

A HISTORY OF MERIT RATING
OF TEACHERS IN
CANADA AND THE UNITED STATES

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PREFACE

Merit rating or merit pay is one of the most discussed aspects of teacher salary schedules at the present time. The concensus of opinion seems to be that superior teaching should be recognized and rewarded, but the questions "how" and "by whom" present tremendously complex problems. At the present time, in Manitoba, the Minister of Education has appointed a committee to consider a study of merit rating. In Alberta, a Royal Commission on Education headed by Senator Donald Cameron has recently presented its findings to the Government of Alberta. A section of this brief deals with the question of merit rating of teachers. In Cranbrook, British Columbia, a merit pay plan was in effect last year and in Halifax, Nova Scotia, merit pay was brought up at a meeting between members of the Nova Scotia Teachers' Union and the Halifax City School Board in the winter of 1960. In the light of these facts, any study which has to do with teacher evaluation or merit rating at this time is indeed very significant.

This thesis proposes to find out through documentary study of Merit Rating in various provinces of Canada and Merit Pay Plans in the United states just what has been done in this important field of study and from the evidence gained draw some conclusions.

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INTRODUCTION

The question of Merit Rating or Merit Pay for teachers has been the subject of heated discussions by school boards, administrators, and teachers since the beginning of the twentieth century. Many different forms of merit rating scales have been tried in both Canada and the United States with little or no success up until recent years. Within the last twelve years in certain cases in the United States and Canada, some success has been achieved. Experience has demonstrated that merit rating is very difficult to administer in such a manner as will be recognized by everyone as fair. The success of merit rating among industrial workers cannot be assumed to constitute an argument for its applicability to teachers. The contribution of a factory worker can be determined with relative ease. His rate of production can be determined with a high degree of accuracy, and the excellence of the finished product can be readily assessed. No one can estimate accurately the worth of the widely varied and subtle contributions of a teacher who is but a drill-master and has no interest in his pupils beyond getting them successfully through their examinations with that of a teacher whose pupils achieve no more than average academic success but who exerts an

outstanding influence on their character development. However, some people and some places in the United States and Canada where it is used claim that a merit system of rating teachers can work.

In discussing the difficulties and obstacles inherent in merit rating for teachers, Roberts Reed quoting Fenis E. Engleman made two statements which are worth quoting here:

If a system can be devised which does not do violence to sound principles of human relations, stimulates professional improvement and improves services to children, it should be seized upon But what are the difficulties inherent in this problem? The first of these is the exceedingly complex character of the professional task of the teacher; the second is the great range of specialization inherent in the modern school system; and the third is the difficulty of finding merit raters who can rate with validity and fairness. These three factors make it exceedingly difficult to have a rating system that allows broad generalized comparisons of one teacher with another.¹

The public generally understands Merit Rating to be related to the teacher's salary; therefore, it is primarily concerned with Merit Pay rather than Merit Rating. Some of the arguments for and against merit pay have been summarized by two large associations, the National School Board Association and the National Education Association.²

Pros

1. A merit system plan, in the development of which

¹Roberts Reed, "Blueprint for Merit Rating," The B. C. Teacher, XXXVIII, No. 2, (November, 1958), p. 81.

²Merit Pay, The Argument, The Manitoba Teacher, XXXVII, No. 2, (November-December, 1959), pp. 14 and 15.

teachers have played an important role, should be established on the premise that merit pay for better teaching is equitable and sound.

2. Citizens may support a merit system in preference to a single salary system because people like to know the good teacher is paid commensurate with his ability.

3. The good teacher welcomes a merit system. Many poor teachers hide behind tenure.

4. One of the best advantages in merit pay would be that teachers would know that they were not at the top of the ladder.

5. The teaching profession is losing too many good teachers because of the lack of a merit system.

6. Tenure is the biggest stumbling block. But because of tenure, we need the merit system even more.

7. This issue comes about because the public does not believe it is receiving value in services for salaries paid to many teachers.

8. Merit Rating and salary schedule adjustments seem to be a way of attracting men into classroom teaching.

Cons

1. There are no accurate means at present of measuring pupil growth or teaching differences.

2. Merit rating tends to lower morale.

3. It tends to force conformity to preconceived ideas of some person or group of persons.

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4. It is usually an administrative technique for controlling educational cost of instruction rather than a means of promoting better teaching.
 5. It tends to reduce cooperation between teacher and teacher, and between teacher and administrator.
 6. Merit rating conditions teacher attitudes.
 7. Merit rating reduces professionalism in teaching and tends to reduce teachers to the role of laborers, rather than encourage them to become competent professional employees.
 8. Merit rating actually increases educational costs because of the large staff necessary for adequate administration of the system.
 9. Merit rating often inhibits the cooperative discussion between teacher groups and boards of trustees regarding salary matters.

This thesis proposes to find out through documentary study of Merit Rating in Canada and the United States just what has been done in this field of study and from the evidence gained, draw some conclusions.

CHAPTER I

BACKGROUND AND DEFINITION OF MERIT RATING

Merit rating has been under discussion since as far back as 1906. The topic has been the subject of numerous study and research projects, especially in the United States. The fact that experience has resulted in a decline in the practice of merit rating in recent years in no wise disproves the validity of the principles involved. The decline in the use of merit rating may have resulted from the conclusion that such ratings involved problems and difficulties rather than that their application lacked value.¹ The imposition of merit rating on teachers by administrators has brought about general disfavor on the part of teachers. On the other hand, where teachers have been given an opportunity to participate in developing the appraisal program, an entirely different attitude has resulted. While there has been a decline in the merit rating practice, the public demand for evidence of improvement in teaching efficiency has increased.

The experience of the past fifty years in attempting to use merit rating for salary purposes has evolved certain guiding principles which anyone attempting to relate teachers'

¹Dwight E. Beecher, The Evaluation of Teaching, Backgrounds and Concepts, (Syracuse University Press, 1949.)

salaries to quality of service must take into account, if past difficulties are to be avoided.² Many of the principles have been known for years, yet the frequency with which they are violated makes their re-emphasis necessary.

The main principles are:

1. Teacher acceptance and cooperation must be achieved in advance.
2. The basic purpose of the plan must be to help teachers succeed and improve in their work. The complete realization of this purpose could eventually result in the advancement of the whole staff into the "superior service" category.
3. The school authorities must sincerely intend to make the salaries available and be just in implementing the plan. If there is evidence that the plan is being used to make it possible for very few to get salary increases, if there is evidence of favoritism, if there is evidence of insincerity of any kind, a school committee will quickly have a dissatisfied faculty on its hands.
4. The district must adhere to the merit principle in selection and retention of all employees.
5. A merit salary plan cannot be used as a corrective measure for the failure of school boards to apply the merit principle in selection and retention of staff in earlier

²Teacher Merit and Teacher Salary, Report of Special Committee on Merit Payments, (New York State Teachers Association, 1957), pp. 45-48.

years. The New England School Development Council Committee commented that the problem can be solved only by working on the cause not on the effect. It would do no good to blame these less qualified teachers for having been hired. The better course would be to raise the level of teachers' salaries so that incompetent people need not be hired.

6. Teachers must be provided with a good basic salary program. A plan for relating salaries to evaluation of service should not be an excuse for keeping the salaries of most teachers down. Unless the basic schedule is sufficiently high, a school system cannot recruit and hold competent teachers.
7. The reward should be large enough to be worth the effort.
8. The plan must be administratively feasible and adequate staff must be provided for its administration.
9. All teachers must thoroughly understand the plan and procedure to be followed.
10. Appeals from teachers must be provided for.
11. Merit should be only one of the factors in granting salary increments.

A report of a study in 1957 by the New York State Teachers' Association reads as follows:

The use of merit rating in determining salaries of teachers is not by any means a new development. We can expect to be confronted with this issue periodically in our American school community. A society which supports its education by public taxation may

expect expression on all phases of the school program, especially on an item which represents as large a proportion of the school dollar as do teachers salaries.³

This observation is equally valid in our country.

The clamour by the public for consideration of a merit pay program is always greatest during periods of rising costs of education. This is the situation which the teachers of Manitoba face at the present time where the Minister of Education has appointed a committee to consider a study of merit rating. Also, a Royal Commission on Education in Alberta headed by Senator Donald Cameron has considered merit rating in its report.

There are many reasons why merit pay is an issue at the present time. Some of these reasons are:

1. The growing interest of the public in education.
2. The growing awareness of the citizens of Canada of the importance of teachers in the educational field.
3. The desire of all to improve the quality of instruction in the classroom.
4. The desire of some to save money by paying some teachers lower salaries than they would receive under current schedules.
5. The desire of some to reward the excellent teacher.

Whatever the reasons, there is evidence that wherever merit pay is becoming an emotional issue appeals to reason

³Merit Pay, "Background and Definition," The Manitoba Teacher, XXIVIII, No. 2, (November-December, 1959), p. 12.

are being ignored.

The most widely accepted definitions are those prepared by the New Jersey Education Association's Research Division. These were accepted by the New York Teachers' Association and employed by the Alberta Teachers' Association and employed in its supplementary brief to Alberta Royal Commission on Education.

Merit Rating is defined as a systematic method of evaluating performance for the following purposes:

1. To help determine promotions, transfers, demotions, dismissals and salaries.
2. To provide an analysis of strong and weak points so that the employees' performances may be improved through a guidance program.
3. To provide the personnel division with a yard stick to measure effectiveness of testing, recruiting and in service training programs.⁴

Merit Pay scales are set up in attempt to reward with money those who rank as "superior" or "class one" or "meritorious" on some kind of merit rating scale. Scales are generally of these types:

- (a) Those which reward "superior service."
- (b) Those which penalize unsatisfactory service.

⁴Ibid., p. 13.

(c) Those which combine the reward and penalty provisions.⁵

Merit pay scales stress the money incentive group output, and often run counter to the non-financial incentives; such as, feeling of belonging, cooperation and loyalty to the group's output objectives.

Merit rating for salary purposes is a subjective, qualitative judgement of a teacher made administratively by one or more persons, with or without the participation or knowledge of the person rated, for purposes of determining salary.

⁵Ibid.

CHAPTER II

MERIT RATING IN THE UNITED STATES

The question of Merit Pay for teachers has received a great deal of attention in the United States, where a number of Merit Pay Plans are in effect. It is the purpose of this chapter to present some of these plans that are in effect and some that have been in effect in the United States and have since been dropped for various reasons.

1. Merit Rating in Ladue School District St. Louis, Missouri

"Merit pay for teachers can work."¹ This statement was made by Ivan C. Nicholas, Superintendent of Schools, Ladue School District, St. Louis, Missouri. The merit plan has been successful in Ladue School District since 1952. It is claimed that this program in Ladue has been successful because a highly professional group of teachers and an alert board of education, representing a community deeply interested in the education of its children, have developed and followed certain basic principles that seem to be consistent with the democratic way of life. Some of these principles are: (1) the community and teachers must understand the

Ivan C. Nicholas, "Salary Schedules Are Based on Effectiveness of Teaching," The Nations Schools, (The Modern Hospital Publishing Company, Chicago 2, Illinois, U.S.A., June, 1956), pp. 52-56.

fundamental purpose of education in this country; (2) the community, through its representatives on the board of education, must establish a range in salaries for teachers which reflects the importance of the job to be done and which is consistent with our concepts of economic democracy; (3) the effectiveness of teaching must be judged in terms of the basic purposes to be attained; and (4) the professional teaching staff should determine the procedures and methods to be used in determining the effectiveness of teaching.² The teaching staff and the community have come to understand that the basic purpose of public education is to work for the complete development of children so that they may adjust and contribute to the democratic way of life.

The board of education of the Ladue School District understood the great responsibilities of teachers as they worked to achieve this high purpose. The board was also fully aware of the shortage of teachers, so they implemented a salary that would reflect the importance of the teacher's work and would compete with salaries paid in other fields of endeavour. This insured the Ladue School Board that people of high potential could be attracted to enter and remain in the teaching profession. Consequently, three schedules by which salaries were related to competency, experience, training, and overall value to the school system were adopted. In 1956, the minimum salary was \$3,600 and the maximum salary

²Ibid., p. 52.

was \$15,600. In 1957 the second schedule ranged from \$4,300 to \$7,500 and provided eight annual increments of \$400 each. The third schedule has a minimum of \$5,400 and a maximum of \$10,400 and provided ten annual increments of \$500 each.³ Teachers earn increments on a schedule and are promoted from one schedule to another on the basis of their competency. The three salary schedules are one part of a teacher evaluation program designed to improve teaching. The superintendent of schools was authorized to present the merit salary plan to the teachers for consideration. The plan was accepted, and the formation of a committee to develop a plan of evaluation was recommended. This committee was made up of ten members and the superintendent. Of the ten selected, four were from the administrative staff and six were from the classroom teaching group. At the beginning of its work, the evaluation committee accepted the premise that effectiveness of teaching should be the prime consideration in the evaluation of a teacher. It also recognized the twofold purpose of evaluation: (1) to promote improvement of teaching, and (2) to provide placement in the salary schedule. The final report of the committee, which included the criteria to be used in evaluation, was unanimously approved by the teaching staff.⁴ The teachers in Ladue firmly stated that they wanted to be evaluated by professional persons trained

³Ibid., P. 53.

⁴Ibid.

in educational administration and educational methods who have developed a philosophy of education consistent with that of the school system. They believed that such people should be in direct professional contact with the teacher being evaluated and that they should understand the role of the teacher in the total school program and evaluate the teacher without bias or prejudice. The evaluator should be thoroughly familiar with the objectives and the traditions of the school system, have adequate time available for classroom visitations and conferences, and be adept in the methods of counseling. Upon the recommendation of the teaching staff, building principals assume the major responsibility in evaluating teachers in their schools. The superintendent of schools may participate in the evaluation process at any time or at the request of either party. Building principals make recommendations for a teacher's placement on one of the salary schedules to the superintendent of schools. The superintendent in turn recommends salaries to the board of education. If at any time a satisfactory agreement cannot be reached between the evaluator and the teacher, either party has the privilege of consulting with the superintendent. When such a situation arises, a conference will be called and will include the principal, the teacher, the superintendent, and any other person the superintendent or the parties feel might help solve the disagreement. In a four-year period of operation, only one

such conference was called; and the matter was resolved without the assistance of outside parties.⁵

Self-evaluation on the part of the teacher is a vital part of this process. Such continuous evaluation demands a clear understanding between the evaluator and the teacher of the many factors involved. In order to develop and maintain such understanding, a series of conferences and meetings is held throughout the year. Building principals visit the teachers in their classrooms either upon their own initiative or upon invitation of the teacher. Classroom visitation must be frequent, because besides evaluation, the principal must try to develop mutual understanding between himself and the teacher and to assist and promote the effectiveness of teaching through familiarity with classroom activities.

