A SURVEY OF MONTANA EMPLOYERS PARTICIPATING IN HIGH SCHOOL DISTRIBUTIVE EDUCATION PROGRAMS DURING THE 1970-71 SCHOOL YEAR TO DETERMINE COORDINATION PRACTICES AND EMPLOYER PREFERENCES

by

CHARLES WILLIAM KOON

A professional paper submitted to the Graduate Faculty in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE IN BUSINESS EDUCATION

with concentration in

Distributive Education

Approved:

Montana State University
Bozeman, Montana

July, 1973
ACKNOWLEDGMENT

This paper could not be presented without proper acknowledgment of those who have given valuable assistance towards the completion of this paper. First and foremost is a mother (Bertha Francis Koon) and a wife (Diana) who have continually showed optimism and perseverance when this investigator had none, and whose support is directly responsible for this investigator's current achievements. It is further acknowledged that without the financial aid and suggestions of the Montana Advisory Council for Vocational Education and more specifically Mr. William A. Ball, it is questionable if this study would have been conducted. And last but not least, the advice given by Dr. G. Dean Palmer, Mr. Mike Bullock, Mr. Norm Millikin, Mr. Jim Bowman, and Dr. Mary Uber is considered as the direct keynote for the development of the survey, the survey tool, and this paper.
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ABSTRACT

What do Montana's high school distributive education participating employers claim is occurring in regards to coordination practices, and what are their opinions on the operation of their programs? To attack this problem and keep the information as current as possible, the 1970-71 school year was applied since it held the latest completed academic school year. Thirteen of fourteen distributive education programs in operation during the selected year in Montana submitted coordination reports to the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, which were screened and 193 employers were identified. All 14 programs in operation were classified as Part B programs under the Vocational Education Amendments of 1968 and have no state stipulations on coordination practices. Simultaneously a questionnaire to be mass mailed to all identified employers was prepared and submitted to the Executive Director of the Montana Advisory Council for Vocational Education, the Supervisor for Marketing and Distributive Education, the Autumn 1971 Business Research class at Montana State University, and the Distributive Education Teacher-Educator for constructive criticism. The questionnaire was mailed in November, 1971, a follow-up was forwarded in January, 1972, and the survey was terminated on February 11, 1972. The invited sample (193) was revised downward to 189 upon survey termination because 4 employers were either out of business or claimed no association with the program. Of the 189 revised invited sample, there were 133 (70.9 percent) responses and 107 (56.6 percent) usable. Findings presented tended to substantiate the hypothesis that teacher-coordinators during the 1970-71 school year were not in strict compliance with commonly accepted coordination practices. However, it should be kept in mind that the survey was limited in scope in that only one of the three major participants in the distributive education program—the employer—was questioned: the teacher-coordinator and the student were not involved. Furthermore, findings suggested that participating employers tended to prefer teacher-coordinator visitations to their business establishments on an average of once a month. Based upon the survey findings, two important conclusions were reached: (1) There is a need to develop and maintain a periodic inquiry of participating employers and to follow-up with feedback on what was revealed in comparison to commonly accepted coordination practices; and (2) There is a need to strive for improvement on all fronts dealing with commonly accepted coordination practices.
Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

The cooperative method of instruction has been applied to high school distributive education programs for over thirty years (Harris, 6: v). The National Advisory Council on Vocational Education reflected its attitude toward this method of instruction when it stated:

The part-time cooperative plan is undoubtedly the best program we have in vocational education. It consistently yields high placement records, high employment stability, and high job satisfaction (Harris, 6:1).

Three primary groups require participation in a program of cooperative vocational education: students, employers, and teacher-coordinators. The cooperative method of instruction places the responsibility of training the student in the hands of the teacher-coordinator and the employer. Thus the major success of this program lies heavily upon the roles of these two individuals (Mason, 8:121).

Even though the teacher-coordinator and the employer share in the responsibility of educating students in the cooperative plan of education, the teacher-coordinator is in essence the controlling figure. Instruction is intended to be related and meaningful to the students' tentative career objectives, both in the classroom and at the students' training stations. Compliance with the cooperative vocational education method assures that each training station will be viewed as a learning laboratory in which desired behavioral outcomes may be developed (Marks, 7:7).
In order to assure a favorable outcome at the training station, some commonly accepted coordination activities conducted by the teacher-coordinator include the following:

1. Establishing training stations.
2. Establishing and developing job training sponsors to supervise student learning activities.
3. Matching and placing students by their tentative career objectives to appropriate training stations.
4. Acquiring student working agreements, and developing planned training experiences and evaluation procedures.
5. Performing periodic visits to training stations.

Two officials directly responsible for the operation and upgrading of high school distributive education programs in Montana are the state supervisor for marketing and distributive education, and the distributive education teacher-educator. The state supervisor, working out of the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, conducts his activities in an advisory capacity—advising teacher-coordinators in the operation of their programs and recommending actions to the Superintendent of Public Instruction when appropriate (Bullock, 2). The distributive education teacher-educator, operating from Montana State University,

1Mr. Mike Bullock, (Past) Supervisor for Marketing and Distributive Education from the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, was interviewed on August 10, 1971, and information given is presented in Appendix A.
in an advisory capacity is responsible for teacher-coordinators' acquiring and enriching their capabilities for effective relationships in the classroom and the community (Palmer, 11).²

In order for any member of an organization to operate effectively and efficiently, he must have sufficient information to perform the job (Newman, 10:755). The means available to the state supervisor for securing information on the activities occurring in the high school distributive education programs are the following: (1) discussions with teacher-coordinators in the field, which are not always verifiable, and (2) observations made by occasional accompaniment with teacher-coordinators on visits to their students' training stations (Bullock, 2). The distributive education teacher-educator's means of securing information at the time of this survey was from the following sources: (1) discussions with the state supervisor, (2) opinions of student-teachers upon their return from student-teaching assignments, which are not considered as a basis for action, and (3) discussions with teacher-coordinators, which are not always verifiable (Palmer, 11). However, during the time lapse between the initiation of the study and submission of this paper there has been a change in personnel in the role of teacher-educator, and with this change there has been an incorporation

²Dr. G. Dean Palmer, (Past) Distributive Education Teacher-Educator, School of Commerce, Montana State University, was interviewed on August 13, 1971, and information given is presented in Appendix B.
of two additional sources of information: (1) the Montana State University Council for Distributive Education, which is made up of six teacher-coordinators representing both the secondary and post-secondary levels, and (2) research conducted by distributive education graduate students (Millikin, 9:2).³

THE PROBLEM

The general purpose of this survey is to secure pertinent information about Montana's high school distributive education programs, in order for those individuals concerned to have a solid basis for action.

Statement of the Problem

The specific purpose of this survey is to determine, from those Montana employers actively participating in the high school distributive education program during the 1970-71 school year, the following: (1) distributive education teacher-coordinators' compliance with commonly accepted coordination practices for cooperative vocational education, and (2) specific opinions on the operation of the program. More specifically, answers to the following questions are sought:

1. To what extent did teacher-coordinators apply recruitment and selection of training stations?

³Mr. Norman L. Millikin, Distributive Education Teacher-Educator, School of Commerce, Montana State University, was interviewed on June 18, 1973, and information given is presented in Appendix C.
2. To what extent were training sponsors appointed to train and supervise students concerned?

