THE ROLE OF THE STATE SUPERVISOR IN THE DISTRIBUTIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM AS VIEWED BY MONTANA TEACHER-COORDINATORS

by

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Chapter I

Introduction

It has long been recognized that the traditional courses of academic instruction offered in the United States high schools have not been totally successful in preparing all of our nations-youth for a monetarily rewarding and aesthetically pleasing vocational career. For many years most high school curricula were oriented primarily towards providing the necessary background material needed only by those students who planned to continue their education at institutions of higher learning. Such an approach almost completely overlooked the needs of those vast numbers of students who either chose or were involuntarily forced onto the labor market following graduation from high school. To remedy the situation many high schools initiated a series of courses in vocational education to provide the skills, knowledge, attitudes and understanding necessary for success in the business world.

A strongly agrarian nature of our society existed when these programs were first initiated and the original emphasis was primarily on training in agriculturally-oriented fields. During the last fifty years however, programs of vocational education have been initiated in a number of occupational fields. One of the fastest growing of these vocational education programs is that of distributive education.

In Montana, as well as in all other states in the U.S., the distributive education program is under the guidance of the state supervisor of distributive education. The supervisor, who is charged with the responsibility for the development of the distributive education program

in the state public schools, is a member of the state department of public instruction. As such, he obviously plays a major role in the program's acceptance throughout the state. However, the state supervisor's role in implementing new programs is somewhat vague, the most widely accepted view being that he is "responsible for promotion of new programs" but that the "initial request for information about the program must come from local school authorities" (1:20).

Because the state supervisor of distributive education has such an important role in determining the success or failure of a distributive education program, the writer felt that some guidelines should be established to communicate what his specific duties entail. This study was designed to determine the role of the Montana state supervisor of distributive education in the distributive education program.

Statement of the Problem

The problem of this study was to determine the opinions of Montana secondary school teacher-coordinators of distributive education in regard to what should be the duties of the state supervisor of distributive education? To fully solve this problem there are two basic questions which must be answered.

1. Are the functions listed in the literature as being specific duties of the state supervisor viewed as such by Montana teacher-coordinators of distributive education?

2. If the duties listed are viewed as being a part of the state

supervisor's role, then are they presently being performed by the current state supervisor?

Assumptions

The writer assumes that this study will indicate that the Montana teacher-coordinators of distributive education agree with the specific duties of the state supervisor listed in the current literature.

The writer further assumes that the study will show these duties viewed by Montana teacher-coordinators as currently being performed by the Montana state supervisor of distributive education.

Procedures

Two major procedures were used in this study. The first consisted of a systematic review of literature concerning distributive education. The purpose of this review was to determine: (1) The broad categories of duties the state supervisor is expected to perform for distributive education as stated in the state plans for vocational education, (2) Within these broad categories, the specific duties listed in the related literature which must be performed to satisfy the category objectives.

The second major procedure involved the development of a questionnaire based upon the findings of this literature review and the administration of the questionnaire to all teacher-coordinators of distributive education in Montana.

Design of the Study

There were four major sections contained in the design of this study. They were (1) the construction of the questionnaire (2) the administration of the questionnaire to teacher-coordinators of distributive education in Montana (3) the compilation and analysis of the data resulting from the questionnaires completed and returned and (4) the formulation of recommendations based on the findings of the study.

Construction of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire was designed on the basis of what the Montana State Plan for Vocational Education and the survey of literature revealed were: (1) the major broad categories of duties the state supervisor is expected to perform as stated in the state plans for vocational education and (2) the specific duties listed in the related literature which must be performed to satisfy the broad category objectives. A review of the state plans revealed that the broad categories could be divided into five logical specific sections plus an additional miscellaneous section. Category one is concerned with the supervisors role in the development and establishment of new distributive education programs. Items one through five are specific duties the literature suggests should be performed by the state supervisor in developing and establishing a new program. Category two is concerned with the improvement of distributive education programs and again five specific duties are listed. Category three is involved with the supervisors school visitations and lists six specific duties he could be expected to perform

during the time spent at the school. Category four involved the role of supervisor in the promotion of distributive education programs and lists three specific duties. Category five is involved with the supervisors role in program evaluation and lists four specific methods of evaluation he could be expected to utilize. The fifth or miscellaneous category (other) lists ten additional duties the supervisor is expected to perform in order to satisfy the requirements of his position.

The respondent was asked to make two value judgments for each specific item: (1) whether or not he felt the item was a specific duty of the state supervisor, and (2) if so, whether or not the duty was currently being performed by the existing state supervisor. In addition, a space for comments, corrections or additions was left at the end of the questionnaire. A sample of the questionnaire can be found in Appendix B.

Administration of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire, together with a stamped, self-addressed envelope was mailed to each teacher-coordinator of distributive education in the twenty-six high schools or post-secondary schools offering the program in the state of Montana. A covering letter, a copy of which can be found in Appendix A, was also included. A 100 percent response was received on the first mailing of the questionnaire, which was sent out the latter part of January, 1972.

Analysis of the Data

The data obtained from the questionnaire was analyzed on an individual item basis in the following manner. The number of affirmative and the number of negative responses were totaled and expressed as a percentage of the total number responding. Those responding in the affirmative were further broken down into those feeling the duty was not presently being performed and then expressed as a percentage of the total number responding in the affirmative. Additional comments made by coordinators were compiled and a copy of these may be found in Appendix C.

Limitations of the Study

The population sampled for the study consisted only of the teacher-coordinators of distributive education in all high schools or post-secondary institutions offering distributive education programs in Montana. The demographic limits were imposed by the nature of the study which was explicitly designed to determine the opinions of this specific group of educators.

The study was geographically limited to the state of Montana, again by reasons dictated by the nature of the study.

Definition of Terms

A number of terms have been used in this study which are often subject to different interpretations. They are defined in this section to clarify their meaning. Most of the definitions were drawn from the standard educational dictionaries.