Cumulative folders are provided to which both the evaluator and the teacher may contribute material pertinent to experiences and growth. The teacher's folder is available at all conferences.

A standing committee on teacher evaluation has the job of continuously evaluating the program and recommending desirable changes which might be made to improve it. This committee is made up of a representative from each school building in the district selected by the teachers in that school and one representative from the administrative staff

⁵Ibid.

selected by the principals and superintendent of schools. For example, in 1956 the committee circulated a questionnaire among the teachers in order to find out what they liked and disliked about the program. Teachers in Ladue definitely like the evaluation program. Some of the favorable comments were:

"The evaluation program is challenging. It gives an incentive to do better work."

"It gives a feeling of confidence and security, but not to the point where inferior work should be tolerated."

"I find the plan very challenging."

"I would consider another type of employment if Ladue reverted to a tenure salary schedule."

"It definitely promotes teaching competency."

"It has brought about closer working relations between administrators and teaching staff."

"I am impressed by the way in which administrators and other teachers help one to improve."⁶

The negative reactions come under three headings: (1) subjectivity of evaluation, (2) conferences, (3) professional attitudes. The committee working on the original plan, after consideration of other merit plans, recognized that effective teaching cannot be reduced to objective data. Effective teaching is not only a skill but also an art. Any judgement of teaching or behavior must be

⁶Ibid., p. 55.

determined in terms of the values held by the person making the judgement--hence its subjectivity. A number of persons indicated a desire for more conferences during the year; along with more constructive suggestions during the conferences. Finally, there was some concern over promiscuous talking about salaries and it was felt that a more professional attitude must be maintained in order to serve the best interests of the program.

LADUE'S CRITERIA for EVALUATION

1. Personal qualities of the superior teacher.

Any evaluation of the effectiveness of teaching must include an evaluation of the teacher as a person. Teachers in Ladue believe that such an evaluation is not objective and cannot be made so by an attempt to classify the numerous facets of personality. The criteria which are listed and described are those which can be observed and discussed with an individual. These criteria are broad enough to be significant and yet specific enough to give insight into the effectiveness of an individual's teaching and to serve as a guide for further personal growth. A superior teacher is a person who:

- A. Reflects strong basic character. These values can be evidenced through:
1. His integrity and sincerity in relation with others.
 2. His willingness to defend the convictions and values he believes to be true.
 3. The consistency between what he professes to believe and that which he does.
 4. His moral conduct.

B. Reflects good mental physical health as evidenced by:

1. His appreciation of the worth and integrity of each individual.
2. His behavior with reference to the interaction and interdependence of himself and others.
3. His development of skills which enable him to contribute as a part of a team or group.
4. His ability to make decisions without undue procrastination and rationalization.
5. His constructive attitude toward the relationship between his mental well-being and his physical health and vitality.

C. He understands the role that social amenities play in good relationships. He is a person without affectation and pretense who:

1. Is friendly and easily approached.
2. Has a good but discriminating sense of humor.
3. Demonstrates discretion in his grooming and choice of dress.
4. Has cultivated a well modulated voice and uses good English.
5. Has developed a sense of social appropriateness.

2. Professional qualities of the superior teacher.

A professional teacher has a professional spirit and professional ability. He understands and is in accord with the basic philosophy of his school and its objective. In addition to specific knowledge of his subject area, he integrates his work with the total school program. He has a thorough knowledge of child development, understands and recognizes individual differences in children, and seeks to stimulate a maximum of achievement in his pupils under conditions conducive to healthful and wholesome development.

He, moreover, has a wide breadth of interest - political, social, religious, esthetic and economic. These qualities are manifested by:

A. Basic Training

1. Graduation from an accredited college or university with major training in education.
2. Training, including general courses in humanities plus courses in child growth and development, appropriate subject matter fields and techniques in teaching.

B. Experiences that contribute to the effectiveness of teaching.

1. Evidence of growth in previous teaching experience.
2. Previous experience that contributes to effectiveness in present situation (other school systems or summer teaching).
3. Additional training and growth:
 - (a) Advanced degrees
 - (b) Refresher and other courses
 - (c) Conferences
 - (d) Workshops
4. Development in breadth of interests.

C. Experiences other than teaching that tend to improve the quality of teaching; such as:

1. Travel
2. Work outside the field of teaching
3. Professional reading or writing
4. Camp experience
5. Playground supervision
6. Service clubs
7. Community service
8. Hobbies
9. Military service

3. Evidences of superior teaching.

Individual pupil growth and development of harmonious relationships within the pupil group are the objectives and evidences of effectiveness of teaching. To judge this effectiveness, an evaluation should include more than achievement in factual materials, mastery of skills, and the degree to which pupil behavior approaches teacher approved standards. It must recognise also social and emotional growth and adaptability. It should take into account the limitations placed upon individual teachers but should give credit for

resourcefulness in the use of materials and techniques.

The effectiveness of teaching is evidenced by the degree to which:

- A. The pupils are led to govern their own behavior in a constructive manner and to act in accordance with democratic ideals. In this are included:
 1. Group planning
 2. Group responsibility
 3. Self-discipline

- B. Learning situations are organized and objectives clarified so that pupils understand the purposes of a course or activity. This includes:
 1. Teacher pre-planning
 2. Planning with pupils
 3. Relating activities to previous experiences
 4. Relating present activities to future goals
 5. Motivation
 6. Capitalising on classroom situations

- C. Activities and opportunities are provided to help students achieve planned goals. This includes:
 1. Taking initiative in selecting resource materials
 2. Utilizing community resources
 3. Assisting each child to make some contribution towards these goals.
 4. Selecting and organizing subject matter
 5. Skill in assigning and questioning
 6. Variety of interest to sustain interest
 7. Evaluation of work in the light of planned goals.
 8. Development of proper work habits.

- D. The needs of the individual pupil (retarded, normal, gifted) are recognized and met. This includes:

| | |
|------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Pupil status | 4. Encouragement |
| 2. Pupil success | 5. Fairness in treatment |
| 3. Security | 6. Challenging experiences |

- E. The classroom environment is conducive to learning. This is indicated by:
 1. Classroom control
 2. Establishment of routine
 3. Consistency in deeds and statements
 4. Minimizing noneffective, distracting influences
 5. Attractiveness and care of physical aspects of the room.
 6. Promptness with clerical work and reports

- F. Wholesome and friendly relationships within the school and community are developed. This involves:
1. Courtesy, fairness, cooperation, understanding, sincerity, and sympathy in dealing with children, youth, parents, and professional associates.
 2. Cooperation with parents on problems of mutual concern relative to the total growth of the child and assisting parents in understanding the philosophy of the school and the reason for various school policies and practices.
 3. Utilizing opportunities to contribute to and benefit from the total school program.
- G. There is constructive evaluation of the pupil's growth. This includes:
1. Reporting to parents
 2. Evaluating and using test data
 3. Using cumulative records
 4. Using individual pupil folders
 5. Teacher-pupil conferences
 6. Teacher-parent conferences and reports

The real value of any criteria for evaluation depends upon the means employed in developing and using them. The success or failure of a salary schedule based upon the effectiveness of teaching is dependent largely upon the degree to which there are (1) mutual respect, understanding, and sympathetic professional relationships between evaluators and teachers; (2) confidential treatment of all phases of evaluations; and (3) constructive, conscientious self-evaluation.^{6A}

The data brought out in the foregoing pages shows the criteria used for evaluation of teachers in Ladue School District, St. Louis, Missouri where a merit pay plan for teachers works.

^{6A}Ibid., pp. 54-55.

2. West Hartford's Career Salary Plan

Edmund H. Thorne, Superintendent of Schools, West Hartford, Connecticut, explains West Hartford's Career Salary Plan in the journal of Teacher Education, Vol. VIII, No. 2, June, 1957.⁷

One of the distinguishing features of any profession is the emphasis given to the up-grading of its members. Education can be justifiably proud of the advancement it has made in a more careful selection of future teachers, in the improvement of certification standards, and in the concentrated and realistic approach to both pre-service and in-service training programs. There is increasing evidence to suggest that a correlation exists between salary schedules and the quality of instruction. Further, it seems noteworthy that school systems in general have been reluctant to depart from the comparatively safe and traditional basis for building salary payment plans.

The West Hartford salary plan attempts to get away from the lock-step type schedule based solely upon degrees held and number of years of service. It recognizes that there are qualitative differences, and attempts to identify and reward superior teaching. It is based on the assumption that instruction is the chief function of the school and

⁷Edmund H. Thorne, "West Hartford's Career Salary Plan," The Journal of Teacher Education, VIII, No. 2, (June, 1957), p. 143.

that what happens to children in the teaching-learning process is all-important. It offers a way of keeping superior teachers in the classroom instead of promoting them to better paid positions for which they may not be as well qualified. Finally, their experience to date confirms the belief that salary recognition for superior teaching can be one more factor in raising the whole level of classroom instruction.

They believe the start they have made in incorporating merit in their salary plan will help to make teaching truly a profession. Merit type schedules may ultimately enable them to pay some of their outstanding people salaries equal to those found in other professions, according to Mr. Thorne. As the ceiling of opportunity is increased, it should be easier to recruit more of the able minds into teaching. By paying for superior work, many talented teachers who now leave for higher salaries in other lines of endeavour can be retained.

The West Hartford teachers' salary schedule incorporates two features: (a) merit advancement to teachers who have not reached the maximum, and (b) "career" awards to superior teachers who have reached the normal maximum and render outstanding service to the schools and community.

(a) MERIT ADVANCEMENT. West Hartford's salary schedule is not automatic. Normally, a teacher is advanced one step each year, but double increments may be given for superior work, thereby accelerating him on the salary schedule.

Annual increments may be, and occasionally are, withheld from those whose work is not satisfactory.

(b) "CAREER" CLASSIFICATION. In recognition of unusual teaching ability and service to the schools and community, the Board of Education may grant the teacher who has reached the maximum* an additional \$500 per year. At the end of three years, he is eligible for another \$500, and at the end of three more years, a third \$500 making a total of \$1,500 above the normal maximum. The award, once given, is continued from year to year.

Selection of "Career" Teachers

Nomination may be made by the teacher's principal or any group of three or more teachers. If a teacher is not recommended by his principal or colleagues, he may apply. In all cases, the teacher's consent is necessary if he is to be considered for the "career" award.

Nomination is based on established criteria, which include skill in teaching, pupil-teacher relations, staff relations, professional activities and community relations. Supporting evidence is submitted to a central administrative committee, composed of the director of elementary education, one elementary principal, a junior high principal, and a senior high principal, and the Assistant Superintendent of Schools. Membership of principals is rotated, with one new

*Present Maximums: BA - \$6,550; MA - 1-\$6,850

member each year.

The committee reviews the records, interviews the principals, visits the schools over an extended period of time. Final recommendations of the committee are submitted to the superintendent and approved by the Board of Education. Announcement of teachers appointed to the "career" classification is made through the staff bulletin and the press. No attempt is made to keep the names secret. Teachers not selected may have their evaluations reviewed by the superintendent or Board of Education.

How the Plan Developed

The "career" salary classification was adopted by the Board of Education in November, 1953, following a five-year study by teachers and principals selected by members of the staff.⁸ To date, 30 teachers at maximum have been awarded the first step and are receiving \$500 more than the amount they would receive for their degree preparation, eight teachers are at the second step and are receiving \$1,000 more than the normal maximum. There are 122 teachers at maximum, which means that 31 per cent of their teachers have received the first or second step of this special award. The present cost of the West Hartford "career" program is \$23,000 per year, which is approximately one-half of one per cent of their current operating budget.

The term "merit rating" in connection with the salary

⁸Ibid., p. 144.

plan is not used nor do they base evaluation on isolated classroom visits. They try to judge a teacher and his performance not only in the classroom but in his contribution to the school, his profession, and the community. They do not claim to have all the answers or that they "have arrived." They believe, however, that they have reasonable success to date and that they can continue to improve the administration of their salary plan. They are constantly evaluating it and making changes as they gain more experience.

Although the "career" schedule has been in operation only four years, the merit concept in West Hartford is not new. Teachers have received "merit" increments for more than twenty-five years. At first these consisted of an additional \$100 each year. Since the adoption of a new step schedule in 1947, teachers recommended for "merit" increments have been advanced two steps on the salary schedule. This provision in the schedule makes it possible to accelerate good teachers toward the maximum.

With the adoption of the 1947 schedule, teachers reaching scheduled maximums were no longer eligible for the "merit" increments. It seemed proper that the merit principle ought to apply to these people as well. The teachers association was asked to study the problem. A committee was appointed by them and after five years of study, the career plan was recommended and approved by the teachers

on an experimental try-out basis. It was then presented to the Board of Education and adopted by them.

How Do West Hartford Teachers Feel About the Plan?

A poll conducted by the West Hartford Teachers' Association in the spring of 1955 showed 85 per cent in favor of the "career" plan as it was then, or with minor changes; 15 per cent were opposed to all forms of merit plan.⁹

Following the teachers' poll, a more comprehensive survey was made by a citizens' committee appointed by the Board of Education. Their findings substantiated the teachers' poll. Suggestions for improvements were offered, all of which have been adopted by the Board of Education. The suggested improvements were as follows:

1. That non-degree teachers be eligible for "career" awards (only degree teachers were eligible in the beginning),
2. that the same amount be given to all "career" teachers regardless of degree (at the beginning the award for teachers with an A.B. degree was \$400 and for M.A. degree and beyond, \$500),
3. that greater weighting be given to classroom teaching skills,
4. that each step of the award, once given, be made permanent (in the beginning awards were given for three-year periods,

⁹Ibid., p. 145.

after which the person had to requalify).

A more recent survey was conducted by the Wichita (Kansas) City Teachers' Association. Two representatives spent two days in West Hartford interviewing teachers, administrators, board members, and parents to determine as accurately as possible their reactions to the West Hartford "career" salary plan. Their findings were compiled in a 102-page mimeographed report.

The Wichita report shows that 85-95 per cent of the West Hartford teachers approve the "career" program. They state that teachers recognize that the mechanics are not perfect, but that the salary plan offers a personal incentive to do a better job. Very few cases of jealousy or resentment have resulted when a teacher has been rejected. Of those who had criticisms of the program, when pinned down to whether they would like to see it done away with or kept, they were almost unanimous in saying they wanted to keep it.

The report also states that, in the older teacher group, the "morale has been raised tremendously." All felt they had something to keep working for after they got to the maximum step on the salary schedule, and it was a real inducement when they were named to the "career" classification. Several of the younger teachers were quite interested in it because it gave them something to look for in the

future. Although they found no new teachers just out of college that came to West Hartford because of the "career" plan, there were a few of the older teachers who had been teaching elsewhere that came to West Hartford for the benefits derived.