3. What, if any, sponsor development activities were conducted, and what are the employers' opinions of this approach?

4. What methods were used in placing students in training stations?

5. Were students' tentative career objectives compatible with their respective training stations?

6. To what extent are training plans and training agreements applied?

7. What degree of pre-arranged appointments occurred and how effective were they carried out by the teacher-coordinators concerned?

8. With what frequency did teacher-coordinators visit training stations, and what frequency of visitations do employers prefer?

9. What frequency of student-teacher conferences occurred at the students' training stations, and were conferences held under prescribed coordination guidelines?

10. To what extent were participating employers in the distributive education program used as resource persons for the related instruction?

11. To what extent were student evaluation forms used, and what role did the teacher-coordinators play in the evaluation process?
It is hypothesized that the findings of this survey will indicate that coordination activities occurring are not in strict compliance with commonly accepted cooperative education coordination practices.

Limitations of Study

The study is limited in that it takes into account only the employer, who is one of three major, active participants in the distributive education program. Neither the teacher-coordinator nor the student has been actively included in the study; therefore, only one interpretation is being presented.

It should also be noted that the coordination topics identified in this paper, and transposed into inquiries for response by the participating employer as reflected under the topic of "Statement of the Problem" are by no means the full extent of the teacher-coordinator's activities falling under the area of coordination. The term coordination is defined, as identified in the following topic area, as the act of supervising the cooperative vocational education program toward the goal of providing meaningful education for students enrolled in the program. Obviously the participating employer could not be aware of all activities conducted by the teacher-coordinator, therefore, only those the participating employer comes into contact with are being dealt with in this paper.
DEFINITION OF TERMS

To assist the reader with the terminology of this paper, the following definitions are presented:

1. Career Objective: Either a specific occupation or cluster of occupations in which a student has professed an interest and in which he aspires to train himself. Usually consumated by the act of enrolling in a particular class of vocational education.

2. Cooperative Vocational Education: A program of vocational education for persons who through a cooperative arrangement between the school and employers, receive instruction, including required academic courses and related vocational instruction, by alternation of study in school with a job in any occupational field, but these two experiences must be planned and supervised by the school and employers so that each contributes to the student's education and to his employability.

3. Coordination: The act of supervising the cooperative vocational education program toward the goal of providing meaningful education for students enrolled in the program.

4. Sponsor Development Program: A series of formal meetings in which the teacher-coordinator provides instruction on how persons can more successfully perform the role of the training sponsor.

5. Teacher-Coordinator: A vocational education teacher, meeting requirements of the Montana State Plan for Vocational Education, employed
by the school district to coordinate the cooperative program and teach the related vocational class.

6. **Training Agreement**: A form prepared by the teacher-coordinator that indicates the period of training, hours of work, salary, and other pertinent facts and information necessary to assure basic understanding of the student's position in the cooperative education program. The form may be signed by the teacher-coordinator, employer, student, and parents.

7. **Training Plan**: An outline of educational activities, both classroom and training station experiences, prepared cooperatively by the teacher-coordinator and the employer. The plan is derived from a realistic analysis of the tasks, duties, responsibilities, and occupational objective of the student.

8. **Training Sponsor**: The person within the business designated by the employer to be responsible for teaching and supervising the student.

9. **Training Station**: Often referred to as an occupational laboratory, it is a business establishment employing part-time students to provide them with needed knowledge, skill, and work attitudes in areas closely related to the students' tentative career objectives.
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The search for literature was directed towards two topic areas: commonly accepted coordination practices, and research study in the subject area. Findings from this search are as follows.

Commonly Accepted Coordination Practices

It should be noted at the onslaught that at the initiation of this study there was no formal, up-to-date coordination directive provided by Montana for its teacher-coordinators to refer to for guidance. There was, however, a working draft not for public use provided this investigator at that time dealing with this matter by the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction. This draft was later critiqued by Montana teacher-coordinators and other professionals in the field, and thereafter produced in final form. In the fall of 1972, the Cooperative Education Coordinators Handbook (1) was provided to Montana distributive education teacher-coordinators for a basic, official reference. Furthermore, an up-to-date Guide for Distributive Education Teacher-Coordinators (5) had been developed by the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction and was provided at this time as a more specific reference for distributive education teacher-coordinators in developing and operating distributive education programs. These two publications, since they have been developed for application by Montana's distributive education
teacher-coordinators, will be the primary focal point in presenting commonly accepted coordination practices and for comparison to participating employer responses.

**Recruitment and selection of training stations.** In selecting those business firms most suitable as sites for training stations, the accepted practice in a cooperative vocational education program is for the teacher-coordinator to make contact and inform prospective firms about the program, evaluate the firms for their educational potential, and attempt to acquire their cooperation in the cooperative venture. The *Guide for Distributive Education Teacher-Coordinators* expresses this view by stating the following:

... he should personally visit and interview the owner or manager of each business. This visit serves a dual role, the first being that of evaluating the business as a potential occupational laboratory and the second selling the businessman on the value of the distributive education program (n.n., 5:67).

**Appointment of training sponsors.** There is a general consensus of opinion among writers reviewed, i.e., Amberson (1:94) and Mason (8:189), and the *Guide for Distributive Education Teacher-Coordinators* (5:70), that designating a training sponsor for the student concerned is a key and essential element to a successful program. The *Cooperative Education Coordinators Handbook* (1:103) presents its view on this matter by stating that "if the occupational laboratory (training station) experience is to be truly educational for the student, a (training) sponsor must be appointed".
Application of the sponsor development program. The training sponsor plays the vital role of being directly responsible for the training and supervising of the student while at the training station. On occasion there may occur a situation where the selected training sponsor or sponsors may need some degree of briefing to insure carrying out the training and supervisory role properly. One such method of preparation is through the application of formal sessions of instruction conducted by the teacher-coordinator. Both the Cooperative Education Coordinators Handbook (1:104) and the Guide for Distributive Education Teacher-Coordinators (5:71) contend that the sponsor development program is an effective means of providing the knowledge and information necessary for the training sponsor to instruct the student in the training station.

Student placement. Various methods of student placement are open to the teacher-coordinator's discretion ranging from no control wherein the student obtains his or her own job, to allowing all interested students to apply for an opening, and on through the teacher-coordinator selecting one student for placement in a prospective employer's business firm (Mason, 8:192). Each method tends to have its disadvantages as well as its advantages, to varying degrees. However, there is common agreement among writers in the field that were reviewed that there ought to be teacher-coordinator control over student placement, but his is where agreement ends. Mason (8:193) does not
recommend any specific approach but goes so far as to identify the weaknesses of each option open to the teacher-coordinator, Amberson (1:105) advises that the teacher-coordinator "should send a minimum of three students from which the employer may make his selection", and the Guide for Distributive Education Teacher-Coordinators (5:71) recommends that "the teacher-coordinator should refer two or three students to the potential employer".