Cooperative program. The term cooperative program refers to an educational program whereby the student divides the time he spends in his formal education between regular classroom studies and experiences in a bona-fide job. The two experiences are so planned that each contributes definitely to the student's education.

Distribution. Distribution as used in this study is that segment of our economy which is concerned with the movement of goods and services from producer to consumer.

Distributive education. The term distributive education refers to a program of instruction which is concerned with preparing persons to enter the field of selling and merchandising goods and services and with increasing the efficiency of those already so occupied.

Distributive occupations. Distributive occupations are defined as those occupations which are concerned with making available to consumers the goods and services produced by others.

Opinion. The term opinion refers to a judgment or a sentiment which the mind forms concerning a particular educational program or practice.

State supervisor of distributive education. The title state supervisor of distributive education refers to a member of the state department of public instruction who is charged with the responsibility of the development of the distributive education program in the state public schools.

Teacher-coordinator. The teacher-coordinator is the person employed

by the high school to teach the distributive education classes and to supervise the work-experiences of the distributive education students.

Trainee. The term trainee referred to the student enrolled in a distributive education program who attends school on a part-time basis and spends approximately an equal amount of time working in a distributive business for the purpose of applying the theory he has learned in the distributive class. He receives pay and school credit for his time spent on the job.

Training station. The term training station referred to the distributive business in which the distributive education student is employed for the cooperative phase of his educational program.

Vocational education. The term vocational education identifies a program of education, not leading to the collegiate baccalaureate degree, which is designed to prepare the learner for entrance into a particular chosen vocation or to upgrade employed workers; vocational education includes such divisions as trade and industrial education, office education, agricultural education, distributive education and home-economics education.

Chapter II

Review of Literature

The term distributive education identifies a program of instruction in marketing and distribution (6:2). Distribution, as used here, refers to the total movement of goods and services from the original producer to the final consumer (5:20). A distributive occupation is one in which the worker is engaged primarily in the marketing or merchandising of goods and services at both the management and nonmanagement levels (2:52). This involves the entire spectrum of marketing, including wholesalers, retailers, transporters, advertisers, and marketing researchers as well as sales personnel at all levels. Therefore, today's distributive education programs are vocational instructional programs designed to provide the necessary skills, knowledge, attitudes, and understanding necessary for persons entering or who have already entered a distributive occupation requiring competency in one or more of the marketing functions. Distributive education programs are true vocational programs in the sense that the purpose of the program is to either prepare people who wish to enter into a distributive occupation or improve the skills of those already employed in the various fields.

There are three primary objectives for the distributive education program:

1. To offer instruction in marketing, merchandising and management.
2. To aid in improving the techniques of distribution.
3. To develop an understanding of the wide range of the social and economic responsibilities which accompany the right to engage in distribution in a free competitive society (8:169-176).

The curriculum in distributive education includes the following: a study of marketing including buying, selling, pricing, wholesaling and retailing; a study of the factors affecting marketing including advertising, visual merchandising, store location, customer service and government regulations; and a study of the role of the consumer in the marketing process. In addition, each student receives a wide range of specific instruction which is directly related in the development of an immediate job proficiency (5).

Distributive education is composed primarily of high school preparation and cooperative programs, but also includes post-high school programs and adult education programs. The high school distributive education program operates in the following manner: If the person utilizes the cooperative method of instruction the school provides the classroom, instruction and facilities where the student attends a class or classes in which instruction in the discipline of distribution is given. In addition he will also take the general education courses required of all high school students. In the afternoon the student receives laboratory experience consisting of on-the-job training with a businessman who provides part-time guided employment for which the student receives both pay and credit towards graduation. Through this cooperative arrangement the student is able to receive not only wages but also a level of practical experience that the high school would find it prohibitive to provide (2). This job initiates the student to the field of distribution and provides

him the opportunity to acquire job competency, to advance to subsequent positions of greater responsibility, to observe our free enterprise system in operation, and to become a contributing member of our society (5). If the project method of instruction is used rather than the cooperative method the program operates in much the same manner as described except the student is not regularly employed in a distributive business. In this situation the student receives his practical experience through a series of activities or projects which may or may not involve actual work experience. These projects are designed by the teacher to provide the student with practical experience in the competencies which he is trying to develop (2).

Distributive education in the United States was originated on a national scale with the passing of the George-Deen Act in 1936 which provided federal funding for distributive education programs. In spite of its relatively long history the distributive education program has received very limited support and acceptance in Montana although the situation has changed markedly in the last ten years. As late as 1961 a survey of Montana high schools revealed only four that included distributive education programs in their curricula. In the ten years intervening that number has increased to 26. However, when one considers that over 30 percent of the Montana labor force is employed in distributive occupations the number of schools involved still lags far behind the number one would logically expect to find offering training in the field. The reasons for this discrepancy are largely unknown, but a

study by Palmer (1967) tends to indicate that the major limiting factor is a lack of knowledge about the distributive education program among school administrators throughout the state. Palmer also listed ten recommendations logically arrived at as a result of this study, centering primarily around the need for the initiation of an intensive informational program to overcome the existing knowledge gap. His final recommendation dealt with the need for additional studies to determine what other factors were in existence that would tend to either promote or discourage the establishment of distributive programs in Montana. Therefore, a logical followup study on Palmer's work was to determine what the teacher-coordinators of distributive education felt should be the role of the state supervisor.

In order to conduct this study it was necessary for the writer to review pertinent literature on the role of the state supervisor and formulate a meaningful questionnaire.

This survey (performed at the library of Montana State University) revealed that very little has been written on the subject with the exception of a few isolated magazine articles. As no previous formal studies have been conducted it was, therefore, necessary to depend heavily on the Montana State Plan for Vocational Education for the delineation of the broad areas of the supervisor's duties. Additional information on the specific duties of the supervisor was derived from various business journal articles concerning supervision in other states.