It was the general opinion that all teachers who received the "career" classification deserved it, but one out of five teachers stated they knew of deserving teachers who had not yet received it. Hartford concurs with this opinion, but believe the success their plan has had to date is partially due to the fact that the career committee has recommended only teachers whom they are sure of, and who received the unanimous approval of the committee. Since the Wichita report was made, twelve more teachers have been elected. It is significant to note, however, that none of the West Hartford teachers interviewed by the Wichita committee felt the career committee had been unfair to them.

On the question of visits to the classrooms by the career evaluation committee, teachers were divided in their feelings, but most of them felt their superiors could judge them without making visits to their classrooms; in fact, several said they wished the principal wouldn't visit their room because it created a false situation; most of them didn't want other teachers on the rating committee--they felt this would create a bad situation with each other and would make for poor working relationships.

Teacher Improvement Noted

School principals report that all teachers placed on the "career" classification are better now than when they were chosen. They have worked hard to justify the confidence placed in them. There has also been an increase in staff spirit since the adoption of the plan. The majority of the teachers who have not been selected are definitely trying to improve their work. They are also trying to take an active interest in community affairs and are showing more interest in all school activities, perhaps in anticipation of being nominated again.

The Board of Education is pleased with the operation of the plan and each year has enthusiastically voted the extra funds, required for the "career" teachers.

Chief objection to the plan is the time involved in administration. They believe, however, that it is worth the effort. The results in improvement in the school system far outweigh this objection. There is a sense of accomplishment and pride in being able to express, in a tangible way, appreciation for work well done.

Next Steps

Hartford believes that they can continue to reward superior service successfully by their "career" plan. Its success so far lies in the fact that it was not something forced on the staff, but was adopted after careful study and

deliberation by the staff before it was considered by the Board. The careful and open manner in which selections were made has established confidence. Much credit should also be given for the high professional attitude of members of the staff and the willingness on the part of the teachers, as well as the principals, to make the "career" plan succeed.

At the present time, West Hartford is making a study of the qualities recognized by principals in the people who have thus far been nominated for the "career" classification. Through this study they hope to refine their evaluation instruments by identifying the characteristics and skills of those who are considered to be superior teachers. This should be valuable to teachers, as well as to principals and the central committee. An improved statement of criteria should make it possible for teachers themselves to evaluate their own efforts and achievements, discover strengths and weaknesses, and know where they stand.

A study is also being made of the "merit" increment feature of their salary schedule in relation to the "career" classification so that there will be greater coordination in the criteria and method of selection.¹⁰

A Word of Caution

Merit salary plans can work under favorable environmental conditions provided adequate precautions have been taken to insure against the evils of merit rating that make teacher

¹⁰Ibid., p. 146.

groups fearful of such systems. The greatest danger is that well-meaning superintendents of schools or boards of education may become so enthusiastic about merit rating that they will force teacher committees to come up with plans that have not been carefully thought through and are ill-suited to local conditions. To do so will result in irreparable harm. For such people we offer the following suggestions:

1. Don't hurry! This philosophy behind the plan and method of operation must be worked out by the teachers, principals, and superintendent and be acceptable to them, otherwise, it is doomed to failure.
2. Do not attempt to borrow a merit plan from another school system and expect to have it work in yours. There is no universal pattern for all school systems. Like any other aspect of the salary schedule, there are local conditions that must be taken into account.
3. No matter how carefully conceived, any merit plan you adopt will not be perfect. Make plans for continuous re-evaluation and be willing to modify it in the light of experience gained.
4. Careful evaluation of teachers takes time. Boards of education should not expect already overworked superintendents and principals to do an adequate job in administering merit schedules without providing sufficient administrative help. It is more difficult to evaluate teaching service and relate it to the salary schedule than it is to automatically advance teachers on schedule in terms of credits earned and years of service.
5. The merit principle must operate all along the way. This includes initial selection, evaluation for tenure, advancement on the schedule, promotion within the system, etc. The administrative staff must have freedom to operate the school system on a merit basis and be free from outside interference of politically-minded members or others who try to exercise pressure.
6. "Merit" or "career" award should be commensurate with the value placed on superior service. They must be large enough to make them worthwhile.

7. Finally, do not expect a merit system to correct an inadequate salary plan. The basic schedule must provide a fair and equitable scale, with normal maximums equal to or better than older school systems in your area. "Career" salaries should be something over and beyond if school systems are to offer rewards to teachers of unusual skill and demonstrated ability.¹¹

3. The Glencoe Career-Teacher Plan

The career-teacher plan of the Glencoe Public Schools is not an individual merit pay plan of the type that has been so frequently discussed in recent years. Rather, it is a plan that attempts to award the merit of an entire faculty. The plan came into being on July 1, 1946, after a two-year study and has, today, essentially the same purposes and methods of operation that it had at its inception.¹² The fact that any plan could retain its identifying characteristics through so turbulent a period as the past eleven years is an indication of the satisfaction it has rendered. Credit for the success of the plan should go largely to the thoughtful people who conducted the original study. They had to resist the obvious temptation to devise stop-gap measures that would have led to more stop-gap measures. As the problems of securing and holding teachers have increased rather than diminished since 1946, it has been comforting to know that a personnel program was in operation that attracted some of the best teachers available and at the same time

¹¹Ibid., pp. 146-147.

¹²Jack Cushman, "The Glencoe Career-Teacher Plan," The Journal of Teacher Education, VIII, No. 2, (June, 1957), p. 154.

improve the total educational program of the schools. Succeeding boards of education have supported and strengthened the framework and various features of the plan. Today the Glencoe Career-Teacher Plan is an integral part of the Glencoe School System. To imagine operating the educational program without it would be a disconcerting thought to the faculty, the administration, the Board of Education, and to the community.

When the original two-year study was completed in 1946, several conclusions had been reached. These conclusions were the result of work by the faculty, administration, and Board of Education under the direction of an expert in personnel study:

1. Most of Glencoe's teacher turnover was due to the competition of more attractive salaries offered by high schools, private schools, colleges, and universities; not by comparable elementary schools. Apparently, the necessity for adequately rewarding the elementary teacher had not been recognized.
2. The principle of equal pay for equal work was being violated whenever men received a higher salary than women simply because they were men. The teaching profession could hardly expect to continue to attract high caliber women teachers if they were to be told that they could not expect to compete with men on an equal basis.
3. Opportunities for continuing professional growth should be available to all teachers if teaching is to be truly a

profession.

5. Opportunity for the experienced professional teacher to receive adequate financial reward is essential.
6. Teaching should no longer be considered a part-time job.

On the basis of the foregoing conclusions, the essential framework of the Glencoe Career-Teaching Plan was developed.¹³ Today these features are still the strength of the personnel program of the Glencoe Schools.

Summer Work

Perhaps the most significant feature of the plan is that teachers are employed on a twelve month basis. However, this does not mean that teachers work twelve months of each year. A five week period following the end of school in June until August 1 is a period of professional growth for all Glencoe teachers. For new teachers this involves participation in an orientation program that is directed by staff members of the Glencoe Schools. Meeting at the same time are about half of Glencoe's experienced teachers who take part in a variety of activities. Curriculum materials, methods, and other phases of the school program are evaluated, studied, and revised during the relatively relaxed atmosphere of the summer. In addition, workshops conducted by Glencoe counsellors, administrators, and teachers take place. Often, workshops and study groups are led by experts brought in

¹³Ibid., p. 155.

from universities, other school systems, and lay groups. As a part of the orientation program, new teachers are assimilated into the workshops and study sessions wherever possible. Field trips combined with picnics as well as social events also help to knit the new staff members into the Glencoe system in a relaxed, though purposeful, atmosphere. In effect, there are no new teachers in Glencoe when schools open in September.

At the time that new teachers and about half of the experienced staff members are engaged in the "on-campus" activities, the remainder of the staff is involved in other programs of professional improvement. Graduate work and domestic or foreign travel are the usual pursuits of other staff members. Glencoe teachers with master's degrees or the equivalent comprise more than 50 per cent of the total staff. And, as college credit beyond the master's degree is rewarded, there are teachers with six or even seven years of college credit. The domestic and foreign travel experiences of the teachers has done much to broaden the vision of both teachers and students. Foreign travel is encouraged by a \$250 payment toward expenses by the Board of Education. Some teachers also elect to take part in the recreation program conducted for the Glencoe children during the summer.

Other Programs

The effect which such a program has on the professional growth of teachers is obvious. However, the summer session

has not been the only type of in-service program designed to improve the competence of teachers and the education of the Glencoe schools. Year-round workshops, study groups, and committee work also contribute their share. Each Thursday during the school year, the children are dismissed at 2:30 P.M. so that meetings of the faculty may be held. Problems that need consideration and action by the entire faculty are attacked during this period. Often, programs are carried over into the summer for more intensive study by a smaller group. The planning and coordination of the summer and school year in-service programs is developed by a Planning Committee that meets throughout the school year. This committee is headed by the faculty chairman--a classroom teacher or counsellor. Other members of the committee include the superintendent and assistant of schools, the school principals, the school psychologist, the reading consultant, and the chairmen of the various committees. Each spring this committee has an all-day meeting to evaluate the previous year's in-service program and to plan the program for the coming year.

Benefits of the Plan

It is quite obvious that teaching in Glencoe is truly a professional endeavor. The part-time stigma has been removed and yet adequate vacation time continues to be available. Certainly, opportunities for professional growth through a variety of means have become a part of the life of the Glencoe teacher. Leadership possibilities for the

classroom teacher are abundant. Situations that allow the tapping of the talents of individual staff members for the benefit of all are numerous. The emphasis has been upon cooperative effort toward a more competent and professional group, not competition between teachers to catch the attention of an evaluation team.

There are other benefits of the summer and school year in-service programs that deserve mention. As stated previously, the Glencoe Career-Teacher Plan attempts to reward the merit of an entire faculty. Therefore, the very existence of a plan that requires a teacher to spend five weeks of a summer in a program of professional growth tends to attract those teachers who look upon teaching as a full-time professional occupation. It has also become apparent that those teachers who are not truly interested in professional improvement, who are "trying-out" teaching, or who are determined to squeeze all the free time they can from the year are repelled by the idea that teachers take themselves seriously enough to spend five weeks of a summer in self-improvement.

Of considerable importance also is the feeling by the community that its teachers are professionals who recognize the need for continuous study. The approval that the citizens have given to building programs and salary increases can be in part attributed to the appreciation of the community for such a program.

Despite the teacher shortage and the lack of interest on the part of some teachers to commit themselves to an

extended work year, there has continued to be a relatively large number of teachers seeking positions in Glencoe. As a result of this interest, the selection of teachers is an evaluative process. A personnel committee composed of teachers, administrators, and members of the Board of Education conduct interviews and study credentials carefully before teachers are employed. Inexperienced and experienced teachers alike are attracted by the proven career-teaching plan. Experienced teachers receive up to nine years credit for experience outside of the Glencoe schools.

Credit for military service is the only item considered other than teaching experience. There are three levels of teaching competence provided for in the Glencoe Career-Teaching Plan. These levels are designed to provide initiative for the individual teacher to grow professionally and at the same time to provide controls that safeguard the existence of a plan that depends upon a high degree of competence on the part of all teachers within the system.

The Probationary Teacher Level

The first step for any teacher in Glencoe, experience or inexperienced, is the probationary level. Inexperienced teachers remain at this level for a minimum of three years. Experienced teachers are eligible for advancement at the end of a two-year probationary period. During this two-year period, the experienced teacher receives a salary commensurate with his experience despite the probationary status preceding

the privileges of tenure that accompanies advancement to the next level. Evidence of satisfactory adjustment to the school system and capacity for continued professional growth is required before a recommendation for advancement is made. The superintendent of schools has the assistance of the Personnel Committee in making this recommendation. If there is any question regarding an individual teacher, a complete review of the status of the teacher in question is made.

In fairness to the individual concerned and the entire school system, decisions at this level of advancement are seriously considered. The success of the Career-Teacher Plan depends upon the competence of each member of the group.

The Professional Teacher Level

Advancement from the probationary level brings the teacher to the professional level. Advancement on the professional level is continuous except in those cases where questions arise concerning the personal and professional competence of an individual. Any cases of this nature are reviewed by the superintendent of schools and the Personnel Committee. Appropriate recommendations are made to the Board of Education.

The Career-Teacher Level

Teachers eligible for the career-teacher level must have a master's degree or its equivalent from an accredited university graduate school and a minimum of eleven years of service, three of which have been in the service of the

Glencoe Schools. A designation of an individual as a career teacher implies a high level of competence in direct service to pupils, personal qualifications, professional activities, professional preparation and training, and community service. There are seven annual increments in salary at the career-teacher level. The minimum salary is \$6,400 and the maximum salary is \$7,600. University credit beyond the master's degree enable a teacher to attain a salary of \$8,000.

The range in salary from \$4,000 for the inexperienced teacher to \$8,000 for the services of the teacher who has presented evidence of personal and professional competence, who has participated in in-service programs that have strengthened not only individual skills but the foundation of the entire school system, who has taken advanced study in the recognition that teaching requires continuous study, who has shared his strengths with fellow teachers, who has demonstrated that he can receive guidance of others, is a testimony to the good faith that succeeding boards of education have kept with the teachers who have helped to build the program of the Glencoe Schools. Any temptation to increase beginning salaries at the expense of the experienced teacher has been continuously resisted. In 1946, when teachers were for the first time expected to take part in a summer program, beginning salaries were raised \$800 and the top salary was increased by \$1,400. This year, the beginning salaries were raised \$200, but the

top of the salary was increased by \$600.¹⁴

There is little evidence to indicate that Glencoe teachers are now being attracted by higher salaries at outside high schools, private schools, colleges or universities.

Administration of the Plan

The Career-Teacher Plan is administered by a Personnel Committee and a Teacher Affairs Committee.

The Personnel Committee is composed of the superintendent of schools and assistant superintendent of schools, school principals, the chairman of the education committee of the Board of Education, the school psychologist, and four classroom teachers, one from each school with alternates for each classroom teacher. The classroom teacher members of the Personnel Committee are elected by the faculty. A two-thirds vote is required for election.

The duties of the Personnel Committee include:

1. assisting in the recruitment and selection of personnel;
2. advising the superintendent of schools on the advancement of teaching personnel from the probationary to the professional level;
3. considering all cases where questions arise concerning the continuous progress of individuals on the professional level and to advise the superintendent of schools on the action to be taken in such cases;

¹⁴Ibid., pp. 156-157.

4. advising the superintendent of schools on the advancement of teaching personnel from the professional to the career-teacher level.

The Teacher Affairs Committee is composed of the eight classroom teacher members of the Personnel Committee, the four regular members and the four alternates.