Common tools used in coordination. Several tools are available to the teacher-coordinator in keeping the cooperative arrangement with the participating employer organized and providing the best learning environment for the student concerned. However, two tools stand out as the most common, and ones the participating employer is most apt to come into contact with: the training agreement and the training plan.

The training agreement, sometimes known as the training memorandum, is the tool used to identify the roles and responsibilities of all those involved in the cooperative arrangement, i.e., the teacher-coordinator, the participating employer, the parents, and the student. Both the Cooperative Education Coordinators Handbook (1:111) and the Guide for Distributive Education Teacher-Coordinators (5:78) are in complete agreement that all parties must be aware of their responsibilities and the responsibilities of others participating in the cooperative arrangement in order to make the experience truly educational for the student concerned.
The training plan, as defined earlier, is the tool intended for identifying in writing the proposed educational activities to be conducted by the student while at the training station. All writers reviewed felt the training plan was highly valuable towards optimum success of the cooperative arrangement and also that there must be concern towards the needs of the participating employer as well as the student when developing the plan. However, there is slight discrepancy on who should participate in its development. Mason (8:186) contends that all three major participants in the cooperative arrangement, i.e., the participating employer, the teacher-coordinator, and the student, should be involved in the training plan development, whereas the Cooperative Education Coordinators Handbook (1:113) and the Guide for Distributive Education Teacher-Coordinators (5:83) only identify the participating employer and the teacher-coordinator working towards its inception.

Pre-arranged appointments prior to visitations. There may occur an occasion when pre-arranged appointments are necessitated to best utilize the teacher-coordinator's and participating employer's time. Mason (8:180) strongly urges the use of this approach, whereas this topic is not even dealt with in the Cooperative Education Coordinators Handbook or the Guide for Distributive Education Teacher-Coordinators.
Teacher-coordinator visitations. A significant activity occurring during the teacher-coordinator's coordination time deals with periodic visitations to training stations. These visitations facilitate the purposes, among others, of conferring with employers and training sponsors on developing and maintaining proper educational settings for students, and with observing students at work as a check on job performance (Amberson, 1:73-74). Samson (12:10) goes further by stating that a more accurate evaluation of the student's performance and progress are obtained through these personal contacts by the teacher-coordinator than by relying strictly on training sponsor evaluation of the student.

Conflicting preferred guidelines exist on the frequency of visitations. The Cooperative Education Coordinators Handbook (1:73) places a minimum on the frequency of visitations of at least once every two weeks to each training station. Mason (8:183) prescribes visitations ought to occur at least once every month with variations occurring as necessary. On the other hand, the Guide for Distributive Education Teacher-Coordinators (5:123) does not pinpoint a specific frequency and presents its position by stating that the training station "should be visited regularly by the distributive education coordinator". However, it should be noted that a survey conducted by Harris (6:23) of participating employers located in Region V of the U. S. Office of Education—Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, and Wisconsin—indicated an employer preference to monthly visitations conducted by the teacher-coordinator.
Student evaluation by the training sponsor. To assure that the student is progressing through an educational experience at the training station, it is important to make periodic evaluations of student progress. All writers reviewed agree that some form of written evaluation ought to be made by the training sponsor, that the content of the evaluation be made known to the student concerned, and that the teacher-coordinator perform followup towards student improvement. However, there is discrepancy of opinion on the frequency that training sponsor evaluations of the student should occur and on the presence of the teacher-coordinator at the time of evaluation. The Guide for Distributive Education Teacher-Coordinators stipulates the written ratings should be made at six-week intervals or at least twice a semester and also recommends that the teacher-coordinator should be present for the initial rating by the training sponsor in order to insure that the training sponsor understood the evaluation and the purpose behind it. On the other hand, Mason's position is that student evaluations "should be made frequently" and no position is taken as to the presence of the teacher-coordinator during the time of the training sponsor's evaluation of the student.

Research Study in the Subject Area

After an exhaustive study of articles, government documents, and other published and non-published papers, little has been found on the
area being dealt with in this study, with the exception of one major study.

In February, 1971, Harris (6) completed a survey of employer preferences and coordination practices in distributive education that is more comprehensive than the present study—securing information both from the teacher-coordinator and the employer.

Harris' survey encompassed Region V of the U. S. Office of Education, which includes the states of Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, and Wisconsin. The developed questionnaire was applied to a pilot study and adjusted by recommendations received. Separate questionnaires were mailed to every teacher-coordinator supplying a list of students and students' employers in that individual's distributive education program, and one to every ninth employer selected by systematic random sample. The return was 496 responses (72 percent) from teacher-coordinators and 544 responses (50.1 percent) from employers (Harris, 6:2). Even though 544 or 50.1 percent responses from employers were received, it should be taken into consideration that only 474 or 42.7 percent were data-producing; i.e., usable responses, which leaves room for doubt on whether the sample is representative of the employers participating in the program.

Recommendations as a result of the survey conducted by Harris (6:35-36) apropos to this study are as follows:

1. Development of a training plan for each student.
2. Assignment of a sponsor for each student.

3. Application of a sponsor development program.

4. Application of a training agreement.

5. Implementation of techniques and procedures for communicating the goals, objectives, and operating procedures so that the distributive education program is understood by all in the business community.

Although reflections of Harris' study may be applicable to employer preferences and coordination activities in Montana, it did not actually cover this state in the survey. Since this condition allows for no action to be taken in Montana, with the exception of spurring a survey of Montana employers, no corrective action can be taken until further information is evident.
Chapter 2

PROCEDURES

In the first chapter of this paper, the trends and effects of cooperative vocational education, as applied to the high school distributive education program, were discussed. In this chapter, the survey procedures will be presented.

There are three distinctive elements incorporated in this investigator's survey procedure: (1) description of sample; (2) the questionnaire; and (3) design of study.

DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLE

The population applied to the rationale of this survey included all past and present Montana employers in the wholesale, retail, and/or service occupations providing part-time employment for distributive education students under the operation of a high school distributive education program. In order to ensure relevancy in the survey, the invited sample included only those Montana employers participating during the 1970-71 school year who provided distributive education students with training stations relevant to a marketing or distributive occupation.

Fourteen Montana distributive education programs were in operation during the 1970-71 school year (Bullock, 2:1). However, upon screening of distributive education teacher-coordinator forms submitted to the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction for the
1970-71 school year, entitled **REPORT OF OCCUPATIONAL EXPERIENCES FOR STUDENTS ENROLLED IN VOCATIONAL COOPERATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAMS**, it was revealed that 13 of the 14 distributive education programs were in evidence. The fourteenth program had failed to submit applicable forms and was therefore excluded from the survey.

An in-depth screening process followed. The screening process was conducted to assure that only one questionnaire would be forwarded to each employer and that those employers having students not employed in marketing or distributive occupational settings were excluded, e.g., those employing distributive education students as cooks and dishwashers which is in the area of home economic wage earning, and those employing students as secretaries which is in the area of office education.