The lack of information on the subject did provide an additional

incentive to the author, however, as it pointed out the specific need for a study of this kind.

The following is a brief summarization of what appears to be the broad areas of the state supervisors duties as indicated by the various State Plans for Vocational Education along with the specific duties related to each as gathered from the supplemental literature in the field.

A. Establishment and Development

Once a school requests information on the distributive education program the state supervisor should plan a visit as soon as possible to meet with the school superintendent, principal and, if possible, the guidance counselor. The operation of the program, responsibilities of the school and the general plan for implementing the program should be discussed in detail at this initial meeting. If the school personnel concerned feel that the program would be a worthwhile addition to the curriculum, the supervisor should then conduct a complete study and analysis of the local situation in order to determine if a distributive education program could succeed.

If the results of this in-depth study and analysis indicate a program could succeed the responsibility for organizing, as well as operating, such a program will rest on the local educational authorities. However, the state supervisor should be available to give advice at each stage of the development of the program, especially during the initial stages when he may be required to devote a considerable amount of time to working with the teacher-coordinator (1).

B. Improvement

Once the initial program has evolved the state supervisor should continue to work as closely as possible with the teacher-coordinator in the development of up-to-date retailing and merchandising courses. In addition, he should also actively participate in the effective utilization of these courses. Realizing that a well trained teacher-coordinator is the key to a successful program, the supervisor should seek to improve teacher education by organizing and conducting conferences and workshops. The supervisor can utilize these gatherings to work both with groups of teacher-coordinators and with individual coordinators in order to improve their effectiveness. Specific categories to cover should include courses of study, reports, teaching techniques, and teaching standards and practices. The supervisor should not only evaluate the performances of the coordinators, but he should also be able to make positive suggestions for improvement in each of the categories mentioned (10).

C. School visitations

Visits should be planned so that the supervisor arrives as soon as the school day commences. Upon his arrival he should meet with the school principal to plan an itinerary that will allow him to accomplish his purpose in one day. The supervisor should spend at least one full class period observing the distributive education teacher and, at its conclusion, be able to give an evaluation, including constructive criticism, of the teacher's classroom technique. Following an informal luncheon with the

coordinator, the supervisor should spend the greater part of the afternoon calling on employers and observing students at their respective training stations. Such observations will aid the supervisor in evaluating the suitability of the selected training stations for the program and provide him with a basis for making suggestions on needed changes or improvements. The supervisor should also spend a certain amount of time discussing the program with each of the students involved in order to determine if they feel they are receiving a valid training experience; and if not, how they feel it could be improved. The supervisor should also discuss the program with as many of the merchant advisory committee members as he can possibly meet with in order to determine their feelings on the program and possible modifications which they feel might be incorporated which result in strengthening the overall approach.

Following the visitation the supervisor should prepare a detailed written report concerning the day's activities. The report should be an unbiased, factual account of what was observed along with the supervisor's recommendations on how the program could be improved. The supervisor must guard against making the report too critical or negative in nature, but rather he should offer positive constructive suggestions for strengthening the program. Copies of the report, along with a covering letter, should be mailed to the school administration officials involved and to the teacher-coordinator of the program (7).

D. Promotion

Once the distributive education program has been established in

a community the state supervisor should play a major role in the dissemination of information between the state, the school and the supporting community. Much of this promotion can be accomplished by editing a periodic newsletter that should be mailed to each teacher-coordinator in the state as well as all others interested in the program.

After visiting the schools and communities where programs have been established the supervisor should have the necessary backlog of information to be able to present an account of the progress the local program has made during the school year. This information can be incorporated with the kinds of activities the school is involved with along with its long range goals so that the community can fully understand, appreciate, and lend its full support to the program.

The state supervisor can play a major role in insuring that the distributive education program is being utilized to its maximum potential by the development of a program of continuous evaluation. Through this means the supervisor can determine how well the program is functioning; ie., to what degree its objectives are being realized, the strong and weak points of the program, and what steps can be taken to improve it.

It is unrealistic to expect that all programs will attain the same level of competence due to the variation that exists within a state between communities, schools, and students. Each program must be evaluated in terms of its own objectives; therefore, an effective evaluation will require the cooperative efforts of the teacher-coordinator and the state supervisor. The goals of the program must be evaluated in order

to determine if they are realistic in light of the actual or anticipated opportunities for gainful employment within the community. Once the objectives for the program are clearly established, a follow-up study of the previous graduates should be conducted to determine how well the program suited the needs, interests, and abilities of these students. A portion of this study should be devoted to how effective the program has been with regard to placement and successful employment of the students in their chosen occupations.

Once the evaluation has been completed it should be the responsibility of the state supervisor to send a copy of the report to the school officials involved. The report should include the major strengths of the program, areas of weaknesses and suggested procedures for making the necessary improvements indicated by the report (7).

This completes the list of what the literature indicates are the broad areas of the state supervisor's role in distributive education. However, throughout the review of literature a number of specific duties were mentioned which did not totally lend themselves to placement within any one of the accepted "broad area" categories. The following is a brief outline and description of these "miscellaneous" specific duties.

1. The literature assumes that the state supervisor will cooperate with the local school administration in sending any information that they may request at any time during the development and operation of the program. It further assumes that the state supervisor will keep the local school administration informed of any recent developments

in all pertinent phases of the distributive education program.

2. The state supervisor should be able to perform a major service by making meaningful recommendations for the filling of vacancies which exist in new or ongoing distributive education programs. The tremendous diversity that exists between programs necessitates that each position be evaluated independently as to its requirements. The job of performing this evaluation and determining what individuals are best suited among those personnel presently available for employment in the field is most certainly a task requiring the background knowledge and skills of the state supervisor. The final selection, of course, will be up to the administrative officials of the school involved.