The duties of the Teacher Affairs Committee include:

1. considering jointly with the education committee of the Board of Education and the superintendent of schools all operating policies that directly affect the personal and professional welfare of teachers;
2. serving as representatives of the faculty to whom any individual or group of teachers may bring any matter of personal or professional concern for consideration, study, and appropriate action;
3. taking appropriate action whenever, in the judgment of the committee, conditions arise that threaten to impair the maintenance of accepted professional standard and ethics within the personnel organization of the school system.¹⁵

4. The Ithaca Merit Salary Program

As early as 1919 some attention was given to merit in determining salaries of classroom teachers in Ithaca.¹⁶ The first "merit" schedule provided a minimum of \$800 per year and a maximum of \$1,250 for elementary teachers with a pro-

¹⁵Ibid., pp. 157-158.

¹⁶W. L. Gregg, "The Ithaca Merit Salary Program," The Journal of Teacher Education, VIII, No. 2, (June, 1957), p. 159.

vision for \$200 for extra study. Differentials were provided for secondary teachers, for men, and for teachers with additional responsibility such as supervisory duty. The \$200 "extra" was primarily an incentive for professional study. It was further employed in distinguishing among teachers on maximum automatic salary with respect to quality of service. An elementary teacher, for example, with sufficient years of service, rated "superior" by her supervisors might receive the \$200 in addition to the regular \$1,250. An interesting development which evolved from this schedule and persisted until 1942 was a provision whereby an elementary teacher was rated independently by her principal and each of the several elementary subject supervisors (music, art, reading, and so forth). If all evaluators agreed that the teacher was "superior" she then received four-fifths of the \$200 increment. The teacher in this example might, in turn, earn \$40 per year more than a fellow teacher who received only three "superior" ratings.

Another early venture into recognition of merit was the salary schedule of 1930. The office of model teacher or grade demonstrator was established. Only one teacher was thus designated for each of the first six grades. Compensation was \$100 higher than that of teachers with corresponding preparation and experience. Actually, the position called for additional service in the form of assistance of

new teachers, demonstration lessons, and consultation on classroom problems. Supply teachers were furnished by the teacher whenever he was absent from the classroom in pursuit of his special duties. The model teacher program, even as a modest attempt to recognize outstanding teachers, enjoyed only limited success. It was abandoned due to economy measures during the depths of the depression.

Mandatory Salary Schedules

In 1947 the New York State Legislature established mandatory teachers' salary schedules which included four promotional increments.¹⁷ The increments were to be granted teachers after completing a designated number of years of service. Specific requirements were incorporated in the statute to afford to each teacher the opportunity to qualify for promotional increments. Objective evidence was to be obtained by the evaluator regarding the teacher's contribution in one or more areas, as follows:

- (a) exceptional service to pupils
- (b) exceptional service to the community
- (c) substantial increase in the value of service rendered to pupils through the teacher's participation in non-school activities
- (d) substantial increase in the value of service rendered to pupils as a result of education beyond the level of the master's degree, education not formally credited

¹⁷Ibid., pp. 159-160.

toward a degree, or continued approved study by teachers who do not hold a college degree.

Boards of education employing eight or more teachers were obliged to adopt standards for promotion and to provide for granting promotional increments to not less than a specified percentage of the number of teachers employed. Incidentally, the wealthier school districts tended to avoid the issue by granting increments automatically through all "promotional" steps. At the other extreme, some school boards hewed to the line of granting only the required minimum percentage of promotions, with little regard for the number of teachers who might meet prescribed conditions at any given time. In both instances the net effect was certainly a diminution of regard for the intent of the salary law.

Despite difficulties and confusion which might be expected to arise in a state-mandated merit salary plan, most districts made valiant efforts to expedite the statute by adopting new salary schedules in harmony with the law. In Ithaca, the school board adopted a schedule effective in 1948 which contained 17 steps with promotional levels provided after steps 9, 12, and 15. Standards for promotion were devised by a committee of eight classroom teachers, three supervisors, and three principals elected by the entire faculty. The superintendent served ex officio

with the committee, which met in numerous sessions, delegating work to a number of sub-committees, inviting board members, laymen and teachers for consultation from time to time.¹⁸

The substantial effort of the teacher committee, its effectiveness in working with both the school board and the teachers, and the ultimate acceptance of its recommendations by both groups, was probably the most significant factor in assuring the promotional plan a fair trial.

Of equal importance to the formulation and adoption of standards was the work of the committee in building a structure for administering those standards. The original plan, later modified, included the use of weighted numerical scores for each of the items upon which the teacher was rated. On a possible top score of 100, each teacher was required to attain at least 80 for eligibility for promotion. The old problems of delimiting the critical point and rationalizing the problem of the teacher who might attain a score of 79 caused the ultimate abandonment of exact mathematical evaluation.

Evaluative Guide

An important item in the administrator's aspect of the merit program was a published salary schedule which contained a complete guide on the evaluation and an outline of the

¹⁸Ibid., p. 160.

entire rating process. Each teacher was furnished a copy of the schedule. Some commendable features of the guide are worth noting. A written statement of the philosophy of education adopted by the faculty a few years earlier was incorporated in the merit program. It was printed at the head of the guide and served as a statement of concepts and purpose of the entire guide. Emphasis was placed on the growth of boys and girls in terms of the purposes of the schools' educational program.

Evaluation placed a heavy responsibility upon principals and supervisors in their obligation to obtain objective evidence on exceptional teaching service. In order to note development of children in the many phases of the educational program, supervisors were challenged to become informed of the total curricular pattern in their subject field, as well as the past learning experiences of the children.¹⁹

In obtaining evidence, care was exercised to avoid the notorious problem of "snooping." Recommendations were listed for the use of the guide. For example, supervisors were urged to record only those evidences actually observed during classroom visitations or noticeably lacking in situations where they were warranted.

Classroom observations were recorded on report forms which included facts and comments about the lesson or

¹⁹Ibid.

activity observed. The supervising principal of each elementary school was required to observe each teacher "as many times as needed." Each visit was to be at least 50 minutes in length. There were to be two or three consecutive visits. Observation reports were used only between observer and teacher. The prime objective was aiding improvement of teaching. The observer registered his visits in the office of the principal. In secondary schools the principal made at least two annual visits to probationary and potential merit teachers. Supervisors and department heads made at least three visits to probationary and merit teacher candidates.²⁰

Visits for evaluation could be made at the invitation of the teacher, on a mutually pre-arranged schedule, or unscheduled. The report notes which type of visit was evaluated. All specialists and non-classroom teaching personnel were evaluated annually by whatever supervisory staff member was responsible. An evaluative scale was especially devised for use with school-nurse teachers, librarians, speech therapists, counselors, and other special service personnel who do not carry regular classroom duties.

Prior to March 1 of each year the superintendent advised all principals and supervisors of the names of all teachers eligible for consideration for merit promotion. Supervisory personnel, in turn, notified teachers of their eligibility

²⁰Ibid., p. 161.

and began their visits shortly thereafter so that all reports could be filed by the following December 15.

Culminating the evaluative process each year, a review of the year's progress for each teacher was written by the evaluator and immediately followed by a conference in which teacher and evaluator discussed the evaluation report. The principal then used the reports (as modified in observer-teacher conferences) as part of his final evaluation. The annual evaluation, likewise, was made on a four-page form developed by the teacher committee. In outline form it followed the evaluative criteria published in the guide.²¹

Each year the principal evaluated every teacher on his staff, using the evaluation forms. This form has gone through three major revisions. Presently it is divided into five areas: (1) teaching ability, (2) classroom management, (3) contribution to the total school program, (4) personal qualities, and (5) professional growth. Evaluation is now made on a new five-point scale, "1" being the highest and representing the highest level of distinguished teaching service. Teachers rated "1" are eligible to receive the two highest increments in the salary scale. Teachers rated "2" represent a high level of quality and degree of efficiency and are eligible to earn two merit increments above the automatic schedule, but not more than two. The current schedule includes a total of four \$300 merit increments.

²¹Ibid., P. 162.

Both the school board and the staff recognized that complete objectivity is a goal to strive for but one which can never be reached. Teachers are aware of the fact that the evaluative process involves an indefinable area of judgment which will depend on the professional competence and integrity of the principal; he is expected to exercise this honesty and skill.²²

Difficulties in Administering the Program

In 1951 the New York law as liberalized to place upon the local school district the responsibility for determining and using whatever criteria for evaluating superior teaching the district deemed practicable. Meanwhile school boards had been meeting with varying degrees of success in administering merit salary programs. Continued inflation had forced many districts to revise salary schedules almost every year. This had the effect, often, of nullifying a merit program by adoption of new maximum salaries on an automatic basis which exceeded the amount of the former merit increments.

Another common effect, one which was both confusing and annoying, was the continuing disparity between service and reward. To illustrate, many districts during the past decade have raised salary schedule limits more rapidly than they have adjusted actual salaries. Teachers began to feel like greyhounds chasing a mechanical hare, the latter symbolic of maximum salaries.

²²Ibid.

In Ithaca, there arose the perplexing situation of adjusting the merit salary level along with the automatic schedule. Some peculiar results ensued. A number of teachers promoted to merit salary steps in the late 1940's found that they again had to qualify for merit steps in the early 1950's. Some interesting questions had to be answered. For example, is a teacher who was "worth" \$5,000 in 1950 entitled to \$6,000 in 1954 if both figures represent the same point relative to the salary scale?²³

It was mentioned above that the original 100-point numerical rating scale proved unwieldy in practice. In modifying the procedure of evaluation to comply with revisions in the state salary law, the Ithaca schedule came to rely upon the five-point scale. Likewise, the responsibility for evaluating a teacher was centralized on the principal. Eventually a compromise developed to make evaluation a joint responsibility of two supervisory personnel. Elementary teachers are now evaluated by the principal and the assistant superintendent for instruction. Secondary teachers are evaluated by the principal and the department head or director. At the same time, it has been decided that the principal will prevail in any case where judgments do not coincide. Thus, the role of the special subject supervisor is less fettered by evaluative duties; the supervisor is freer to act as a consultant and counselor to teachers.

²³Ibid.

Merit Rating Survey

At a December, 1956, meeting of a committee on teacher evaluation of the National Education Association, Department of Classroom Teachers, the president of the Ithaca Teachers Association reported on the survey conducted among its teachers by the association just prior to the Classroom Teachers meeting in Washington. Supervisors and administrators had no part in framing or analyzing the survey. Teachers were encouraged to make anonymous reports. The survey covered these questions:

- (1) What, in your opinion, is merit rating?
- (2) How do you feel merit rating affects your morale toward the children?
- (3) How does merit rating affect your morale toward your fellow teachers?
- (4) How does merit rating affect your relationship with your administrators?
- (5) How does merit rating affect your morale toward your community? ²⁴

The association president had kindly prepared a resume of responses which is incorporated in the next few paragraphs. About fifty per cent of all teachers replied. Some non-respondents stated that they hesitated to answer in many cases because they had not been on the staff long enough to form an opinion for which they felt qualified to report.

In answering the first question, one teacher said, "To

²⁴Ibid., p. 163.

tell the truth, I've been so busy teaching I haven't paid any attention to merit rating." To the second question a teacher replied, "The key to the entire situation is the manner and extent to which the teachers would be indoctrinated so as not to view the process with fear."

Not all responses were favorable. One teacher felt that rating might influence her in a way that might make her feel inferior among fellow teachers. Presumably this would be a feeling of a teacher who would be denied merit recognition while others were elevated to the distinguished service level.

Question four appears to be significant. Answers were frequent and well directed. "I should think the teachers would feel a strong relationship," said one teacher, "since part of the administrator's work is to help the teacher toward the goal of becoming all that he is capable of becoming." Another observed, "I should like to have an administrator feel that I am a friend simply because I want to be-- not because I have an apple to polish. There can be a lonely life." "Rating promoted a secure feeling," comments one teacher--"Lets you know where you stand and where you can go for help if needed." To the fifth question a typical answer was, "I respect a community that wants top professional teaching, is willing to pay for it, and gives recognition for it."²⁵

²⁵Ibid., p. 164.

SALARY SCHEDULE OF ITHACA PUBLIS SCHOOLS

July 1, 1956

Teacher-Preparation Schedule

| LEVEL | YEAR | 4 | 5 | 6 | INCREMENT |
|--------------------------|------|---------|---------|---------|-----------|
| Probationary | 1 | \$3,600 | \$4,100 | \$4,400 | |
| | 2 | 4,000 | 4,300 | 4,600 | \$200 |
| | 3 | 4,200 | 4,500 | 4,800 | 200 |
| Regular | 4 | 4,600 | 4,900 | 5,200 | 400 |
| | 5 | 4,900 | 5,200 | 5,500 | 300 |
| | 6 | 5,200 | 5,500 | 5,800 | 300 |
| | 7 | 5,500 | 5,800 | 6,100 | 300 |
| | 8 | 5,800 | 6,100 | 6,400 | 300 |
| | | | | | |
| Distinguished Service | 9 | 6,100 | 6,400 | 6,700 | 300 |
| | 10 | 6,400 | 6,700 | 7,000 | 300 |
| | 11 | 6,700 | 7,000 | 7,300 | 300 |
| | 12 | 7,000 | 7,300 | 7,600 | 300 |

5. The Utah Study

Mr. Gale Rose, secretary and research director, Utah School Merit Study Committee, acted as consultant at the Syracuse workshop on merit rating in July, 1958. He reported fully on the history and accomplishments of the committee he heads.

The Utah Study had its beginning in 1948 when the state legislature was dealing with a series of education problems, among which was the question of teachers' salaries. The state legislature decided to set up a special committee to look into merit pay for teachers. Four educationalists, four lay citizens, and a government appointee as chairman were selected. Their problem was to answer the question, "Can individual merit in teaching be discovered and rewarded?" To date, the committee has spent nearly \$250,000 in research and investigation. It has yet to file a final report with the state legislature.²⁷

Mr. Rose outlined some of the problems the committee had encountered in the study. The basic problem was three-fold: to define the scope of the teaching job objectively, to place a proper value on these items once they were defined, and to decide how to reward for these items. It is interesting to note that the committee employed job analysts to

²⁷British Columbia Teachers Federation Bulletin (September 4, 1958, B.C.T.F., Vancouver, B.C.).

assist them, and that the job analysts reported that evaluating the teaching position was one of the most complex and difficult analyses, they had ever done.

Some of the problems for which the Utah Committee are still seeking the answers are:

Can you really determine teacher effectiveness?

Is bias a real danger in the evaluation measurement?

Does merit pay encourage "apple polishing"?

Does merit pay lower morale?

Does merit pay destroy cooperation in teachers' ranks?

Does merit pay create a reluctance in teachers to discuss problems with their supervisors?

Is there a concealed purpose behind the school board pressure for merit pay?

Is it simply a device to save money by holding down salary levels?

In his final statement to the workshop, Mr. Rose said:

The teacher's job is a complex, on-going, emerging process, and it is naive in the extreme to think that a simple rating program, cheaply administered, can produce a valid or reliable picture of it.²⁸

After ten years of study at a cost of \$250,000, the Utah Committee has not arrived at a definition which it can accept.

