

OFFERINGS AND ENROLLMENTS IN KANSAS SECONDARY SCHOOLS
WITH SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON COURSES IN ENGLISH

by

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A. B., Bethel College, 1940

A MASTER'S REPORT

submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree

MASTER OF SCIENCE

Department of Education

KANSAS STATE COLLEGE
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INTRODUCTION

This study of enrollments in the Kansas high schools covers the school year 1955-1956. An investigation was made of the specific course offerings and enrollments in the field of English. It also included the enrollments in the nine subject fields set up by the State Department of Public Instruction. In addition to reporting the findings of the Kansas high schools, a comparison was made with two previous surveys: (1) a national survey of "Offerings and Enrollments in High School Subjects"; and (2) a similar state survey in 1953-1954 conducted by the Kansas State Department of Public Instruction.

It is hoped that school administrators may find the report useful in checking their present curriculums and planning future changes. Students of secondary school curriculums and publishers of textbooks may find the information valuable.

The data provided could serve as a stimulus and foundation for future studies that would stress subject areas other than English. Such studies would present a picture of the trends in subject offerings and enrollments in the state of Kansas.

SCOPE AND METHOD OF STUDY

The study was made by compiling information from the 1956 High School Principal's Organization Reports on file at the Kansas State Department of Public Instruction. The reports cover all Kansas public, private and parochial schools. Since this study collected information of courses from grades 9 through 12, ninth grade data were obtained from junior high school reports in cities using an organization plan other than the 8-4 type. Only junior high schools in Wichita and Kansas City were omitted. These reports were not available at the time of this study.

For the school year 1955-1956, 648 senior high schools were accredited by the State Department of Public Instruction. The present study included data from 636 schools or 97.4 percent. Schools omitted were those who failed to submit a report or those who failed to include enrollment figures in their reports.

The High School Principal's Organization report lists nine general subject fields, with specific courses classified below each. These specific courses were totaled and combined for each subject field.

In the English field each course was treated separately, then these were totaled. In order to get a comparison of the English program in the state to the size of school, another grouping was made by placing the schools into six groups according to their enrollment: 0-49, 50-74, 75-99, 100-149, 150-299, and those over 300.

A comparable study was conducted by the State Department

of Public Instruction for the school year of 1953-1954.¹ Returns from 648 of the 652 accredited high schools in Kansas were complete for compilation of data in their survey. Information from junior high school reports was not used in schools that used an organizational plan other than the 8-4. Only totals for individual subjects and totals for the specific field were reported.

For the national survey information was obtained from a questionnaire sent to each school reporting an enrollment of 500 or more and to half of the schools reporting an enrollment fewer than 500 pupils.²

Good responses were received in the national survey. From the larger schools 91.8 percent of the schools responded and 75.1 percent of the smaller schools. The schools furnishing usable returns included 91.8 percent of the enrollment in the large schools, 82.1 percent of the enrollment in the small schools, making an 89.1 percent of the enrollment of the total number of schools circularized.³

These last two reports provide data for comparison and portray a clearer picture of the status of English offerings in the state of Kansas.

¹ Sixth Annual Progress Report of Kansas Secondary Schools. State Superintendent of Public Instruction, pp. 43-46.

² Biennial Survey of Education in the United States, 1948-50, Chapter 5, Offerings and Enrollments in High School Subjects. Federal Security Agency, Office of Education. Washington: Government Printing Office, p. 2.

³ Loc. cit.

FINDINGS

In order to make a study whereby the size of a school and its relationship to the course of study in the English field is concerned, the schools were classified into six divisions. Table 1 shows the enrollment spread of each group, the number of schools in each and their percentage, and the number of students and their percentage in each group.

There were two thoughts in mind in determining the extremes of each group: (1) the desire to have a workable group within each and a spread large enough to make a significant study; (2) one group should include those schools with an enrollment of over 300 students. This figure, advocated by National Commission on School District Reorganization as a

Table 1. Enrollments of Kansas secondary schools by groups in 1955-1956.

Enrollment of School	Number of Schools	Percent	Number of Students	Percent
0- 49	205	32.3	8,867	8.6
50- 74	130	20.4	8,046	7.8
75- 99	58	9.1	4,942	4.9
100-149	91	14.3	10,858	10.5
150-299	82	12.9	16,865	16.3
Over 300	70	11.0	53,601	51.9
Total	636	100.0	103,179	100.0

minimum enrollment for a high school with adequate offerings, would be a group which could be compared to others of the state of Kansas.

