

THE QUALITIES NECESSARY FOR A VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE
TEACHER TO HAVE LONG TENURE IN THE SCHOOLS OF
OKLAHOMA AS EXPRESSED BY
SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS

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Scope and Procedure of Study: Questionnaires pertaining to qualities which should be of importance for a Vocational Agriculture teacher to have long tenure were sent to twenty-five high school superintendents in all parts of Oklahoma. The superintendents rated each item according to the degree of importance which he felt necessary for a teacher to have long tenure. The information obtained from the questionnaires was value-rated, analyzed, and conclusions and recommendations made.

Conclusions and Recommendations: It was concluded that the vocational agriculture teacher must possess a thorough knowledge of the agricultural problems in his supervised farm training program and that his instructional program for in-school students must be based on needs growing out of their supervised farming program. It was also concluded that effective communication between the administration and the teacher is often the basis of many problems. A recommendation was made that an adult psychology course be added to the requirement leading to a bachelors degree in Agricultural Education. It was also recommended that vocational agriculture teachers join the civic organizations of the community in an effort to better promote community-school relationship and that they strive for better communication with their administrator.

ADVISER'S APPROVAL _____

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Report Approved:

Report Adviser

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PREFACE

Oklahoma is nationally recognized as having one of the better vocational agriculture programs. This is attributed to the intensive teacher-training program provided at the Oklahoma State University and to the many dedicated professors and other personnel within the college.

The object of this study is to determine why some vocational agriculture teachers, with superior knowledge of the agricultural problems of Oklahoma, fail to enjoy long tenure in the school systems of Oklahoma, and to offer suggestions, based upon data obtained, for the improvement of teacher tenure in the schools of Oklahoma.

The writer wishes to express his gratitude to Dr. Claxton Cook, his major adviser, for the counseling and encouragement that promoted this study. Special appreciation is due Dr. Robert R. Price, whose help in laying the foundation for this study was of great value.

The writer also wishes to express his gratitude to the twenty-five superintendents in the schools of Oklahoma for their cooperation in contributing information for this study.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
I. INTRODUCTION	1
Statement of the Problem	2
Methods of Procedure	2
II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE	4
III. REPORT FINDINGS	6
IV. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS	24
Recommendations	29
BIBLIOGRAPHY	31
APPENDIX	32

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
I. Opinions Expressed By Twenty-five School Superintendents Relative To The Vocational Agriculture Teacher's Responsibility In The Area Of Subject Matter.	6
II. Opinions Expressed By Twenty-five School Superintendents Relative To The Vocational Agriculture Teacher's Responsibility In The Area Of Community Service	7
III. Opinions Expressed By Twenty-five School Superintendents Relative To The Vocational Agriculture Teacher's Responsibility In The Area Of Professional Improvement	8
IV. Opinions Expressed By Twenty-five School Superintendents Relative To The Vocational Agriculture Teacher's Responsibility In The Area Of Administration.	9
V. Opinions Expressed By Twenty-five School Superintendents Relative To The Vocational Agriculture Teacher's Responsibility In The Area Of School Boards	11
VI. Opinions Expressed By Twenty-five School Superintendents Relative To The Vocational Agriculture Teacher's Responsibility In The Area Of School Faculty.	13
VII. Opinions Expressed By Twenty-five School Superintendents Relative To The Vocational Agriculture Teacher's Responsibility In The Area Of Discipline.	14
VIII. Opinions Expressed By Twenty-five School Superintendents Relative To The Vocational Agriculture Teacher's Responsibility In The Area Of Community Outlook On Tenure.	15
IX. Opinions Expressed By Twenty-five School Superintendents Relative To The Vocational Agriculture Teacher's Responsibility In The Area Of Personality	16
X. Opinions Expressed By Twenty-five School Superintendents Relative To The Vocational Agriculture Teacher's Responsibility In The Area Of Civic Groups.	18

Table	Page
XI. Opinions Expressed By Twenty-five School Superintendents Relative To The Vocational Agriculture Teacher's Responsibility In The Area Of Other Agencies.	19
XII. Opinions Expressed By Twenty-five School Superintendents Relative To The Vocational Agriculture Teacher's Responsibility In The Area Of Finances.	20
XIII. Opinions Expressed By Twenty-five School Superintendents Relative To The Vocational Agriculture Teacher's Responsibility In The Area Of Family Life	20
XIV. School Superintendents Opinion Expressed As To Importance And Various Characteristics Of Each Area Relative To Teacher Tenure Of Oklahoma Vocational Agriculture Teachers.	21

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Why do some vocational agriculture teachers enjoy long tenure while other teachers experience a constant change in schools? There are various answers to this question. The vocational agriculture teacher must be a dynamic individual to meet changing conditions; he must be open-minded, resourceful, use good judgment, be sincere, and above all possess desirable leadership and not be afraid to work. (1)

Who is the good teacher? We have all had a few excellent teachers, a large number who were only fair, and a few who seemed wholly incompetent. The middle group faded out of our memories. We remember only the best and the worst -- the former because they gave us something which we prize beyond any material possession, the latter because of the disgust and resentment which we felt toward them. (2)

We as vocational agriculture teachers need to study the community in which we teach to assure that our program is in pace with the growth of our community.

Tenure of the vocational agriculture teacher among some school authorities is recognized as being highly desirable, particularly where the teacher is performing the function of his responsibilities in a highly competent manner. Long tenure increases the possibilities of the teachers knowing more about the local situation so that he, in turn, can develop a more advantageous program for the local situation. What factors are associated with long tenure, as viewed by school

superintendents, is the consideration of this study.