Following is the step-by-step screening process conducted in securing the invited sample: (1) employers providing training stations for more than one student were identified to ensure only one questionnaire would be forwarded for completion, (2) those employers providing training stations not in a distributive education occupation were exempt from the study, and (3) report forms of distributive education programs in those cities having more than one distributive education program were compared to detect duplications of employers, in order to ensure only one questionnaire would be forwarded for completion.

The results of the screening process produced 193 remaining employers actively involved in the distributive education program during...
the 1970-71 school year. This group comprised the survey's invited sample.

THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The method of employer response to questions asked was primarily of a totally structured response nature, i.e., stating a question and offering a list of potential answers. Also included in the questionnaire, in descending order of emphasis was the structured response with free option, and the limited free response.

Emphasis was placed on the structured response, i.e., totally structured and structured with free option, because the range of possible responses was limited, and the questions were of a surface nature or were simple opinion questions (Fox, 4:536-37). By so doing, it would help the investigator in recording and interpreting data received from respondents.

Two limited free response questions were applied in the questionnaire because of the unknown nature of the responses (Fox, 4:537).

DESIGN OF STUDY

Prior to mass mailing of the questionnaire to the invited sample of 193 employers, the questionnaire was subjected to constructive criticism by the following people and suggestions implemented as appropriate: (1) the Executive Director of the Montana Advisory Council for
Vocational Education, (2) the Supervisor for Marketing and Distributive Education from the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, (3) the Autumn 1971 Business Research class at Montana State University under the instruction of Dr. Mary Uber, and (4) the Distributive Education Teacher-Educator at Montana State University.

The latter part of November, 1971, a letter of transmittal (Appendix D) jointly signed by the Executive Director of the Montana Advisory Council for Vocational Education and this investigator was sent with the questionnaire (Appendix E) to each employer. The joint signatures were used in order to enhance the prospects of a greater response. Approximately seven weeks were given for return of the questionnaires in an attempt to give consideration for those employers too busy to comply since the questionnaires arrived during the Christmas Season rush.

A follow-up letter (Appendix F) was prepared and forwarded along with a second questionnaire to those employers not complying with the initial request in January, 1972. Upon receipt of 70.9 percent of the invited sample, or 133 replies, the survey was considered successful and terminated on February 11, 1972.

Upon receipt of each completed questionnaire, responses were recorded upon a questionnaire consolidation form (Appendix G), with each respondent ear-marked with its respective code number to ensure accurate recording. After termination of the survey, responses were tallied for each question and results reported in the following manner:
1. Total number of responses.

2. Number of responses made for each option given, along with the percentage of the total response for each.

3. Number and proportion of omits, or no responses, of the total usable responses from responding employers to the survey.

4. Total number of responding employers to the survey.
Chapter 3

FINDINGS

In the second chapter of this paper, procedures were discussed in respect to the description of sample, the questionnaire, and the design of study, for the intent of identifying and securing information from participating employers in Montana's distributive education programs during the 1970-71 school year. In this chapter, findings from the survey will be presented.

EMPLOYER PARTICIPATION

Initially 193 employers were identified as participating in the 13 Montana high school distributive education programs during the 1970-71 school year. Table 1 reflects the breakdown of participating employers by the programs surveyed. Upon termination of the survey, it was revealed that three employers were out of business and the employers could not be contacted, and one employer claimed not to have been a participant in the program. Thus a revised invited sample of 189 potential employer participants was derived. Out of this revised base, 133 (70.9 percent) responded to the mailed survey and 107 (56.6 percent) were usable.
Table 1
Identification of Participating Employers by Montana Distributive Education Programs Surveyed During the 1970-71 School Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROGRAMS SURVEYED (Part B Classification)</th>
<th>INVITED SAMPLE</th>
<th>RESPONSES</th>
<th>USABLE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Original</td>
<td>Revised</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baker High School, Baker</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Billings Senior High, Billings</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dawson County High School, Glendive</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. M. Russell High School, Great Falls</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great Falls Senior High School, Great Falls</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hardin Senior High, Hardin</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Havre High School, Havre</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flathead High School, Kalispell</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Custer County High School, Miles City</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hellgate High School, Missoula</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sentinel High School, Missoula</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polson High School, Polson</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sidney Senior High, Sidney</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>193</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION OF TRAINING STATIONS

Selected employers were asked if they were personally interviewed by the teacher-coordinator and informed about the program prior to becoming involved and accepting a distributive education student. Responses proved to be split almost equally. Of 107 responding employers, 57 (53.3 percent) said they had been contacted, whereas 50 (46.7 percent) claimed that they had not been contacted prior to becoming involved and accepting a distributive education student.

APPOINTMENT OF TRAINING SPONSORS

Designating an individual in the business firm as the training sponsor for the cooperative education student-employee is a key and essential element to a successful program. Of the 107 responding employers, 76 (71.0 percent) claimed a training sponsor had been appointed and 31 (29.0 percent) claimed there had been no such identification.

APPLICATION OF THE SPONSOR DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

The employer was asked if the training sponsor had received any formal training sessions—to aid him in the role as trainer and supervisor—prior to or during the employment of a student-learner. Furthermore, the attitude of the employer was sought on the value or potential value of a formal approach to assisting the training sponsor.
As seen in Figure 1, 16 (15.2 percent) of the employers claimed that formal training sessions for the training sponsor had occurred, whereas 89 (84.8 percent) respondents claimed that there had been none provided. Employer response to the inquiry about the value or potential value of formal sessions revealed that 15 (93.8 percent) of the 16 employers being provided with formal sessions believed them to be beneficial, and 49 (55.1 percent) of the 89 respondents claiming no formal sessions had been provided felt that such sessions would have been beneficial. Employer preference dealing with the subject of formal training sessions for the designated training sponsor reveals that 64 (61.0 percent) of the 105 respondents to this line of inquiry felt that the sessions were or would have been beneficial.

STUDENT PLACEMENT

Various methods of placement are at the teacher-coordinator's disposal for carrying out the aim of placing students in training stations compatible with their tentative career objectives. Since placement plays an important role in the success or failure of a cooperative education program, there was a built in need to know as to what methods of placement were being utilized and to what degree they were utilized. At the same time, some indication of placement success was necessitated to correlate what was being done with the success of these actions.
Application of Formal Sponsor Development Sessions and Employer Opinion on Its Value

Figure 1
Methods of Placement Used

Because of the various methods available in placement and the various circumstances that may have prevailed at that given time, the employer was asked to identify the number of students that were trained in their establishments during the 1970-71 school year and how each was placed. Responding employers identified 164 students who were trained in their establishments during the 1970-71 school year.

As seen in Figures 2 and 3, the largest number of students were placed on the basis that the individual sought out his own job, and thereafter the teacher-coordinator followed-up by securing the aid of the employer in the cooperative venture. This approach constituted 60 student placements or 36.6 percent of the total number of identified students placed. The second largest group of students placed fell into the category of teacher-coordinator selection of 3 or 4 students and the prospective employer making the final selection, which constituted 41 (25.0 percent) of the students identified. The teacher-coordinator selection of one student who was in turn interviewed by the prospective employer represented the third largest category of placement methods, and constituted 33 (20.1 percent) of the students identified.

