

Salaries for Principals*

By Robert W. Eaves

The following article is based on a talk given by Robert W. Eaves, Executive Secretary of the Department of Elementary School Principals, NEA, at a meeting of The New York Principals Association. Data for the talk were provided by the Research Division of the NEA.

Your chairman has asked me to tell you something about the NEA point of view on the single-salary schedule for principals, and something about salaries generally thruout the country.

Single-Salary Schedule

Let us consider first the idea of the single salary schedule for principals. I interpret the phrase to mean that the same salary rates apply to elementary school principals as to high school principals.

The NEA has been on record for more than 30 years in favor of single-salary schedules for classroom teachers, are almost obsolete. The NEA has not yet taken a stand on single-salary schedules for principals. Your NEA Department of Elementary School Principals has, however, adopted formal resolutions that recommend the single-salary schedule for the principalship, with equal pay for principals of equal qualifications.

You doubtless are familiar with the arguments pro and con on this issue. Those who feel that high school principals should be paid more emphasize the greater complexity of scheduling, the problems of faculty departmentalization, the great variety of pupil activities and organizations, and the more serious problems of pupil conduct that are likely to arise with older pupils.

Those of us who support the single-salary idea concede the greater complexity of organization. We point out, however, that most of the same basic problems of administration arise in the elementary school as in the high school. We recall also that the high school principal usually has assistant principals and secretarial help in relatively greater numbers, so that his own personal administrative burden is no greater than that of the elementary school principal. There is also, for the elementary school principal, much closer identity with the community and closer relationships with parents. These community contacts represent a greater contribution by the elementary

school. They also represent additional demands upon the principal, demands which are almost impossible to delegate.

In thinking about the single-salary schedule for principals, however, you immediately face another issue. It is the matter of adjusting principals' salaries to size of school. The fact that high schools usually are much larger than elementary schools has been one justification for the usual practice of higher salaries for the high school principals.

The NEA Research Division's latest information from New York City shows that you have a dividing line in your elementary school principals' salary schedule between schools of 25 teaching positions and those that are larger. And likewise, a high school with fewer than 50 positions has a different type of administration. Such a pattern would make a logical starting point for the single-salary schedule idea as it is now emerging here and there in the United States.

Our NEA Research Division has recently analyzed the salary schedules in 125 of the largest cities in the country. They were the ones with populations of 100,000 or more. Twenty-one of the 125 cities have single-salary schedules for principals. Twenty of the 21 make a difference according to size of school. The one exception is Atlanta. Oakland, California, for example, has six salary classes for principals, starting with "fewer than 10 teaching positions," and going up to a top class for "70 or more teaching positions." Yonkers starts with class for 1-7 teachers, and has other salary classes for each six additional teachers, up to the ninth class for 50 or more teachers. The maximum salary for the smallest group of schools in Yonkers is \$6600; or the largest, \$9000.

We know of two cities over a third of a million in population — Oakland and Louisville — that had a single-salary schedule for principals since 1936-37, later modified it slightly, and now has gone back to a single-salary schedule. All three of these cities classify principalships by size of school. In 1952-1953, the median salaries actually paid to principals in those three cities averaged 18 per cent higher in the high schools than in the elementary schools. If you make this comparison for the three cities nearest in size and location to these three, and having traditional schedules, you will find that high school principals were ahead of elementary school principals by only 20 percent. Thus, the differential for the high

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school principal was only 2 percent higher under the traditional schedule than under the single-salary schedule.

Of course, all other cities seem small to New Yorkers, but for most of us, a city over a half-million in population is large; only 18 cities in the country are that big. One-sixth of these largest cities — New Orleans, Baltimore, and Houston — have single-salary schedules for principals. In New Orleans there are five salary classes based on size, increasing for each 300 pupils enrolled, up to 1201 pupils.

Baltimore has four groups of principals. They are classified according to a statistical process that gives weighted credits to (a) pupil population, (b) professional staff, (c) building employees, and (d) program and organization, plus an additional weighting based on a list of 12 administrative factors.

In Houston, four categories are set, one for head teachers in schools of 1-7 teachers, and three other classes — for 7-25 teachers, for 26-45 teachers, and 46 teachers or more.

Ways of Scheduling Salaries

Apart from the issue of a differential or no differential between elementary and secondary school principals' salaries, various other issues arise in scheduling. Most of these issues are illustrated in the 18 largest cities.

For example, there is the question of size of school as salary factor. Ten of the 18 schedules pay the largest salaries in the biggest elementary schools. In eight of the 10, the high school principals are paid more in larger schools than in smaller ones. But there are eight cities in which size of school, as such, does not affect salaries of either elementary or high school principals. These eight are all cities in which elementary school principals are paid less than high school principals, regardless of size of school.

You might ask how many classes of schools, on the basis of size, are usually provided for. The typical plan, the one you follow in New York, has only two groups of elementary school principalships. The size of school which marks the line between the lower and upper classes of elementary schools, where there are only two groups, is as follows:

- Detroit — Membership of 700 or over
- Minneapolis — 21 or more teaching positions
- New York — 25 or more teaching positions
- Pittsburgh — 20 or more teaching positions

Philadelphia also has a two-group schedule, but the exact sizes are not specified. Not more than 50 percent of the principals may be in the upper group. In some of these cities there may also be provision for teaching principals and teachers in charge, as I believe you have here in New York.

