

News and Trends

Who Are ASCD Members?

Margaret Gill

WHO are the members of ASCD? Supervisors? Consultants? Directors of instruction? State department personnel? College and university professors? Producers of instructional materials? Teachers? Principals? For an answer we have had some hunches and some outdated information, neither of which is adequate for making important decisions about the kinds of activities for which ASCD should be expending its resources now and in the immediate future. For long-range program planning based on the responsibilities of members of the Association, exact information is needed about who the members are and what their positions are.

In an effort to obtain the needed information, 7,696 questionnaires were mailed to individual ASCD members in November 1963. This membership survey,¹ the first since 1957, was perhaps the most detailed survey of its kind undertaken by the Association. Two mailings were made when necessary to obtain responses, and three questionnaires went to some people in a diligent effort to get as complete information as possible. An analysis of some of the findings may be of interest to those who are a part of ASCD.

Years of Membership. The largest percentage of the respondents, 33.5, have

¹This resulted in a 76.7 percent return, or 5,905, which speaks highly for the cooperation of the membership.

been members 2-5 years, with the second largest group, 24.6 percent, having membership 6-10 years. However, the 11-15 year period decreased to 13.4 percent. Only 9 percent are first year members. The peaks of 2-10 years membership indicate failure to hold members. This fact becomes disturbing when examined against the trend of an increase in individual membership for the past five years. The increase has been small but steady.

At this time the Association is not made up of an aging population. Thirty individuals have been members 26 or more years; this means they were identified with the original NEA Department of Supervisors and Directors of Instruction, which preceded the merger of this Department with the Society for Curriculum Study and resulted in the Department of Supervision and Curriculum Development, eventually becoming ASCD in 1946. According to the Constitution "any individual who has been a member of the Association for 15 consecutive years, and has reached the age of 70 shall be a life member of the Association." Yet, we have only eleven life members.

What happens to ASCD members after 2-5 or 6-10 years? Why do they drop out?

Experience. Of the number responding to the questionnaire, 1,004 (17 percent) have had 26-30 years experience; 977

(16.5 percent) indicated 11-15 years experience, yet the range between the two, 16-25 years experience, includes 27.5 percent of the total.

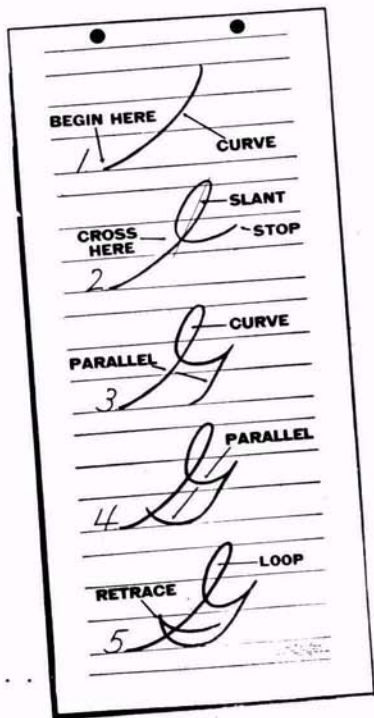
It could be inferred that the number of people new in supervisory or curriculum positions do not join ASCD since only 3 percent of the total have 1-5 years experience. Only 8.3 percent have 6-10 years experience.

Why are more new supervisors not a part of ASCD? What is the responsibility of experienced curriculum workers to new people in the field?

Highest Degree Earned. Twenty-five percent of those surveyed hold doctoral degrees, with 17 percent of these being Ed.D.'s and 8 percent Ph.D.'s. Sixty-six percent hold Master's degrees, with the M.A. degree earned by the largest number of ASCD'ers (40.8 percent). The baccalaureate degree accounts for 4.5 percent.

With the growing interest in professionalization and the increasing number of teachers who have Master's degrees, what type of training beyond the M.A. should be provided for the approximate two-thirds of the ASCD membership?

Sex. The membership is almost equally divided between men and women, with the males having the slight advantage of 50.4 percent of the respondents who checked this part of the survey. In the states with more than 100 national members who participated in the survey, there is a predominance of women in California, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Maryland, North Carolina, Ohio, Tennessee and Virginia. The same trend is evident in several southern states with fewer than 100 members, including Alabama, Arkansas, Kentucky and Louisiana; also



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Puerto Rico. More men are found in Illinois, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, New Jersey, New York, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Texas, Washington and Wisconsin. Predominance of men exists in some states with fewer than 100 members: Colorado, Idaho, Kansas, Massachusetts and Montana; also Canada.

What is to be inferred from the seemingly regional and geographical pattern of differences in sex? What are the implications for selection and recruitment?

