67%
	No:	106	85.48%	50	83.33%
Number of schools reporting		121		60	
Number of schools not reporting		5	2.43%		
Total			100.00%		100.00%

The following point by Johnson stresses the desirability of keeping some simple but definite record of teachers' meetings:<sup>12</sup>

"The secretary's records should be carefully kept. It is a good plan to have these typewritten in a loose-leaf book which can later be bound and permanently preserved."<sup>12</sup>

<sup>12</sup>Franklin W. Johnson, op. cit.



"It is well to keep a record of the proceedings of each meeting. Some teacher may be appointed to act as secretary during the meeting and to make a record of all important matters considered. Such a record, if properly made and filed, will enable the superintendent to know what has been said and done, as well as what has been left unsaid or undone."<sup>13</sup>

Data tabulated in Table 10 seem to indicate that not enough attention is given to this matter in North Dakota high schools. Only twelve per cent of the classified schools and 16.6 per cent of the consolidated and graded schools that reported kept any record of teachers' meetings. If a simple record is kept of matters considered at meetings it may prove very valuable as a guide for future meetings and it also helps to establish a more definite form of procedure in conducting meetings.

#### Refreshments

The serving of light refreshments at teachers' meetings is not practiced very extensively in secondary schools in North Dakota, but on the other hand there are a number of such schools that have refreshments at some of the meetings. Table 11 shows the extensiveness of this practice in the 182 schools that submitted data.

Table 11

#### Refreshments at Meetings

		Classified Schools		Consolidated and Graded Schools	
		Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
Are refreshments served at teachers' meetings?	Yes:	33	26.61%	4	8.67%
	No:	89	71.78%	56	93.53%

<sup>13</sup> W. N. Anderson, A Manual for School Officers (The Century Co., 1925), p. 320.

Table 11 Continued

	Classified Schools		Consolidated and Graded Schools	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
Number of schools reporting	122		60	
Number of schools not reporting	2	1.61%		
<u>Total</u>		100.00%		100.00%

Approximately one-fourth, 26.61 per cent, of the classified schools indicated that refreshments were served at some of the meetings. A smaller percentage, 6.67 per cent, of the consolidated and graded schools reported that refreshments were served at some of their teachers' meetings. Two of the classified high schools reported that the pre-school meeting would take the form of a general meeting held at the school building. This meeting would be followed by a six o'clock dinner at the home of the superintendent. Schools having home economics departments occasionally arrange for light refreshments at meetings. The majority of the schools reported that refreshments were not served in connection with teachers' meetings.

#### Arranging Tentative Schedules

In order to know objectively what topics should have first place and in what time order they should be considered, cooperation of all the teachers is necessary. By listing a number of outstanding topics that are closely related to your school and asking the teachers to rank these topics in order of importance, and also by having the teachers list needs of the school and rating them in order of importance, much valuable material for teachers' meetings will be discovered. This

work should be done in the preceding year or as early as possible at the beginning of the school year. If the superintendent or a large number of the teachers are new members, it may be found necessary to build the programs as the problems are discovered. Otherwise a schedule for the year probably is arranged. Topics included in this tentative schedule should be largely determined from actual needs of the school.

"Prepare programs a half year or more in advance."<sup>14</sup>

"Plans and formally announced schedules for the entire year should be available from two to six weeks before the school year opens. The first teachers' meeting which should come either the Thursday, Friday, or Saturday before the opening day of school in September, should be fixed and announced at the close of the preceding school year in May or June, as the case may be."<sup>15</sup>

What is the practice in North Dakota secondary schools relative to the arranging of schedules for teachers' meetings? Table 12 is a tabulation of the replies to this question received from 185 superintendents in such schools.

Table 12

Teachers' Meetings Schedule

		Classified Schools		Consolidated and Graded Schools	
		Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
Is a schedule of meetings arranged for the year?	Yes:	54	27.43%	12	20.00%
	No:	89	71.77%	48	80.00%

<sup>14</sup>J. C. Almack and J. F. Bursch, The Administration of Consolidated and Village Schools (Houghton Mifflin Co., 1925), p. 363.

<sup>15</sup>John G. Fowlkes, "Your Every-day Problems," The Nation's Schools, Vol. 2 (September, 1928), p. 75.

Table 12 Continued

	Classified Schools		Consolidated and Graded Schools	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
Number of superintendents reporting	123		60	
Number of superintendents not reporting	1	.80%		
Total		100.00%		100.00%

According to Table 12 only about one-fourth, 27.42 per cent, of the classified schools and one-fifth, twenty per cent, of the consolidated and graded schools arrange a schedule of meetings for the year. This violates the principle advocated by such educational leaders as Cubberley, Almack, Bursch, Thomas, and Johnson. The fact that so many of the replies indicate that no schedule is arranged may be interpreted to mean that a rather large number of superintendents do not give enough attention to the general arrangement for professional meetings.

#### Agencies Planning Topics and Programs

Various agencies function in planning programs and other matters for consideration at teachers' meetings. The size of the school, kind of program, type of meeting, and training and experience of the teaching staff are some of the factors to be considered. Probably no one principle can be stated that will serve equally well for all schools.

What is the practice relative to this matter in North Dakota public high schools at the present time?

Table 13  
Agencies Functioning in the Planning of Topics  
and Programs for Teachers' Meetings

Agencies	Classified Schools		Consolidated and Graded schools	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
Superintendents	71	57.26%	53	88.34%
Committee of teachers	19	15.32%	3	5.00%
Superintendent-committee	12	9.68%	2	3.33%
Superintendent-principal	11	8.87%	2	3.33%
Superintendent-principal-teacher	6	4.84%		
Principal-teacher	2	1.61%		
Number of schools reporting the data	121		60	
Number of schools not reporting the data	3	2.42%		
Total		100.00%		100.00%

According to Table 13 the superintendents in graded and consolidated high schools in most instances plan matters to be considered at the meetings. In classified high schools this function is distributed to a larger number of agencies, but in over one-half of the instances the superintendents assume this responsibility. This situation corresponds very closely to what Sutherland found in Minnesota.<sup>16</sup> Elster,<sup>17</sup> when studying the status of the superintendent in North Dakota, also found a somewhat similar condition a few years ago.

<sup>16</sup>John E. Sutherland, Teachers' Meetings in Minnesota, Master's Thesis, University of Minnesota (1929).

<sup>17</sup>Julius J. Elster, The Status of the Superintendent in North Dakota, Master's Thesis, University of North Dakota (1933), pp. 87-88.

Table 14 Continued

Days	Classified Schools		Consolidated and Graded Schools	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
Indefinite	46	37.03%	22	36.67%
Number of schools reporting the data	111		50	
Number of schools not reporting the data	13	10.49%	10	16.67%
Total		100.00%		100.00%

Interpreting the data in Table 14, a large number of the schools do not have a definite day set for teachers' meetings. Tabulations of these replies that stated definite days show that Monday and Tuesday are the most frequent days for meetings in classified schools, and that Monday is the most frequent day in consolidated and graded schools. This is very much in agreement with practices recommended by school administrative authorities.

#### The Time of the Day for Meetings

During what time of the day do the teachers have their meetings? The answers to this question received from 184 public high schools in North Dakota are presented in Table 15. One hundred thirty-one of the returns, almost three-fourths of the total number, designated after school as the time of the day devoted to teachers' meetings. Various other practices are also shown in Table 15. Koos found that high school teachers preferred after school for meetings. <sup>21</sup> Although Barr and

<sup>21</sup>L. V. Koos, The American Secondary School (Ginn and Co., 1927), pp. 638.

Burton suggest that meetings as a rule should not be held after school;<sup>22</sup> it probably is a difficult task to find a more convenient time. Gold found that a large majority of the high schools in South Dakota held meetings after school,<sup>25</sup> and also that a rather large number of the superintendents in these schools actually preferred this policy. Probably a faculty vote to decide the question is a good method.

Table 15

## Time of the Day Devoted to Teachers' Meetings

Time of Day	Classified Schools		Consolidated and Graded Schools	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
Morning	2	1.61%		
Noon period			1	1.66%
School time	5	2.42%		
After school	87	70.15%	44	73.33%
Evening	7	5.66%	1	1.66%
Indefinite	7	5.66%	7	11.66%
Morning and after school	4	3.22%	6	10.00%
Noon period and after school	5	2.42%		
After school and evening	10	8.06%	1	1.66%
Noon period and evening	1	.80%		
Number of schools reporting	124		60	
Number of schools not reporting				
Total		100.00%		100.00%

<sup>22</sup>A. S. Barr and W. H. Burton, *op. cit.*

<sup>25</sup>Charles E. Gold, Teachers' Meetings With Special References to Practices in South Dakota, Master's Thesis, University of South Dakota (1930).