3. The state vocational board is charged with the responsibility of receiving and processing applications from schools throughout the state for Federal funds. It is the state supervisor's duty to determine whether a school making application for federal distributive education funds meets the federal requirements and furthermore to recommend approval or rejection of any or all requests for federal distributive education funding.

4. The state supervisor is automatically the sponsor of all DECA clubs within the state and as such should organize and attend the annual state DECA conference. He is also expected to attend any regional or national DECA conferences which may be held throughout the year.

5. The state supervisor must also stay abreast of any current developments by continually researching the literature in all areas of distributive education. Because of his close association with teacher-coordinators, he may be called on to aid individual coordinators in their negotiations with the school administration. Such negotiations may call for a great deal of diplomacy on his part to insure against placing the program in an unfavorable light among local officials.

Chapter III

Findings

The literature survey revealed that while there are no strict specific guidelines listed for the State Supervisor of Distributive Education there are various duties associated with the office that the state supervisor is expected to perform to some degree or another. Therefore, a three page questionnaire was designed and sent out, along with a cover letter, to all teacher-coordinators of distributive education programs in Montana. The purpose of the questionnaire, as previously stated, was (1) to determine if the tasks implied in the literature as being a function of the state supervisor were regarded as such by D.E. coordinators in Montana; and (2) whether or not such duties were currently being performed by the present Montana State Supervisor of Distributive Education.

A 100 percent return was received on the first mailing of the questionnaire to the 26 D.E. coordinators in Montana.

This chapter will be a detailed report of the findings of this study based on these completed questionnaires.

There are five broad general areas of duties that the State Supervisor is expected to perform in the distributive education program. These five categories are universal as they are stated in the state plans for vocational education in all 50 states. The questionnaire was designed to reflect this, being divided into the five categories with specific duties listed within each. An additional section was added for the inclusion of those specific duties which did not logically fit into the five main categories.

The first category covered on the questionnaire is concerned with the establishment and development of new distributive education programs. Within this category five specific duties are somewhat arbitrarily listed as being necessary for the state supervisor to perform in order to adequately participate in the establishment and development of a new program. All of the coordinators felt that once a school requests information of the possibility of establishing a D.E. program the supervisor should plan a visit to meet with the school superintendent, principal, and if possible, the guidance counselor. In those programs presently existing it was found that in 24 instances (92%) the state supervisor had performed this duty and in the remaining 2 instances (8%) it had not been performed.

Twenty four of the coordinators (92%) felt that the supervisor should give a complete outline of the various steps that should be followed for the proper establishment of a successful program during this initial visit. Of those that felt such an outline was an essential part of the supervisor's job, 20 (83%) felt that the duty had been performed with respect to their specific program and 4 (17%) felt that the task had not been performed satisfactorily.

Looking at these two specific duties it is apparent that although the supervisor had visited 24 of the 26 schools involved to initiate the program he failed to achieve the purpose of his visit at four schools because the operation of the program, responsibilities of the school and the general plan for implementing the program had either not

been discussed or were not sufficiently explained to those concerned.

Although all the coordinators felt that it was the duty of the supervisor to visit the school and explain the program, only 13 (50%) of them felt that if the program was desired the state supervisor should conduct a complete study and analysis of the local situation to determine if a program could succeed. Of the 13 reporting this as a function, 8 (62%) felt that the task had been performed and 5 (38%) felt it had not.

If the results of the indepth study indicate that a program could succeed the responsibility for organizing, developing and operating the program will rest on the local educational authorities. However, 23 (88%) of the coordinators felt that the supervisor should be available for consultation and advice at each stage of the programs development. All 26 (100%) felt his help was especially important during the initial stages when he may be required to devote a considerable amount of time to working with the teacher-coordinators. In the first category 22 (96%) of the 23 coordinators indicated that the supervisor was available for help during all stages of the program development. The same number (22) indicated he was there during the critical initial development stage, while 4 (15%) indicated he had not been present.

The results clearly indicate that the coordinators feel that the responsibility for establishing and developing a new program to the degree stated in the questionnaire is certainly a duty of the state supervisor. Four of the five duties were accepted as part of the super-

visor's job by a minimum of 88% of the coordinators. The fifth duty (completing a study and analysis of probable success) found the coordinators equally divided. Although this duty may not totally be the responsibility of the state supervisor, he should at least outline the study and initiate its beginning. In addition, although he may not have the responsibility of actually conducting the study directly, the author feels he should at least be available for advice on how it should be conducted and how to interpret the results. Therefore, the author feels this particular phase of the programs development should at least be under the guidance and supervision of the state supervisor.

On the basis of the questionnaire response, the improvement of distributive education programs is very obviously thought to be a responsibility of the state supervisor. For instance, all 26 teacher coordinators felt the state supervisor should provide them with resource material for the purposes of program improvement. Of the 26, 4 (15%) felt that this service was not being provided at the present time.

Twenty three of the twenty six (88%) also felt that the supervisor should be available to work in close association with them to develop new retailing and merchandising courses. A majority of these 23 (13 or 57%) felt that this responsibility was not being fulfilled by the present state supervisor. It is interesting to note that this specific duty received the highest number of "not performed" responses on the questionnaire.

The third specific duty, the one pertaining to the organization and

conduction of teacher-coordinator conferences, received unanimous approval as being the responsibility of the state supervisor. In addition, only one (4%) of the coordinators felt that this function was not being performed at the present time.

The next duty listed pertaining to the organization and conduction of workshops for coordinators found 25 (96%) of the coordinators agreeing that this was a specific duty of the state supervisor. Of the 25, 19 or 76% felt the duty was currently being performed and 6 or 24% felt the state supervisor did not perform this function.