A definite relationship of the enrollment of a school and the number of course offerings in the field of English was revealed by the study. The State Department of Public Instruction requires three units of language arts for all students who receive a diploma.² Despite this requirement, there were 30 schools in the state that offered two or less courses in English

Table 2. Number of English courses offered by Kansas secondary schools during 1955-1956.

Enrollment	Number of Course Offerings in English Field						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7 or more
0- 49	4	23	123	52	2	1	0
50- 74	0	3	68	68	11	2	0
75- 99	0	0	19	32	5	2	0
100-149	0	0	26	49	19	3	0
150-299	0	0	5	22	39	13	3
Over 300	0	0	0	6	17	20	27

¹ National Commission on School District Reorganization, A Key to Better Education. Washington: National Education Association, 1947, pp. 10-11.

² The Kansas Secondary School Handbook, 1956. State Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1955, p. 39.

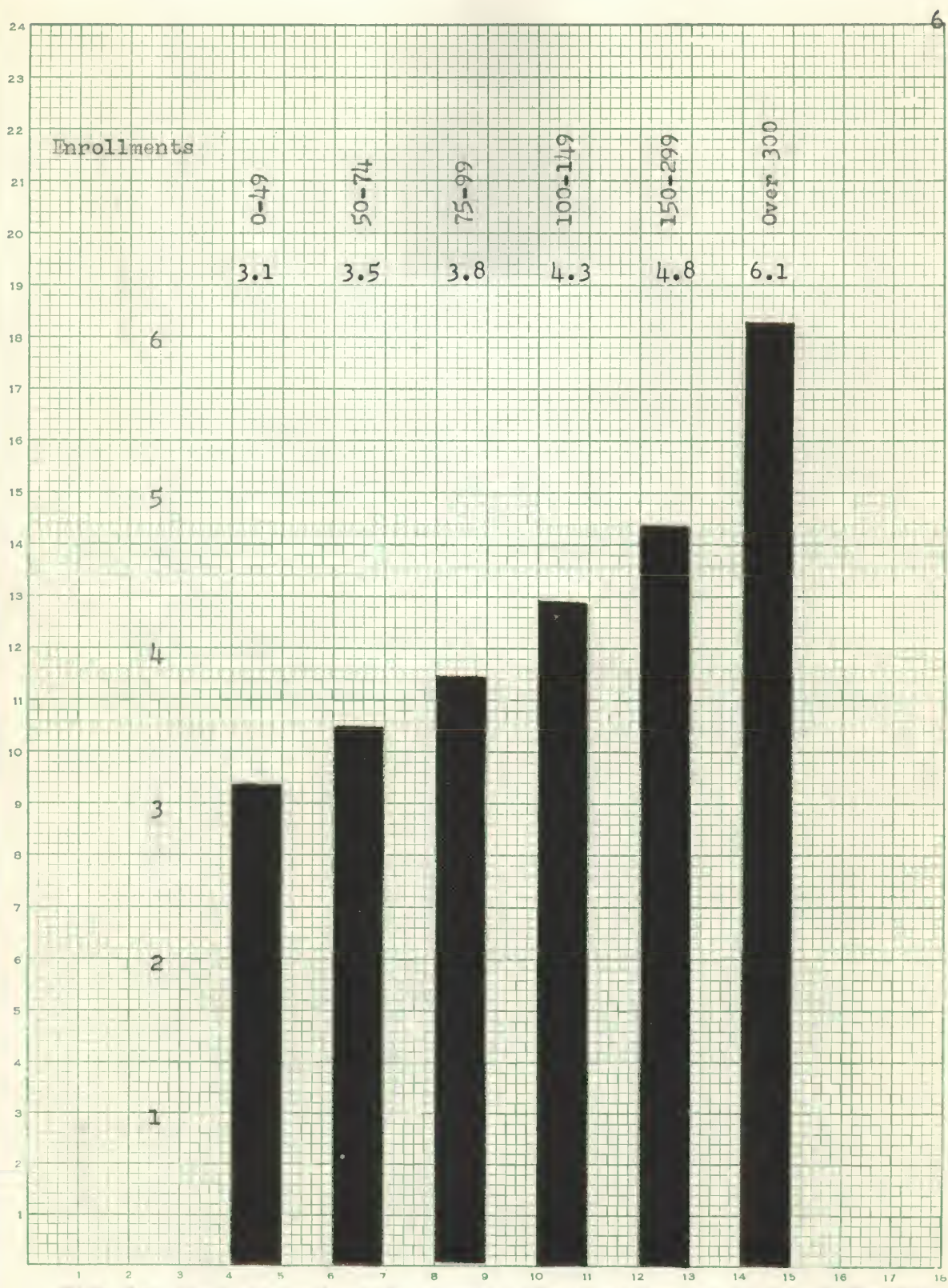


Fig. 1. Average number of course offerings in the field of English in Kansas secondary schools during 1955-1956 as compared with designated enrollment groups.

during the year 1955-1956. Of this group 27 were schools whose enrollments were less than 50 students and the remaining three schools had enrollments from 50-74 students. Table 2 shows the number of courses offered by the schools in the field of English. Figure 1 presents this comparison in graphic form.

The relationship of the enrollment of a school and the number of courses offered in the field of English is further clarified by Tables 3 and 4. Table 3 reports the total number

Table 3. Total number of Kansas secondary schools offering specific courses, their enrollments and percentages during 1955-1956.

Courses	Schools Offering Courses		Total Enrollments	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
English I	624	98.1	23,308	23.3
English II	621	97.9	25,695	24.8
English III	604	95.0	23,328	23.3
English IV	222	34.9	5,118	5.0
Speech I	218	34.2	4,160	4.6
Speech II	12	1.9	184	.2
Dramatics	47	7.4	1,000	1.0
Journalism I	129	20.1	2,067	2.0
Journalism II	7	1.2	121	.1
Debate	33	5.2	465	.5