The Report of the Utah School
Merit Study Committee

The report of the Utah School Merit Study Committee

²⁸Ibid.

has now been tabled in the Utah State Legislature. Much of the report applies specifically to the Utah situation. The sections of more general interest are set forth below:²⁹

FINDINGS:

A. General

1. Merit salary programing has been used or attempted in many school systems, industries, and government agencies, over the past 25 years. It has met with varying degrees of success in all of these settings. There are numerous examples of failure of such programs, and also some examples of success with them. Certain recurring conditions which seem to lead to success or failure have been identified in this Utah study. (In industry, merit rating is usually associated with performance appraisal for in-service improvement and assignment purposes, not directly for salary determination.)³⁰
2. Earlier forms of merit rating, based on unreliable, subjective trait rating devices and superficial administrative procedures, are generally mistrusted and condemned by the teaching profession, and are steadily being abandoned by industry.
3. Recent developments in both education and industry have led toward a focus on performance appraisals based on carefully collected observation data and well defined functional criteria. Such procedures have resulted in greatly improved objectivity and reliability. Furthermore, they produce information of great value for in-service development of personnel skills, which is one of the Utah study's major contributions in this field.³¹
4. The costs for conducting such evaluations are generally not provided in the normal school budget. For the implementation of a thorough-going appraisal system schools are often understaffed, and personnel are not adequately trained. Also, professionally trained school administrators often devote time to clerical

²⁹British Columbia Teachers Federation Bulletin, "The Report of the Utah School Merit Study Committee," B.C.T.F., Vancouver, B.C., February 23, 1959, p. 1, jr. 59-208.

³⁰Ibid., p. 1.

³¹Ibid.

and other non-leadership functions. The annual extra costs of operating comprehensive evaluation and correlated in-service training programs to serve as a base for merit rating have been estimated at \$130 or more per teacher evaluated.³²

5. Merit salary payments in both education and industry are usually provided above a basic schedule or pay plan for those who qualify. The costs of a merit salary program cannot be estimated without a clear specification of their relationship to an existing salary program. The majority of school districts across the country which have used merit payments have followed one or both of the two usual approaches: an acceleration of merit teachers up the regular schedule, and super-maximum salary increments on merit alone. Many districts which claim to operate merit salary programs have only a provision for withholding increments from unsatisfactory teachers. The currently operating school merit programs which have achieved teacher acceptance offer merit awards of about \$500 or more to the qualifying persons, usually in addition to their normal salary position on a typical automatic schedule.³³
6. Teacher morale is not necessarily directly related to whether or not the teacher is working within a merit salary program. A recent study completed by two Northwestern University professors in the Midwest demonstrates this lack of correlation.³⁴

B. Utah

1. The three Utah study districts have produced three specific definitions of teaching which can be studied and used by other groups of teachers, administrators, and school board members. Although these definitions differ in certain respects, they also have some elements in common, and demonstrate the fact that school districts can develop useful definitions on the local level. Emphasis has been on performance functions rather than personal traits.
2. After the teacher's job has been defined, it is possible to determine the information collection and recording procedures which are best suited to each aspect of the definition. The next step is to des-

³²Ibid.

³³Ibid., p. 2.

³⁴Ibid.

cribe qualities of performance for each aspect of the definition. The evaluation process then becomes one of collecting and recording information and relating it to the description of good teaching. The Utah study districts are at different points in their development of usable descriptions. In the past, and in many current merit plans, school administrators have omitted the information collection and recording procedures and have made evaluations in one rating operation. Such a simplified operation places almost complete reliance on a rater's subjective judgments. It has generally proved inadequate. A primary effort of the Utah study has been to develop more objective processes in which the essential operations are identified and separated.

5. The three Utah experimentation procedures, financed through special state grants, require somewhat different types of training of the personnel who carry them out, but all emphasize the great need for well-trained personnel. Such training is hard work and requires a definite effort and time commitment.
6. The Utah study districts agree that if an evaluation process is to be of value it must be carried out systematically and with attention to such problems as adequate sampling of the teaching, development of first hand data, conferring with the teacher, and reliability checks on the procedure. Such a program requires a dedicated effort by persons designated and trained for it, which cannot be realized unless the Board of Education makes adequate financial and personnel provision.
7. Not one of the three Utah study districts has as yet adopted a merit pay plan. One concludes that "without an objective and valid method of appraisal, low teacher morale and dissatisfaction will result and the wrong kind of teaching may be rewarded," and admits that despite much research, study and trial since 1954 it has not yet developed such a plan. Another found the minimum time needed by principals for evaluation is 10 days for observations and 10 hours of conferences for teachers. Teacher attitude toward merit rating became more and more negative as this study progressed. The third is checking tests and procedures for validity and after this appraisal intends to launch an experimental merit pay plan.

CONCLUSIONS

1. Personnel appraisal or evaluation is feasible in school systems which have prepared themselves by establishing an adequate set of basic conditions.
6. Any attempt to impose merit programing on a local district would be damaging to a long-term development of beneficial merit procedures.
7. A very careful preparation and training period is necessary before a school district can handle the technical and human relationship problems inherent in a thorough-going merit program.
9. It is possible, and necessary, to attain a higher degree of objectivity in teacher appraisal than has usually been achieved. The Utah study has been successful in developing a highly objective procedure for measuring the nature of teacher-pupil interaction in the classroom. The study has also demonstrated the difficulties and weaknesses in subjective procedures and ways for minimizing or overcoming the objectionable features of such methods.
10. Appraisal systems which have the appearance of objectivity through superficial use of numerical scales, or whose reliability has not been demonstrated, are misleading as to their value and result in disillusionment among teachers and others concerning the application of the merit concept.
15. There is a considerable need for school boards and professional educators to work together to clarify the goals of salary programs and then to take steps to implement those goals. Aside from the merit question, teacher salary schedules often include increment patterns and salary limits which are detrimental to the development of a skilled and stable profession.³⁵

BASIC CONDITIONS FOR A LOCAL PERSONNEL EVALUATION AND MERIT SALARY PROGRAM

The following conditions would be agreed to by a local district before additional funds are approved by the state

³⁵Ibid., p. 3.

agency.

1. The local professional staff and Board of Education will develop and accept a set of evaluative standards which can be applied to individual teaching situations with reliability and objectivity. Such criteria can be based on those produced in the Utah study, as well as those in use in other states.
2. They will develop and achieve general acceptance of the administrative and supervisory procedures which will be followed in applying the criteria to an individual teaching situation. Procedures currently in successful use can be adapted to particular local conditions.
3. The district will acknowledge that the major purpose of the local merit program is the improvement of teaching. The system should provide such guidelines and resources that any interested teacher can identify problems and receive help in solving them. Administrative action concerning personnel employment, placement, reassignment, in-service development, promotion, dismissal, retirement, and salary, could then follow as a result of the evaluation program and would be based on thoroughly developed information.
4. A regular appraisal of the work of all school staff members will be conducted for improvement purposes, but no teacher should be required to accept a merit award.
5. Provision would be made in the district for sufficient personnel, and adequate training of such personnel, for the correct implementation of the evaluation program. In a system in which the school principal has major responsibility for collecting data and assisting teachers in the improvement program, the ratio of personnel should approximate one full-time principal or assistant principal to each 15 teachers, with adequate clerical help.
6. The local Board of Education must establish a generally accepted basic salary program before merit payments are added for those who qualify.
7. The school board would then provide for merit payments which represent a substantial reward for excellence. One to five steps for merit, each worth at least 10 per cent above the individual's position on the basic schedule, should be available

over a 6 - 20 year period of time. Such awards would remain in the individual's salary unless later appraisals showed they could no longer be justified.

8. No percentage or fixed limits may be set on the number who might qualify for merit salary. The only limitation should be the level of standards which have been established for excellent performance.
9. The decisions concerning merit salary awards in a school system should be made at the district level. Those who analyze and evaluate the teaching, and work with teachers to improve their performance at the school level, should have no direct connection with the salary administration program. The policies under which the merit salary program is administered should be developed cooperatively by the school board, administrators, and others of the professional staff, and should include adequate provision for the objective evaluation of appraisal data furnished from the individual schools.³⁶

The Development of a Merit Program

The development of a merit pay plan is a slow, difficult and expensive process as the following summary of steps followed in the three experimental districts chosen in the overall Utah State study will show. Even where there is a desire for or good will toward the merit concept, serious study can expose problems and difficulties such that no actual merit pay plan may ever materialize.³⁷

The Sevier, Utah, Study

1. In the spring of 1955, teachers asked to participate in study; 84 say yes, 17 no, 24 uncertain, 12 no response.
2. Committee appointed 8 professional persons, 5 lay persons, full-time director.

³⁶Ibid., pp. 3-4.

³⁷British Columbia Teachers' Federation Bulletin, "The Development of a Merit Program," (B.C.T.F., Vancouver, B.C., February 25, 1959), p. 1. CM-59-224.

3. Attempts made to develop acceptable criteria. Teacher reaction sought.
4. April, 1956, survey of teacher attitude taken--58% willing to proceed.
5. Concern arises as to who will do the evaluation--teachers favor evaluation by principal, supervisor and self-evaluation.
6. Each teacher uses rating scale for self-evaluation--tabulations show narrow distribution.
7. School year 1956-57 used for trial runs of evaluation procedures: 2nd survey of teacher attitude shows increased teacher opposition to continuation.
8. In April, 1958, second trial evaluation prepared and test arranged involving only 9 principals and 17 teachers.
9. Found that raters need considerable training in observation of teaching and interpretation of data. Four attempts made to produce suitable evaluation scale but none satisfactory. Minimum time needed by principals for evaluation found to be 10 days, for observation and 10 hours of conferences per teacher.
10. At end of 1958, teacher attitude still less favorable. No adequate basis for merit rating yet developed.³⁸

The Provo, Utah, Study

1. Winter of 1954-55--by 85% vote teachers agree to study merit rating.
2. Committee of 5 teachers, 1 Board representative, and staff of 2 full-time and 3 half-time persons appointed.
3. 1955-56--series of measures of teaching staff taken to establish "benchmarks."
4. Spring of 1956--assumption made that for merit pay to be feasible a scientifically objective and valid evaluation program would be required. Expert consultant service employed to help design measuring instruments. Trial runs instituted which revealed

³⁸Ibid.

that staff members need to be trained for evaluation. Training program arranged.

5. 1956-57--detailed code developed and tested. Total of 973 records obtained. Total of 75 distinct teacher acts specified. Substantial differences among teachers observed.
6. Validation procedures invoked--still going on.
7. Concluded that evaluation of a particular teacher's work should not be made for salary purposes by local personnel, but by a non-profit, independent agency which could issue a "Certificate of Competence." Teacher should be evaluated for this only at his own request.
8. By end of 1958, actual merit pay plan still not developed.³⁹

The Jordan, Utah, Study

1. 1955--teachers vote 4 to 1 in favor of undertaking merit study.
2. Central committee of 31 lay people and 39 professional people appointed with executive committee plus 2-4 staff members and professional consultant.
3. Critical incident approach--4,000 teaching behaviors exacted--5 major categories with 18 sub-categories.
4. Self-appraisal form on 5 point scale developed--trial evaluations lead to modification. Now being checked for reliability.
5. Principals entrusted with job of collecting objective data. Training program for principals instituted. Special provisions made to give principals enough time for observation.
6. 11 basic policies to govern application of a merit salary plan developed.
7. End of 1958--plan to continue current trials and tests, to conduct validity checks, survey of teacher

³⁹Ibid., p. 2.

attitudes. Based on that appraisal, an experimental program of rewarding meritorious service may be developed.⁴⁰

Why Merit Salary Scales Were Abandoned

In the *Journal of Teacher Education*, Vol. VIII, No. 2, June, 1957, published by the National Commission on Teacher Education and Professional Standards, Washington, D. C., U. S. A., a number of instances where Merit Salary Schedules were abandoned are cited.⁴¹ These cases are summarized briefly at this point in Chapter II.

Detroit, Michigan

In the Detroit Public Schools, salary recognition was given for outstanding teaching service at the rate of approximately \$200 per teacher so recommended. Along with the increment, the teacher was also given the classification of Second Assistant (secondary schools) and First Assistant (secondary schools). This was done in the 1930's and early 1940's prior to inauguration of a single salary schedule, for all teachers. When the single salary schedule was instituted, the practice was terminated with the understanding that no additional teachers would be recognized in this fashion, but those already classified would retain their

⁴⁰Ibid.

⁴¹"Why Merit Salary Schedules Were Abandoned," The Journal of Teacher Education, Vol. VIII, No. 2, (published by the National Commission on Teacher Education and Professional Standards, The National Education Association of the United States, Washington, D.C., June, 1957), pp. 186 to 191.

salary differential until they were promoted or had retired from the system. The costs of living adjustments have since been effected which have changed the differential, but not to the extent of eliminating it! George H. Baker, Executive Administrative Assistant, points out that the single salary schedule now in effect was a major factor in discontinuing the plan.⁴²

District of Columbia

An incentive salary plan was established in the District of Columbia Public Schools by a provision in the Teachers' Salary Act of 1947. Section 7 of title IV of the Act is quoted below to indicate the exact nature of the plan:

Sec. 7. On July 1, 1948, and on the first day of each fiscal year thereafter, if his work is satisfactory, every permanent teacher, school officer, or other employee except as provided in Section 2 of this Act shall receive an annual increase in salary within his salary class or position as hereinbefore provided without action of the Board of Education, except that after a teacher, school officer, or other employee has received five annual increases he shall receive no further increases until he is declared eligible therefor by the Board of Education, on the basis of such evidence of successful teaching in the case of a teacher or outstanding service in the case of a school officer or other employee and of increased professional attainments as that Board of Education may prescribe, and that after having been declared so eligible and after having received five more annual increases, he shall receive no further increases until he is declared eligible therefor by the Board of Education on the basis of such evidence

⁴²George H. Baker, "Why Merit Salary Schedules Were Abandoned," The Journal of Teacher Education, VIII, No. 2, (June, 1957), p. 186.

of successful teaching in the case of a school officer or other employee and of increased professional attainments as the Board of Education may prescribe. A program of in-service training under regulations to be formulated by the Board of Education shall be established to promote continuous professional growth among the teachers, school officers, and other employees and such teachers, school officers, and other employees shall annually report evidence of participation in the in-service training program thus established and other evidence of professional growth and accomplishment.⁴³

The incentive plan provision was not requested by the superintendent but was inserted in the Salary Act by Congressional Committees.

In order to meet the requirements of this legislation, the superintendent appointed a committee of teachers to set up criteria by which the professional growth of teachers and officers might be evaluated. The criteria were divided into the following four groups:

- (1) in-service program provided by or under the direction of assistant or associate superintendents, supervising directors, divisional directors, directors of supervision and curriculum planning principals.
- (2) organized study (courses, seminars, workshops, lecture series organized by educational associations, colleges or groups).
- (3) service on city-wide committees or activities.
- (4) other educational activities.⁴⁴

As the first step in the preparation of the criteria, a study was made of the professional growth of teachers in

⁴³Ibid.