Size School System. Seventy-one percent of the total number of respondents are in public schools. Of this number 49.6 percent are in school systems of fewer than 10,000 pupil population and 32.4 percent from systems of 10,000 to 75,000 pupils. Only 4.3 percent are in the 75,000 to 100,000 range, but in the systems larger than 100,000 the percentage increased to 13.7 percent. It could be expected that larger systems with correspondingly larger supervisory and consultant staffs would constitute a greater part of the ASCD membership.

From 1961 to 1964 California has had the largest state membership, followed in order by New York, Illinois, Michigan, Ohio. The survey revealed the same pattern of ASCD membership in school systems of the various sizes of school population that has existed in the five largest states for the period 1961 to 1964.

Why does ASCD attract most of its members from the school systems of fewer than 10,000 school population?

Positions of ASCD Members

Four general categories of positions were used in the survey: public school, state department, higher education, and other.

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Positions of ASCD Members

Public Schools	71%
State Departments	3%
Higher Education	20%
Other	5%

Public Schools. Of the public school personnel in ASCD, elementary principals from schools of 15-30 classroom units constitute the largest category, followed in order by elementary supervisors, assistant or associate superintendents in charge of instruction, superintendents, directors of elementary curriculum or education, curriculum directors and curriculum consultants.

Principals, totaling 1,147 including vice or assistant principals, are 19.4 percent of the total, while supervisors, including general and special subject, consultants and department heads are 21.5 percent. Assistant superintendents in charge of instruction and directors of curriculum and directors of elementary and second-

ary curriculum make up 16.8 percent of the total.

Home economics supervisors lead the special subject group, followed closely by language arts/English and art. Teachers number 207 or 3.5 percent of the total. Those responsible for pupil personnel services, including counselors, psychologists, librarians, and visiting teachers, constitute 1.1 percent. There were only 21 directors of research (.4 percent).

Secondary personnel, junior and senior high including principals, teachers, supervisors and department heads, are a noticeable minority of the ASCD membership. Of the nine most frequently indicated positions in the public schools, not one secondary position was found; three of the nine were designated elementary and the remaining were general.

Is the principal the key person in curriculum development? Are the roles of



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the elementary principal and the supervisor becoming identical? What is the teacher's role in curriculum planning? Why are more secondary people not involved in ASCD? What is the difference between elementary and secondary curriculum development?

State Department Personnel. Three percent of those surveyed are employed in state departments of education. Of this group most have responsibility in two areas: special subject and elementary education. Only 8 of the total of 195 work at the secondary level.

Higher Education. The observation is occasionally made that ASCD is dominated by college and university people. Examination of the survey results reveals evidence to the contrary. Twenty percent of the respondents are in higher education; of this number, deans and assistant or associate deans make up 2 percent

and professors of all ranks 18 percent. Full professors are 7.6 percent of the membership but instructors only .6 percent.

Analysis of the membership of the Board of Directors as of February 1964 revealed 64 percent of the total Board were non-college.

Other. A category "other" was used to group positions not clearly identified with public schools, colleges and universities, or state departments. It is extremely difficult to list all titles used to describe the many jobs, responsibilities and interests in the area of instruction. Some important jobs were omitted from the survey forms unintentionally. Some important roles were omitted in cases where other professional organizations are specifically designed to provide for specialized interests, such as audio-visual.

The category "other" made up 8 per-

cent of the survey respondents. The two major categories were student members (88) and producers of instructional materials (88). ASCD has pioneered in involving parents and other citizens in curriculum planning, yet only 5 of the respondents are lay citizens, and only 6 school board members participated in the survey.

What is the appropriate role of lay citizens in curriculum development? How can the variety of interests contribute to curriculum development? Should ASCD activities be concentrated more on specialized areas and less on general concerns?

Who Are the Members of ASCD?

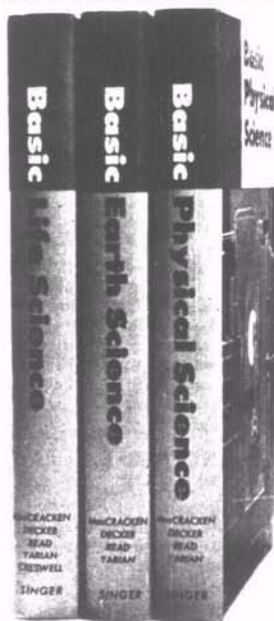
The stereotype member constructed from the results of the survey works in a public school system of less than 10,000 pupil population, has a Master's degree

and either 26-30 years or 11-15 years experience but has been a member of the Association for 2-5 years.

The object of ASCD as stated in the Constitution is "... the general improvement of education through better instruction and supervision. . . ." If the status of membership as revealed in the survey may be expected to continue, some pertinent questions need attention.

Should ASCD continue to direct its resources toward a wide range of educational concerns? Should ASCD plan primarily for the the majority of the current membership? Should ASCD's program be focused to involve more people with responsibilities for curriculum development if the general objective of the Association is to be translated specifically into the lives and work of the members?

—MARGARET GILL, *Executive Secretary, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.*



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