All other courses	12	1.9	416	.4

and percent of schools in Kansas offering each specific course in the English field.

Table 4. Number of Kansas secondary schools and percentage within each group offering specific courses in the field of English.

Courses	Groupings and Total Number in Each Group					
	0-49 205	50-74 130	75-99 58	100-149 91	150-299 82	Over 300 70
English I	200 97.5	129 99.3	58 100	91 100	82 100	64 91.5*
English II	194 96.6	129 99.3	57 98.4	90 99.0	81 99.0	70 100
English III	176 87.5	127 97.7	58 100	91 100	82 100	70 100
English IV	38 18.0	33 25.4	19 32.9	37 40.6	42 51.3	53 75.7
Speech I	20 9.8	28 21.5	20 34.5	35 38.5	60 73.2	55 78.6
Speech II	1 .5	1 .8	0 .0	0 .0	6 7.3	8 11.4
Dramatics	2 1.0	5 3.8	3 5.2	5 5.5	8 9.8	24 34.3
Journalism I	10 4.9	8 6.2	5 8.6	19 20.9	36 44.0	51 72.9
Journalism II	0 .0	0 .0	0 .0	0 .0	1 1.2	6 8.6
Debate	2 1.0	1 .8	2 3.4	1 1.1	4 4.9	23 32.9

* Does not include the ninth grade courses offered in the schools of Kansas City and Wichita

In Table 4 a breakdown is made into the six groups of this study to show comparison with size of school.

The tables reveal that 624 high schools in Kansas or 98.1 percent offered English I during 1955-1956. Of this group 200 had an enrollment of less than 50 students and represented 97.5 percent of the schools in that enrollment group. A total of 129 schools or 99.3 percent of the schools with an enrollment of 50-74 students offered English I. All schools with an enrollment of 75-299 reported offering English I, as well as 64 (91.5 percent) of the schools over 300. The lower percentage in the group over 300 is due to the omission of ninth grade courses in the Wichita and Kansas City areas in this report. Disregarding this group, it is evident that all schools over 75 enrollment did offer the required course of English I during 1955-1956.

In English II, usually considered a required course of study, only that group of schools over 300 enrollment reported 100 percent offerings of the course. The total of 621 was 97.9 percent of the Kansas high schools.

In the course English III, 604 high schools (95 percent) reported offering the course with the group representing the larger schools reporting the highest percentage.