⁴⁴Ibid.

the system during the school year, 1946-47. This survey indicated that teachers and officers had participated in in-service programs under these four categories without legislation requiring it:

- (1) in-service program set up by the school system
- (2) organized in-service courses and extension courses through the two teachers' colleges
- (3) lectures sponsored by educational groups
- (4) courses and organized study in colleges throughout the country in summer classes, and in colleges in the metropolitan Washington area during the school year.

The survey further showed that the teachers and officers had paid approximately \$11,300 for numbers two and three.

In June, 1950, after three years of experience with the incentive salary plan, the superintendent and administrative officers concluded that the plan was not necessary, that it disturbed professional morale, and that it was almost impossible to administer. The Board of Education, therefore, sought legislation to have this provision deleted from the 1947 Salary Act, and this was enacted on October 24, 1951.⁴⁵

Kansas City, Missouri

Reviewed briefly are the Rules and Regulations of the

⁴⁵Norman J. Nelson, "Why Merit Salary Schedules Were Abandoned," The Journal of Teacher Education, VIII, No. 2, (June, 1957), p. 187.

Kansas City, Missouri School District which indicate the general philosophy practiced in administering separate salary schedules for elementary and secondary school teachers under the merit rating plan. This plan was effective in the school system from the early twenties through 1941-42. Notification of the merit rating plan began with the 1942-43 school year and was abandoned altogether with the adoption of a single salary schedule in 1944 for all instructional personnel, based upon formal scholastic preparation and years of experience.⁴⁶

Among the basic factors influencing the abandonment of the merit rating plan were the following:

- (1) subjective evaluation of the quality of instruction
- (2) arbitrary limitation of the numbers eligible for any one classification
- (3) misunderstandings among teachers within school faculties
- (4) misinterpretations of the true role of the principal in the improvement and supervision of instruction.⁴⁷

Lincoln, Nebraska

The teachers salary schedule in the Lincoln Public Schools during the late twenties and early thirties made provisions for extra pay for superior teachers on a so-called

⁴⁶James A. Hazlett, "Why Merit Salary Schedules Were Abandoned," The Journal of Teacher Education, VIII, No. 2, (June, 1957), p. 187.

⁴⁷Ibid.

super-maximum of the schedule. Teachers who were selected by members of the administrative staff as being superior teachers were paid above the regular schedule providing they had already reached the regular schedule maximum. As nearly as can be determined, this practice was stopped in 1932 for two reasons. First, the depression necessitated a complete pay schedule revision and second, the plan in effect apparently created ill will among many staff members. To my knowledge there has been no consideration of re-instating this plan since it has been dropped.⁴⁸

Lynchburg, Virginia

A merit schedule obtained in Lynchburg for at least forty years, but the request for its discontinuance was almost unanimous as far as the staff was concerned. Their objection to it did not include personalities but was due to their conclusion that it was nearly impossible for the work of teachers to be impartially rated.⁴⁹

Medford, Massachusetts

An advanced study schedule has displaced the preparation-development-merit salary schedule for teachers which long since has been considered quite antiquated The evaluation of a teacher's personal professional fitness

⁴⁸Steven N. Watkins, "Why Merit Salary Schedules Were Abandoned," The Journal of Teacher Education, VIII, No. 2, (June, 1957), p. 187.

⁴⁹Paul M. Munro, "Why Merit Salary Schedules Were Abandoned," The Journal of Teacher Education, VIII, No. 2, (June, 1957), p. 188.

was abused by the evaluator and . . . became farcial.⁵⁰

Milwaukee, Wisconsin

A single salary schedule for teachers was adopted in Milwaukee in 1944. Previous to that time, they had a version of the merit type schedule which was applied to high school teachers only. Teachers in the elementary and junior high schools were placed in a separated schedule, \$1,400 - \$2,600 with \$100 increments.

The high school teachers' schedule had three divisions plus a provision for additional bonus allowances, as follows:

| | <u>Minimum</u> | <u>Maximum</u> | <u>Increment</u> |
|--------|----------------|----------------|------------------|
| Div. 1 | \$1400 | \$2600 | \$100 |
| Div. 2 | 2700 | 3000 | 100 |
| Div. 3 | 3100 | 3300 | 100 |

Bonus Div.: Additional \$100, \$200, or \$300.⁵¹

This schedule provided that not more than 50 per cent of the instructors in any high school might be above Division No. 1, and that not more than 25 per cent of the instructors in the school might be in Division No. 2. All promotions from one division to the next, and for the bonus salaries, were made upon recommendation of the Board of School Directors.

These provisions had the effect, in the older schools

⁵⁰Bertrand Hooper, "Why Merit Salary Schedules Were Abandoned," The Journal of Teacher Education, VIII, No. 2, (June, 1957), p. 188.

⁵¹Howard M. Aker, "Why Merit Salary Schedules Were Abandoned," The Journal of Teacher Education, VIII, No. 2, (June, 1957), p. 188.

particularly, of freezing opportunities for promotion when the upper division quotas were filled. Objections to the system were voiced by high school teacher groups as early as 1920. The situation was aggravated during the depression years when the board failed to make any promotions even when the quotas would permit them. Other objections were made by elementary and junior high school teacher groups who were not eligible for promotions to a higher salary division.

Following a two-year study by a special school board committee in 1942 and 1943, action was taken to institute a single salary schedule. The original 1944 version provided for a B.A. and M.A. training division. Successive amendments, particularly since 1950, have resulted in the present \$4000-7000 schedule based entirely on experience and training. A wide variety of training activities is now recognized, with salary divisions provided for 16, 32, and 48 credits beyond the master's degree division.

It is significant that the local teacher organizations, representing all grade levels, supported the single salary schedule principle and continue to do so.⁵²

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

A salary plan for the promotion of high school teachers in first-class school districts of Pennsylvania to the super-

⁵²Ibid., p. 189.

maximum salary was approved by the Pennsylvania State Council of Education and became effective in Philadelphia in 1922. This plan was generally referred to as "C-Class" and applied only to teachers in the senior high schools who were rated in the upper 20 per cent of the faculty.

The conditions under which a teacher might be promoted to C-Class were set up by state regulations and administered by the Philadelphia Board of Education through the Superintendent of Schools. In order to meet the initial requirements, it was necessary for a teacher to have taught one year at regular maximum salary and to have been rated 90 or above. Twelve semester hours of approved graduate work in education or in the teacher's field, or both, was also required. (This requirement could be waived on recommendation of the superintendent.) In the absence of the master's degree, the teacher was required to submit a thesis or a published article of a professional nature. Membership in professional organizations and participation in the extra-curricular activities of the school was also required.

The plan called for two salary increments of \$200 each. The second increment was dependent upon meeting the conditions set forth for the first increment plus an additional twelve semester hours of approved graduate work. In order to continue in C-Class, a teacher was required to maintain standards and show evidence of continued scholastic and professional interest.

In April of 1942, the last group of teachers was recommended to the Board of Education for promotion to C-Class. From this time until 1946, consideration was under way for a revision of the entire salary schedule. In January of 1946, a single salary schedule was put into effect in the public schools of Philadelphia. This new schedule made no provision for super-maximum salaries.

The special classification of G-Class was a controversial issue from the first. It was poorly administered. The high school principals of the day for one reason or another recommended for G-Class their senior teachers without regard to their effectiveness as classroom teachers. Many of these senior teachers were superannuated and their selection as outstanding teachers aroused considerable criticism from the younger and more effective members of the high school faculties. In defense of the principals, it may be said that it was 25 years ago that the plan began in the very early days of teacher rating and that any selection they would have made would have aroused criticism within the faculty.

The plan was so controversial that it fell into disrepute and many sensitive teachers would not accept the appointment when it was tendered to them in order to avoid the opprobrium of their colleagues.

As the years passed, there was a determined effort on the part of high school teachers to remove all percentage

limitations on the number of teachers who might be selected for C-Class. Many administrators felt that this was an effort to open the doors so that practically all of the teachers would eventually be included in this group. The C-Class Plan was finally abandoned when the single salary schedule went into effect in 1946, although nominations had been held up for some years previously.⁵³

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

In 1927, the Pittsburgh Teachers Association, an independent group organized in 1904 and affiliated with the N.E.A., requested that the Pittsburgh Board of Public Education grant salary increases. The board appointed a citizen's committee to consider the matter and make recommendations. After long study, the committee recommended a super-maximum merit-rating salary plan which the board adopted and put into effect in January, 1930.

Under this plan, a pyramidal system of five superior teaching levels, each carrying an increment of \$200, was set up. The super-maximum salaries attainable were \$1000 above the maximum on a regular schedule. In general, the qualifications necessary for teachers to be advanced to the super-maximum categories included conspicuously strong service and the attainment of advanced degrees. Ratings of

⁵³William E. Burkard, "Why Merit Salary Schedules Were Abandoned," The Journal of Teacher Education, VIII, No. 2, (June, 1957), p. 189.

teachers by their principals formed the basis of promotion to the various levels. The pyramidal feature envisaged 55 per cent of teachers at the automatic maximums for elementary and secondary teachers, 15 per cent on superior teaching level number one, 12 per cent on the second level, 9 per cent on the third, 6 per cent on the fourth, and 3 per cent on the fifth or top super-maximum merit rating level.

The new citizens' committee schedule was one of two super-maximum schedules in effect as of January, 1930. The other was mandated by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania for senior high school teachers in Pittsburgh and Philadelphia. It provided for two extra increments of \$200 each beyond the \$3200 automatic maximum for these teachers. Attainment of these super-maximum salaries was dependent upon the acquisition of the master's degree or its equivalent.

The depression of the 1930's put an end to super-maximum schedules in Pittsburgh. A school board minute dated November 9, 1931, thanked the Pittsburgh Teachers Association for "magnanimously foregoing"⁵⁴ the extra increments. However, those teachers who had attained placement on the various levels of the two super-maximum salary plans retained their salary status. Quite naturally, the

⁵⁴John P. Shaefer, "Why Merit Salary Schedules Were Abandoned," The Journal of Teacher Education, VIII, No. 2, (June, 1957), p. 190.

majority of Pittsburgh teachers to whom the door to advancement was closed built up a resentment as the years rolled by. In individual cases, teachers who know their ratings to be superior and who had acquired advanced degrees found themselves working for the automatic maximum annual salary of \$3200 while some teachers in the same senior high school might be receiving \$4000 per year on the super-maximum merit-rating plan. This situation continued until 1947, when the Pittsburgh Board of Public Education adopted a single salary schedule.⁵⁵

Rochester, New York

About eight years ago the State Legislature in setting up a new minimum salary schedule required merit ratings, but this requirement has now been abandoned. Rochester, therefore, does not operate on a merit rating system. Howard C. Seymour, superintendent, Rochester, New York, quotes former superintendent of schools, James M. Spinning, as to the reasons for abandonment:

- (1) The legislation was jammed through;
- (2) Teachers knew that no unimpeachable scientific case had been established for teacher evaluation and that each local advisory committee was called to rear back and pass a miracle;
- (3) Eligibility for consideration was arbitrarily and mechanically determined;

⁵⁵Ibid.

- (4) The proportion of promotions was itself a mechanical factor;
- (5) The permissive and liberalizing features of the law were easily nullified by lack of funds;
- (6) Wealthier communities could buy their way out of merit evaluation--only the poor were forced to be pure;
- (7) Promotion once granted could not be recalled;
- (8) There was almost nowhere to look for successful experience;
- (9) Administrators and supervisors had not adequate time for preparation;
- (10) Constructive leadership was endangered;
- (11) Teachers knew the limitations of objective criteria;
- (12) They saw cooperation giving way to competition;
- (13) They could not accept the college concept of academic rank as valid for elementary and secondary schools;
- (14) They foresaw administrative dilemmas in the problems of jurisdiction, transfer, and bottlenecking.⁵⁶

St. Louis, Missouri

Before 1947, the teachers' and administrators' salary schedule of the St. Louis Public Schools contained various ranks; for example, high school instructional personnel were classified as Principal, Assistant Principal, Education Counselor, Head Assistant, 1st Assistant, 2nd Assistant, and

⁵⁶Howard C. Seymour, "Why Merit Salary Schedules Were Abandoned," The Journal of Teacher Education, VIII, No. 2, (June, 1957), p. 191.

3rd Assistant. Elementary School instructional personnel were classified as Principal, Assistant Principal, Head Assistant, 1st Assistant, 2nd Assistant, and 3rd Assistant. These ranks represented a series of promotional grades. A person worked his way to the upper levels by means of recommendations from his superiors with the approval of the Board of Education. According to this plan some teachers never reached the upper levels.

In 1947 this plan was abandoned mainly because it was felt that the same salary opportunities should be available to elementary teachers with superior qualifications as to high school teachers with superior qualifications. It was also difficult to administer. Even though it was partly a cooperative venture, fair and accurate evaluations were difficult to make. In addition, neither the teachers' organizations nor the Board of Education was satisfied with the plan. Therefore, it was abandoned in favor of a single salary schedule.

At present several procedures are used to detect satisfactory personnel. In the first place, St. Louis has progressively given principals more clerical assistance so that classroom supervision might be given teachers under their direction. Also, there are elementary and high school consultants who give full-time to classroom visitation. In

another year, the number of consultants will be increased with the hope that the needs of more teachers will be served. Persons marked unsatisfactory are not granted the normal increment. Due to the facts that careful screening is done at the time of appointment and a three-year probationary period is required of all probationary teachers, the number of unsatisfactory teachers is negligible.⁵⁷

⁵⁷L. H. Diekroeger, "Why Merit Salary Schedules Were Abandoned," The Journal of Teacher Education, VIII, No. 2, (June, 1957), p. 191.

CHAPTER III

THE ALBERTA AND ONTARIO REPORTS ON MERIT PAY

A. Alberta Report on Merit Pay

1. The Alberta Federation of Home and School Associations' Report on Merit Pay

There is a good deal of Canadian material on merit rating. One organisation, other than a teacher organization, which has devoted some time and study to the problem of merit pay for teachers is the Alberta Federation of Home and School Associations. In reply to a request from the Alberta Royal Commission on Education, it submitted a brief last November prepared by its Executive Committee.¹

The brief defined merit pay:

to mean basing salary schedules for teachers on effectiveness in the classroom, on the degree of excellence in teaching, rather than exclusively on years of study and years of experience.²

The main concern of the committee was to improve classroom instruction and further to distribute the salary budget to this end.

¹The Alberta Report, Special Report: Merit Rating! The Manitoba Teacher, XXXVIII, No. 3, (November-December, 1959), pp. 24, 25.

²Ibid., p. 24.