The NEA Department of Elementary School Principals has published two yearbooks on the status of the principalship which included chapters on salaries. Both of these yearbook Committees recommended that when schools are classified by size for salary purposes, only a few broad classifications should be set up.

Another point of difference is whether or not to pay for extra advanced professional preparation. Some school systems have competent principals of long service who do not have a bachelor's degree. In the same system may be other principals with doctor's degrees. The single-salary schedule for classroom teachers assumes that, by and large, each year of professional preparation enhances the value of the teacher's services to the community. When we study the salary schedules for principals, we find that six of them extend this reasoning to principals, and 12 do not. The six systems in which principals with advanced preparation are paid more than others are New Orleans, Baltimore, Minneapolis, Buffalo, Cleveland, and Milwaukee.

Another issue is that stating the principals' salaries in the form of a differential over and above what the principal would receive if he were being paid on the classroom teachers' schedule. This is a means of recognizing different levels of preparation (assuming the preparation schedule for teachers, now adopted at least in principle in all 18 of the largest cities). It is so a means of guaranteeing that raises for principals will follow automatically with increases in the classroom teachers' schedule. The latter idea can prove to be fallacy, however, if the amount of the differential stays frozen. When the classroom maximum rises from \$4500 to \$6000 and the principals' differential remains at \$2000, the financial recognition for the principalship has shrunk from about 45 percent to about 33 percent. At present only two of the 18 schedules in big cities — Baltimore and Buffalo — state the principals' salaries as differentials above the teachers'.

Of course, one of the greatest issues has just been indicated when I spoke of the percent relationship between principals' and classroom teachers' schedules. The NEA Research Division gets many requests for figures on the ratios in existing salary schedules, and there is a tendency for boards of education to consider the relationships elsewhere in fixing local administrative salaries.

It is risky business to prepare such figures, because sometimes the salaries are into being paid in full, or only a handful of either classroom teachers or principals may actually be receiving the maximum salaries called for by the schedule. Recognizing that the schedules may not present a completely truthful picture, the NEA Research Division has computed some figures on these relationships. It seems that in one

city the highest salary scheduled for an elementary school principal is 52.6 percent higher than the highest salary scheduled for a classroom teacher, and in another city it is only 61.1 percent higher. These are the extremes; the mid-point is 35.3 percent. In New York the elementary school principals' maximum is 37.4 percent above the classroom teachers' maximum, a figure which is close to the group median.

Another issue of relationship is the matter of overlapping the principals' schedule with the classroom teachers' schedule. Classroom teachers feel that the upper levels of their schedule may well be as high as the beginning salary for in-experienced principals. The 1948 Yearbook Committee of our Department recognized that the point of view by its recommendation that new principals appointed from within a school system should receive either (a) the beginning step of the new salary class or (b) salary step on the new salary class that would be larger. As well as we can interpret them, eight of the 18 schedules are so organized that such an overlap would be possible.

As another part of this whole question of the relationship of administrative and teaching salaries there is a long-time trend to lower the administrative differential. During the past 20 or 30 years, salaries of classroom teachers have been rising more rapidly than those of administrators. We do not have the information on the median salaries actually paid. Back in 1930-31, the elementary school principals in cities of a half million population or more received median salaries 72 percent higher than the median salary of elementary school teachers. Twenty-two years later, in 1952-53, the principals were paid a median amount that was only 52 percent higher. Junior high and senior high school principals had an even greater reduction in their salary differential.

Salary Amounts

At one time, the salaries of New York City's classroom teachers and principals led the nation. Today, however, in six of the 18 cities of a half-million pop-

ulation or more, the beginning salaries of classroom teachers having A.B. degrees are higher than in New York. And the top-maximum salary for teachers with the highest qualifications is higher in two cities — Los Angeles and San Francisco — than in New York.

In paying principals, San Francisco again surpasses New York, with an elementary school principal's maximum of \$11,245. Both Los Angeles and Detroit equal the New York maximum for elementary school principals and pay junior high school principals slightly more than does New York.

As mentioned earlier, principals' salaries have lagged behind those of teachers in the advances of the past two decades. This is not to say that principals' salaries have failed to increase. Between 1930-31 and 1952-53, the median salary paid elementary school principals in cities over 500,000 in population increased 76.7 percent. But this 76.7 percent was less than the average increase for all classroom teachers, which advanced 98.8 percent. During the same time the median for high school principals' salaries increased only 56.4 percent. And just to round out the picture, let us remember that the median salary of superintendents increased only 21 percent.

These increases, whether large or small, took place against an economic background in which prices nearly doubled, wages and salaries in general increased more than two and a half times, and income taxes soared.

The trend appears to be in the direction of levelling up the salaries of classroom teachers. The vast gulfs of differences in salaries, as well as in professional preparation and prestige, no longer exist between school administrators and classroom teachers.

On the other hand, the need continues for a substantial of leadership and initiative required for the administration of a school. Only the best are able to meet the tasks of leadership posed by today's alert, professionally-trained teachers; today's precocious and sometimes censorious communities.

How Do Large Cities Select Principals?

By Jay E. Greene

(EDITOR'S NOTE: This article is an abstract of an unpublished doctoral study made at New York University in 1954. It is concerned particularly with current practices in the selection of elementary school principals in cities with a population over 250,000).

ALTHOUGH much attention has been given to problems of teachers selection and the prediction of teaching efficiency, comparatively little research has been devoted to the problems of selecting supervisory-administrative personnel for the schools. Yet it is recognized that the selection of capable principals to give superior leadership for schools is of vital importance.