### Duration of Teachers' Meetings

Studies made in other states show that the duration of meetings varies according to type of meeting, but the range generally is from forty-five minutes to ninety minutes with the majority of the meetings lasting approximately one hour.<sup>24,25</sup>

The data which were received relative to the average length of time for teachers' meetings are presented in tabulated form in Table 16.

Table 16  
Comparison of the Duration of Teachers' Meetings

Minutes	Classified Schools		Consolidated and Graded Schools	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
0-15	3	2.42%	5	6.55%
16-30	23	18.54%	15	25.00%
31-60	79	65.71%	33	55.00%
61-90	15	12.10%	7	11.67%
Over 90 minutes	1	.80%		
Indefinite	3	2.42%		
Number of schools reporting	124		80	
Number of schools not reporting				
Total		100.00%		100.00%

<sup>24</sup>See page 14.

<sup>25</sup>John E. Sutherland, op. cit.



There is much variation in the length of time devoted to teachers' meetings in North Dakota secondary schools. Table 16 indicates that the range is all the way from less than fifteen minutes for a meeting to over ninety minutes. However, a majority, almost sixty per cent of the schools, signify that teachers' meetings last from thirty minutes to sixty minutes. It is interesting to note that in general the duration of teachers' meetings in consolidated and graded schools is shorter than in classified schools.

#### The Frequency of Teachers' Meetings

The frequency of meetings is dependent upon several factors, especially upon the size and the type of school organization. L. V. Koos found that the frequencies preferred by high school teachers were monthly and biweekly meetings.<sup>26</sup> It is quite generally maintained that professional meetings should be held as often as once a month and at regular intervals.<sup>27</sup>

The data relative to how often teachers' meetings are held in North Dakota public high schools are presented in Table 17.

Table 17  
Frequency of Regular Meetings

Frequencies	Classified Schools		Consolidated and Graded Schools	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
Weekly	10	8.07%	4	6.67%
Biweekly	22	17.75%	13	21.67%
Monthly	43	34.67%	12	20.00%

<sup>26</sup> L. V. Koos, op. cit.

<sup>27</sup> Franklin W. Johnson, op. cit.

Table 17 Continued

Frequencies	Classified Schools		Consolidated and Graded schools	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
Every six weeks	4	3.22%		
On call	4	3.22	1	1.66%
Indefinite	41	33.07%	30	50.00%
Number of schools reporting	124		60	
Number of schools not reporting				
Total		100.00%		100.00%

It will be noted that in thirty-three per cent of the classified schools and in fifty per cent of the consolidated and graded schools the frequencies of meetings are indefinite. Occasionally meetings must be called in order to take care of matters which need immediate attention; but, according to Kocs, Johnson, and others,<sup>28</sup> professional meetings should be scheduled periodically. A large percentage of the secondary schools in North Dakota seemingly violate this principle. Many of these schools do not have a definitely arranged schedule for meetings. According to Table 17 this condition is somewhat more serious in consolidated and graded schools than in classified schools because a larger percentage of the first mentioned schools report that frequencies of meetings are indefinite.

Monthly and biweekly teachers' meetings are held in a fairly large number of schools (Table 17). Fourteen schools report weekly meetings, and four classified high schools report that meetings are held regularly every six weeks.

<sup>28</sup> See page 15.

### The Chairman of Teachers' Meetings

L. V. Koos found that high school teachers prefer that the superintendent generally act as chairman of the meetings.<sup>29</sup> Teachers are sometimes selected to lead the meetings.<sup>30</sup>

Table 18

#### Agencies Generally Acting as Chairman of Meetings

Agencies	Classified Schools		Consolidated and Graded Schools	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
Superintendent	94	75.81%	58	96.67%
Principal	4	3.23		
Teacher	5	4.04%	1	1.66%
Superintendent, principal	12	9.67%	1	1.66%
Superintendent, building principal	3	2.41%		
Superintendent, principal, teachers	5	4.04%		
Number of superintendents reporting	123		60	
Number of superintendents not reporting	1	.80%		
Total		100.00%		100.00%

The data which were received from 183 superintendents in North Dakota secondary schools, relative to agencies generally acting as chairman of the meetings, are shown in Table 18. The superintendent in seventy-five per cent of the classified schools and in ninety-six per cent of the consolidated and graded schools that reported acted as chairman of the meetings. This shows that the superintendent is

<sup>29</sup>L. V. Koos, *op. cit.*

<sup>30</sup>See page 16.

largely responsible for the procedures taking place at meetings. This is especially the case in consolidated and graded schools.

#### Amount of Time Spent Weekly Planning Meetings

If teachers' meetings are to be a success they must be thoroughly planned and administered.<sup>31</sup> Adequate preparation requires time. How much time do leaders of teachers' meetings in North Dakota public high schools spend per week in planning meetings?

Table 19

#### Amount of Time Chairmen Spend Weekly Planning Meetings

Minutes per Week	Classified Schools		Consolidated and Graded Schools	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
0-40	79	64.51%	43	71.67%
41-80	16	12.90%	5	8.33%
81-120	1	.80%		
Indefinite	19	15.32%	4	6.67%
Number of superintendents reporting the data	116		52	
Number of superintendents not reporting the data	8	6.45%	8	13.33%
Total		100.00%		100.00%

The serious fact that approximately three-fourths of the schools that reported spend very little time in planning teachers' meetings is here revealed (Table 19). The data show that sixty-eight per cent of the chairmen (the superintendent in nearly every instance acts as chairman)<sup>32</sup> spend less than forty minutes per week in planning and

<sup>31</sup>A. S. Barr and W. H. Burton, *op. cit.*

<sup>32</sup>See Table 18.

arranging for teachers' meetings. Eleven per cent of the replies stated that the time spent in planning meetings was indefinite (Table 19). Approximately ten per cent of the superintendents from whom the data were received did not indicate the amount of time spent per week in planning teachers' meetings. According to the facts presented in Table 19, there are a large number of schools that do not allow enough time for planning teachers' meetings to really make such meetings a success. Data compiled by Julius Elster show a very similar situation.<sup>48</sup>

Although superintendents and principals have a large number of other administrative and supervisory duties to perform, it is reasonable to conclude from Table 19 that if teachers' meetings are to have their proper place in school supervision and in educational growth, more definite time must be given to systematic planning of such meetings.

#### The Place for Teachers' Meetings

The superintendent's office or the principal's office very often is found to be a suitable place for minor conferences and for smaller group meetings. The classroom, the library, and in larger schools, the school board's room is often used for professional and general meetings. There is no certain rule about place for teachers' meetings, but the most suitable place should be selected. What is the practice relative to this matter in North Dakota secondary schools?

<sup>48</sup> Julius J. Elster, op. cit.

Table 20  
Comparison of Places for Teachers' Meetings

Places	Classified Schools		Consolidated and Graded Schools	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
Classroom	69	55.64%	22	36.87%
Superintendent's office	22	17.74%	27	45.00%
School library	9	7.26%	5	8.33%
High school assembly room	5	4.03%	6	10.00%
Superintendent's office, and classroom	4	3.22%		
Superintendent's office, and library	3	2.42%		
Home Economics room, and classroom	3	2.42%		
Principal's office	2	1.61%		
School board's room	2	1.61%		
Superintendent's home, and classroom	2	1.61%		
Indefinite	1	.80%		
Number of schools reporting	122		60	
Number of schools not reporting	2	1.61%		
Total		100.00%		100.00%

As may be observed from the above table, a rather large percentage of the secondary schools in North Dakota report that teachers' meetings are held either in the classroom or else in the superintendent's office.

### Chapter Summary

The significant facts revealed in this chapter about teachers' meetings in the North Dakota secondary schools that submitted data are as follows:

1. Teachers' meetings are almost universal in the schools that have been studied. Every one of the public high schools in the state that have twenty or more teachers report that teachers' meetings are held.
2. Only eight schools out of a total of 181 report that they have departmental study clubs.
3. Less than one-half of the superintendents send mimeographed or printed copies to teachers of announcements and other materials requiring little or no explanation. Classified schools make greater use of teachers' bulletins than consolidated and graded schools.
4. Approximately forty-three per cent of the superintendents state that they make use of a bulletin board for notices to teachers.
5. Teachers in classified schools are taking more direct part in teachers' meetings than are the teachers in graded and consolidated schools.
6. Only about forty per cent of the superintendents provide their teachers with copies of topics to be considered at the meetings.
7. Attendance at teachers' meetings in most cases is considered a professional duty.