Statement of the Problem

The problem presented in this study is to determine, from the opinions of school superintendents, the reason some vocational agriculture teachers fail to enjoy long tenure. We, as teachers, need to take a look at ourselves as others see us and try to determine the weaknesses in our instructional programs as well as the weaknesses in our personalities. It is hoped, by the writer, that this study will shed some light on the qualities which superintendents deem necessary for long tenure and that we as vocational agriculture teachers will be more capable to adjust to the various situations which tend to rise from day to day.

Methods of Procedure

This study was started by obtaining from the State Board of Education a list of twenty-five superintendents in the state of Oklahoma who have been in the same school for a period of at least ten years and have a Vocational Agriculture Department in their school. This list represented every section of Oklahoma.

Since the main reason for this study was to determine the reason many vocational agriculture teachers are relieved of their responsibilities the questionnaire which was prepared for use in interviewing the superintendents was time consuming as well as thought provoking. After consultation with the major thesis adviser and several changes in the questionnaire, the final form was approved. The superintendent was asked to complete the questionnaire and return it to the writer. Twenty-five forms were returned.

The study was based upon the opinions of the twenty-five superintendents

concerned and what literature the writer was able to find concerning teacher tenure.

These opinions were then weighed in each area as to their degree of importance expressed by the superintendents. The degrees are: Excellent, Good, Fair, and Poor weighing 4, 3, 2, and 1, respectively.

The average weight expressed by the superintendents relative to a total area will be compared so as to determine major areas of importance toward vocational agriculture teachers' tenure as viewed by school superintendents.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Few studies were discovered by the writer concerning teacher tenure. Cook(1), in a study on qualifications of a vocational agriculture instructor, writes that for the most effective results the teacher should remain in the community for several years. He found that teachers need to get acquainted in the community, have people get acquainted with them, and develop a comprehensive program, including all-day, Young Farmer and Adult Farmer classes. Such a program which will meet the needs of all the farm people requires time to develop. It is through such a total program in agriculture that the vocational agriculture teacher can develop the confidence and understanding of the persons in his training programs and make the greatest achievements.

Reeder(3), in a study on selection and tenure of teachers found that either by state law or by rules and regulations of the local board of education, school employees should be protected in their positions as long as they are efficient. He also found that courts are agreed that proper tenure laws are not designed primarily to protect teachers but to protect pupils and the public against "politics" and other forms of favoritisms. Most of the larger schools have adopted such rules and regulations, or they have an understanding that teachers who are efficient shall be privileged to keep their positions as long as they desire them. Many schools have developed the continuing form of contract, after a probationary period of one to five years. Tenure laws

should not "freeze" all teachers, incompetent as well as competent, into their positions. There must be an orderly procedure by which incompetents may be dismissed and in all cases, the cause for dismissal should be specified. Life tenure for all school employees is not favored, neither are the too-frequent conditions today which make it possible for school employees to be "fired" on the slightest pretext.

E. P. Cubberley was quoted by Reeder as follows:

"If a teacher or principal will cooperate it is easier to educate them than to dismiss them, and far more pleasant. If superintendents were given legal control of the selection and designation for retention of all teachers, so that boards of education and their committees were deprived of all powers in the matter except the approval or disapproval of the superintendent's recommendations, the question of the dismissal of teachers would, in most communities, occupy a less important position. Still, good teachers do not always continue to be good, and an occasional removal will need to be made for the welfare of the service."(3)

It is the general opinion of both Cook and Reeder that the employee should be given notice of the deficiencies of their work and given an opportunity and reasonable assistance to remedy them. If improvement does not result sufficient to warrant the retention of the teacher, the superintendent should then recommend that the school board desires to terminate the contract with the teacher to take effect at the close of the school year.

CHAPTER III

REPORT FINDINGS

TABLE I

OPINIONS EXPRESSED BY TWENTY-FIVE SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS
RELATIVE TO THE VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE TEACHER'S
RESPONSIBILITY IN THE AREA OF SUBJECT MATTER

Item	Ratings				Weighted Average	Rank Order
	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor		
He has a thorough knowledge of the agriculture problems in his supervised farm training program	20	3	2	-	93	1
He has the ability to communicate effectively in presentation of subject matter	13	9	3	-	85	3
He does a thorough and orderly job of securing and maintaining departmental facilities, equipment, and teaching materials	11	12	-	2	82	5
He places special emphasis on the agricultural economic problems in the community	11	11	3	-	83	4
He conducts an instructional program for in-school students based on needs growing out of their supervised farming programs	17	7	1	-	91	2

Data in Table I reveal that twenty-five superintendents in the state of Oklahoma who participated in this study rated thorough knowledge

of the agriculture problem as the most essential quality related to subject matter. While twenty superintendents felt the teacher should rate excellent, three checked a rating of good, and two felt that a rating of fair was adequate.

Needs growing out of supervised farming program was rated as second most essential with seventeen superintendents rating excellent as the necessary qualification of vocational agriculture teachers for long tenure; seven felt that a rating of good in this area was sufficient, and one felt a rating of fair was sufficient.

The ability to communicate effectively was rated third in importance.

Item 4, emphasis on agriculture economic problems was fourth in importance with Item 3 or securing and maintaining departmental facilities and equipment rated as least important.