In the non-required or elective courses there is a greater group difference in the percentage of schools offering the specific English courses as the enrollment of school increases. English IV is taught by 18.0 percent of the schools with an enrollment less than 50, 25.4 percent of the schools between 50-74, 32.9 percent of schools between 75-99, 40.6 percent of schools

between 100-149, 51.3 percent of the schools between 150-299, and 75.7 percent of the schools over 300.

The percent of high schools offering Speech I also increases as the enrollment of the school increases. The group with an enrollment less than 50 students reported 9.8 percent offering the course, whereas the group with an enrollment exceeding 300 reported 78.6 percent. Dramatics increases in these two groups from 1.0 percent to 34.3 percent, Journalism from 4.9 percent to 72.9 percent, and Debate from 1.0 percent to 32.9 percent.

Tables 3 and 5 portray a picture of the enrollment in the specific courses in the English field. As an example English III in Table 3 reported an enrollment of 23,328 students totaling 23.3 percent. This was broken down in Table 5 to show that 1,635 students in high schools with an enrollment less than 50 were enrolled representing 18.5 percent of that group. In the remaining five enrollment groups, the percent of enrollment within each group was fairly constant and did not increase as the enrollment of the group increased.

The total enrollment and percentages of each group in Table 5 reveal an interesting fact. Although the course offerings were greater as the enrollment of the group increases, the percentage of students availing themselves of the courses offered did not increase in a proportionate measure. In schools with an enrollment less than 50 students, total enrollment in the field of English was 5,819 or 65.7 percent of the students in that group. This represents by far the smallest percentage. In schools with enrollments varying from 50-74, 6,948 students were

Table 5. Kansas secondary school enrollment and percentages within each group in specific courses in the field of English during 1955-1956.

Courses	Groupings and Total Enrollment in Each Group					
	0-49	50-74	75-99	100-149	150-299	Over 300
	8,867	8,046	4,942	10,858	16,865	53,601
English I	1,922 21.8	2,160 26.8	1,352 27.4	2,821 26.0	4,703 28.0	10,350* 19.5
English II	1,705 19.3	2,160 25.5	1,236 25.0	2,693 24.8	4,033 23.9	13,972 26.0
English III	1,635 18.5	1,933 24.0	1,242 25.1	2,592 23.0	3,872 23.0	12,054 22.5
English IV	246 2.8	320 4.0	171 3.5	508 4.7	748 4.4	3,125 5.8
Speech I	187 2.1	305 3.8	259 5.2	445 4.1	1,091 6.5	2,327 4.3
Speech II	1 .0	9 .1	0 .0	0 .0	26 .2	148 .3
Dramatics	19 .2	72 .9	31 .6	45 .4	98 .6	735 1.4
Journalism I	84 .9	85 1.1	56 1.1	193 .8	517 3.3	1,132 2.1
Journalism II	0 .0	0 .0	0 .0	0 .0	15 .1	106 .2
Debate	20 .2	8 .1	16 .3	17 .2	41 .3	363 .7
Total Enrollment	5,819 65.7	6,948 86.2	4,363 88.5	9,314 84.8	15,144 89.6	44,314* 82.5

* Does not include the students in the ninth grade in the schools in Kansas City and Wichita

enrolled making 86.2 percent of the students. Schools with enrollments of 75-99 students enrolled 88.5 percent in the field of English, 89.6 percent were enrolled in schools with enrollments from 150-299, and 82.5 percent in those schools with enrollments over 300.

COMPARISON OF FINDINGS WITH OTHER SURVEYS

A biennial survey of education in the United States covering the school year 1948-1949 included a section of offerings and enrollments in high school subjects.¹ The national enrollments in the various fields of study as well as specific subjects and their percent of enrollment were reported as well as a breakdown for each of the states.

The field of English reported the highest percent of student course enrollments (excluding physical education and health) with a total of 103.2 percent. Kansas reported only 94.3 percent student course enrollments in English. This figure was the lowest reported by any state.

A similar study was conducted for the school year of 1953-1954 by the Kansas State Department of Education reporting the enrollments within the various fields of study and the enrollments in specific courses.²

¹ Biennial Survey of Education in the United States, 1948-50, Chapter 5, Offerings and Enrollments in High School Subjects. Federal Security Agency, Office of Education. Washington: Government Printing Office, p. 2.