8. Less than fifteen per cent of the schools keep a record of each teachers' meeting.
9. Approximately twenty-six per cent of the classified schools and six per cent of the consolidated and graded schools report that refreshments are served at some of their meetings.
10. About one-fourth of the classified schools and one-fifth of the consolidated and graded schools arrange a schedule of meetings for the year.
11. Various agencies function in the planning of programs for meetings, but in a majority of the schools the superintendent assumes most of this responsibility.
12. Monday and Tuesday are the most popular days for teachers' meetings.
13. Meetings are generally held after school, and they continue for about one hour.
14. The tendency is to hold teachers' meetings as needs arise; but monthly and biweekly meetings are regularly scheduled in a fairly large number of schools.
15. The superintendent generally acts as chairman of the meetings.
16. A majority of the chairmen spend less than forty minutes per week in planning and arranging for teachers' meetings.
17. The meetings take place most frequently in the classroom, superintendent's office, and school library.



CHAPTER 4  
 TYPES, NUMBER, AND RELATIVE IMPORTANCE  
 OF VARIOUS TYPES OF MEETINGS

Teachers' meetings are classified into four types as follows:

- (1) Pre-school meetings held before the opening of school. (2) General meetings of all teachers in the school system. (3) Group meetings. (4) Routine meetings. The number and relative importance of each kind of meeting held in North Dakota secondary schools are presented and explained.

Types and Number of Each Type of Meeting

It is possible to classify teachers' meetings according to types in various ways. Cubberley discusses five types of meetings which should be avoided.<sup>1</sup> Barr and Burton divide meetings into five groups.<sup>2</sup> There is no rigid classification. In actual practice there likely is a certain amount of overlapping in various instances of certain types of meetings. For example, a meeting may deal with both professional and routine business matters, although such practice probably should be avoided as much as possible.

(A) Pre-school Teachers' Meetings

Pre-school teachers' meetings, those meetings held before the opening of school, should bring to the teachers the philosophy and main administrative principles of the local school system. This part of the meeting is the superintendent's direct responsibility.<sup>3</sup> The

<sup>1</sup>See pages 16-17.

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup>John G. Fowlkes, "Your Every-day Problems," The Nation's Schools, Vol. 2 (September, 1928), p. 78.

pre-school meetings should also present the chief educational objectives for the year.<sup>4</sup> In a large school, pre-school meetings may last for several days. In the small system the first meeting may serve the double function of the general meeting and also take care of routine matters.<sup>5</sup> It may take care of all necessary routine relative to opening of school, help obtain uniformity of methods of enrolling pupils for keeping records, and so forth, and take care of any unsolved staff problems that need group consideration before school commences.

Fowlkes states that the pre-school meeting should also set forth a working plan of teachers' meetings for the entire year.<sup>6</sup>

The data received from 184 public high schools in North Dakota, relative to the number of pre-school meetings, is presented in Table 21. Almost one-sixth of the classified schools and one-third of the consolidated and graded schools report that they do not have any pre-school meetings. When we consider the fact that everyone of the schools that reported had five or more teachers, this percentage becomes significant. It indicates that there are a number of school administrators in North Dakota high schools that do not place much emphasis on this phase of their supervisory work.

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<sup>4</sup>Ibid., pp. 75-77.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

Table 21  
 Number of Pre-School Meetings in Various  
 North Dakota Secondary Schools

Number of Pre-School Meetings	Classified Schools		Consolidated and Graded Schools	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
-	20	16.13%	18	30.00%
1	65	68.55%	35	58.33%
2	16	12.90%	1	1.67%
3	1	.80%		
6	1	.80%		
Number of schools reporting	123		54	
Number of schools not reporting	1	.80%	6	10.00%
Total		100.00%		100.00%

A majority of the schools that reported the data stated that one pre-school meeting was held. Some of the larger schools reported two or more pre-school meetings, and one of the largest schools in the state reported six pre-school meetings for the same group of teachers.

#### (B) General Teachers' Meetings

Since the typical high school in North Dakota is very small, less than seven teachers in the whole system,<sup>7</sup> the general meetings in many instances will also be the professional meetings. In some of the larger schools, group meetings may be the professional meetings, and general meetings may be centered chiefly around matters of routine and general inspirational material.

<sup>7</sup> Julius J. Elster, The Status of the Superintendent in North Dakota, Master's Thesis, University of North Dakota (1933), p. 4.

Roberts and Draper state that superintendents should recognize a twofold function of teachers' meetings.<sup>8</sup> Such problems as hall duties, lunch room and playground supervision, organization of the social program, appointment of committees, and various reports are often considered at meetings. On the other hand, teachers' meetings are also devoted to the development of the professional spirit and advancement in the faculty through professional reading, discussions, and reports.<sup>9</sup>

"Many principals do not distinguish clearly the purpose of their meetings and permit confused, undirected, and un-intelligent discussion to consume far too much time to no effective good of faculty or school."<sup>9</sup>

What is the extent of general teachers' meetings in North Dakota secondary schools?

Table 22  
Number of General Meetings in Various  
North Dakota Secondary Schools

Number of General Meetings	Classified Schools		Consolidated and Graded Schools	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
-	10	8.06%	9	15.00%
1	10	8.06%	1	1.67%
2	4	3.22%	4	6.67%
3	5	4.05%	2	3.33%
4	11	8.87%	6	10.00%

<sup>8</sup> A. C. Roberts and E. M. Draper, "The High-School Principal" (D. C. Heath and Co., 1927), p. 105.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid.

Table 22 Continued

Number of General Meetings	Classified Schools		Consolidated and Graded Schools	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
5	1	.80%	3	5.00%
6	12	9.67%	2	3.33%
7	2	1.61%	1	1.67%
8	4	3.22%	1	1.67%
9	24	19.35%	6	10.00%
10-14	13	10.48%	7	11.66%
15-19	7	5.64%	4	6.67%
20 and over	6	4.83%	3	5.00%
Indefinite	9	7.25%	6	10.00%
Number of schools reporting data	118		55	
Number of schools not reporting	6	4.83%	5	8.33%
Total		100.00%		100.00%

As indicated in the above table, there is much variation in the number of general teachers' meetings held in the 173 schools that reported the data. Approximately twelve per cent of them indicated that they did not have general teachers' meetings. Four, six, or nine general meetings held during the school year seem to be the most common practices among the schools that furnished this information.

#### (C) Group Meetings

Group meetings should be held by the teachers that are vitally interested in the same problems. Such meetings are usually held for the purpose of considering matters that concern teachers of certain subjects, grades, or departments only.

<sup>10</sup>W. N. Anderson, A Manual for School Officers (The Century Co., 1925), p. 316.

"In special meetings, confined to a limited number of teachers, and called for a purpose in which all are directly interested, a more thorough and intensive study can be made of the subject or problems under consideration. These meetings should be informal; questions and suggestions should always be in order; and a frank and free discussion on the part of all teachers should be encouraged.

"In the special meeting plans, methods, and devices for teaching; material on different subjects; and experiments and investigations may be discussed. From time to time the teachers of two or more consecutive grades should meet to discuss and make a study of the subject-matter that preceded and follows their particular work in a given subject."<sup>11</sup>

Table 23  
Number of Group Meetings in Various  
North Dakota Secondary Schools

Number of Group Meetings	Classified Schools		Consolidated and Graded Schools	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
-	38	26.61%	36	60.00%
1-4	22	17.74%	7	11.66%
5-8	20	16.12%	4	6.67%
9-12	23	18.54%	3	5.00%
13-16	4	3.22%	2	3.33%
17-20	2	1.61%	4	6.67%
21-24				
25 and over	2	1.61%		
Number of schools reporting	106		56	
Number of schools not reporting	18	14.52%	4	6.67%
Total		100.00%		100.00%

<sup>11</sup>Ibid.

Tabulations made in Table 23 show the number of group teachers' meetings held in various North Dakota public high schools. Approximately one-fourth of the classified schools, and six-tenths of the consolidated and graded schools report that they do not have group meetings. A fact not brought out in this table is that a number of schools reported that individual conferences took the place of group meetings.