TABLE II

OPINIONS EXPRESSED BY TWENTY-FIVE SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS
RELATIVE TO THE VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE TEACHER'S
RESPONSIBILITY IN THE AREA OF COMMUNITY SERVICE

Item	Ratings				Weighted Average	Rank Order
	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor		
He spends a large part of his time with adult farmer problems	3	12	8	-	72	4
He spends a large part of his time with local civic activities	7	12	5	1	75	3
He cooperates with and coordinates his program with agricultural agencies in the county	11	12	2	-	84	2

TABLE II (continued)

Item	Ratings				Weighted Average	Rank Order
	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor		
He provides organized class instruction in agriculture for adults in the community	4	11	7	3	66	5
He contributes his time and energies on activities designed to improve the school and the community	19	5	1	-	93	1

Nineteen superintendents felt a teacher should have an excellent rating on Item 5, contributing his time and energies on activities designed to improve the school and community. A rating of good was checked by five superintendents and fair was checked by one superintendent as being adequate. Item 3 was rated in importance with eleven superintendents feeling a rating of excellent was required and twelve feeling a rating of good was sufficient. Only two superintendents felt a rating of fair was adequate for long tenure.

It was interesting to note the value placed on Items, 1, 2, and 4. Item 2, teacher spends a large part of his time with local civic activities, was rated higher than Item 1 or Item 4 which are directly related to agriculture.

TABLE III

OPINIONS EXPRESSED BY TWENTY-FIVE SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS
RELATIVE TO THE VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE TEACHER'S
RESPONSIBILITY IN THE AREA OF
PROFESSIONAL IMPROVEMENT

Item	Ratings				Weighted Average	Rank Order
	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor		
He spends sufficient amount of time in professional improvement	10	12	3	-	82	4

TABLE III (Continued)

Item	Ratings				Weighted Average	Rank Order
	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor		
He reflects pride in his professional improvement	12	10	3	-	84	2
He has above minimum requirements for teaching vocational agriculture	14	7	2	2	83	3
He is recognized in the community as being well qualified professionally	19	4	2	-	92	1

In Table III, a much higher value was placed on the teacher's recognition in the community than on the other three items. Pride in professional improvement was rated second most important with Item 3 being rated third. In Item 3 it is interesting to notice that while fourteen superintendents felt a teacher should be rated excellent, two felt a rating of poor was adequate, or that the very minimum requirements for teaching vocational agriculture was adequate. In Item 1, which was rated fourth in importance, only ten of the twenty-five superintendents felt a rating of excellent was required on time spent in professional improvement, twelve expected a rating of good, and three felt a rating of fair was sufficient.

TABLE IV.

OPINIONS EXPRESSED BY TWENTY-FIVE SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS
RELATIVE TO THE VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE TEACHER'S
RESPONSIBILITY IN THE AREA OF ADMINISTRATION

Item	Ratings				Weighted Average	Rank Order
	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor		
He is loyal to the administration and to fellow workers	20	5	-	-	95	2
He accepts responsibility for performing other school duties	17	8	-	-	92	4

TABLE IV (continued)

Item	Ratings				Weighted Average	Rank Order
	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor		
He observes school rules, regulations, and policies	21	4	-	-	96	1
He clears with the teachers and administration before taking students from other classes	20	4	1	-	94	3
He keeps the administration informed of his work	13	9	3	-	85	6
He makes appropriate arrangements prior to being away from school	17	6	2	-	90	5
He considers his vocational agriculture program and department as an integral part of the school	20	4	1	-	94	3

Examination of Table IV reveals that Item 3, observance of school rules, regulations, and policies, was considered the most important in the administration category, with twenty-one superintendents reporting a rating of excellent was required for a teacher to have long tenure. Only four superintendents felt a lower rating was acceptable, and they required a "good" rating. Loyalty to the administration and other teachers was rated second with only one point difference in value. Twenty superintendents felt a teacher must achieve a rating of excellent while five felt a rating of good was acceptable. Items 4 and 7 received the same rating from those taking part in this study. Twenty required a rating of excellent, four required a "good" rating, and one was content if the teacher achieved a "fair" rating. Item 2, accepting responsibility for performing other school duties, was rated fourth in importance in this category, with seventeen superintendents requiring a teacher to rate

excellent, and eight requiring a "good" rating. Item 6 received a value rating of 90 in this category. Seventeen superintendents felt it essential that a teacher receive a rating of excellent in making appropriate arrangements prior to being away from school, 6 felt a rating of good was sufficient, while two required only a rating of fair. Perhaps the two superintendents who rated "fair" as adequate felt the teacher was usually accompanied by the majority of his students and that no problem existed in the teacher's absence. Item 5 is most interesting. Only thirteen superintendents felt it necessary for a teacher to receive an excellent rating in Item 5, keeping the administration informed of his work, to enjoy long tenure. Nine superintendents felt a rating of good was sufficient for long tenure, while three felt a rating of fair was adequate. In writing this report, one wonders if the superintendents rated what they felt was required for long tenure, or if they actually rated their own teacher in the various categories!

TABLE V

OPINIONS EXPRESSED BY TWENTY-FIVE SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS
RELATIVE TO THE VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE TEACHER'S
RESPONSIBILITY IN THE AREA OF SCHOOL BOARDS

Item	Ratings				Weighted Average	Rank Order
	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor		
His contacts with the School Board in regard to their recommendations relative to the vocational agriculture program is handled as the administration desires	16	7	1	1	88	1
He utilizes the services of the School Board in public functions to the advantage of the total school program	9	10	6	-	78	2

Table V indicates sixteen superintendents require a rating of excellent from their vocational agriculture teacher in their contacts with the school board in regard to their recommendations relative to the vocational agriculture program. Seven administrators reported a rating of good was necessary, one superintendent was satisfied with a rating of fair, while one superintendent reported a poor rating was adequate. The writer questions whether the present teacher was rated or if these are the actual qualifications deemed necessary for long tenure. Too often, the vocational agriculture teacher problems are not presented to the board members, or if they are, the entire problem is not aired. The writer does not intend to intimate the superintendents purposely misconstrue the problem, he wishes to point out that only one side of the problem is presented and the board usually acts on his recommendations without further investigation! Many teachers are forced to personally contact the board for a solution to some of their problems, thus creating a situation for friction between the administration and the teacher.

