

THE UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Report on Teachers Salaries in Schools of Kansas for the Year 1942-1943

Early in January a letter from the University's School of Education to county superintendents in the state requested that a copy of each county 'school directory', listing salaries of individual teachers, be provided for use in making an analysis of teachers' salaries. In response to this request, 43 directories were received. Several county superintendents replied that their school directories were not yet available.

Six of the directories received did not report individual salaries for any teachers. Many others listed names but not salaries of teachers in high schools and neither names nor salaries of those teaching in city schools. Such limitations in the sources of information have restricted both the number and the size of tabulations which could be made with reference to the salaries of teachers.

If salaries were stated on an annual basis, they were translated to a monthly basis for the purposes of this report. Separate tabulations were made of salaries for elementary and high school teachers and for high school principals. So generally are elementary school principals merely head teachers with a small additional salary (except in larger city schools) that they have for the most part been classified in this report as teachers. But there are elementary school principals in the state, and not in city districts, who receive salaries of \$250 to \$300 per month.

It is not known precisely how well the facts presented here represent the situation in all schools of similar type in Kansas, but it is probable that the sampling is sufficient to make the salary facts highly indicative. Indeed, if these facts are regarded as reasonably representative, then they are disturbing. For it is hopeless to the point of simple delusion to expect to secure or hold competent teachers for salaries which are gravely inadequate when better employment is abundant.

Many schools are necessarily either accepting inferior teachers and inferior teaching or else they are exploiting good teachers. There are hundreds or probably thousands of teachers in the state whose monthly salaries are lower than the weekly wage of many semi-skilled artisans in nearby industrial plants. The average monthly salaries of elementary teachers, high school teachers and high school principals are from five to twenty-five dollars below what they were for similar positions in this state twelve years ago (1930-31) -- and they were by no means adequate at that time.

At the present time there may be no educational service which a county superintendent of schools can render that is more important than guarding the quality of work in our schools by urging salaries which make possible attracting and holding teachers that assure quality of work. In general, low salaries attract cheap teachers and cheap teachers usually turn out to be expensive in terms of the inferior service provided by them. If school boards were enabled to see that an additional fifty dollars per month would buy much more of teaching competence and pupil achievement in the person of a superior teacher, it is probable that the teachers selected and the salaries paid would reflect their understanding of what is true economy.