Relative to this same matter of group meetings in smaller schools Anderson makes the following important statement:<sup>12</sup>

"In small school systems where there are fewer than ten to twenty teachers, and where the superintendent himself teaches regular classes, it may be impractical to hold many special meetings for teachers of separate grades and subjects. Here it is often more practical to talk over some things with teachers individually whenever it may be convenient or seem advisable, and to take up other matters at the general meetings of all teachers. The best results will be obtained, however, if at least some of the meetings are held separately with the teachers of one or a few consecutive grades, and with those of a given subject in departmentalized or high school work. One of the chief advantages in this is that it affords an opportunity for teachers to discuss with one another their respective problems, experiences, and views."

#### (D) Routine Business Meetings

The business meeting deals chiefly with daily routine matters such as reports, current problems of pupil-personnel, hall duties, use of new equipment, and school programs. Care must be taken to make use of bulletin boards and mimeographed copies whenever it is advisable, so that meetings are not called to consider matters which could be better handled through other media.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>12</sup>W. N. Anderson, op. cit.

<sup>13</sup>A. S. Barr and W. H. Burton, The Supervision of Instruction (D. Appleton and Co., 1926), p. 413.

A fairly large number of public high schools in North Dakota do not have routine business meetings (Table 24). Almost one-fourth of the schools that returned the questionnaires indicated that they did not have special routine meetings for teachers. From careful study of Table 24 and other data reported in this chapter, and also in Chapter 3, we probably are justified in inferring that much of the routine business is taken care of in the general meetings, and also that a limited amount of routine is handled by means of teachers' bulletins.

Table 24  
Number of Routine Business Meetings in Various  
North Dakota Secondary Schools

Number of Routine Meetings	Classified Schools		Consolidated and Graded Schools	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
-	26	20.96%	17	28.33%
1-4	32	25.80%	10	16.67%
5-8	23	18.54%	17	28.33%
9-12	17	13.70%	4	6.67%
13.-16	2	1.61%	2	3.33%
17-20	3	2.42%		
Over 20			3	5.00%
Number of schools reporting	103		53	
Number of schools not reporting	21	16.93%	7	11.67%
<b>Total</b>		<b>100.00%</b>		<b>100.00%</b>



Relative Importance of Various Types  
of Teachers' Meetings

In an attempt to determine in an objective manner the relative importance of various types of teachers' meetings in North Dakota secondary schools the superintendents were requested to rank four types of meetings, assigning to the type considered most important the rank of one, to the next in importance, two, and so on.

Table 25

Ranks Assigned to Four Types of Teachers' Meetings  
by 112 Superintendents of Classified  
High Schools in North Dakota

Types of Meetings	Number of Superintendents Assigning Ranks				Total Score	Average Rank	Rank Order
	1	2	3	4			
Pre-school meetings held before the opening of school	45	54	22	11	225	1.99	1
General meetings of all teachers in the system	31	38	27	16	252	2.25	2
Group meetings, according to grades or departments	29	25	36	22	275	2.45	3
Routine business meetings	5	12	54	41	355	3.16	4

The distributions in Table 25 and likewise in Table 26 show the variation in judgment usual in studies of this sort, but, with the averages, they tend to show that some types of meetings are in general considered more important than others. The type of meeting

most highly regarded in classified high schools, if we may judge by the averages of the ranks, is the pre-school meeting which is held before the opening of school. According to Table 25, general meetings rank second, group meetings third, and routine business meetings fourth.

Table 26

Ranks Assigned to Four Types of Teachers' Meetings  
by Forty-Three Superintendents of Consolidated  
and Graded High Schools in North Dakota

Types of Meetings	Number of Superintendents Assigning Ranks				Total Score	Average Rank	Rank Order
	1	2	3	4			
Pre-school meetings held before the opening of school	15	8	12	8	99	2.30	2
General meetings of all teachers in the system	15	13	11	4	90	2.09	1
Group meetings, according to grades or departments	7	6	16	14	123	2.86	4
Routine business meetings	8	14	14	7	106	2.46	3

General meetings of all teachers in the system are considered of most importance in consolidated and graded schools in North Dakota (Table 26). Pre-school meetings rank second, routine business meetings third, and group meetings fourth.

We may infer from Tables 25 and 26 that, in general, superintendents in North Dakota public high schools evaluate pre-school meetings and general meetings more highly than group meetings and routine business meetings.

### Chapter Summary

1. Approximately sixteen per cent of the classified schools and thirty per cent of the consolidated and graded schools that submitted data stated that they did not have pre-school meetings. A majority of the schools stated that one pre-school meeting was held. Approximately thirteen per cent of the classified schools and two per cent of the consolidated and graded schools reported two pre-school meetings.
2. Almost ninety per cent of these schools reported general teachers' meetings. There is much variation in the number of general meetings scheduled but four, six, or nine general meetings during the school year, with nine predominating, is most common.
3. Although a fairly large percentage of the schools reported group meetings and also routine business meetings, individual conferences and the use of teachers' bulletins appear to reduce the number of schools that have such meetings. Much routine school matter is taken care of at general meetings.
4. In general, pre-school meetings and general meetings are considered of greater importance than group meetings and routine business meetings in both classified schools and consolidated and graded schools in North Dakota.

## CHAPTER 5

## THE CONCERN OF TEACHERS' MEETINGS

This chapter considers (1) purposes for holding teachers' meetings and the relative importance of these purposes; and (2) topics discussed at the meetings, and the relative importance of these topics on the basis of frequency ranking.

## Purposes of Teachers' Meetings

Teachers' meetings afford an opportunity for considering various school problems. If properly conducted, these meetings can be made to promote unity and harmony as well as to increase the general efficiency of the regular work.<sup>1</sup>

In an attempt to evaluate purposes for which teachers' meetings are held in North Dakota secondary schools, ten problem-units were suggested, and those cooperating were requested to number in order of importance these problem-units, assigning to the most important one the rank of one, to the next in importance two, and so on.

The results of the study are presented in Tables 27 and 28.

<sup>1</sup>W. N. Anderson, A Manual for School Officers (The Century Co., 1925), p. 314.

Table 27

Ranks Assigned by 109 Superintendents in North Dakota Classified High Schools  
to Ten Suggested Problem-Units for Teachers' Meetings

Purposes of Meetings	Number of Superintendents Assigning Ranks										Total Score	Average Rank	Rank Order
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10			
Improvement of classroom instruction, including the use of educational tests and measurements	47	18	15	11	11	3	2	1	2	1	289	2.65	1
Keeping up-to-date on educational thought and practices	15	17	14	20	9	5	14	6	6	3	476	4.36	2
Studying and discussing pupil-personnel	6	14	12	16	8	17	8	12	14	2	574	5.26	3
Problems of school routine	20	12	7	9	12	7	5	5	8	24	590	5.41	4
Considering extra-curricular and out-of-school activities	1	10	16	13	14	16	8	12	12	7	617	5.66	5
Reconstruction of curriculum in terms of local and present day needs	6	18	9	5	8	15	13	13	5	17	619	5.67	6

Table 27 Continued

Purposes of Meetings	Number of Superintendents Assigning Ranks										Total Score	Average Rank	Rank Order
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10			
Personal, educational, and vocational guidance	9	7	9	11	18	10	12	13	11	9	621	5.69	7
The health program	2	7	12	10	16	17	17	16	9	3	652	5.70	8
Considering regulations and standards for ac- crediting; and develop- ing greater cooperation and unity in the school	5	5	9	5	8	8	18	10	19	24	765	7.01	9
Capitalizing (making use of) the successes of the teachers, and of educa- tional leaders	1	2	6	8	4	11	14	19	24	20	805	7.39	10

Table 28

Ranks Assigned by Fifty-Four Superintendents in North Dakota Consolidated and Graded  
High Schools to Ten Suggested Problem-Units for Teachers' Meetings

Problem-Units	Number of Superintendents Assigning Ranks										Total Score	Average Rank	Rank Order
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10			
Improvement of classroom instruction, including the use of educational tests and measurements	9	9	9	7	7	3	4	4	1	1	214	3.96	1
Problem of school routine	20	7	3	3	2	4	1	2	3	9	229	4.24	2
Studying and discussing pupil-personnel	4	10	8	8	6	6	1	3	3	5	254	4.70	3
Keeping up-to-date on educational thought and practices	10	4	3	8	6	5	9	3	4	2	262	4.83	4
Considering extra-curricular and out-of-school activities	1	8	12	7	5	5	3	9	3	1	266	4.92	5
The health program	-	4	5	7	6	14	10	5	3	-	302	5.59	6