In the category of utilizing the services of the school board in public functions, nine superintendents expected an excellent rating, ten required a rating of good, and six reported a rating of fair was satisfactory. One superintendent wrote "Invite the board, but play up to no one". This sentiment, however, is not expressed by the majority of superintendents. Too many administrators require the teacher to place too much significance upon the board of education. The writer feels the board members should be treated with respect, should always be invited to public functions as a spectator, not as a participant, should be kept aware of the problems confronting the vocational agriculture teacher in maintaining his program, but most of all he

should be treated as any other man in the community.

Most men become board members because of their desire to better the school, not to seek recognition for themselves.

TABLE VI
OPINIONS EXPRESSED BY TWENTY-FIVE SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS
RELATIVE TO THE VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE TEACHERS
RESPONSIBILITY IN THE AREA OF SCHOOL FACULTY

Item	Ratings				Weighted Average	Rank Order
	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor		
He cooperates to promote harmonious faculty relationship; shows interest in the total school program	22	3	-	-	97	1
He is loyal to fellow workers	21	3	1	-	95	2
He takes steps that will cause other faculty members to understand the nature and scope of his work	13	9	3	-	85	4
He makes necessary arrangements for his classes when he must be away	19	6	-	-	94	3

Data in Item 1 of Table VI reveal twenty-two superintendents expect a rating of excellent from their vocational agriculture teacher in cooperating to promote harmonious faculty relationship and showing interest in the total school program. One superintendent wrote that he expected no more from his vocational agriculture teacher than any other teacher. Three superintendents reported a rating of good was adequate. Item 2 was rated second in importance and it is interesting to compare this with Item 1 in Table IV. The value is the same in each question but the rating is different. Item 4 is rated third in importance and this

question is also listed in Table IV, Item 6. It is interesting to note the deviation in rating. In Table IV the two superintendents who rated "fair" as adequate checked a rating of excellent as essential in Table VI. In Item 3, thirteen superintendents felt a vocational agriculture teacher should achieve a rating of excellent in promoting the understanding of his program to the other faculty members. Nine superintendents felt a rating of good was sufficient, while three were happy with a rating of fair.

TABLE VII

OPINIONS EXPRESSED BY TWENTY-FIVE SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS
RELATIVE TO THE VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE TEACHER'S
RESPONSIBILITY IN THE AREA OF DISCIPLINE

Item	Ratings				Weighted Average	Rank Order
	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor		
He takes full responsibility of discipline in vocational agriculture classes	19	5	1	-	93	1
He calls on superintendent or principal in extreme discipline problems	17	6	2	-	90	4
He correct students in a calm but firm manner	18	6	1	-	92	2
He determines the circumstances, and the student or students involved, before administering discipline	15	10	-	-	90	4
He stays within authority in disciplining students	16	9	-	-	91	3

Nineteen superintendents expected a rating of excellent from their vocational agriculture teacher in Item 1, that is, he takes full responsibility of discipline in his vocational agriculture classes. Five

superintendents felt a rating of good in the responsibility of discipline was sufficient while one reported a rating of fair was adequate.

Eighteen superintendents expected a vocational agriculture teacher to achieve a rating of excellent in correcting students in a calm, but firm manner. Six reporting felt a rating of good was allowable while one felt a rating of fair was adequate. Sixteen superintendents expected an excellent rating on staying within authority in disciplining students while nine superintendents expected a rating of good. Items 2 and 4 received the same value rating; seventeen reporting a rating of excellent was required for long tenure in calling of the superintendent or principal in extreme case of discipline problems. Six superintendents reported a rating of good was permissible and two reported a rating of fair must be achieved. In Item 4 determining circumstances and students involved before administering discipline, fifteen superintendents rated a qualification of excellent as necessary for long tenure and ten were satisfied with a rating of good.

TABLE VIII

OPINIONS EXPRESSED BY TWENTY-FIVE SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS
RELATIVE TO THE VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE TEACHER'S
RESPONSIBILITY IN THE AREA OF COMMUNITY OUTLOOK
ON TENURE

Item	Ratings				Weighted Average	Rank Order
	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor		
He takes tenure as a matter of prudence	12	11	2	-	85	3
The community appreciates tenure of their vocational agriculture teacher	15	8	2	-	88	2

TABLE VIII (continued)

Item	Ratings				Weighted Average	Rank Order
	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor		
School Boards outlook on tenure of vocational agriculture teacher	14	10	1	-	88	2
Superintendents outlook on tenure of vocational agriculture teacher	15	10	-	-	90	1

Data in Item 4, Table VIII reveal that fifteen superintendents checked excellent as the rating for superintendents outlook on tenure for vocational agriculture teachers. A rating of good was checked by ten. School board's outlook on tenure was close behind with fourteen rating excellent, ten rating good, and one rating fair. Item 2, the community's appreciation of long tenure for vocational agriculture teachers received the same value rating as Item 3 with fifteen rating excellent, eight good, and two fair. Item 1, tenure taken as a matter of prudence, was fourth in importance in this category. Twelve placed a rating of excellent as necessary, eleven rated good and two rated fair. One superintendent wrote that tenure should be taken for granted.