Findings indicate that the teacher-coordinator had some degree of initial control over placement in 71 (45.1 percent) reported cases as compared to 93 (54.9 percent) cases where there was no initial control over placement.
It should be noted prior to termination of this discussion that the placement method having the largest number of responses, i.e., the process of having the individual seek out his own job, and thereafter having the teacher-coordinator follow-up by securing the aid of the employer, is condemned by Mason (8) as the weakest method available to the teacher-coordinator. Mason (8:193) proceeds by claiming that (1) this approach gives indication that the teacher-coordinator has made little or no attempt to establish training stations, nor a serious attempt to match students to training opportunities, and (2) that programs operated in this manner are doomed to needless difficulties and tend to become in reality--not a cooperative venture--just a work experience program.

Student Interest: A Pulse on Placement Success

One major purpose for the training stations is to give students practical experience in an area compatible with their tentative career objectives. It is therefore important for the teacher-coordinator to strive towards securing compatibility between the students' career objectives and training stations procured from the surrounding community. This task is not an easy one for the teacher-coordinator and matters are compounded when students are indecisive about their tentative career objectives, or for that matter have not considered the idea.
Figure 2
Employer Recollection on Method of Student Placement

Figure 3
Breakdown of "Other" Response to Student Placement Methods
Because of the fear that selected employers could not recall if their students had tentative career objectives or not and in an effort to secure a pulse on job placement success, the employers were asked to voice their opinions on students' interest. As represented in Figure 4, those students considered by employers as "interested most of the time" and "highly interested" in their job roles (143 students or 87.2 percent) far surpassed the numbers considered by employers as "not interested" or "somewhat interested" (21 students or 12.8 percent). Even though the data reflects a favorable view upon successful job placement, it does not consider those not placed, nor if the students were placed specifically in their career interest areas but that those with favorable interests worked compatibly with and/or for their employers.

COMMON TOOLS USED IN COORDINATION

Two common tools applied in coordination are the training agreement and the training plan. Each has a specific role to play in aiding all parties involved in the cooperative program towards providing the most effective and worthwhile educational program for the student.

Application of the Training Agreement

It should be pointed out that the training agreement is only required for state funding by those programs classified as Part G (new programs) under the Vocational Education Amendments of 1968, Public Law
Figure 4

Employer Opinions on Students' Interest Levels While at Their Training Stations
90-576 (Bullock, 2:1). The programs currently under study do not fall into this Part G category, but that of the Part B (on-going programs) category of the same vocational act. Thus the Part B program does not require application of this tool for funding by the state. This is not to infer, however, that the training agreement is not a valuable tool for coordination—only that it is not a prerequisite to placement of students involved in Part B programs to maintain eligibility for state monies.

Participating employers were asked if the training agreement or memorandum was suggested to them by the teacher-coordinator, and if it was used. As seen in Table 2, 91 (85.1 percent) out of the 107 responding employers claimed the training agreement had not been suggested to them. Of the 16 employers claiming the training agreement had been suggested to them, 13 (81.3 percent) did not put the tool into use.

Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Line of Inquiry</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training agreement suggested to the employer</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>85.1</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of agreement by those informed of the tool</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>81.3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Application of the Training Plan

Fifteen (14.0 percent) of the 107 responding employers claimed that a training plan was suggested to them by the teacher-coordinator, yet 19 (17.8 percent) employers implemented this tool. This discrepancy can only be explained by considering that four employers took it upon themselves to develop a training plan for their student-employees without the aid of the teacher-coordinator. Discussion of these plans, however, should not tend to imply that all programs implementing a training plan had them designed in formal writing, for 15 (78.9 percent) of the 19 employers did not use a written, formal training plan approach.

All 19 employers considered the training plans developed did take into consideration the needs of the student as well as the employer, but people and combinations of people involved in the development of training plans, as seen in Figure 5, varied greatly from common coordination practices. Most significantly of those involved in the training plan development were the employer/sponsor and the student, with 8 of 19 employers claiming this approach was used.

PRE-ARRANGING APPOINTMENTS PRIOR TO VISITATIONS

In some instances, the participating employer in the distributive education program may desire the teacher-coordinator to arrange an appointment prior to visitation. Eleven (10.3 percent) of the 107 responding employers claimed such a situation did occur. Such a request
ought not go without proper consideration by the teacher-coordinator concerned. Of the 11 employers requesting the pre-arranged appointment, all 11 stated the teacher-coordinator involved complied with their request.

\[
\begin{array}{|c|c|}
\hline
\text{Unwritten Training Plans} & \text{Written Training Plans} \\
\hline
\end{array}
\]

\[\text{N=19}\]

**PARTICIPANTS**

**Figure 5**

Participants in the Development of Written and Unwritten Training Plans

**TEACHER-COORDINATOR VISITATIONS**

Employer responses were sought pertaining to the frequency of teacher-coordinator visitations that had occurred, and as to their preference to visitation frequency. Data collected are thus presented in
two parts: visitation frequency, and employer preference on visitation frequency.

Visitation Frequency

Of the 107 employers responding to the questionnaire, 106 gave their recollection on the average frequency of teacher-coordinator visitations and 1 failed to respond, as seen in Figure 6. Three response categories given were significant: "less often than monthly", "monthly", and "never".

Obviously the employer response of "never" to teacher-coordinator visitation frequency cannot be condoned. This represents that a work experience program was in effect with 23 employers or 21.6 percent of the 106 responding employers. This also represents that at least 23 students in the distributive education program were not provided with an effective experience.

Employer responses to the categories of "less often than monthly" and "monthly" constituted 37 (35.0 percent) and 30 (28.3 percent) employers respectively. The combined totals of these 2 categories represent over half, i.e., 67 (63.2 percent), of the 106 responding employers. Yet the categories mentioned do not prescribe to the guideline set forth in the Cooperative Education Coordinators Handbook (1:73), but fairs more closely to the frequency noted by Mason (8:183).
Employer Preference on Visitation Frequency

As also seen in Figure 6, 61 (57.0 percent) of 107 responding employers preferred an average visitation frequency of once a month. A 1971 survey of distributive education participating employers in Region V of the U. S. Office of Education--Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, and Wisconsin--indicated the same preference (Harris, 6:23).

It is apparent upon close observation of the employers' responses to visitation frequency that the topics of what had occurred and what was preferred are leaning in opposite directions. Employer recollection of teacher-coordinator visitations tends to lean in the direction of monthly or less frequently, with 90 (84.9 percent) employers claiming this was the case, whereas 86 (80.4 percent) employers preferred a visitation frequency of monthly or more frequently. In addition to this, employer preference tends to indicate that teacher-coordinator visitation to the training station is desirable as an element in the distributive education training venture, for not one respondent wished never to see the teacher-coordinator during his participation in the program.

STUDENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

While performing visitations to the student's training station, the teacher-coordinator may find it necessary upon occasion to hold a student-teacher conference. When employers were asked if such a situation did occur, 94 (88.7 percent) claimed such a happening did not occur
TEACHER-COORDINATOR VISITATIONS

Figure 6

Employer Recollection on Frequency of Average Teacher-Coordinator Visitation in Comparison to What the Employer Preferred
while 12 (11.3 percent) recollected at least one conference occurred at their establishments.