Table 28 Continued

Problem-Units	Number of Superintendents Assigning Ranks										Total Score	Average Rank	Rank Order
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10			
Considering regulations and standards for accrediting; and developing greater cooperation and unity in the school	2	7	10	4	3	1	4	13	7	3	508	5.70	7
Reconstruction of curriculum in terms of local and present day needs	5	1	4	5	9	8	4	5	9	6	533	6.16	8
Personal, educational, and vocational guidance	2	1	1	6	6	5	12	3	15	5	356	6.59	9
Capitalizing (making use of) the successes of the teachers, and of educational leaders	-	4	-	1	5	3	6	7	11	21	440	8.14	10



Table 27, dealing with ranks assigned in classified high schools to ten suggested problem-units for teachers' meetings, shows that "improvement of classroom instruction, including the use of educational tests and measurements" ranks first place. "Keeping up-to-date on educational thought and practices" ranks second place. A point to be noticed in Table 27 is that, although problem-units have been ranked in numerical order according to average rank, the spread or variability is not the same between all problem-units. The average ranks are rather close in problem-units ranked three, four, five, six, and seven. We probably can not safely infer that problem-unit ranked, say fifth, is definitely more important than problem-unit ranked sixth, because the average ranks (5.66 and 5.67) are approximately the same. On the other hand, problem-units ranked first and second are rated much higher by superintendents than problem-units ranked ninth and tenth place.

What has been said about Table 27 is equally true for Table 28. In Table 28, which deals with the ranking obtained from consolidated and graded high schools, "improvement of classroom instruction, including the use of standard tests and measurements" ranks first place. This is the same as in Table 27. By comparing Tables 27 and 28 many interesting variations will be discovered.

#### Topics for Teachers' Meetings

The ranking of forty-five topics on the basis of frequency of use during a period of twelve months at teachers' meetings in 124 classified high schools and sixty consolidated and graded high schools in North Dakota is presented in Table 29.

"Duties of teachers in halls and on playgrounds," "uniformity in the marking system," "pupil accounting," and "fire drills" are very frequent topics for teachers' meetings in both the classified schools and consolidated and graded schools. If the various topics in Table 29 were grouped into larger units it would be found that a number of the topics most frequently considered deal with routine school matters. In fact, the six topics listed first, those most frequently used according to Table 29, are school routine problems.

Topics dealing directly with the improvement of classroom instruction are scattered throughout Table 29. Topics dealing with extra-curricular activities are quite frequently considered at teachers' meetings. In general, the topics most often used in classified schools are also most often used in consolidated and graded schools.

Figure 2, a bar-graph, presents by means of linear magnitudes the relative importance of the topics tabulated in Table 29.

Table 29

Ranking of Forty-Five Topics for Teachers' Meetings on the Basis of Frequency of Use During a Period of Twelve Months in 124 Classified High Schools and Sixty Consolidated and Graded High Schools in North Dakota

Topics	Classified Schools		Consolidated and Graded Schools	
	Frequency	Rank	Frequency	Rank
Duties of teachers in halls and on playgrounds	113	1	54	1
Uniformity in marking system	111	2	47	2

Table 29 Continued

Topics	Classified Schools		Consolidated and Graded Schools	
	Frequency	Rank	Frequency	Rank
Pupil accounting (attendance, reports, program cards, etc.)	101	3	42	4
Use of library and other reference places	88	4	35	7
Fire drills	88	4	46	3
Enrollment of pupils	79	5	39	5
Our program of extra-curricular activities	74	6	38	6
Methods of obtaining supplies for classroom	69	7	34	8
The use of standard tests and measurements in the improvement of teaching	68	8	20	15
Objectively studying school failures and pupil adjustments	68	8	28	9
Patriotic and other programs	64	9	25	12
Developing right school spirit and making school a happy place	64	9	25	12
Studying and discussing necessary changes in school policies	63	10	23	13
School publicity	63	10	23	13
The improvement of teaching through better selection and organization of subject matter and material of instruction	58	11	19	16
Extra-classroom activities	58	11	27	10

Table 29 Continued

Topics	Classified Schools		Consolidated and Graded Schools	
	Frequency	Rank	Frequency	Rank
Health education	58	11	28	9
Methods and value of making lesson plans	56	12	28	9
The diagnostic value of mental and educational tests	56	12	28	9
Personal guidance for pupils	55	13	16	13
The teacher and his community	55	13	23	13
Protection against sickness and accidents	55	13	28	9
Teaching pupils how to study effectively	54	14	20	15
Economy in classroom management	50	15	26	11
Considering reports of state and national educational meetings	50	15	23	13
General devices for the improvement of teachers in service	49	16	11	22
The program of studies and changes in curriculum	48	17	15	19
Provisions for the physical welfare of the school population	45	18	15	19
Better playgrounds	44	19	27	10
Salary standards and schedules	42	20	21	14
Evaluation of professional magazine articles and books	39	21	9	22
Discussing progressive movements in other schools	35	22	13	20
Proper use of leisure time	33	23	15	19

Table 29 Continued

Topics	Classified Schools		Consolidated and Graded Schools	
	Frequency	Rank	Frequency	Rank
Age-grade-progress studies and classification of pupils	32	24	17	17
Educational guidance for teachers and pupils	32	24	7	23
Capitalizing the successes of the teachers	29	25	12	21
School lunches	29	25	25	12
Pupil and community needs and curricula	27	26	12	21
Proper use of the United States flag	26	27	11	22
Studying ideals and objectives of elementary and secondary education	24	28	6	25
The value of educational statistics in the classroom	23	29	3	28
Listening to educational leaders and other outside speakers	23	29	2	29
The place of vocational education in the curriculum	18	30	5	26
The presentation of model lessons	14	31	5	26
Regulations and standards for accrediting public schools	14	31	4	27