TABLE IX

OPINIONS EXPRESSED BY TWENTY-FIVE SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS
RELATIVE TO THE VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE TEACHERS
RESPONSIBILITY IN THE AREA OF PERSONALITY

Item	Ratings				Weighted Average	Rank Order
	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor		
He demonstrates honesty and integrity in all personal dealings	23	2	-	-	98	1
He displays a warm, friendly personality	22	3	-	-	97	2

TABLE IX (continued)

Item	Ratings				Weighted Average	Rank Order
	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor		
He possesses a desirable personality to meet the needs of the students	24	4	-	-	96	3
He possesses an attitude of good sportsmanship	22	3	-	-	97	2
He uses clean speech in presence of others	22	3	-	-	97	2
He exercises control of his personal feelings in his dealings with people	22	3	-	-	97	2

Twenty-three superintendents reporting felt the vocational agriculture teacher must have a rating of excellent in demonstrating honesty and integrity in all his personal dealings in order to enjoy long tenure. Two reported a rating of good was sufficient. Items 2, 4, 5, and 6 were all rated the same with twenty-two superintendents demanding an excellent rating in each category and three reporting a rating of good was permissible. In Item 4, he possesses an attitude of good sportsmanship, one superintendent wrote "Very Important". Item 3, he possesses a desirable personality to meet the needs of the students, was rated sixth in importance. Twenty-one reported a rating of excellent was required while four demanded a rating of good.

TABLE X

OPINIONS EXPRESSED BY TWENTY-FIVE SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS
RELATIVE TO THE VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE TEACHER'S
RESPONSIBILITY IN THE AREA CIVIC GROUPS

Item	Ratings				Weighted Average	Rank Order
	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor		
He takes an active part in community, civic, and fraternal organizations	17	8	-	-	92	1
He has vocational agriculture classes meet with local civic groups	9	12	3	1	79	3
He has FFA boys work with local civic groups	13	10	1	1	85	2
He serves as an officer or on a functioning committee in local civic groups	15	6	3	1	85	2

Seventeen superintendents reporting required their vocational agriculture teacher to rate excellent in Item 1, taking an active part in community, civic, and fraternal organization, while eight reported a rating of good was desirable. Items 3 and 4 received the same value rating but the actual rating varied in that fifteen superintendents expected an excellent rating from their vocational agriculture teacher in serving as an officer or on a functioning committee in local civic groups. Six expected a rating of good, three desired a rating of fair, and one reported a poor rating in this category was sufficient. One superintendent reported, "When in the natural course of events he is chosen to do so, he will not seek office." In Item 3 FFA boys working with civic groups, the ratings were thirteen excellent, ten good, one fair, and one poor. One superintendent noted, "as circumstances warrant". Item 2 in this table received a low value rating of seventy-nine. Only

nine reporting felt a rating of excellent should be attained. One superintendent felt that vocational agriculture classes meeting with civic groups was good only when natural, normal arrangements were made without "barging in".

TABLE XI

OPINIONS EXPRESSED BY TWENTY-FIVE SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS
RELATIVE TO THE VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE TEACHER'S
RESPONSIBILITY IN THE AREA OF OTHER AGENCIES

Name	Ratings				Weighted Average	Rank Order
	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor		
He cooperates with other agencies	16	8	1	-	90	3
He helps plan and participates in local and county activities	18	6	1	-	92	1
He helps plan and participate in local farm tours and field trips	17	7	1	-	91	2
He joins and participates in local organizations	17	7	-	1	90	3

Item 2 in this table was rated the highest in value. Eighteen superintendents required a rating of excellent from the vocational agriculture teacher in planning and participating in local and county activities with one superintendent noting that only "when invited or when duty calls". In the entire table there were only three superintendents who checked fair as an adequate rating and one who checked poor as sufficient. The majority of superintendents expected an excellent rating in all categories.

TABLE XII

OPINIONS EXPRESSED BY TWENTY-FIVE SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS
RELATIVE TO THE VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE TEACHER'S
RESPONSIBILITY IN THE AREA OF FINANCES

Item	Ratings				Weighted Average	Rank Order
	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor		
He is prompt in paying bills or matters so as to have a good credit rating	23	2	-	-	98	1

Table XII reveals twenty-three of the twenty-five superintendents require vocational agriculture teachers to maintain an excellent rating on financial matters. Only two superintendents checked "good" as a satisfactory rating for long tenure.

TABLE XIII

OPINIONS EXPRESSED BY TWENTY-FIVE SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS
RELATIVE TO THE VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE TEACHER'S
RESPONSIBILITY IN THE AREA OF FAMILY LIFE

Item	Ratings				Weighted Average	Rank Order
	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor		
He takes an active part in his church	15	8	2	-	88	4
He owns or is buying his home	16	7	-	2	87	5
He makes his home attractive	14	11	-	-	89	3
He improves his home facilities	15	10	-	-	90	2
He has an ideal family life	17	8	-	-	92	1

Item 5, possessing an ideal family life was rated highest in value in this category with seventeen superintendents requiring a rating of excellent from the vocational agriculture teacher and eight checking a

good rating as satisfactory for long tenure. The table shows he is definitely expected to improve his home facilities and keep his home attractive. One superintendent wrote "as finances and time permit". In Item 1, fifteen superintendents reporting felt it necessary for the vocational agriculture teacher to rate excellent in church participation while eight felt that a good rating was sufficient and two checked that fair was adequate. In Item 2, owning and buying home, sixteen superintendents checked excellent as the rating necessary for long tenure, seven checked good, and two felt it was not especially necessary for the teacher to be a home owner to have long tenure.