² Sixth Annual Progress Report of Kansas Secondary Schools. State Superintendent of Public Instruction, pp. 43-46.

A comparison of these two surveys covering the field of English and the present study is reported in Table 6. Figures 2 and 3 give a graphic representation of the national findings as compared with the present study.

Table 6. Number and percentage of high school pupils enrolled in English subjects in Kansas and in the United States.

Courses	U. S.	Kansas			
	1948-1949	1948-49	1953-54	1955-56	
	Number and Pct.	Number and Pct.	Number and Pct.	Number and Pct.	
English IX	1,564,358 29.0	23,483 27.6	19,286* 18.9	23,308# 22.6	
English X	1,397,897 25.9	22,273 26.3	25,736 25.2	25,799 25.0	
English XI	1,198,018 22.1	20,058 23.4	22,922 22.4	23,328 22.6	
English XII	855,617 15.9	3,014 3.5	3,257 3.0	5,118 5.0	
Speech	246,213 4.5	4,513 5.3	3,997 3.9	4,944 4.8	
Journalism	100,147 1.9	2,808 3.3	2,140 2.1	2,188 2.3	
Dramatics	82,957 1.5	1,661 1.9	1,070 1.1	1,000 1.0	
Debate	13,665 .3	793 .9	517 .5	465 .5	
All other English courses	114,560 2.1	1,764 2.1		416 .4	

* Ninth grade from junior high reports were not used in this study.

Ninth grade from junior high reports in Kansas City and Wichita schools were not included in this figure.