The theory of merit pay as the committee saw it was (a) that incentive will lead to improved instruction; and (b) that reward in proportion to achievement is only just. With this theory, the committee was largely in agreement provided the following conditions existed in the school system which proposed to embark on a merit pay scheme:

- (1) There was screening the admission to teacher training.
- (2) There was screening all during the period up to certification.
- (3) Candidates for a particular school system should be screened.
- (4) The system should be able to place teachers where they will be most able to make use of their training and experience.³

The committee stated "where these conditions are not met, to attempt to weigh merit is not only unfair but it will not accomplish the prime purpose, which is eventually to improve instruction."⁴ One further condition which the committee required was an adequate basic salary schedule.

There were three central problems which arose from any merit pay proposal:

- (1) Criteria by which merit is to be determined.
- (2) The effect of rating on all teachers, but particularly on the poorer teachers.
- (3) The effect of rating on the general morale

³Ibid., P. 24.

⁴Ibid.

of the whole school system.⁵

The committee cautions that these are very real problems and must not be ignored. Of the first one it concludes that any school system considering a merit pay programme must have a surplus of personnel and time to devote to the process. The plan should have the following features:

1. Criteria which represent the essence of teaching rather than an accumulation of non-essentials.
2. Criteria which allow objective observation and recording.
3. Provision for more than one observer.
4. Impersonal determination of the final status.
5. Participation of teachers in all phases of the plan.
6. A written record for reference in consultation, review or appeal.⁶

The other two problems are no less real. The report states "as for the effect on the teacher, it cannot be disregarded--teaching is essentially a personal process."⁷ The adverse effect that a merit pay plan may have on teacher morale may be considerable particularly if the intra-staff and intra-district conditions are basically poor.

⁵Ibid.

⁶Ibid., P. 25.

⁷Ibid.

The committee concluded that

Merit pay would be workable only as to the result of genuine agreement between teachers and school board in a situation marked by mutual trust and respect, by high requirements for employment coupled with high minimum salaries, and by enthusiasm for a common goal.⁸

With reference to the application of merit pay to Alberta, the committee stated:

1. There was no merit pay plan which it could recommend, and further, Alberta is not in a position at the present time to profit from a merit pay system.
2. That even if a satisfactory rating scale could be devised and better teachers could be rewarded in proportion to their worth and poorer teachers paid proportionately less, the major problem which is better instruction, would not be solved. We know that we are not going to get rid of the poorer teachers, at least not by dismissing them. We still need every breathing body that can occupy a teacher's chair. However, we might get rid of them in another sense. The logical thing to do is to educate them. Such teachers need the means of finding out what is wrong, every assistance to correct it, and the opportunity for further training.
3. The time required to administer a fair rating system would be better spent directly on improving instruction by class supervision of inexperienced teachers, by use of diagnostic and achievement tests and other measurements and by provision of in-service training courses.
4. Above all, Alberta needs to set high standards for the teaching profession and make them workable.⁹

2. Alberta Teachers' Association Report
on Merit Rating and Merit Pay

The following is a summary of part of a brief submitted

⁸Ibid.

⁹Ibid.

to the Alberta Royal Commission on Education by the Alberta Teachers' Association.¹⁰ The A.T.A. presented a brief dealing with a large number of matters to the Royal Commission in May, 1958. Members of the Commission expressed keen interest in two subjects which the A.T.A. brief had touched upon; namely, merit pay and tenure. The A.T.A. was asked to submit a supplementary brief on these two matters. In preparation for the section on merit pay, the A.T.A. sent two delegates to the Workshop in Merit Salary Schedules held at Syracuse University, Syracuse, New York, July 7 to 11, 1958. They were thus able to provide up-to-date information on merit pay scales and their impact upon the profession. The Syracuse Conference was composed of 93 people who came to the conference to try to find the answer to the question, "Can merit rating be a success?" Included in the group were 42 classroom teachers, nine school board members, 10 superintendents of schools, 14 principals of schools, a dean of a faculty of education, a junior college director, state research directors from Utah, New York, and Washington, management consultants, a magazine editor, chairmen of various lay groups interested in education, and others. Ontario, Quebec (Protestant), Saskatchewan and Alberta were represented, as were all sections of the U. S.

¹⁰ British Columbia Teachers' Federation News Bulletin, (September 4, 1958, B.C.T.F., Vancouver, B.C.), p. 1.

except the southeast,¹¹

Conclusions

The Alberta Teachers' Association believes that from the practical point of view, the rating of teachers is a task of tremendous difficulty and complexity. To the variables such as pupil, school plan, system, administrator, and teacher differences as well as to all the complex differences involved in the learning process, we must add the human frailties to which those who will evaluate may fall prey. The possibility of creating an objective means which will rate all teachers seems most remote.

This is well illustrated by a study made by the United States Air Force in 1956, reported to a St. Louis, Missouri meeting of the N.E.A. at which association delegates were present. The U.S.A.A.F. made an expensive and detailed study in an attempt to establish the criteria of good instruction. Leading statisticians and job evaluators were employed, and their findings were that a factor in teaching success which appeared significant in one instructional situation would have no bearing whatsoever in another one. The only factor which appeared as a constant in the study was popularity with students. Because of the danger

¹¹British Columbia Teachers' Federation Bulletin, Alberta Report on Merit Rating and Merit Pay, (September 4, 1958, B.C.T.F., Vancouver, B. C.), p. 3.

that the popularity might be sought by instructors as a means of gaining promotion, even this factor was of no use in the application of the study.

It is well known that some teachers should not be in the classroom. What should be remembered is that these incompetent teachers are a far greater burden to their fellow teachers than they could ever be to anyone else except the student in front of them.¹² The Alberta Teachers' Association does not want the incompetent person to teach anywhere for any pay, large or small. To this end they have a well established procedure, stated clearly and definitely, and tried by long use. It is the merit principle which calls for careful screening of candidates who wish to enter the Faculty of Education. It calls for further careful screening and observation of these students as they passed through their teacher education, and rigid standards for those who would graduate. It calls for a supervisory in-service program which will ensure professional growth, and it calls for retention procedures which will ensure that the talented people we want will come into and remain in teaching; and finally, it calls for a system of eliminating those who prove incompetent in the field. They feel that any attempt to implement merit scales on a group which has not been

¹²Ibid., P. 6.

hired under a merit principle will simply result in aggravation of present recruitment and retention difficulties and in breakdown of rapport between supervisor and teacher will cause envy and fear to spring up to corrupt the group effort that teaching must be, and will hinder the implementation of the merit principle itself.

The Alberta Teachers' Association is not opposed to salary policy changes, but it wishes to investigate very closely any policy which will pose a challenge to the merit principle as they have defined it. If merit pay scales are to improve instruction in Alberta schools, the A.T.A. believes that the first step is to perfect some form of merit rating not for salary purposes, but for the purpose of improving classroom instruction. While teacher competence quality of instruction and educational results are the concern of the taxpaying public, the means by which these are achieved are a professional matter. The teaching profession must resist attempts to usurp those responsibilities which are professional in nature. The A.T.A. does not believe that some form of merit pay scales, hastily imposed and cheaply administered, is the answer to a very complex professional problem. They do not believe that good teachers now giving all the service they can offer to their pupils and their communities will somehow uncover more means for service under a merit

salary scale. Nor do they believe that teachers with less devotion and concern will be able to find in merit salary denials the means for self-improvement. The problem is much deeper than this, and the means to solve it are matters of great concern to those engaged in teaching.¹³

Recommendations of the Alberta
Teachers' Association

1. A study should be made by the Alberta Advisory Committee on educational research respecting the feasibility of merit rating as a practical device for the improvement of instruction.
2. If such a study indicates its advisability and practicability, the Alberta Teachers' Association should cooperate with the Faculty of Education, University of Alberta, in the preparation of an appropriate merit rating scale.
3. The merit principle defined in the foregoing should be observed in the recruitment, education, hiring and retention of Alberta teachers.
4. Merit rating scales should not be imposed unilaterally by school boards.

The A.T.A. believes that there is a natural merit rating involved already when school boards have a wide choice of teachers to fill various teaching positions. School boards in the province which are offering relatively superior salaries and working conditions find that teachers are in competition with each other to secure better positions. These boards can utilize the merit principles as the A.T.A. defined them, not only in recruitment, but in their

¹³Ibid.

promotion policies; because the staff that they have hired is of a calibre which permits selection in the awarding of administrative and supervisory positions. The association believes that this is the natural form which merit rating and merit pay should take.

B. Merit Rating in Ontario

A short time ago, a report of a joint committee of the Ontario School Trustees' Council and the Ontario Teachers' Federation was published under the title of "Merit Rating Pay and Tenure of Teachers."¹⁴ This committee found that it was impossible to secure any agreement on merit plans directly related to salary schedules. Accordingly, it was agreed to drop this approach and to consider the advisability of instituting merit plans not related to salaries. In this area a wider measure of general agreement was reached, culminating in the adoption of the following recommendations:

1. That school boards be encouraged to recognize the contributions of teachers of exceptional ability by one or more of the following methods:

- (a) By instituting more promotional steps such as more vice-principalships, more department heads or special supervisory positions, which will not take the teacher out of the classroom and for which the teacher can be paid an allowance for added responsibility.

¹⁴"Ontario Study of Merit Rating," The B. G. Teacher, XXXVII, No. 6, (March, 1958), pp. 276 and 306.

- (b) By a special award to an outstanding teacher each year.
- (c) By appointment of a teacher as a delegate with expenses paid to attend an educational conference of special interest to the teacher or board.
- (d) By public recognition.
- (e) By selection of the teacher as a consultant to the board on matters of mutual interest.

2. That School Trustees be advised of the advantages of using probationary contracts and encouraged to use them more extensively.

3. That School Trustees be advised that it is the duty and responsibility of the school principal to submit a report on the capabilities of his staff members when requested by the board and that the board should call for these reports at least once a year. The Ontario Teachers' Federation endorses the right of school boards to request such reports.

4. That Trustees may expect interim reports from the principal on teachers whose work has been called into question by the school board, and on inexperienced teachers.

5. That it is desirable that steps be taken to institute a course for elementary school principals to which admittance will be granted only to properly qualified applicants and culminating in an elementary principal's school certificate which would be a prerequisite to becoming a principal in an elementary school of five rooms or more.

6. That school trustees be advised that it is their

right to withhold the increment of a teacher who is rated unsatisfactory by the principal or the inspector provided the teacher is notified in writing not later than April 1 of the current school year, given a year to achieve a satisfactory standard and re-instated if a satisfactory standard is achieved within the year.¹⁵

¹⁵Ibid., pp. 276, 306.

CHAPTER IV

MERIT RATING IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

A. The Cranbrook Experiment

The most recently publicized Canadian experiment in merit pay was begun in Cranbrook, British Columbia in January, 1958.¹ It was widely reported both in the press and trustee publications across Canada.

The *Financial Post* in a special report of November 29, 1958, stated that two male trustees were primarily responsible for the adoption of the merit pay plan. One was described as a "tough minded and vocal professional engineer" who stated, "If lack of incentive is going to cost teachers money, they will certainly develop initiative in a hurry."

A teacher representative, in an article published in the B. C. Teacher, March, 1959, stated that there was an unsatisfactory educational situation in Cranbrook and that the school was in danger of losing its accredited standing.² It appears that, when the Board proposed a large increase in salaries (though salaries were increased 23%, they were

¹A Canadian Experiment, Special Report: Merit Rating!, The Manitoba Teacher, XXXVII, No. 3, (November-December, 1959), pp. 33-35.

²Ibid., p. 33.

not higher or in some cases as high as neighboring districts), and a reduction of the work load, in addition to other changes, the secondary teachers agreed to experiment with a merit pay system.

In his article defending the scheme, Mr. Hutchinson, chairman of the Salary Committee of the Cranbrook Teachers' Association, stated:

It is obvious that teachers cannot be evaluated on production; it is also obvious that no small district like this area has the resources of specialized knowledge to devise an objective rating scale on the value of a teacher's work as is apparently being attempted in Utah at enormous cost. We would claim that it is possible for an experienced principal to judge whether or not there is a good learning situation in a given classroom.³

The Alberta Teachers' Association commented as follows on the Cranbrook Experiment:

In the light of the research done on merit rating, it is difficult to conceive of a more gauche instrument than the Cranbrook formula, which is designed to measure one of the most intricate and complex human occupations. It might be more logical to call the system a demerit system, in view of the fact that penalties are automatically considered each year, while the rewards require special legislation by the school board. The system violates all the concepts which were stressed as basic in the Utah study. A merit system must be set up with a clear concept of the difference between penalising and rewarding. The subjectivity of the formula is evident in the fact that 120 out of 200 marks are awarded by the principal and inspector on what they consider the teacher's efficiency and ability. Any objectivity that the formula does attempt to achieve is drained off by the seemingly innocuous "etceteras." A quick glance at other basic salary scales in British Columbia districts will reveal that the Cranbrook basic pay scale

³Mr. Hutchinson, "A Canadian Experiment," A Report On Merit Pay, The Manitoba Teacher, XXIVII, No. 3, (November-December, 1959), p. 33.

is far from being near the top. Dr. Amid J. Burke, research director for the New York State Teachers' Association, stated at the Syracuse conference that those districts in New York which have been the most backward in the providing of administration services and high salary scales have been the loudest in their praise of merit pay.⁴

The Cranbrook Merit Plan is attached to the salary schedule as an addendum.

School District No. 2, Cranbrook

Addendum for Secondary School only, being the proposed formula for arriving at a decision pertaining to clauses 6, 7 and 8.

1. Carrying a fair share of co-curricular activities. It is understood that this varies and is dependent on factors of load involved in the teaching of various courses. Consideration shall be given only to participation in these activities connected directly with the school. It is of prime importance that initiative and intellectual stimulus provided be assessed in this category, which covers such things as sponsorship and supervision of student councils, year book, library club, school paper, teams, band, dances, clubs, etc. Twenty points are allowed for participation in these activities.
2. Attention to matters which keep the school functioning smoothly.
 - (a) Classroom supervision - not only of class in session, but proper supervision of halls, assemblies, lunchroom, detention hall, examinations, vicinity of school, etc.
 - (b) Complete conformity to application of school regulations - where a situation not covered by school regulations develops, a teacher is expected to adopt and use a policy of common sense.

⁴The Alberta Teachers' Association, "A Canadian Experiment," A Report on Merit Pay, The Manitoba Teacher, XXXVII, No. 3, (November-December), p. 34.

- (c) Promptness and care in turning in sundry reports, mark sheets, textbook issue, etc.
- (d) Promptness and consideration - consideration of other teachers, administration, office staff, custodians, etc.
- (e) Willingness to perform teaching duties beyond normal load - consideration to be given to teachers handling courses for which they have little or no specific training.

Thirty points are allowed for attention to the aforementioned matters.