The final question pertaining to the improvement of distributive programs revealed only 16 (62%) of the 26 coordinators felt that the state supervisor should work with them on an individual basis to help in improving their effectiveness. Of the 16 who felt that this was a valid function only 6 or a mere 38% said that such help was presently available. This represents the lowest percentage rating in the "performed" category of the entire questionnaire.

In summary, the five items outlined on the questionnaire were accepted by the majority of the coordinators as being specific duties of the supervisor that must be fulfilled in order to effectively carry out his role in improving existing distributive education programs. Only one duty was not accepted by an overwhelming number of the coordinators as being a part of the supervisor's role, item 5, which pertains to individual help in improving coordinator effectiveness. This task was accepted by a margin of 16 to 10. The small margin is

probably indicative of one of two factors, either uncertainty in the minds of the coordinators as to exactly what the duty as stated encompasses or it indicates the tendency to regard individualized help as intrusion into ones personal affairs. It is the author's belief that working individually with each coordinator to help him improve is not only of vital importance to the supervisor in fulfilling his role in strengthening and improving a program, but it is also necessary to build the trust and understanding needed by people engaged in a cooperative undertaking. Unfortunately, this task is apparently not being performed in a majority of those schools indicating that it is a part of the supervisor's duties. The reasons for it's not being performed are unknown, but a major one could well be the sensitivity of the area and the difficulty associated with approaching a coordinator about his classroom techniques, knowledge of subject matter or personal characteristics. Another task, that of working closely with the coordinators in the development of new retailing and merchandising courses although accepted by an overwhelming majority of the coordinators (88%) as being a specific task of the supervisor also showed that in the majority of cases (57%) this duty was not being presently performed. The conclusion that can be drawn from the results of these two largely similar questions is that the non-performance of these needed tasks could be due to the inability of the supervisor to either work or want to work in close cooperation on an individual basis with the coordinators in areas that both may feel are primarily the responsibility of the coordinator. The solution to the

dilemma rests on the ability of both parties to communicate on the same intellectual level with a high degree of mature patience and understanding.

The literature review revealed six tasks that should be carried out to maximize the benefits of a supervisor's visit to a school offering a distributive education program. The first task, that of supervisor observation during a full period of classroom instruction by the coordinator, received approval from the coordinators by a small majority (54% to 46%). Of those accepting observation as being part of the supervisor's role only 50% agreed that it was currently being performed. The second duty listed, that of calling on employers and observing students at training stations found the coordinators equally divided on the issue, with 50% agreeing and 50% disagreeing on it being a valid function of the state supervisor. Of those agreeing that it was a valid function only 46% stated that it was presently being performed.

Twenty (77%) of the twenty-six coordinators felt the state supervisor should talk with the merchant advisory committee members. Of these 20, only 8 (40%) indicated that this task was presently being performed.

Meeting with and talking to the school principal or superintendent during the course of a school visit met with the unanimous approval of the coordinators as being a specific task of the supervisor. The study revealed that 24 (92%) of the 26 felt the task was presently being performed.

The final duty connected with school visitations, that of attending

teachers meetings scheduled for the day of the visit was rejected as a duty by 19 (73%) of the 26 coordinators. Of the 7 who felt it was a duty 4 (57%) indicated the task was presently being performed.

The findings relating to the section on the state supervisor's role in school visitations indicate that only four of the six specific duties listed in the related literature are viewed by Montana coordinators as being functions of the Montana state supervisor. Of these four, (1) talking with school administration officials, (2) meeting with merchant advisory members, (3) talking with co-op students, and (4) observing coordinators during classroom instruction only the first two were accepted by over 75% of the respondents as specific duties. Of the remaining two, one function listed (calling on employers and observation of students at training stations) found the coordinators equally divided in their opinions and the other (attending teacher meetings) was rejected by almost 75% of the respondents. A major inconsistency is indicated in this section in the acceptance of the need for the supervisor to talk to the students at work by 50% of the respondents and the rejection of the need to observe the students at work by over 60% of the coordinators.

The overwhelming rejection by the coordinators of the need for the supervisor to attend any teacher meetings during his visit is somewhat surprising. It is the writer's opinion that this duty, although admittedly time consuming and sometimes inconvenient to perform, should warrant his consideration as its performance would certainly tend to strengthen the

relationship existing between the school faculty and the state supervisor's office. The lack of knowledge about the goals and benefits of the distributive education program that exists among educators would seem to indicate that the supervisor should use any method that is feasible in distributing information on the program and the benefits accruing to the specific school involved.

The fourth major broad category in the functions of the state supervisor concerns the promotion of the distributive education program. The first specific task listed, that of editing a periodic newsletter for distribution to all interested parties was accepted by 19 (73%) of the 26 coordinators, as a task the supervisor should perform. However, only 11 (58%) of the 19 felt the task was currently being performed.

The second task, the presentation of an account on the progress made by the local distributive education program by the state supervisor, was accepted as the supervisor's duty by 17 (65%) of the 26 coordinators. Of these 17, only 9 (53%) were of the opinion that such presentations were currently being given.

The third duty, that the supervisor was responsible for the interpretation and presentation of information on the distributive education program to the community was rejected by 15 (58%) of the 26 Montana teacher coordinators. Of the 11 who felt this was a part of the supervisor's duties only 5 (45%) said the supervisor was presently fulfilling this community service obligation.

In summary, it can be seen that the first two tasks listed on the

questionnaire dealing with promotion of the distributive education program were accepted as part of the supervisor's role by a large majority of the coordinators. However, almost half of those accepting the tasks were of the opinion that they were not presently being performed. The rejection of the program within the community came as a major surprise to the writer. It is the writer's opinion that the importance of community acceptance and support of the distributive education program may not be fully appreciated by the teacher-coordinators in Montana. The importance of the communities role in the development and operation of successful programs cannot be overemphasized as they offer not only direct support by providing training stations and advisory committee members, but they also indirectly contribute in a multitude of ways. These range in scale from providing news coverage of program events to, in most cases, providing at least a part of the coordinators salary.

