

**A REPORT ON THE SUBORDINATE ADMINISTRATOR IN KANSAS SCHOOLS--  
HIS DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

by 4589

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## INTRODUCTION

With the greatly increased complexity of the functions of secondary education has come an increasingly vast number of administrative problems which every principal is facing at the present time or will be facing sooner or later. This is particularly true in the larger schools and urban areas. A trend over the last two or three decades has been to break down these administrative responsibilities and grant the principals the authority to delegate many of the administrative problems to subordinates.

The position of the subordinate administrator has emerged in answer to an urgent need. The average supervising principal in the secondary schools spends eight and nine hours a day at school. In this time, it is impossible for him to be more than a high-priced clerk.<sup>1</sup> In order to free the principal from his many routine duties, he has been provided with subordinates capable of handling administrative responsibility. These subordinates have various titles. They may be called assistant principal, vice principal, administrative assistant, dean of students or even counselor-administrator. Some of these individuals handle classroom teaching assignments and assume their administrative role only in the absences of the principal. Others have one-half day teaching assignments and one-half day administrative assignments. Much of this, of course, depends on the size of the school.

The duties assigned the subordinate administrator also depends upon the administrative philosophy. Many times one individual is handed all the tasks his superior does not feel like doing--really giving no recognizable

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<sup>1</sup>Richard K. Bent and Lloyd E. McMann, Administration of Secondary Schools (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1960), p. 32.

job description to the subordinate, and leaving him with the appearance of nothing more than a high-priced clerk. Richard Jarrett stated, "too many times the duties of the assistant principal are delegated on the basis of expedience rather than sound principles of organization and personal administration."<sup>2</sup>

#### Importance of the Study

What is the role of the subordinate administrator? Very little research has been conducted in the state of Kansas concerning his responsibilities. Jarrett stated, "The position of the assistant-principal in the American secondary school, has evolved over the past half-century without an adequate sense of direction or underlying philosophy."<sup>3</sup> Having worked for two years as a subordinate administrator--one year in the position "administrative assistant" and one year with the title, "assistant principal," this writer is still vague and uncertain about his specific duties, responsibilities, and authority. In conversations with others, who held subordinate positions, it seemed they also felt their duties were not formalized and certain. Most could agree to some general administrative duties, but it was generally agreed that many of the duties assigned were those the principal just wanted to "get out from under."

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<sup>2</sup>Richard Jarrett, "The Activities of the Assistant Principal in the Public Schools of Minnesota," The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary School Principals (September, 1958), p. 28.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 29.

### Statement of the Problem

The primary objectives of this report were to (1) determine the actual duties and responsibilities of the subordinate administrator, as defined by his immediate superior, and (2) provide a basis for the development of direction of various subordinate positions in the administrative hierarchy of secondary schools in the state of Kansas.

### Limitations of the Study

This study was planned to be a survey of all the public senior high schools of Kansas with a student population of 300 or more. It is important to keep this in mind when reading this report and the results of the survey. The results cannot be applied to each individual public high school that participated and certainly not to every individual public school in Kansas.

### Definition of the Terms Used

A brief definition of subordinate administrator is given to clarify the writer's usage of the term--both in the report title and throughout the context of the report.

There is little agreement as to the title afforded the person or persons next in authority to the principal. Therefore, in lieu of using the many different title designations such as assistant principal, vice-principal, administrative-assistant, etc., interchangeably, it was decided to use only one term, where possible, to mean "the person or persons next in authority to the principal."