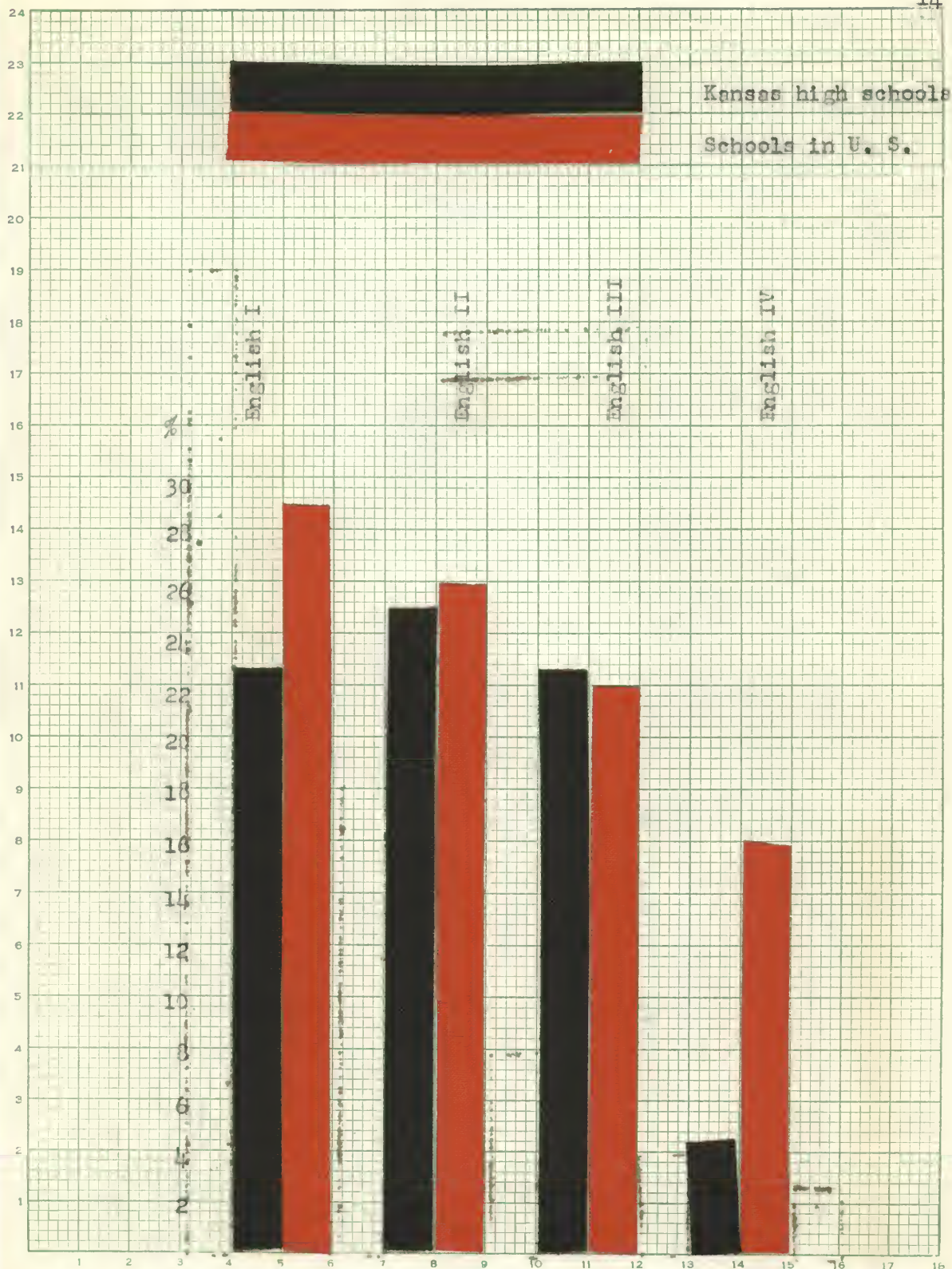


Fig. 2. Comparison of percentage of student enrollment in Kansas high schools with those of the nation in certain English subjects.