The fifth broad category of duties involves the state supervisor's responsibilities in evaluating ongoing distributive education programs. From the literature it is apparent that one specific duty of the supervisor is to conduct a study after the first year of the programs operation in regards to fulfilling its anticipated goals in terms of employment within the community which had been forecast. However, the survey of Montana coordinators revealed they were equally divided in their opinions as to their acceptance of this as a supervisor's duty with 13 agreeing and 13 disagreeing on the subject. Of those accepting this

as a duty only 6 (46%) felt it was currently being performed.

The second proposed supervisor's task, that of conducting a follow-up study to see if the program has been effective in its training so that students can be successfully employed in the occupations for which they were trained or in closely related fields. This task received much better acceptance by the Montana coordinators as 18 (69%) of the coordinators viewed it as a specific duty of the state supervisor. Of these 18, 10 (56%) felt that such studies were currently being conducted and 8 felt that they were not.

A third type of follow-up study listed in the literature as a specific task of the supervisor, that of determining whether or not the program was successful in the opinion of the students who had graduated during previous years, was accepted as a supervisor's duty by 18 (69%) of the respondents. Of these 18, a majority (11 or 61%) felt the students were currently being contacted in regard to their opinions on the program.

The final proposed specific duty of the state supervisor in regard to program evaluation is the sending of an official letter of evaluation each year to the school officials involved. This letter should include favorable comments on the programs strengths as well as pointing out areas of weakness and suggested procedures for improvement. The coordinators approved this as a specific task by a large majority, 19 (73%) to 7. However, of the 19 regarding this as a duty only 8 (42%) felt such a letter was currently being mailed to their respective schools and the remaining 11 said it was not.

In summary, in the category involving the supervisor's role in program evaluation three of the four tasks listed were accepted by a large majority of the Montana coordinators as duties of the supervisor. The fourth (conducting a study to see if the program is realistic in terms of the potential for student employment within the community) found the coordinators equally divided in their opinions. The writer feels that this particular duty needs some specific elaboration to the coordinators as to its importance in the development and maintenance of a successful program. The justification for a distributive education program is largely based on the need for training personnel in a specific vocational field to fill job opportunities which exist within a given community. Once it is determined where these vacancies lie within the community a curriculum suitable for the training of potential workers to fill them can then be designed. After the program has been in operation for a year a follow-up study should be conducted in order to see if the program is still needed in terms of existing job opportunities, or if such opportunities no longer exist; whether the program needs to be redesigned. If such a follow-up study is not undertaken the community may find itself in the position of supporting a program which is not attuned to its needs. In the design of the questionnaire the writer used the five broad areas of responsibilities of the state supervisor that are given in the state plans for vocational education as the five major categories and then listed the specific duties found in the literature within the categories to which they were the most closely related. However,

while conducting the review of literature it became apparent that there were several additional tasks that are commonly felt to be specific duties of the state supervisor that do not fit within these five broad categories. These duties were, therefore, listed under a sixth broad category classed as "other". The remainder of this chapter will be devoted to what could be thought of as the miscellaneous duties of the state supervisor in regard to fulfilling his role in distributive education.

The first miscellaneous task, that of providing all information pertaining to distributive education that is requested by the local school administration was accepted as a duty of the state supervisor by 77% (20 of the 26) of the coordinators. Of these 20, only 1 felt that the present supervisor failed to send such literature when requested.

Another miscellaneous task of the state supervisor is assisting local school administrations in the selection of teacher-coordinators for distributive education programs. Eighteen (69%) of the coordinators viewed this as the supervisor's duty, and of this number all but one felt that the task was presently being performed. It is the writer's feeling that this is a logical task for the state supervisor, for he should be by far the most knowledgeable as to what type of individual is best suited to operate a successful program geared to the specific needs of a given community. His past experience in the field gives him the breadth needed to best recognize the intangibles

involved in a specific position. The writer, therefore, feels that this duty should be regarded as being a mandatory part of the state supervisor's role in distributive education.

Closely related to helping in teacher selection is the supervisor's role in evaluating a prospective teacher-coordinator's work experience in order to determine if the applicant meets the minimum state qualifications. In Montana at the present time this responsibility does not rest directly with any one individual. Of the teacher-coordinators polled, 23 (88%) viewed this as the responsibility of the state supervisor. Of these 23, all but one stated that his work experience had been evaluated by the state supervisor.

Again, largely for the same reasons given in the preceding task, the writer feels that the supervisor is the one who is best qualified and experienced with the kinds of activities needed to be a successful teacher-coordinator. Therefore, evaluation of work experience should rest with the state supervisor.

The fourth task listed in this section was that of determining if a given school has met the requirements for aid and then recommending approval or rejection of the proposal for a distributive education program. This task is listed as a specific duty in the Montana state plan for distributive education. The reason for including it in the questionnaire was to determine if the coordinators were aware of whose task this is. A 100 percent response was received indicating that the duty is recognized as part of the supervisor's role by all

concerned. Again, all but one coordinator listed the function as presently performed by the state supervisor.

The fifth task listed pertains to the supervisor's role in attending merchants meetings of educational association meetings to explain the distributive education program. Twenty (77%) of the coordinators viewed this as a duty of the supervisor and of these 15 (75%) said it was currently being performed. The writer feels the success of any program rests on the amount of support it receives from the community and educators not directly in the field. Therefore, the importance of promotional efforts geared to spread information on the programs benefits to these various groups cannot be overemphasized especially in light of the lack of knowledge that exists about the program within the state at the present time.

DECA (Distributive Education Club of America) is the youth club of distributive education which draws its membership from students enrolled in the program. To be a useful part of the overall program it must have qualified sponsors and advisors who are well informed in all the aspects of the program. Twenty two of the coordinators (85%) felt the state supervisor should serve as a sponsor for all the DECA clubs in the state. Of these 22, all but one felt the state supervisor was currently performing this function.