Figure 2  
Forty-five Topics for Teachers' Meetings Ranked on the

Basis of Frequency of Use During a Period of

Twelve Months in 184 North Dakota

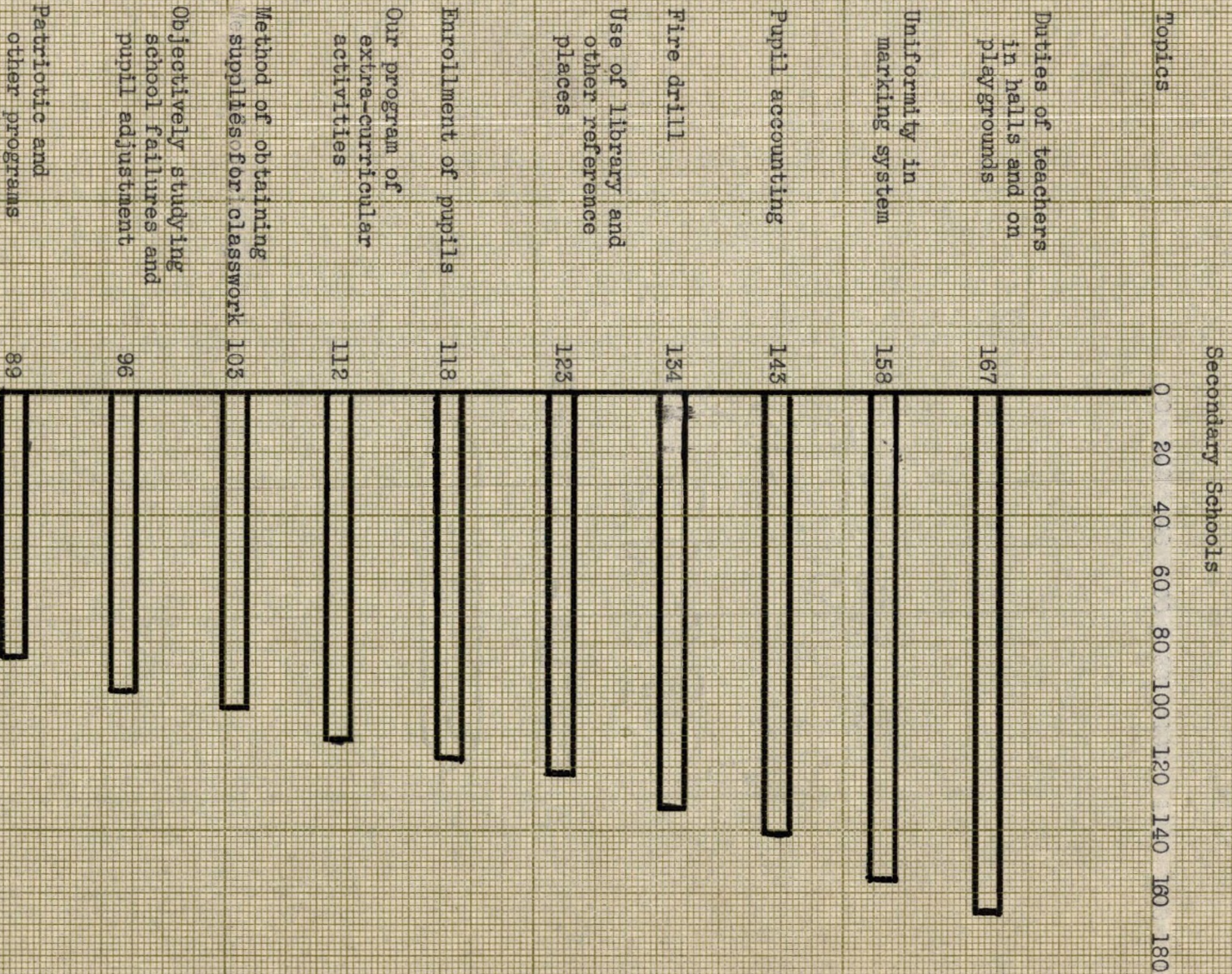


Figure 2 Continued

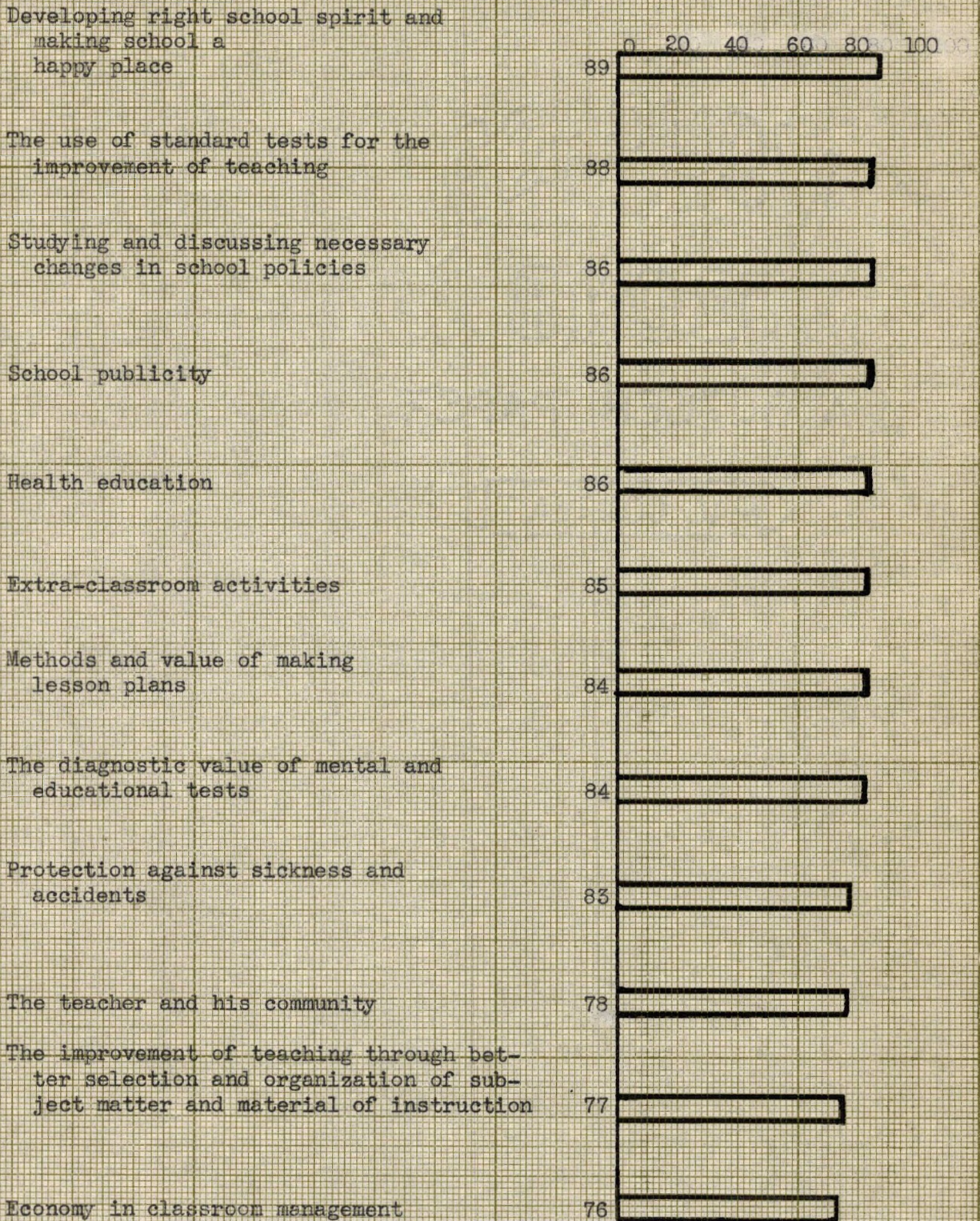


Figure 2 Continued

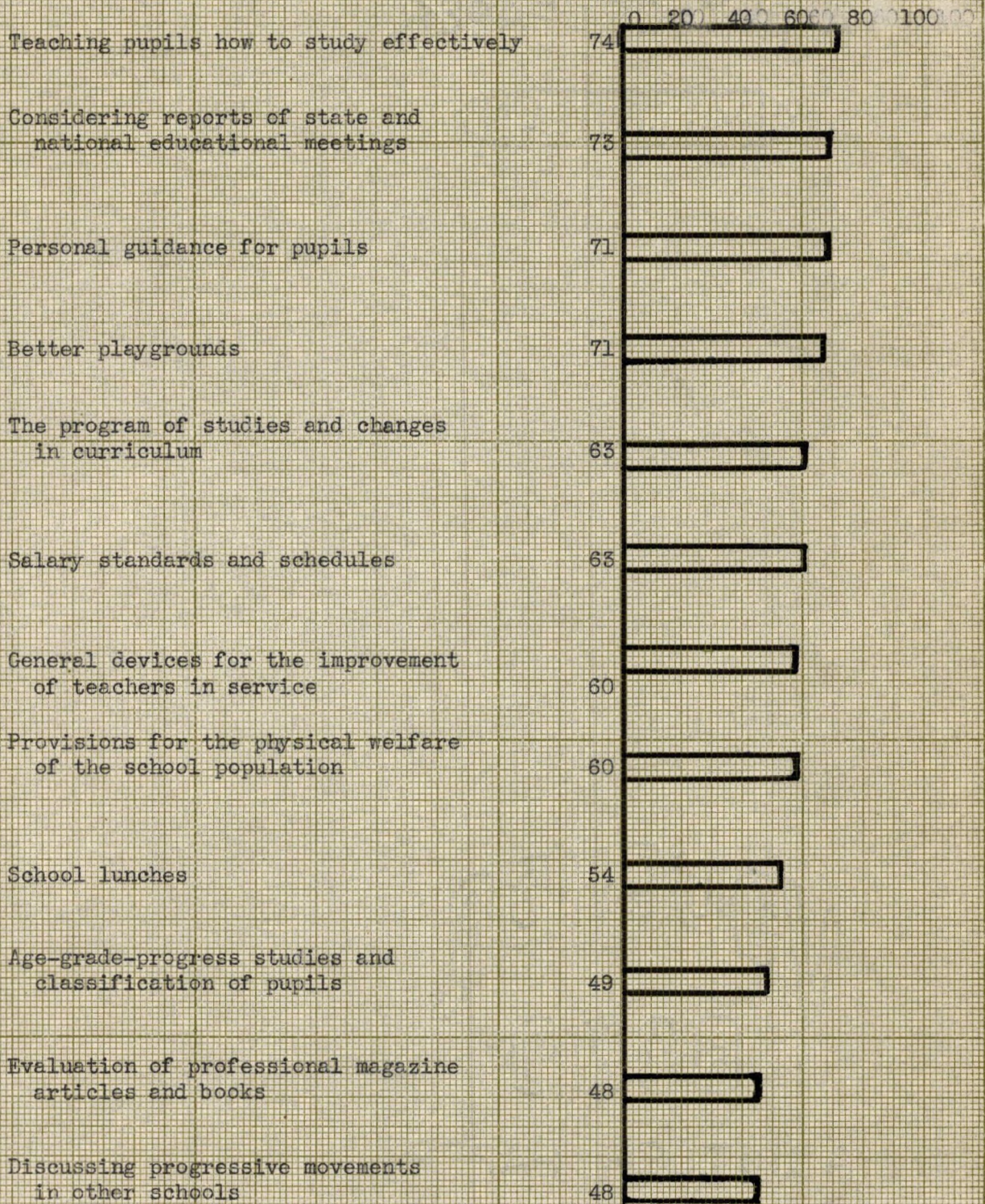
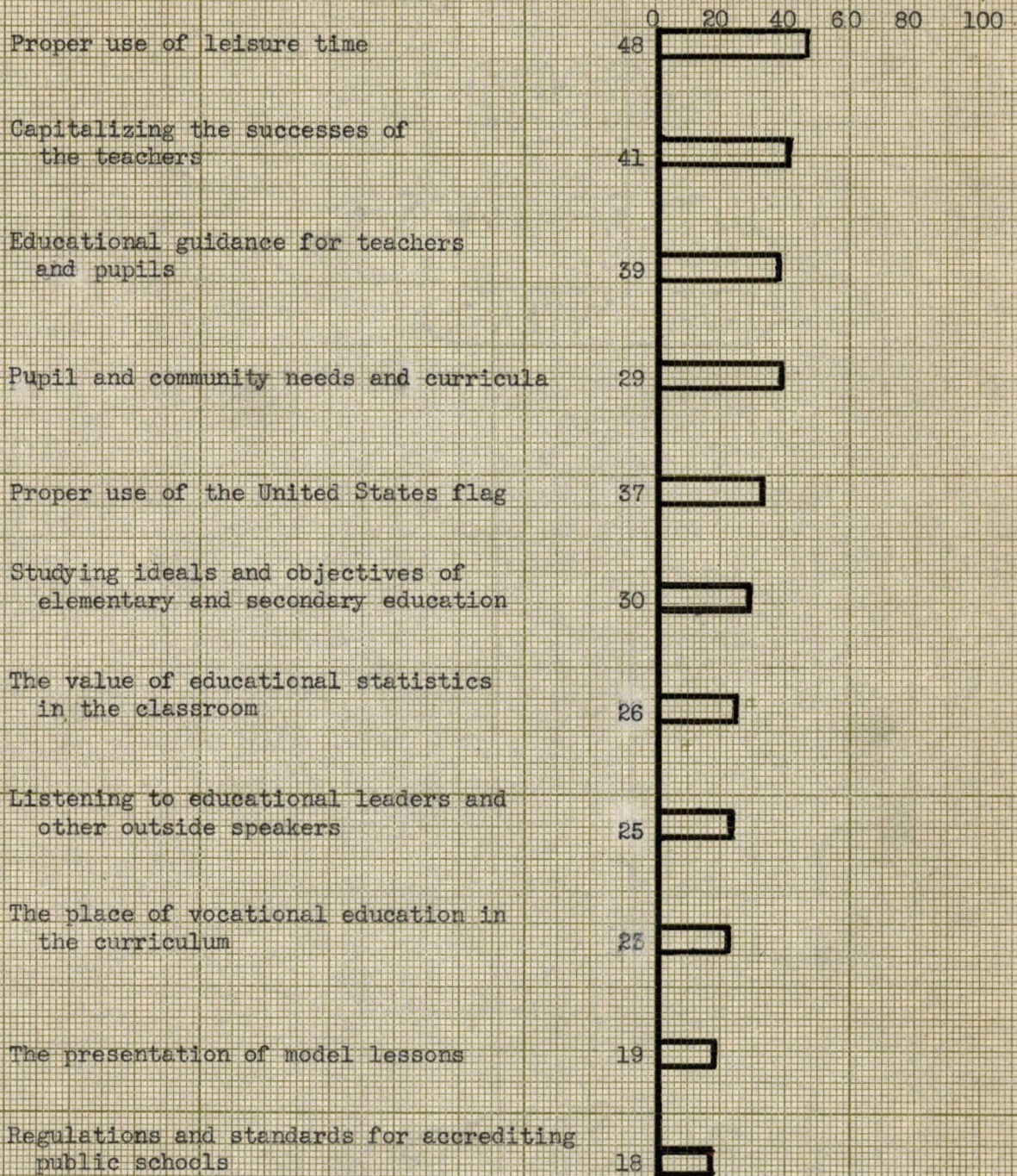




Figure 2 Continued



### Chapter Summary

1. The purposes for teachers' meetings most highly regarded by superintendents in North Dakota secondary schools, if purposes may be judged by rank averages of problem-units, are "improvement of classroom instruction, including the use of educational tests and measurements," "keeping up-to-date on educational thought and practices," and "considering problems of school routine."
2. The ranking of forty-five topics on the basis of frequency of use during a period of twelve months at teachers' meetings in 184 North Dakota public high schools shows that routine problems, such as, "duties of teachers in halls and on playgrounds," "uniformity in marking system," "pupil accounting," and "fire drills" were most frequently discussed.

## CHAPTER 6

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents the major deductions drawn from this study and offers recommendations for improving teachers' meetings in North Dakota secondary schools.

## Conclusions

1. Teachers' meetings have been discussed from time to time in educational textbooks and magazines, but surveys of actual conditions are not numerous.
2. Teachers' meetings have an important place in North Dakota secondary schools because over ninety-nine per cent of the schools that submitted data indicated that they had such meetings.
3. Only a few schools have departmental study clubs. This may be due to the fact that the average size secondary school in North Dakota has less than seven teachers in the system.
4. Much time is devoted to routine matters and administrative details at meetings. A large number of superintendents do not use bulletins for taking care of announcements and other matters requiring little or no explanation.
5. Reports from 124 classified schools showed that only about one-half of those schools had direct participation of teachers in meetings while data from sixty graded and consolidated schools revealed that only a little over one-fourth of those schools had direct participation of teachers.
6. Approximately forty per cent of the superintendents occasionally provide their teachers with copies of topics to be considered at the meetings.

7. Attendance in most cases is considered a professional duty.

8. A rather small percentage of the schools keep a record of each meeting.

9. Although a majority of the schools do not have refreshments at their teachers' meetings, approximately twenty-six per cent of the classified schools and six per cent of the consolidated and graded schools report that they have refreshments at some of their meetings.