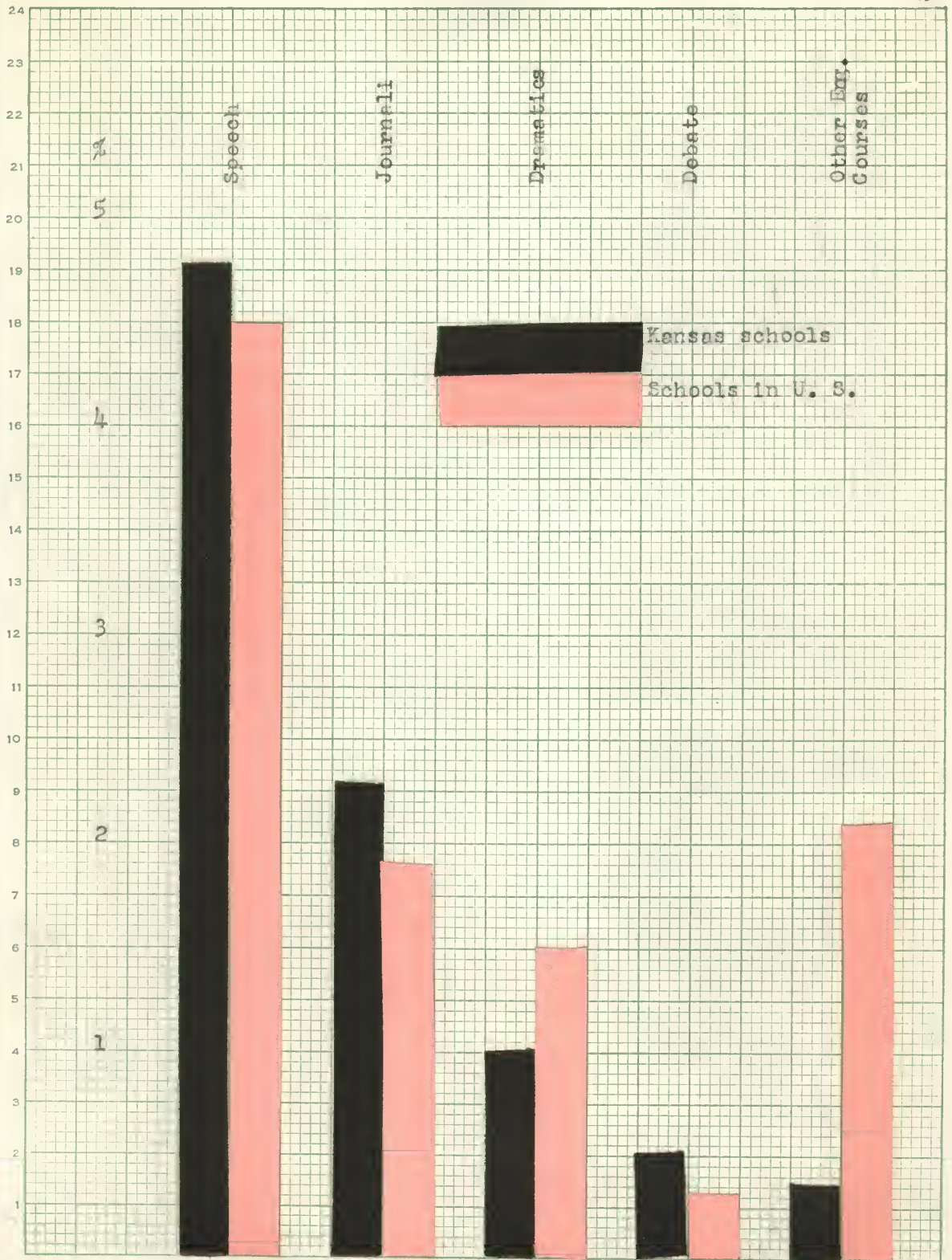


Fig. 3. Comparison of percentage of student enrollment in Kansas high schools to those of the nation in certain English subjects.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

About one-third of the secondary schools in Kansas report an enrollment of less than 50 students. These schools educate only 8.6 percent of the state's enrollment. The schools with an enrollment in excess of 300 pupils educate over half of the youth of the state (51.9 percent) and represent only 11 percent of the schools.

There were more pupil enrollments in Kansas in the field of English during 1955-1956 than in any other field. This can be expected since that is the only field in which the State Department of Public Instruction placed a requirement of three units for graduation. Nevertheless, the percentage enrolled in this field was considerable lower than the national average of 103.2 percent during the year of 1948-1949. The 94.3 percent of student enrollments in Kansas in the English field in 1948-1949 was the lowest reported by any state in the union. In 1955-1956 student enrollments in the field of English were 84.6 percent. Although this figure does not include ninth grade students in Wichita and Kansas City, it does appear that Kansas youth are spending less time in the classroom in the field of English than the youth of any other state.

The greatest deviation from the national figures was evident in English IV, where 15.9 percent of the national enrollment was in this course. The Kansas schools during 1955-1956 enrolled only 5.0 percent. However, this represented an increase over the 3.0 percent reported during the year of 1953-1954.

In making further comparisons of the enrollment figures of Kansas high schools and those in the United States during 1948-1949, courses other than English IV vary little in their percent of enrollment. The difference of 12.4 percent reported in English IV accounts for the large drop away from the national average.

A comparison of the national survey to the survey of the State Department of Education or to the present study, should be viewed very critically. Since the survey of the State Department did not include any of the ninth grades in the junior high schools, the figures for ninth grade courses are not as complete. The present study did include ninth grade enrollment figures in all schools except the junior high schools of the Wichita and Kansas City area. Therefore these figures, too, must be viewed carefully.

The percent of enrollment in English IX in Table 6 showed a big drop in the 1953-1954 study and a smaller drop in the present study. The failure to include all ninth grade enrollment figures in all schools undoubtedly accounted for this drop.

In other courses, a good comparison can be made. The percent of enrollment in English IV during 1955-1956 in Kansas has increased from 3.0 percent in the 1953-1954 survey to 5.0 percent.

Speech and Journalism during 1955-1956 showed a slight increase in percent of enrollment over the survey in 1953-1954. The percent of enrollment in these two courses exceeds the national average in 1948-1949.

Kansas schools exceeded the national average in their percent of course enrollment in Speech, Journalism, and Debate.

Despite the Kansas requirement of three units of language arts for graduation, some of our smaller high schools offered less than three units in the field of English during the year of 1955-1956. Many high schools offered only the required number of three. By alternating courses it is possible to offer more than the required three units to each student before he is graduated, but it is evident that the variety of offerings is not being met by the smaller schools.

In the larger high schools this was not true. Schools with enrollments exceeding 100 pupils averaged more than four courses in the English field. But it was only when the enrollment exceeded 300 that the average course offering exceeded four, reaching 6.1. From the viewpoint of course offerings, the minimum size of 300 for a high school with adequate offerings as recommended by the National Commission of School District Reorganization seems to be a reasonable figure.