TABLE XIV

SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS OPINION EXPRESSED AS TO IMPORTANCE AND
VARIOUS CHARACTERISTICS OF EACH AREA RELATIVE TO
TEACHER TENURE OF OKLAHOMA VOCATIONAL
AGRICULTURE TEACHERS

Areas	Weighted Average Value	Rank Order
Subject matter	86.80	9
Community service	78.00	12
Professional improvement	85.25	10
Administration	92.28	4
School boards	83.00	11
School faculty	92.75	3
Discipline	91.20	5
Community outlook on tenure	87.75	8
Personality	97.00	2
Civic groups	85.25	10
Other agencies, SCS, County Agents and others	90.75	6
Finances	98.00	1
Family life	89.20	7

Perhaps Table XIV is the most significant of all. It reveals the basic reasons as viewed by the writer for an agricultural program in the schools receiving ninth and twelfth places in rank order and in weighted value they received 86.80 and 78.00, respectively. Subject

matter, which to any vocational agriculture teacher is top priority, was rated ninth in importance by the twenty-five superintendents who participated in this study and community service which to a vocational agriculture teacher is of vital importance to his program, was rated twelfth or last of all areas.

Finances was rated first in rank order receiving a weighted value of 98.0. This was understandable in that a person is judged by his honesty and in order to succeed in any vocation one must manage his finances properly.

Personality, which was ranked second in order, received a weighted value of 97.0, only 1.0 below finances. The ability to maintain a harmonious relationship with the other faculty members was ranked third in importance, with cooperation with the administration receiving fourth place in rank order. This appears to the writer to be in reverse of actual cases. There are many instances whereby the faculty members are not in accord, however, by tending their own department and avoiding conflicts they have remained in the school system for years. This, however, is usually not the case in the event of friction between a teacher and the administration. Superintendents are willing to solve their problems concerning teachers if the teacher is willing to cooperate; however, there are instances of a teacher being relieved of his job without having one conference with the administration or even realizing the administration was unhappy with his performance on the job.

The superintendents felt discipline was important to teacher tenure and placed a weighted value of 91.2 on it with rank order being fifth.

Ranked sixth in order was cooperation with other agencies such as

the Soil Conservation Service, County Agent, and other agencies. This received a weighted value of 90.75.

Family life of the teacher was ranked seventh by the superintendents receiving a weighted value of 89.2.

The community outlook on tenure, with a weighted value of 87.75 was ranked eighth in importance, almost one point above subject matter which fell in ninth place.

Receiving equal rankings were professional improvement and close association with civic groups. These two areas were value weighted 85.25 and ranked tenth in importance.

The school boards outlook on tenure was ranked eleventh in importance receiving a weighted value of 83.0 with community service being ranked least of all in importance with a weighted value of only 78.0.

Some of the notations on the questionnaires returned were as follows:

1. An agriculture man is a member of a school faculty and if he works at the job of just being one of them, he will stay probably longer than any. If he goes "lone wolf" he will be trapped.
2. Ability to listen.
3. Attending teachers' meetings with the rest of the faculty.
4. No more should be expected of him than others; likewise, no less should be expected of him than others.

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This study of the factors necessary for vocational agriculture teachers to have long tenure as determined by twenty-five superintendents of schools in Oklahoma was made with one distinct purpose in mind - that is, to try to determine the main reasons some vocational agriculture teachers experience difficulty in remaining in a school system long enough to really become acquainted with the agricultural problems of the community.

In examining the questionnaires which were answered and returned by twenty-five superintendents in Oklahoma, it was determined that the vocational agriculture teacher must possess a thorough knowledge of the agriculture problems in his supervised farm training program and that his instructional program for in-school students must be based on needs growing out of their supervised farming program.

The ability to communicate effectively in presentation of subject matter was rated third in importance in the category of subject matter. This would seem to be a very logical rating. Many teachers who possess thorough knowledge of subject matter often find it difficult to convey that knowledge to their students because of their inability to express themselves.

Emphasis on the agricultural economics program was rated fourth in importance by the superintendents questioned. Perhaps their thinking was that economic problems would naturally fall in line with

the overall program.

In Table II, Community Service, one wonders why the items were rated in value as they were. Certainly, we can see why contributions of the teacher's time and energies on activities to improve the school and community should be rated first in value, but it is hard to understand why cooperation with and coordination of the school vocational agriculture program with agricultural agencies in the county and the vocational agriculture teacher spending a large part of his time with local civic activities should be rated higher than the vocational agriculture teacher spending a large part of his time with adult farmer problems and providing an organized class of instruction in agriculture for adults in the community. It is in this category one wonders if the administration of some of our schools do not exploit the vocational agriculture program.

It was determined in Table III that the superintendents placed a much higher value rating on the necessity of the vocational agriculture teacher being recognized in the community as being well qualified professionally than for the vocational agriculture teacher to acquire above minimum requirements for teaching vocational agriculture or even that he spend sufficient time in professional improvement. The superintendents felt that pride in professional improvement was a necessary quality, however, this study would indicate that school superintendents lean heavily on the vocational agriculture program as a means of desirable community relations. One superintendent checked a rating of excellent on all items in each category as a necessary qualification for a teacher to enjoy long tenure in his school.

Under Table IV, Administration, those participating in this study felt it was very important for the vocational agriculture teacher to observe all school rules, regulations, and policies and rated second in value was that the vocational agriculture teacher be loyal to the administration and fellow workers. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

The administration felt the vocational agriculture teacher must consider his program and department as an integral part of the school. As one superintendent wrote on his questionnaire, "an Ag-teacher who goes 'lone wolf' soon finds himself in a trap." Clearance with other teachers before taking students out of other classes was rated equally as high. It is to the vocational agriculture teacher's advantage to assure that students have a permit to miss other classes when it becomes necessary, as for instance on a field trip that would not allow enough time to return for the next class.