When such conferences are necessitated, common coordination practices suggest strongly that the teacher-coordinator seek out the permission of management prior to approaching the student. Of the 12 employers claiming student-teacher conferences did occur in their establishments, 11 (91.7 percent) claimed prior permission was secured, whereas 1 (8.3 percent) stated approval was not requested prior to the conference.

EMPLOYER INVOLVEMENT IN RELATED INSTRUCTION

Participating employers were asked if they had been involved in classroom activities as resource persons or had had any other involvement dealing with related instruction. Of the 107 respondents, 17 (15.9 percent) employers claimed they had had involvement, whereas 90 (84.1 percent) employers claimed no contact dealing with related instruction.

STUDENT EVALUATION BY THE TRAINING SPONSOR

The training station provides not only the opportunity to earn a wage, but to gain experience in a tentative chosen career field. Because it is designed to provide learning experiences, it is logical that evaluation must be in evidence to insure continuous direction and a check on learning. One of the responsibilities of the training sponsor
is to perform a periodic evaluation based on job performance of the student (Amberson, 1:104) and report findings to the teacher-coordinator for necessary action.

**Form of Evaluation**

Approaches to securing an evaluation of the student at the training station site by the training sponsor may take on an oral or written form, but as discussed earlier in this paper, all writers reviewed suggest some form of written evaluation should be applied. Of the 107 responding employers, 57 (53.3 percent) claimed that student evaluation forms were filled out by the training sponsors, whereas 49 (46.7 percent) claimed that evaluation forms were not used.

**Application of the Written Evaluation**

Whatever the approach used, the result is to secure the knowledge of what is occurring, and what needs to be taught or re-taught in order to secure acceptable performance for entry level employment. Thus follow-through on what is revealed from evaluation is necessary for optimum learning (Clark, 3:13). The responses of the 57 employers claiming student evaluation forms were used by their training sponsors to evaluate student performance in respect to (1) the teacher-coordinator's approach to securing the evaluation information, and (2) teacher-coordinator follow-through with evaluation findings derived are reflected in Figures 7 and 8 respectively.
One means of securing the information desired by the student evaluation form is for the teacher-coordinator to present the questions personally and record responses as they arise. Some advantages to this approach are (1) consistancy of interpretation of each question since the teacher-coordinator is present to clarify any discrepancy, (2) problems immediately correctable can be swiftly remedied, and (3) problems possibly overlooked or neglected in a written evaluation completed without the teacher-coordinator present may be detected from personal discussions. However, a distinct problem that may occur with this approach is the time element involved—both from the training sponsor's and the teacher-coordinator's position. This disadvantage may have been the reason for 50 (87.8 percent) of the 57 employers stating the teacher-coordinator was not present at the time of evaluation, but no verification is evident to substantiate this conjecture.

Upon receipt and interpretation of the student evaluation, the follow-through as stated earlier is an essential, succeeding element to secure an optimum and meaningful learning experience for the student. Thirty-four (68.0 percent) of the employers claimed the teacher-coordinator attempted to rectify student imperfections and 8 (16.0 percent) claimed the teacher-coordinator attempted rectification on most occasions. These positive responses ought to be further clarified by considering that the total efforts made by the teacher-coordinator to improve the student may not have been known by the employer.
Figure 7

Presence of Teacher-Coordinator Upon Training Sponsor's Evaluation of the Student
EMPLOYERS MAKING WRITTEN EVALUATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No Response</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>53.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Teacher Attempt</td>
<td>12.3%</td>
<td>(7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Attempted to Rectify</td>
<td>16.0%</td>
<td>(8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Attempt On Most Occasions</td>
<td>16.0%</td>
<td>(8)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

RESPONSES

Figure 8

Attempt by Teacher-Coordinator to Rectify Student Imperfections Noted from Training Sponsor's Evaluation
Chapter 4

OVERVIEW AND IMPLICATIONS

In the previous chapter, findings as a result of surveying Montana's distributive education participating employers from the 1970-71 school year were presented and compared to common coordination practices. In this fourth and final chapter, a summary of the study and recommendations derived will be presented.

SUMMARY

Distributive education has applied the cooperative method of instruction for several decades. The cooperative method requires active participation of the teacher and the employer in a joint effort to attain the most valuable learning experience for the student concerned. The specific purpose of this survey was to gain information from Montana's participating employers relevant to teacher-coordinator coordination practices and their opinions on the operation of the program. It was hypothesized that Montana's teacher-coordinators were not in strict compliance with common coordination practices. However, it should be kept in mind that only one of three major participants in the distributive education program—the employer—has a voice in these findings: the teacher-coordinator and the student are not represented.

The 1970-71 school year was selected since it was the latest academic school year completed. Teacher-coordinator reports for the
selected academic year were obtained from the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction and screened to void those employers offering training stations not in a distributive occupational area and duplications of those employers providing more than one training station. Screening resulted in 193 participating employers involved in 13 of 14 distributive education programs operative during the 1970-71 school year: the fourteenth program failed to submit appropriate report forms and therefore was not represented in the survey. All programs in existence during the 1970-71 school year fell into the Part B classification of the Vocational Education Amendments of 1968, which have no state stipulations on coordination practices.

In the latter part of November, 1971, questionnaires were mailed to the 193 identified employers, and a follow-up forwarded in January, 1972, to those not responding at that time. The survey was terminated on February 11, 1972, with a revised sample size required since three employers were out of business and one claimed no participation occurred in the program. Thus a revised sample of 189 was applied instead of the initial 193 participating employers identified. Upon termination of the survey there were 133 respondents (70.9 percent) and 107 usable (56.6 percent) in receipt.

Responses given by the 107 usable reporting respondents tended to support the hypothesis that Montana's teacher-coordinators were not in strict compliance with common coordination practices. Of these 107
employers, the following conditions were claimed to be in evidence during the 1970-71 school year pursuant to coordination practices investigated:

1. **Recruitment of Training Stations.** Fifty-seven or 53.3 percent claimed that a teacher-coordinator personally interviewed them about the distributive education program prior to becoming involved and accepting a student.

2. **Appointment of Training Sponsor.** Seventy-six or 71.0 percent claimed a training sponsor had been appointed.

3. **Sponsor Development Program.** Sixteen or 15.2 percent claimed formal training sessions to aid the training sponsor occurred. Yet 64 or 61.0 percent considered the training program was beneficial or would have been of value if implemented.

4. **Student Placement.** Of the 164 students identified as placed in the 107 responding employers' business firms, 60 (36.6 percent) of these students had sought out their own jobs and the teacher-coordinators thereafter approached the employers for assistance, 41 (25.0 percent) were placed by the method of teacher selection of 3 or 4 students for employer interview, and 33 (20.1 percent) students were placed by the method of teacher selection of a student for employer interview.