10. Only about one-fourth of the classified schools and one-fifth of the consolidated and graded schools arrange a schedule of meetings for the year. This violates the principle advocated by a number of educational leaders.

11. Various agencies function in the planning of programs for meetings, but in a majority of the schools the superintendent assumes most of this responsibility.

12. Monday and Tuesday are the most popular days for teachers' meetings. They are generally held after school, and continue for about one hour. This is in agreement with preferred and actual practices in South Dakota and Minnesota.

13. The frequency of teachers' meetings varies from one each week to one every six weeks. There is a tendency to hold meetings as needs arise, but monthly and biweekly meetings are regularly scheduled in a fairly large number of schools.

14. The superintendent generally acts as chairman.

15. The study reveals that in approximately three-fourths of the schools very little time is spent in planning teachers' meetings.

16. The meetings most frequently take place in a classroom, the superintendent's office, or the school library, in the order mentioned.

17. In general, pre-school and general meetings are ranked above group and routine business meetings.

18. In a group of ten suggested problem-units for teachers' meetings, "improvement of classroom instruction, including the use of educational tests and measurements" was ranked highest by superintendents. A tabulation of forty-five topics, used at meetings in North Dakota secondary schools during a period of twelve months, shows that topics dealing largely with routine matters are most frequently discussed.

#### Recommendations

The recommendations for the improvement of teachers' meetings, based on this study and upon practices advocated by nationally prominent educational authorities, may be applied to a rather large number of schools in North Dakota. The detailed organization and administration of teachers' meetings in any school system must undoubtedly be largely determined by actual conditions found in that system.

1. Superintendents and others having charge of administrative and supervisory functions should make use of teachers' bulletins in order that more time may be given to professional matters at teachers' meetings. Teachers can be held as strictly responsible for notices to them in the form of mimeographed or printed bulletins as when announcements are made by the spoken word.

2. If teachers' meetings are to fulfill their objectives, superintendents and others in charge must arrange to have all members of the faculty make definite contributions to a series of thoughtfully planned programs.