Over two-thirds of the superintendents participating in this study felt the vocational agriculture teacher should be rated excellent in accepting responsibility for performing other school activities. Activities such as hall duty at noon, ticket taking at sport events, and similar functions are considered by superintendents as being as much the vocational agriculture teacher's duty as well as any other teacher.

It was Item 5 in Table IV that was particularly interesting.

Only thirteen superintendents felt that the vocational agriculture teacher should be rated excellent to have long tenure in keeping the administration informed of his work. One can only surmise whether this was an indication of complete faith in the vocational agriculture teachers' ability or that they felt they could detect any problem from observance. It would seem feasible for the superintendents to keep informed on all school work.

Sixteen superintendents checked a rating of excellent as necessary for long tenure for teachers in Item 1, Table V. This was interpreted to mean that the administration received the recommendations pertaining to vocational agriculture and in turn supposedly passed the information on to the teacher. In discussions with several fellow teachers, it is apparent that more than one superintendent is lax in this area. Many times a board member will question a teacher as to action taken on certain recommendations only to find the teacher has heard nothing about it. Seven superintendents reported a rating of good was desirable for long tenure, one reported a rating of fair was adequate, while one felt a rating of "poor" was sufficient. As stated before, while examining this study, we felt perhaps the superintendents deviated from checking what they felt was required for any vocational agriculture teacher to enjoy long tenure to rating their own vocational agriculture teacher.

Only nine superintendents participating in this study felt the vocational agriculture teacher should rate excellent in utilizing the services of the school board in public functions to the advantage of the total school program. Ten reported a rating of good was required, while six felt a "fair" rating was acceptable. The writer appreciated the notation one superintendent made on his questionnaire - "Invite the

board but do not play up to anyone". A vocational agriculture teacher loses his individuality when he is expected to "cow-tow" to board members or to the administration. Certainly he should show respect to those in authority, but at the same time he should demand respect.

The area of School Faculty, in Table VI has some duplicate questions listed. The teacher's cooperation to promote harmonious faculty relationships and showing an interest in the total school program was valued the highest in this area. Twenty-two superintendents required a rating of excellent while three required a rating of good. A good vocational agriculture teacher is interested in the total school concept and this is most essential, especially in the smaller schools. Any friction among teachers or the administration is easily and quickly denoted by students.

Loyalty to fellow workers and teacher making necessary arrangements for his classes when he must be away are both duplicate questions and are checked differently in Table VI than in Table IV. Here again the superintendent probably was rating his own vocational agriculture teacher. In the same category only thirteen superintendents felt it necessary for the vocational agriculture teacher to rate excellent in making other faculty members understand the nature and scope of his work. Nine felt the vocational agriculture teacher should rate good and one felt a rating of fair was adequate. If the other faculty members can be made to understand the total vocational agriculture program - not just the in-service portion, this would preclude any friction which might arise in thinking the vocational agriculture teacher was free just because he was doing community service several periods a day. Many new teachers especially do not understand the vocational agriculture teacher's

absence from school during part of the school day.

Recommendations

1. It is recommended that a course in adult psychology be added to the requirements leading to a degree in agricultural education. With this added training the vocational agriculture teacher would then be more prepared to cope with the daily problems with which he is faced.

2. It is also recommended that upon entering a new school system, the vocational agriculture teacher acquaint himself as quickly as possible with the problems of the community farmers and with all persons in the community. It would be an advantage to join some of the civic organizations, being careful to work hard at being a "dedicated" member, not just a "joiner". Through the association with the local personalities, one can further the community-school relationship. As one superintendent wrote - "The teacher should serve when asked, but should not 'barge in'". Many superintendents appreciate a teacher who can and will accept community responsibilities, however, modesty in serving is of prime importance.

3. It is recommended that other agricultural agencies in the county be invited to attend some of the FFA meetings and participate in the program. In this way the students have a better understanding of all phases of agricultural life and at the same time, we as teachers, can promote a harmonious relationship among the other agencies.

4. It is recommended that vocational agriculture teachers strive to improve the communication problem with their administration. Many times our problems become so complex, and upon studying the situation, it is found that communications have broken down, mostly from living

such hurried lives. We are prone to forget our administrators have as many, or more, problems than we and that sometimes we should take the initiative in presenting our problems to him.

Close coordination of the agriculture programs with either the principal or superintendent may prove to be more than worth the time and effort spent. In this way a new teacher can more or less "feel" his way until he has his feet thoroughly planted on the ground floor. Full development of his program could then be established with the knowledge that he was operating to the satisfaction of the administration. It is the belief of the writer that many teachers move into a new situation and start developing their programs without consultation with the administration, and while nothing is said, often times there are loop holes which later lead first to misunderstanding, then to dissatisfaction, and eventually to the discharge of the teacher before he has actually had time to establish a program.

It is sincerely hoped that the results of this study may be of some benefit to teachers in establishing tenure.

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APPENDIX

January 8, 1963
Harrah, Oklahoma

Mr.
Superintendent of Schools
, Oklahoma

Dear Sir:

Enclosed please find a questionnaire which was prepared as a study for determining the qualifications required for a Vocational Agriculture instructor to have long tenure.

This questionnaire has been approved by the Department of Agricultural Education of Oklahoma State University for a report pursuant to my Master's Degree and has been mailed to twenty-five school superintendents throughout Oklahoma.

I shall be very grateful if you will complete the questionnaire by placing a check mark in the blank you think is appropriate and return to me by February 1, 1963.