Of the 107 employers presenting opinions on the degree of interest felt evident by the 164 students identified, 143 (87.2 percent)
students were considered as interested most of the time or highly interested in their job involvement, which tends to give a rather favorable reflection on placement success.

5. Use of the Training Agreement and Training Plan. The training agreement and training plan were applied by 3 (2.8 percent) and 19 (17.8 percent) employers respectively. Yet employers claimed that teacher-coordinators suggested the training agreement to 16 (14.9 percent) of them and the training plan to 15 (14.0 percent) of them. The discrepancy noted with the training plan reflects the employer had implemented plans without the aid of the teacher-coordinator in four cases.

6. Pre-arranged Appointments. Eleven employers (10.3 percent) claimed pre-arranged appointments were requested, and all teacher-coordinators concerned complied with employers' request.

7. Visitations. Employers recollection on the average frequency of teacher-coordinator visitations occurred most frequently in the categories of "less often than monthly" and "monthly" for 37 (35.0 percent) and 30 (28.3 percent) responses respectively. These two categories in a combined total represents 67 (63.2 percent) of the total responding employers. Employers preferred an average visitation frequency of monthly for 61 or 57.0 percent of the total response.

8. Student-Teacher Conferences. Twelve employers (11.3 percent) recalled that student-teacher conferences were held in their
business establishments. Eleven of these employers (91.7 percent) claimed that permission was requested by the teacher-coordinator prior to the conference.

9. **Employer Involvement in Related Instruction.** Seventeen (15.9 percent) employers claimed they had been utilized as resource persons dealing with program related instruction.

10. **Student Evaluation by Training Sponsor.** Fifty-seven (53.3 percent) employers claimed that student evaluation forms were filled out by training sponsors. Fifty (87.8 percent) of these 57 employers claimed that the teacher-coordinator was not present at the time of evaluation, but that 42 (84.0 percent) out of the 50 respondents claimed that they were aware the teacher-coordinator had attempted to correct student imperfections noted from student evaluation by the training sponsor or did so on most occasions.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

The recommendations are presented within two topics. The first topic considers the need to develop and retain a communication link with participating employers, and the second deals with coordination weaknesses indicated from findings of this survey.

**Need for Communication Tie**

The employer plays an important role towards the success of the cooperative distributive education program. Yet as in any leadership
role, it is imperative for the participating employer to be informed and to keep others concerned with the success of the distributive education program informed of activities pursued at the grass roots level, i.e., a two-way communication channel is necessary to secure optimum opportunity for program success and improvement. It is therefore recommended by this investigator that the following be considered for implementation in the state of Montana:

1. Implementation of an annual survey of participating employers to provide general overall data pertaining to trends on coordination practices, employer involvement, and employer opinions on program activities and effectiveness.

2. A summary of findings to be developed annually and furnished to the Supervisor for Marketing and Distributive Education, the Distributive Education Teacher-Educator, and distributive education teacher-coordinators in the state. With such information as given by the periodic report of survey findings, participants and overseers will be in a position to evaluate their status and progress, and to take constructive steps towards improving specific programs and the overall picture in Montana for participating students.

Coordination Implications

Based upon careful analysis of the findings from this survey of 1970-71 school year participating employers, the following recommendations in regards to coordination practices are offered to facilitate
growth and development of distributive education programs in Montana:

1. Application of personal coordination visits as the primary technique for securing employer participation in the program.

2. Identification of a training sponsor for every student placed.

3. Training sessions to help prepare training sponsors for their role in training the student.

4. More teacher-coordinator control over student placement and less emphasis upon students seeking out their own job positions.

5. Application of training agreements.

6. Application of training plans.

7. Teacher-coordinator visitations to training stations at an absolute minimum of monthly and more frequently when needed.

8. Increased employer participation as resource persons for the program's related instruction.

9. Use of written student evaluations at least each grading period performed by the training sponsors.

10. Increased emphasis to develop and implement the communication of goals, objectives, and methods of operation so that the program is understood by the business community, and especially participating employers.
REFERENCES CITED


APPENDIXES
APPENDIX A

Interview with Mr. Mike Bullock, (Past) Supervisor for Marketing and Distributive Education, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, Helena, Montana, on August 10, 1971

Question: What programs were in operation during the 1970-71 school year?

Answer: Fourteen programs were in operation, all of which are classified under the Vocational Education Amendments of 1968 as Part B programs. Part B programs are identified as programs in existence upon enactment of the 1968 Amendments.

Plans are to incorporate Part G programs for the 1971-72 school year in Montana. Part G being a program classification identifying new programs, i.e., programs developed after enactment of the 1968 Amendments, which offers more state monies, at least initially, for development of approved programs, but places certain stipulations to acquire and maintain eligibility for state monies.

Question: Are all programs in Montana considered as cooperative programs?

Answer: With respect to funding purposes, Part B programs—which all programs in Montana were during the 1970-71 school year—are not considered as cooperative programs. Part G programs, for funding purposes, are considered as cooperative in nature.
Question: What authority does the state supervisor have over Montana's programs?

Answer: Overall the control is from the standpoint of an advisory capacity. This is especially so for Part B programs. However, Part G programs must comply with utilizing training agreements or memorandums in placement of students in their respective occupational laboratories for funding purposes. Furthermore, Part G programs are evaluated from the standpoint of (1) number of students placed, and (2) placement of students according to appropriate vocational area, i.e., placement in a distributive education area and not that of a home economic area, etc., but occupational objectives of the students concerned are not specifically considered.

Question: What means does the state supervisor have for feedback as to what is occurring in the field?

Answer: Two primary means are applied to secure information as to what is happening in the field: (1) discussions with teacher-coordinators in the field, which occurs periodically during the year, and (2) observations made by occasional accompaniment with teacher-coordinators on visits to their students' occupational laboratories.
Question: What is the role of the Distributive Education Teacher-Educator pertaining to Montana's distributive education programs?

Answer: Part of the role of the teacher-educator is to provide in-service teacher education. This is to aid distributive education teacher-coordinators in upgrading their programs and to keep them up to date. It must be kept in mind that the position calls for an advisory capacity, not direct control over teacher-coordinators in the state.

Question: What means does the teacher-educator have available for keeping informed as to what is occurring in Montana's distributive education programs?

Answer: Three means are available for securing information on what is occurring in Montana's on-going programs. These being (1) discussions with the state supervisor, (2) opinions of student-teachers upon their return from student-teaching assignments, which are not considered as a basis for action, and (3) discussions with teacher-coordinators, which are not always verifiable.
APPENDIX C

Interview with Mr. Norman L. Millikin, Distributive Education Teacher-Educator, School of Commerce, Montana State University, Bozeman, Montana, on June 18, 1973

Question: What is the role of the Distributive Education Teacher-Educator?

Answer: The role of the teacher-educator is five-fold and follows in the decending order of time partaken in each area:

1. Pre-service activities involving the initial training provided those desiring to become teacher-coordinators in the field of distributive education.

2. In-service activities constituting involvement with curriculum development, graduate program, workshops, summer school, and coordinator meetings.