3. It is recommended that topical outlines of matters to be considered should be distributed to the teachers before the meetings in sufficient time for the teachers to prepare. Adequate references, including current periodicals and up-to-date professional books, should be available to all members of the staff. If teachers are to take an active part they must be given opportunity to become intelligently informed on the topics before the meeting is called.

4. The prompt attendance of all teachers that are concerned should be expected, but if the meetings are of the right type then there should be no question of compulsion.

5. A simple record should be kept of matters considered at meetings, because it may prove valuable as a future guide. A record also helps to establish a more definite form of procedure in conducting meetings.

6. Although the superintendent is most generally responsible for the procedures taking place at meetings, teachers or other members of the staff might well be selected occasionally to lead the meetings.

7. Most schools have their meetings in the forepart of the week, after school, and the meetings continue for one hour. It is recommended that these matters be decided by faculty vote.

8. Each school should have from six to nine definitely arranged professional meetings per year. Meetings for school routine may be held on call, and as often as necessary.

9. If teachers' meetings are to have their proper place in school supervision and in educational growth, a certain amount of definite time must be given to systematic planning of such meetings. It is recommended that a well organized plan be made for regular meetings to cover a period of one year. The teachers should be given reasonable responsibility in formulating the plan.

10. The outstanding purposes of teachers' meetings should be to develop and strengthen a spirit of unity and loyalty; to further professional growth both of a theoretical and practical nature; to inspire improvement of various school activities and relationships; and to serve as one of a number of means of effective supervision. Briefly stated, teachers' meetings should promote unity and harmony as well as increase the general efficiency of the regular work.

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Appendix

Y OF TEACHERS' MEETINGS  
TH DAKOTA SECONDARY SCHOOLS

GRAND FORKS, NORTH DAKOTA  
NOVEMBER , 1934

uperintendent:

eaders in the field of education, especially school administrators, clearly  
te the need for teachers' meetings and that they should be in the list of out-  
ng administrative and supervisory functions.

ith the approval of the Department of Public Instruction at Bismarck, and the  
te Division of the School of Education, University of North Dakota, I have  
aken a study of teachers' meetings in North Dakota secondary schools. With  
operation in filling out the following form, I believe this investigation will  
much value to the school men of our state. Data received from you will be used  
ly and only for professional purposes.

hanking you very kindly, I am

Yours sincerely,

*A. H. Pedersen*  
A. H. Pedersen

Answer yes or no).

- . Are teachers' meetings held in your school? \_\_\_\_\_
- . Do you have departmental study clubs? \_\_\_\_\_
- . Do you send mimeographed or printed copies to teachers of announcements or other information requiring little or no explanation? \_\_\_\_\_
- . Is there a teachers' bulletin board in your school? \_\_\_\_\_
- . Do the teachers make definite contributions (present model lessons, report on current educational literature, etc.) at meetings? \_\_\_\_\_
- . Is each teacher provided with a copy of points or topics to be considered at the meeting? \_\_\_\_\_
- . Is attendance compulsory? \_\_\_\_\_
- . Are the meetings recorded? \_\_\_\_\_
- . Are refreshments served at the meetings? \_\_\_\_\_
- . Is a schedule of meetings arranged for the year? \_\_\_\_\_

y whom are the meetings planned? \_\_\_\_\_

hat day of the week are teachers' meetings held in your school? \_\_\_\_\_

hat time of the day are  
he meetings held?

- a) Morning \_\_\_\_\_
- b) After school \_\_\_\_\_
- c) Evening \_\_\_\_\_
- d) School time \_\_\_\_\_
- e) Noon period \_\_\_\_\_
- f) Indefinite \_\_\_\_\_
- g) \_\_\_\_\_

V. What is the average length  
of the meetings?

- (a) 0 to 15 minutes \_\_\_\_\_
- (b) 16 to 30 minutes \_\_\_\_\_
- (c) 31 to 60 minutes \_\_\_\_\_
- (d) 61 to 90 minutes \_\_\_\_\_
- (e) Over 90 minutes \_\_\_\_\_
- (f) \_\_\_\_\_

How often are the meetings held?

- a) Daily \_\_\_\_\_
- b) Weekly \_\_\_\_\_
- c) Two weeks \_\_\_\_\_
- d) Monthly \_\_\_\_\_
- e) Indefinite \_\_\_\_\_
- f) \_\_\_\_\_

VII. How much time is spent per week planning the meetings?

- (a) 0 to 40 minutes \_\_\_\_\_
- (b) 41 to 80 minutes \_\_\_\_\_
- (c) 81 to 120 minutes \_\_\_\_\_
- (d) Over 2 hours per week \_\_\_\_\_
- (e) \_\_\_\_\_

Who generally acts as chairman?

- a) Superintendent \_\_\_\_\_
- b) Principal \_\_\_\_\_
- c) Building Prin. \_\_\_\_\_
- d) Supervisors \_\_\_\_\_
- e) Classroom teacher \_\_\_\_\_
- f) \_\_\_\_\_

IX. Where are the meetings held?

- (a) Superintendent's office \_\_\_\_\_
- (b) Principal's office \_\_\_\_\_
- (c) School library \_\_\_\_\_
- (d) School board's room \_\_\_\_\_
- (e) Classroom \_\_\_\_\_
- (f) Assembly room \_\_\_\_\_
- (g) \_\_\_\_\_

SHOW KIND AND NUMBER; AND RANK IN ORDER OF IMPORTANCE -- MEETINGS HELD DURING THE LAST TWELVE MONTHS.

	Number of Meetings Held	Rank in Order of Importance, 1st place, 2nd place, etc.
Pre-school teachers' meetings held before the opening of school		
General meetings of all teachers in the school system		
Group meetings (according to grades, grade-groups, or departments)		
Routine business meetings dealing with routine school matter		

PLEASE RANK THE FOLLOWING SUGGESTED UNITS FOR TEACHERS' MEETINGS IN ORDER OF RELATIVE IMPORTANCE. (Please be as objective as possible).

	Rank in Order of Importance, 1st place, 2nd place, etc.
Problems of school routine	
Studying and discussing pupil-personnel	
Personal, educational, and vocational guidance	
Improvement of classroom instruction, including the use of educational tests and measurements	
Considering extra-curricular, and out-of-school activities	
The health program	
Reconstruction of curriculum in terms of local and present day needs	
Capitalizing (making use of) the successes of the teachers, and of educational leaders	
Considering regulations and standards for accrediting; and developing greater cooperation and unity in the school	
Keeping up-to-date on educational thought and practices	

PLACE A CHECK MARK BEFORE ANY OF THE FOLLOWING TITLES USED AT YOUR TEACHERS' MEETINGS DURING THE LAST TWELVE MONTHS:

1. Enrollment of pupils
2. Pupil accounting (Attendance, tardiness, report cards, program cards, census cards, etc.)
3. Duties of teachers in halls and on playgrounds
4. Use of library and other reference places
5. Fire drills
6. Proper use of United States flag
7. Methods of obtaining supplies for classroom
8. Uniformity in marking (grading) system
9. The diagnostic value of mental and educational tests
10. Objectively studying school failures and pupil adjustments
1. Age-grade-progress studies and classification of pupils
2. Teaching pupils how to study effectively
3. The place of vocational education in the curriculum
4. Educational guidance for teachers and pupils
5. Personal guidance for pupils
6. The improvement of teaching through better selection and organization of subject matter and material of instruction
7. Economy in classroom management
8. Methods and value of making lesson plans
9. Presentation of model lessons
10. The value of educational statistics in the classroom
11. The use of standard tests and measurements in the improvement of teaching
12. General devices for the improvement of teachers in service
13. Capitalizing the successes of the teachers
14. Listening to educational leaders and other outside speakers
15. Proper use of leisure time
16. Better playgrounds
17. Patriotic and other programs
18. The teacher and his community
19. Developing right school spirit and making the school a happy place
20. Our program of extra-curricular activities
21. Extra-classroom activities
22. School lunches
23. Provisions for the physical welfare of the school population
24. Protection against sickness and accidents
25. Health education
26. Studying and discussing necessary changes in school policies
27. The program of studies, and changes in curriculum
28. Pupil and community needs and curricula
29. Studying ideals and objectives of elementary and secondary education
30. School publicity
31. Salary standards and schedules
32. Regulations and standards for accrediting public schools
33. Evaluation of professional magazine articles and books
34. Discussing progressive movements in other schools
35. Considering reports of state and national educational meetings
- 36.
- 37.
- 38.

STIONS:--