All information will be very confidential. Neither your name nor your school will be used in the report, and no one will know which superintendent submitted a completed questionnaire.

It is the desire of the Agricultural Education Department that this report will help solve some of the teacher-tenure problems.

Sincerely,

Jodie L. VanBuren
Vocational Agriculture Instructor
Harrah, Oklahoma

Purpose:

To find the qualities necessary for Vocational Agriculture teachers to have long tenure in the schools of Oklahoma.

A. SUBJECT MATTER:

1. He has a thorough knowledge of the agriculture problems in his supervised farm training program.
2. He has the ability to communicate effectively in presentation of subject matter.
3. He does a thorough and orderly job of securing and maintaining departmental facilities, equipment, and teaching materials.
4. He places special emphasis on the agricultural economic problems in the community.
5. He conducts an instructional program for in-school students based on needs growing out of their supervised farming programs.

EXCELLENT	GOOD	FAIR	POOR

B. COMMUNITY SERVICE:

1. He spends a large part of his time with adult farmer problems.
2. He spends a large part of his time with local civic activities.
3. He cooperates with and coordinates his program with agricultural agencies in the county.
4. He provides organized class instruction in agriculture for adults in the community
5. He contributes his time and energies on activities designed to improve the school and the community.

C. PROFESSIONAL IMPROVEMENT:

1. He spends sufficient amount of time in professional improvement.

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2. He reflects pride in his professional improvement.

3. He has above minimum requirements for teaching Vocational Agriculture.

4. He is recognized in the community as being well qualified professionally.

EXCELLENT	GOOD	FAIR	POOR

D. ADMINISTRATION:

1. He is loyal to the Administration and to fellow workers.

2. He accepts responsibility for performing other school duties.

3. He observes school rules, regulations, and policies.

4. He clears with the teachers and administration before taking students from other classes.

5. He keeps the administration informed of his work.

6. He makes appropriate arrangements prior to being away from school.

7. He considers his vocational agriculture program and department as an integral part of the school.

E. SCHOOL BOARDS:

1. His contacts with the School Board in regard to their recommendations relative to the Vocational Agriculture program is handled as the administration desires.

2. He utilizes the services of the School Board in public functions to the advantage of the total school program.

F. SCHOOL FACULTY:

1. He cooperates to promote harmonious faculty relationship; shows interest in the total school program

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2. He is loyal to fellow workers.

3. He takes steps that will cause other faculty members to understand the nature and scope of his work.

4. He makes necessary arrangements for his classes when he must be away.

EXCELLENT	GOOD	FAIR	POOR

G. DISCIPLINE:

1. He takes full responsibility of discipline in Vocational Agriculture classes.

2. He calls on superintendent or principal in extreme discipline problems.

3. He corrects students in a calm, but firm manner.

4. He determines the circumstances, and the student or students involved before administering discipline.

5. He stays within authority in disciplining students.

H. COMMUNITY OUTLOOK ON TENURE:

1. He takes tenure as a matter of prudence.

2. The community appreciates tenure of their Vocational Agriculture teacher.

3. School Boards outlook on tenure of Vocational Agriculture teacher.

4. Superintendents outlook on tenure of Vocational Agriculture teacher.

I. PERSONALITY:

1. He demonstrates honesty and integrity in all personal dealings.

2. He displays a warm, friendly personality.

3. He possesses a desirable personality to meet the needs of the students.

4. He possesses an attitude of good sportsmanship.

5. He uses clean speech in presence of others.

6. He exercises control of his personal feelings in his dealings with people.

EXCELLENT	GOOD	FAIR	POOR

J. CIVIC GROUPS:

1. He takes an active part in community, civic, and fraternal organizations.

2. He has Vocational Agriculture classes meet with local civic groups.

3. He has FFA boys work with local civic groups.

4. He serves as an officer or on a functioning committee in local civic groups.

K. OTHER AGENCIES: SCS, COUNTY AGENT, AND OTHERS:

1. He cooperates with other agencies.

2. He helps plan and participates in local and county activities.

3. He helps plan and participates in local farm tours and field trips.

4. He joins and participates in local organizations.

L. FINANCES:

1. He is prompt in paying bills or matters so as to have a good credit rating.

M. FAMILY LIFE:

1. He takes an active part in his church.

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2. He owns or is buying his home.
3. He makes his home attractive.
4. He improves his home facilities.
5. He has an ideal family life.

EXCELLENT	GOOD	FAIR	POOR

VITA

Jodie Lee Van Buren

Candidate for the Degree of

Master of Science

Report: THE QUALITIES NECESSARY FOR A VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE TEACHER TO HAVE LONG TENURE IN THE SCHOOLS OF OKLAHOMA AS EXPRESSED BY SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS

Major Field: Agricultural Education

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born at Carter, Oklahoma, June 10, 1920, the son of Ralph and Berta Van Buren

Education: Attended school at Carter, Oklahoma, graduating from high school in 1940; graduated from Cameron College, Lawton, Oklahoma, in 1948; received the Bachelor of Science Degree from the Oklahoma State University with a major in Agricultural Education in January, 1950. Completed requirements for Master of Science Degree in Agricultural Education at the Oklahoma State University in August, 1963.

Professional Experience: Active duty as pilot in Army Air Force 1942-1946, First Lieutenant; Veterans Agricultural Training Instructor at El Reno, Oklahoma, 1950-1952; Vocational Agriculture Teacher at Harrah, Oklahoma, from 1953 to present. Member of American Vocational Association, Oklahoma Vocational Association, Oklahoma Education Association, and National Agriculture Teachers Association.

Date of Final Examination: August, 1963