3. Program consultant for teacher-coordinators and advisor dealing with instructional materials.

4. Leadership, guidance, and management dealing with youth group activities (DECA).

5. Public relation activities dealing with distributive education as applied to various publics.

Question: What means does the teacher-educator have available for keeping informed as to what is occurring in Montana's distributive education programs?
Answer: Five sources are utilized to keep abreast with program activities:

1. The Montana State University Council for Distributive Education, which consists of six teacher-coordinators (five secondary and one post-secondary) and meets twice annually.

2. Program visitations, primarily occurring through visitations to sites where student-teachers are located.

3. Research conducted by graduate students.

4. Professional association meetings (MADET).

5. Telephone conversations with teacher-coordinators.
APPENDIX D

MONTANA ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR VOCATIONAL EDUCATION
National Guard Armory
Box 1157
Helena, Montana 59601

The Montana Advisory Council for Vocational Education is assisting Mr. Charles Koon, a Distributive Education student at Montana State University, in conducting a survey pertaining to coordination activities being applied in Montana's Distributive Education programs. This survey will contribute greatly to vocational education in Montana. Findings will be used to facilitate improvement of on-going programs and also towards up-grading our current program in developing future Distributive Education teachers at Montana State University. In addition, this study will be passed on to our neighboring states in order to aid them in the development of their programs.

Records furnished by Montana Distributive Education teachers show that you participated in the distributive education program during the 1970-71 school year by employing at least one student in your business. We ask your help and need your honest opinions about coordination activities occurring in your business during the 1970-71 school year. Thus you will find enclosed a questionnaire that will take only a few minutes of your time. This questionnaire has been designed to insure the strictest of confidence and is NOT intended, nor desired, to point a finger at any specific employer or distributive education teacher.

The results will be available through your local distributive education teacher in the late spring, and we appreciate your help in making this study.

Sincerely,

William A. Ball
Executive Director

Charles W. Koon, Student
School of Commerce, MSU

2 Enclosures
Employer Questionnaire
Self-Addressed Return Envelope
APPENDIX E

Distributive Education Employer Questionnaire

Directions:

1. If you feel unqualified to complete this questionnaire, please comment below as to why and return the questionnaire in the self-addressed envelope.

2. Please attempt to keep your responses aimed at activities occurring only during the 1970-71 school year.

1. Were you personally interviewed by the DE teacher, and informed about the program prior to becoming involved and accepting a DE student? ........ YES  NO

2. Were you asked to aid in classroom instruction, such as being a guest speaker or by some other involvement for the classroom? .............. YES  NO

3. Was a training agreement (memorandum) suggested to you? ............... YES  NO
   a. If YES: Was it used? .............. YES  NO

4. Was a training plan (schedule of experiences) suggested to you? ................. YES  NO

5. Was a training plan (schedule of experiences) used? ...................... YES  NO
   If YES:
   a. Was the plan in writing? ...................... YES  NO
   b. Who was involved in its development? 1) DE Teacher 2) Employer/Sponsor 3) Student
   c. Was the plan adequately developed and sufficiently flexible to cover the needs of the business and still give the student the needed training? ...................... YES  NO
6. How frequently on the average did the DE teacher visit your store? 
   a. Weekly 
   b. Twice monthly 
   c. Monthly 
   d. Less often than monthly

7. Do you feel the DE teacher made his visits? 
   a. Not often enough 
   b. Too often 
   c. Sufficiently 
   d. Never

8. How often on the average would you wish the DE teacher to visit your store? 
   a. Weekly 
   b. Twice monthly 
   c. Monthly 
   d. Less often than monthly

9. Did you ever request the DE teacher make an appointment with you prior to coming in to the store? 
   a. If YES: Did the DE teacher comply with your request?
   YES  NO

10. Was a training sponsor appointed (i.e., either yourself or another appointed by you) for supervising the work experiences of the student and for giving him the instruction he needed on the job? 
    YES  NO

11. Were there any teacher-student conferences that occurred at the store? 
    a. If YES: Did the DE teacher gain permission from you or your designated training sponsor prior to conducting these conferences?
    YES  NO

12. Before or during the time you employed a DE student, were there any formal sessions held by the DE teacher to help prepare the student's training sponsor in the training and supervising of the student? 
    YES  NO
    a. If YES: Do you feel these formal sessions were beneficial? 
    YES  NO
    b. If NO: Do you feel that sessions of this nature would be desirable in helping to train a DE student? 
    YES  NO
Directions: How many DE students did you employ during the 1970-71 school year? __________
Please give responses to the questions below in respect to each student employed (e.g., if 3 students were employed, 3 checks should be given for each question, 2 checks for each if 2 students were employed, etc.).

13. How was the DE student placed in your store?
   a. The DE teacher selected a student for the position, and you interviewed this student for the final decision. ____________________________
   b. The DE teacher selected 3 or 4 students he felt were likely candidates, and you interviewed for the final decision. ____________________________
   c. The student applied for a position, was hired, and the DE teacher thereafter approached you about acquiring assistance in training the student. ____________________________
   d. Other (please specify) ________________________________________

14. What degree of interest did the DE student show towards the area of work he or she was involved in? ________________
   a. Not Interested
   b. Somewhat Interested
   c. Interested most of the time
   d. Highly Interested

15. Did the training sponsor fill out a student evaluation form? ________________ YES  NO

16. Did the DE teacher attempt to correct student imperfections brought out on the student evaluation form? ________________ On Most Occasions YES  NO

17. Was the DE teacher present when the training sponsor filled out the student evaluation form? ________________ On Most Occasions YES  NO
I need your HELP!

A few weeks ago, I sent along a questionnaire with a letter endorsed by myself and Mr. William Ball, Executive Director of the Montana Advisory Council for Vocational Education, requesting your help in a Distributive Education study I am conducting. To date, I have no record of a response from you, and your participation is vital to the success of this study. This is especially so since during the 1970-71 school year you were one of a select few constituting 192 concerned Distributive Education employers in Montana.

Distributive Education is playing an important and successful role in many parts of the state by preparing our young people to be competent employees in the fields of retail, wholesale, and service related businesses. Yet the value of this program relies heavily upon the cooperation and assistance in training given by concerned and willing business people like yourself, who in a sense can make or break a successful Distributive Education program.

Presently a problem exists of having no means available for finding out from the Distributive Education employer what has been occurring in lieu of training the student and of the activities of the Distributive Education teacher. Because of this, it has been impossible to be certain what improvements ought to be made, thus limiting the prospects of serving the student and you with a more effective program.

This study is a possible means towards correcting the problem at hand. Yet this cannot be done without your help. Please just take a few minutes out to complete the enclosed questionnaire based on your recollection of what occurred during the 1970-71 school year and NOT on activities occurring during the present school year. If you have already completed the questionnaire from my prior request, or are in the process of doing so, please ignore this second plea.

Many thanks for aiding me in developing something that may prove helpful in building a better Distributive Education program in the state of Montana.

Sincerely,

Charles Koon, Distributive Education Student
School of Commerce

2 Enclosures
Employer Questionnaire
Self-Addressed Return Envelope
APPENDIX G

Questionnaire Consolidation Form

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<td>O = On Most Occasions</td>
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