Another task listed in the miscellaneous group is the supervisor's role in organizing and attending state DECA conferences. Twenty four (92%) of the coordinators viewed this as a task of the state supervisor and all but one said he currently performed this task.

A closely related task included in the survey was whether the supervisor should attend the national DECA conference which is held on an annual basis. All but one of the 26 coordinators felt this was a duty of the state supervisor, and of the 25 again all but one felt the supervisor was currently attending these national meetings.

The writer views all of the DECA functions listed as being tasks of the state supervisor. Being involved at this level not only aids in keeping lines of communication open between the national, state and local levels, it also helps make the supervisor more aware of the various strengths and weaknesses that exist within each. This awareness will help the supervisor in making decisions pertaining to specific programs at the outset of each school year.

The ninth category, that the supervisor should do research in all areas of distributive education, found 19 (73%) of the 26 coordinators agreeing that this was a specific task for the state supervisor. Of these 19, 17 (89%) felt the present supervisor was conducting such research. Keeping current and being fully aware of all the aspects of distributive education is a fundamental part of the state supervisor's job which is vitally needed in order to fully satisfy all the requirements of his position.

The tenth and final task concerns the role of the state supervisor as a go-between in matters involving the coordinator and his school administration. This task was one of only three proposed tasks that were rejected by the coordinators as being duties of the state supervisor.

Fourteen (54%) of the coordinators did not feel it was within the realm of the supervisor's duties. Of the 12 who felt it was, 5 (42%) said that it was not currently being performed.

The rejection of the task could be due to the various interpretations which can be associated with the word "go-between". It is the writer's opinion that the task is a function of the supervisor's role when there is a need for his technical assistance in clarifying specific questions which may arise about the total program. As an example, the school administration may not fully be aware of the importance of release time needed by the coordinator to fulfill his program obligations. The assistance of the state supervisor in explaining the need may well be what the coordinator needs to get the concept understood, accepted and appreciated by the school officials involved.

Chapter IV

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The review of literature revealed that although there are numerous duties that are widely associated with the state supervisor's role in distributive education there is no specific listing of these duties that can be used as a guideline. As a result, the state supervisor and the teacher-coordinator may often tend to visualize the supervisor's role in specific areas from dissimilar points of view. In an attempt to clarify the state supervisor's role in Montana a questionnaire was designed and administered to the Montana teacher-coordinators to determine their opinions on (1) if the duties listed in the literature were valid and (2) if the duties were being performed by the then current Montana state supervisor of distributive education.

Summary of Findings

The following are the major findings of this study:

1. In general, most of the specific tasks listed in the literature which relate to the role of the state supervisor were accepted by the teacher-coordinator as being valid duties of the Montana state supervisor.

2. Over one-half (17) of the total number of tasks (33) were accepted by 75 percent or better of the teacher-coordinators, with six tasks receiving unanimous approval as being duties of the state supervisor.

3. Of the 33 duties listed only three were rejected by over 50 percent of the teacher coordinators as not being valid duties of the

state supervisor. In addition, three proposed duties found the respondents evenly divided in their opinions as to whether or not the duties were valid.

4. In general, most of the teacher-coordinators were of the opinion that the then current state supervisor was performing the specific duties listed on the questionnaire.

5. Over one-half of the listed duties were looked on by 75 percent or more of the teacher-coordinators as being performed by the state supervisor. However, more were viewed as being currently performed by all of the respondents to the questionnaire.

6. Of the 33 specific duties listed six were viewed by over 50 percent of the coordinators as not being currently performed. It is interesting to note, however, that 14 of the 33 duties were listed as "not performed" by 40 percent or more of the respondents.

7. Of the 11 specific duties that were looked upon by over 90 percent of the respondents as being currently performed, 7 of them were in the "miscellaneous" category.

8. All but one of the 10 duties listed in the miscellaneous category were viewed by at least 75 percent of the coordinators as being currently performed by the state supervisor.

Conclusions

From the summary of findings the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. Montana teacher-coordinators of distributive education view the

role of the Montana state supervisor as incorporating most of the duties listed in the general literature in the field of distributive education.

2. Montana teacher-coordinators do not view the state supervisor's role as one of being involved to any great extent in the mechanics and promotion of the program at the local community level.

3. Montana teacher-coordinators do not share the opinion generally stated in the literature that the state supervisor should play an active role as a mediator in negotiations involving the coordinator and local school administrators.

4. Montana teacher-coordinators generally view the current state supervisor as satisfactorily performing the duties listed in the literature, with certain exceptions which have been discussed in the preceding section.

5. A number of the Montana teacher-coordinators feel the state supervisor should be more involved in cooperative undertakings with the coordinators, such as the cooperative development of new courses and teacher improvement.

6. A number of the Montana teacher-coordinators feel the state supervisor needs to be more involved with employees and merchant advisory committee members.

7. A substantial number of the Montana coordinators feel the state supervisor is not involved to the degree that he should be in the area of promotion of the distributive education program.

8. A substantial number of the Montana coordinators feel the state

supervisor is not involved to the degree that he should be in the area of evaluation of the distributive education program.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made on the basis of the findings of this study:

1. The role of the state supervisor in the promotion of the distributive education program at the local level needs to be thoroughly explained and emphasized to the teacher-coordinators during their professional training at the university. The goal of such a program of instruction would be to remove the air of provincialism which appears to exist in the attitudes of teacher-coordinators in order to realize the maximum involvement of communities concerned with the distributive education program throughout Montana.

2. The role of the state supervisor in the evaluation of distributive education programs needs to be clarified in the minds of both the teacher-coordinators and the state supervisor. The state supervisor needs to take a more active role in the various aspects of evaluation as indicated by the questionnaire. The teacher-coordinators, in turn, must look upon evaluation as a chance to gain constructive criticism about both the program and themselves from one who is in the best position to judge how each facet can be improved.