When comparisons were made of the percent of students enrolled in the specific courses, there was a somewhat different picture. Except for the high schools whose enrollments were less than 50, the percent of school enrollment taking some course in the field of English was quite uniform throughout the other enrollment groups, varying from 82.9 percent to 89.6 percent. The slightly lower percentage in the group with an enrollment over 300 is due to the failure to include the ninth grade students in Wichita and Kansas City. Although the variety of course offerings

was made available to the students of the larger high schools, the number enrolled in them did not become large enough to increase the percent of enrollment. This would point out the need of guidance and counseling service on the part of the larger high schools.

Four of every ten 1955 graduates of Kansas high schools enrolled in college or university.¹ Reports by the Counseling Bureau at Kansas State College reveal that the incoming freshmen during the past five years have been below the national average in their percentile rank in Mechanics of Expression, Vocabulary and Reading Speed. This again would indicate a great need for counseling and guidance in directing those students planning advanced work in College into courses in the field of English during their senior year of high school.

In high schools with an enrollment of less than 50 pupils, course enrollments in the field of English was 65.7 percent. This low percentage further points toward an inadequate program and the need of consolidation in Kansas in order that an adequate program can be offered.

There has been no attempt made in this study to evaluate the effectiveness of the course offerings, or to compare the knowledge gained by Kansas youth to that of any other state.

¹ Department of Education. Kansas Schools, Kansas State Superintendent of Public Instruction, April 1956.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The author wishes to express gratitude and sincere appreciation to Dr. H. Leigh Baker for his suggestions and guidance in making this study, and to Mr. Raymond E. Custer of the State Department of Education for his aid in securing data from the records under his supervision.

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The study was made primarily to find the course offerings and enrollment of students in the Kansas secondary schools in the field of English, and the relationship of the size of school to the offerings and enrollments. It is hoped the report will be of value to school administrators and to students of secondary education as a basis of comparison to other studies.

The study was made by compiling information from the annual principal's reports for the year 1955-1956. Reports of all grades 9-12 were obtained except the ninth grade from junior high schools in Wichita and Kansas City.

All specific courses in the field of English were listed and totaled. A break-down was also made into six school enrollment groups: less than 50, 50-74, 75-99, 100-149, 150-299, over 300. Total number of courses offered and total enrollment was obtained for each group.

A comparison of the enrollment in the specific courses of The English field was made to a national survey conducted in 1948-1949 and to a similar Kansas survey in 1953-1954. Comparative figures show that the percent of course enrollment in the field of English in Kansas is smaller than any other state. The greatest difference is found in the enrollment of English IV where 15.9 percent pupil enrollment was reported in the U. S. as compared to 5 percent in the present Kansas study.

Small high schools in Kansas are not offering the variety of courses in the field of English needed for an adequate school program. The study revealed that although the State Department of Education required three units of work in the field of language

arts for graduation, there were 30 high schools in Kansas that offered two or less courses in the field during 1955-1956. Four of these were schools with an enrollment less than 50 that offered only one course in the field of English. Twenty-three of this group represented schools with an enrollment less than 50 that offered two courses in the field of English and the remaining three were from schools with an enrollment from 50-74.

Average number of courses offered in the field of English in the six enrollment groups of this study were as follows: less than 50, 3.1; 50-74, 3.5; 75-99, 3.8; 100-149, 4.3; 150-299, 4.8; over 300, 6.1. The study reveals that as the size of high school increases, the number of courses in the field of English offered also increases. The need of consolidation in Kansas again becomes clearly evident.

The percent of pupil course enrollment in the field of English during 1955-1956 in Kansas was 84.3 percent. The pupil course enrollment in high schools with less than 50 pupils was only 65.7 percent. In all the other enrollment groups of the study, there was little difference in the percent of pupil course enrollment, varying from 82.5 percent to 89.6 percent. The study again points out the need for consolidation to eliminate the very small high schools in Kansas.

The figures in the preceding paragraph point out another need. Although the course offerings in the high schools with larger enrollments was greater, the percent of pupils enrolling in the courses did not increase proportionately. Kansas State Department of Education revealed that 40 percent of the 1955

graduates of Kansas high schools entered college or university training. Reports from Kansas State College Counseling Bureau indicated that incoming freshmen were below the national percentile rank in Mechanics of Expression, Vocabulary and Reading Speed. Evidently there is a need of guidance on the part of our secondary schools; the need of directing young people planning to continue their education in college or university into some of the available courses in the field of English.