3. Teacher-Pupil relationships:

- (a) Professionalish - dignity; never aloof nor familiar.
- (b) Knowledge of subject matter.
- (c) Ability to analyse and solve disciplinary problems.
- (d) Posture and presence in classroom.
- (e) Use of proper English. Avoidance of slang, sarcasm and abusive terms.

Thirty points are allowed for proper teacher-pupil relationship.

- 4. Teaching ability and efficiency, as evaluated by inspections of Principal and Inspector. One hundred and twenty points are allowed for evaluations of Principal and Inspector.

This system gives a possible of 200 points which can be divided by two to give a percentage evaluation. It is felt that only a teacher achieving a final score of 80% be eligible for any payment above the basic scale.

Terms of Agreement in Connection with Proposed Formula

- (a) Four mandatory inspections per year shall be carried out by the principal; also inspection by the department heads and School Inspector.
- (b) Results are considered by a committee of School Board members, principal and inspector.

- (c) Names of those who will get increases are sent by the Committee to the Cranbrook School Board of Trustees.
- (d) The Board of School Trustees shall not consider for extra increments or other emoluments anyone not recommended by the Committee.
- (e) Notice of increments to be granted or withheld shall be given in writing by Secretary-Treasurer of School District No. 2 (Cranbrook) not later than May 31.
- (f) A score of 160 on the scale is needed to qualify for increments,
- (g) An appeal of an unfavorable rating can be made to the original committee augmented by a committee of teachers.⁵

Conclusion

It is evident that the Cranbrook plan is a device for penalising service rather than recognising superior service. It might indeed be referred to as a de-merit plan.

Last September, the elementary school teachers agreed with the Cranbrook School Board to prepare and adopt a plan of merit rating to apply to the elementary school field as well as to the secondary school teachers. By January, the elementary teachers had decided they didn't want to go ahead with merit rating after all. Secondly, Cranbrook is not now including a reference to merit rating in their advertisements as they so proudly did last year. Finally, many of the

⁵"A Canadian Experiment," The Manitoba Teacher, XXXVII, No. 3, (November-December), pp. 34-35.

teachers who were entitled to merit increases have left the district. These reports seem to indicate that the experiment has not been too successful.

B. The British Columbia Teachers' Federation's Stand on Merit Pay

In 1958, among the school trustees in British Columbia, enthusiasm was being generated for the application of a system of merit pay to teachers. The British Columbia Teachers' Federation is firmly opposed to any such plan.

The Federation's opposition to merit pay is not an automatic, unthinking, emotional reaction. After thorough examination of available literature on the subject, over a period of several years, the B.C.T.F. was unable to find the merit pay plans anything of value for teachers. Mr. J. A. Spragge, speaking for the B.C.T.F. in the B. C. Teacher, December, 1959, explains why his organization opposes it.⁶

He points out that advocates of merit pay frequently point to various school systems in the United States where such plans are in operation; the phrase generally used is "in successful operation." Such reference, according to Mr. Spragge, is a negative sort of argument, because adoption of any administrative device should be based on some specific advantage seen in it, rather than on the fact that someone

⁶J. A. Spragge, "Merit Pay - Why the B.C.T.F. Opposes It," The B. C. Teacher, XXXVIII, No. 3, (December, 1958), pp. 150, 151, and 159.

else is using it. More important, however, is the fact that such plans are not in successful operation in any significant numbers. The Research Division of the National Education Association has conducted periodic surveys on the subject among school districts having a population of 30,000 or more. Of 556 such districts, in 1955-56, only 37 reported that schedules included merit provisions. In 1956-57, the number dropped to 26. Of the 37 districts that had merit provision in 1955-56, 11 were making no use of the merit provision; 6 others were applying it to less than one per cent of their teachers; in one case, the super-maximum was being paid to all teachers who reached the maximum, with no selective feature in operation. In 1938-39, 20.4 per cent of reporting districts had merit provision either in operation or on paper; the proportion had dropped by 1948-49 to 12.5 per cent; and by 1952-53 to 4.0 per cent. In 1955-56, the figure rose to 7.3 per cent and in 1956-57, it declined again to 5.2 per cent.

Mr. Spragge points out that the argument that merit pay plans are common in industry is equally unconvincing. Quoting Mr. Charles E. Britton, member of the Employee Relations Department of Esso Standard Oil of New York, Mr. Spragge says:

Non-financial incentives seem to be the most effective type for a normal situation. That is, in a normal

economy where workers receive reasonable wages and enjoy a measure of security, non-financial incentives have been the most successful.

. . . a man's time, his presence on the job, a measured quantity of work may be bought. Job satisfaction, enthusiasm and pride of work, impossible to buy, can be developed only by enlightened management constantly striving to find methods of creating team work.

Because wage incentive plans base the worker's pay directly on his output, some yardstick must be available for measuring output and relating quality to earnings. Furthermore, the worker must be able to exert a measure of control over his performance, which presupposes a constant even flow of materials, independence of production, processes, and a more or less repetitive type of work. For these reasons, wage incentive plans have not proved practical in the process industries.⁷

Mr. Edmund H. Thorne, Superintendent of Schools in West Hartford, Connecticut, and architect of one of the best known merit pay plans, the Career-Salary Plan, sounds a warning:

Merit awards should be commensurate with the value placed on superior service. They must be large enough to make them worthwhile. The base schedule must provide a fair and equitable scale, with normal maximums equal to or better than other school systems in your area. "Career" salaries should be something over and beyond if school systems are to offer rewards to teachers of unusual skill and demonstrated ability.⁸

⁷Ibid., pp. 150-151.

⁸Ibid., p. 151.

CHAPTER V

MERIT RATING IN MANITOBA AND NOVA SCOTIA

Interim Report Manitoba Royal Commission on Education

In August, 1958, a Royal Commission on Education presented its report to the Government of Manitoba. For the proposed grant structure the Commission recommended that each Division establish approved costs for the operation of both elementary and secondary classrooms within its boundaries. The approved costs should be the actual costs, not exceeding certain fixed maximums for each item. They should include salaries for teachers up to the amounts given in the specified tables (25 & 26) of this report.

These tables are based on the amount of training a teacher has, his performance, as a teacher, and whether he is employed in an elementary, junior high or high school. Each step up in training qualifications represents one full year of academic or professional training completed successfully. There is no credit granted for a partial year of training, and any supplementary or conditional grades in courses must be removed before a teacher advances to the next higher qualification. Only a year in which the teacher

receives a favorable merit rating yields an increment in the grant toward salary.¹ The merit rating (merit year completed) means that the teacher has taught to the satisfaction of the local Board or Divisional Board as the case may be and is rated by the inspector as "good" or "better." Each year the Local Board or Division Board (on advice of the Principal & Superintendent) if one is employed must report on the teacher's performance. If the report is favorable, it then requires the approval of the inspector before the maximum grant in respect of the teacher is increased for another merit year completed. The maximum grant towards salary remains unchanged in respect of any teacher who fails in any year to get the recommendation of the Board and approval of the inspector.

The maximum grants for teachers in secondary grades (Table 26) are higher than for teachers of like qualifications and merit years completed in elementary grades, (Table 25). For teachers in junior high schools whose qualifications are F₁ U₃ or better, the maximum grants for salary are midway between elementary and secondary figures. This differential in salaries is recommended both because the great shortage of qualified teachers makes it imperative that teachers with the highest academic qualifications be attracted

¹Interim Report, Manitoba Royal Commission on Education, (August, 1958), pp. 71, 72.

to the upper grades and because of the greater difficulty of teaching in the higher grades. A secondary teacher is one holding qualification F₁ U₃ or better, teaching in Grades I to XII and devoting at least half time to teaching the subject or subjects which he took in his last two years at University. Each school board may pay whatever salary it wishes to negotiate. The grant toward this salary is, however, only the lesser of the salary actually paid or the amount stated in the grant tables.²

The main purpose of the Commission's recommendations on grants toward salary, especially of the large grants recommended for highly trained teachers with many years of merit rating is to upgrade the teachers of Manitoba. It is hoped that much of this upgrading will be attained by present teachers putting forth considerable effort to extend their training. Following this, and in addition to it, some present teachers must be replaced by better trained and more competent teachers.

The Commission believes that, if this is to be accomplished, School Boards must always be free to compete for and engage present teachers who improve their training, and new teachers from elsewhere in Manitoba in replacement of teachers with lower qualifications.

²Ibid., p. 75

Under this plan, present experience counts 50% as merit years completed to maximum of five years. Principals allowance of \$100 per classroom except in one room schools maximum \$250. Vice-Principal or Supervisor, \$25 per classroom in schools of 15 or more rooms, maximum \$625. Dependent status would be arrived at by adding 20% to all figures above.

The brief states that any teacher upon notice before May 31 may be released on the following August 15 if the position is being abolished or if merit increases were withheld for the two preceding years.³

These recommendations have not been put into force under the present regulation. The problem is being considered by a committee appointed by the Minister of Education. This committee is studying the complex problem of merit rating jointly with a Manitoba Teachers' Society Committee.

The commission stated that if they were to attract and hold better qualified and more capable teachers, it is necessary, but not sufficient, that teachers' salaries be comparable to those obtainable by like people in other professions and in business. Conditions of work, job satisfaction and fringe benefits must also be reasonably comparable.

³Ibid., p. 76.

Higher salaries for well qualified and competent teachers are necessary. But higher salaries alone are not sufficient. Working conditions, job satisfaction, and fringe benefits reasonably comparable to their counterparts in other employment are equally essential.

The Manitoba special report on Merit Rating in The Manitoba Teacher, November-December, 1959, does not include recommendations nor policy statements from the Provincial Executive of the Manitoba Teachers' Society. The policy of the Manitoba Teachers' Society is stated in the resolution passed at the last annual general meeting. It reads as follows:

Whereas different pupils are receptive to different methods of teaching; and

Whereas it is difficult to evaluate equitable the contribution of any teacher to any child; and

Whereas merit rating, if misapplied, could cause staff disunity, and be detrimental to the best interests of the task of teaching Manitoba Children;

Be it resolved that the Manitoba Teachers' Society go on record as congratulating the Government on the steps it took favoring joint study with a Manitoba Teachers' Society Committee of this complex problem and;

Be It Further Resolved that the Manitoba Government be urged to take no action on merit rating for salary purposes until this joint study group has reached a conclusion mutually agreed upon.⁴

The Provincial Executive of the Manitoba Teachers'

⁴From the Foreword of:
Special Report: Merit Rating! The Manitoba Teacher,
XXXVIII, No. 3, (November-December, 1959), p. 11.

Society published this report in order that the members could be informed on the merit pay issue and be prepared to deal intelligently with any proposal which may be forthcoming.

B. Merit Rating in Nova Scotia

There is no written evidence of merit pay for teachers in Nova Scotia over the past fifty years. However, between the years of 1906 and 1909, there was some sort of a merit pay scheme in the city of Halifax, Nova Scotia. It was eventually dropped by the Halifax City School Board in 1909 because too many teachers were writing in to the school board individually requesting merit pay. This issue came to the fore again in Halifax just before World War II, but the Nova Scotia Teachers' Union opposed it very strongly and the issue was dropped again by the Halifax School Board.

In the winter of 1960, at a meeting of the Halifax City School Board and the Nova Scotia Teachers' Union Salary Committee, the question of merit pay was brought up and discussed. No further evidence of interest in it is at present available.

CONCLUSION

The evidence collected in this thesis seems to point to local successes on an expensive scale but general impracticability of merit pay plans for teachers. At the present time, no valid basis has yet been established for measuring the quality of teacher services in dollars and cents.

A workable plan for merit rating must solve such issues as who shall do the rating, what shall be the criteria for rating, how often shall rating be carried out, who shall be rated and how much of the salary budget shall depend on merit rating. Practically all plans for paying teachers according to merit have eventually been rejected because these problems were not solved to the satisfaction of school boards or teachers or both.

Investigation has shown conclusively that the practice of determining salaries or wages on the basis of evaluated quality of service is not the general procedure in industry. It appears that no substitute has been found in business or industry for competent administration and sound personnel policies in maintaining the quality of group endeavour. Industry has found that the big factor in getting a group to

perform to its maximum is enlightened leadership and good "esprit de corps." What is often mistaken for merit rating in industry is a reclassification of jobs.

At this time it is important to mention that all school boards have a public responsibility for setting high standards in the selection of teachers for initial employment and retention. This can be done by adherence of these school boards to the merit principle. Eventually, competent teaching for every child and adherence to the merit principle will result in the payment of high salaries to all teachers.

In closing, it is worthwhile to mention Myron Lieberman's partial solution to the problem of merit pay.¹

Lieberman states that a partial solution may be found in the establishment of national specialty boards comparable to those in the medical profession. The latter provide special recognition in the form of a diplomate to physicians who achieve outstanding levels of skill and knowledge in a particular field such as surgery or psychiatry. The procedure for handling the diplomate in a given field is handled by the national organization of specialists in that field; e.g., The American College of Surgeons sets the requirements and processes the examinations for the diplomate in surgery.

In education, Lieberman states that the national

¹Myron Lieberman, A Foundation Approach to Merit Pay, Phi Delta Kappan, XLI, No. 3, (December, 1959), pp. 120, 122.

organization of teachers in a given field, for example, the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics could set up an examination procedure for the diplomate in their field. These examinations would be comprehensive and rigorous. They should test the applicant's knowledge of his subject and his ability to diagnose and prescribe for various kinds of teaching problems. They should include observation of the applicant in actual teaching situations and also evaluation of any instructional materials prepared by the applicant. The entire procedure should be such that only outstanding teachers are "board certified."

Lieberman points out that the use of board certification would eliminate favoritism, boot-licking, horse-trading and all the other evils inherent in merit rating procedures whereby teachers are rated by other personnel in their own school system. Since it would not be possible for anyone in the system to give or take away board certification from a teacher the basis for the undesirable practices just mentioned would not exist. Furthermore, he states that the fact that a teacher could carry his board certification with him to a new position would mean that his professional advancement would not be tied to the subjective judgment of particular administrators in particular school systems. The standards for board certification would have to be high and distinctive enough so that both the non-

certified teachers and the public would regard board certification as a defensible basis for salary differentials. This would happen if there were a nationally recognized body which administered the board examinations under conditions scrupulously designed to achieve this purpose. Also, a system of board certification should eliminate the opposition to merit rating by teachers' organizations. School administrators would not be in a position to coerce teachers' organizations by granting or withholding merit pay to particular teachers. There would be little occasion for squabbling within a teachers' organization over who should receive merit pay.

Finally, the specialty boards, according to Lieberman, would eliminate the moral problems inherent in having teachers and administrators evaluate their colleagues for salary purposes. With a national specialty board, the cost of the examination would be borne by the teachers, just as the cost of board certification in the medical profession is borne by the doctors. All that would be required of the school system is a policy decision to pay higher salaries to board certified teachers. The salary differentials for such teachers would have to be large enough to make it worthwhile for them to strive for board certification at their own expense.

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