3. Specific sessions need to be scheduled and conducted at the annual teacher-coordinators convention dealing with requests from the teacher-coordinators for the state supervisor's assistance in all the

aspects of the distributive education program. At one of the earliest sessions, the results of this paper should be discussed so that the problems disclosed can be resolved to the mutual benefit of all concerned, especially in the areas of promotion and evaluation.

4. A detailed job description that outlines the specific duties of the state supervisor of distributive education and which incorporates those included in this paper should be published and made available to all who are involved in the distributive education program. Included in this description should be explanations on what must be done to promote the program and how to properly evaluate the individual programs. The description will not only serve as a guideline for the state supervisor in performing his tasks, it will also serve to outline what the coordinators can expect from the state supervisor in terms of specific assistance in all aspects of the distributive education program.

5. Studies similar to this one need to be conducted in other states to determine if the tasks listed in this paper that are accepted by Montana coordinators have universal acceptance throughout the nation. Such studies might well lead to the development of a set of duties for the state supervisor that would find national acceptance, thus eliminating much of the confusion that presently exists as to his role in distributive education programs in the U.S.

6. Further studies should be conducted in Montana in order to determine if there are any additional duties that should be performed by the state supervisor that need to be included in the proposed job descrip-

tion. It is recommended, however, that the proposed job description not be delayed until the completion of these additional studies as the need for the description is urgent and any additional duties can always be incorporated if provisions are made for future amendments.

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX I

529 South Black
Bozeman, Montana
January 5, 1972

Mr. Teacher-Coordinator
Distributive Education
High School
Montana

Dear

As a part of my graduate study in Distributive Education at Montana State University, I am conducting a research study to determine the role of the state supervisor of Distributive Education as it is perceived by the local school personnel.

You have been selected as a participant in this study and your response is essential to its success.

Will you please take five minutes right now to complete the questionnaire and return it in the enclosed stamped envelope.

Your assistance is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

APPENDIX II

Check the appropriate answer according to whether or not you feel the following functions are specific duties of the State Supervisor of Distributive Education. If yes, indicate if the duty is performed or not performed by your State Supervisor of Distributive Education.

	NO	YES	PERFORMED	NOT PERFORMED
During development and establishment of a new DE program the State Supervisor should:				
(1) meet with the school officials and explain the operation of a DE program and the responsibilities of the school to such a program.				
(2) outline the steps to be followed for proper establishment of the program.				
(3) complete a study and make an analysis of the local situation to determine if a DE program could succeed.				
(4) be available to give advice to the superintendent or principal at each stage of development of the program.				
(5) be available to work with the teacher-coordinator during the early development of the program.				
To improve DE programs the State Supervisor should:				
(1) provide resource material for use by the teacher-coordinator.				

	NO	YES	PERFORMED	NOT PERFORMED
(2) work co-operatively with the coordinators to develop new up-to-date retailing and merchandising courses.				
(3) organize and conduct conferences for teacher-coordinators.				
(4) organize and conduct workshops for teacher-coordinators.				
(5) work with individual teachers to help improve their effectiveness.				
In connection with school visitations the State Supervisor should:				
(1) observe a full period of classroom instruction by the teacher-coordinator.				
(2) call on employers and observe students at training stations.				
(3) talk to some of the co-op students at work.				
(4) talk with the merchant advisory committee members.				
(5) meet with and talk to the superintendent or principal of the school.				
(6) attend any scheduled teacher's meeting on the day of visitation.				
For promotion of Distributive Education programs the State Supervisor should:				

	NO	YES	PERFORMED	NOT PERFORMED
(1) edit periodic newsletters concerning DE activities in the state and send them to all interested parties.				
(2) present a clear account of the progress the local DE program has made during the year.				
(3) interpret and make known the program to the community so that it will be understood and supported.				
When evaluating the program the State Supervisor should:				
(1) conduct a study to see if the program is realistic in light of actual or anticipated opportunities for gainful employment.				
(2) do a follow-up study to see if the program has been effective with regard to the placement and successful employment of students in the occupations for which they were trained or in closely related occupations.				
(3) do a follow-up study to see if the program is suiting the needs, interests, and abilities of the students enrolled during previous years.				
(4) send a letter of an evaluating nature to school officials including favorable comments, areas which need strengthening and suggested procedures for improvement.				

	NO	YES	PERFORMED	NOT PERFORMED
Other: The State Supervisor should:				
(1) provide any and all information requested by the local school administration.				
(2) help in the selection of teacher-coordinators for DE programs.				
(3) evaluate teacher-coordinators work experience to see if it meets the state's requirements.				
(4) determine whether the school has met requirements for aid and recommend approval or rejection of proposals for a DE program.				
(5) attend any meeting of merchants or education associations to explain the DE program.				
(6) be a sponsor of all DECA clubs in the state.				
(7) organize and attend state DECA conferences.				
(8) attend national DECA conferences.				
(9) do research in all areas of Distributive Education.				
(10) act as a go-between for the coordinator in dealing with the school administration.				

COMMENTS, CORRECTIONS, OR ADDITIONS:

APPENDIX III

Comments of Montana Teacher-Coordinators

1. All of the responsibility for evaluating the distributive education program should rest on the local coordinators.

2. Analysis of the local situation to determine if a D.E. program could succeed should be left up to the local coordinator as they can get more valid answers on this type of research.

3. An area supervisor is needed to perform the jobs at the site of the program in order to alleviate the heavy load the state supervisor now carries.

4. The state supervisor should spend more time in discussions involving problems that employers are experiencing with students of the distributive education program.

5. The state supervisor should not be involved in the selection of teacher-coordinators unless he knows the teacher's background.

6. The state supervisor should devise unit plans that will be made available to each distributive education teacher.