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### Center for Extended Services: A Land Grant Concept

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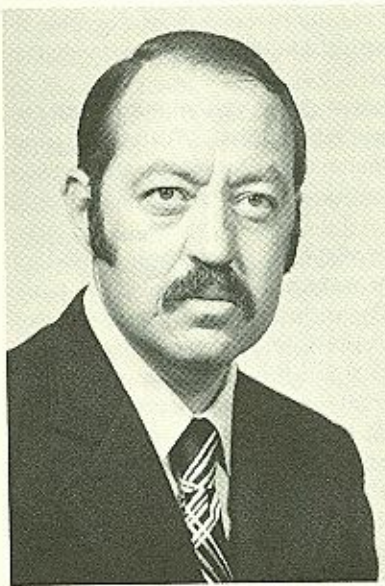
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The goal of the Center for Extended Services is to provide assistance to local school personnel in their own environment. Services provided by the Center include educational facilities evaluation, curriculum planning, administration improvement, and grant proposal preparation.

## center for extended services: a land grant concept

Eddy J. Van Meter



Dr. Eddy J. Van Meter, in addition to serving as Director of the Center for Extended Services, is associate professor of Educational Administration and Foundations within the College of Education at Kansas State University. Prior to joining the faculty at Kansas State University, Dr. Van Meter was coordinator for a school principalship training program in New Mexico and was a research associate with the ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools. Dr. Van Meter received his undergraduate degree from the University of New Mexico, and received both the Master's Degree and Doctorate in Educational Administration and Management Psychology from New Mexico State University. Dr. Van Meter's academic areas of interest include organization behavior and educational organization development as well as program and project management and evaluation.

The Center for Extended Services within the College of Education at Kansas State University is operated as a coordinating unit for the College, specifically responsible for the promotion and delivery of educational support services throughout the state. Providing such services—in the form of consulting and contracted work with local school districts and through the publication of reports and studies which are addressed to the practical concerns of Kansas school personnel—is a responsibility very much in keeping with the land-grant university concept and mission. To gain a clear understanding of the Center and how it fits within the total organizational structure of the College, it is perhaps necessary to look beyond the stated purpose of the Center and examine the actual kinds of activities in which the Center is engaged.

It should be noted at the outset that the KSU College of Education is organizationally comprised of three major departments: Curriculum and Instruction, Administration and Foundations, and Adult and Occupational Education. Such a departmental division of emphasis is typical within a major university where the total College faculty may include anywhere from 60 or 70 to several hundred members. These departments, each operating as a part of the College, in effect focus on separate teaching and research activities and areas of professional training interest. In addition, each department works separately in providing support services to local schools. There are times, however, when service-related programs and projects do not fit neatly under the auspices of a single department. Under such circumstances, it may be necessary to have faculty members from several departments working on a single project. The Center for Extended Services is organized in part to be responsive to the need for such comprehensive projects.

The Center for Extended Services operates from an office located on the KSU campus. This office has support staff and the necessary equipment and materials needed to develop and produce project reports. The Center draws upon the expertise of faculty members within the College to actually conduct projects which have been contracted. The director of the Center for Extended Services serves as a coordinator for projects, as an individual who can maintain liaison with appropriate school district personnel, as the individual primarily responsible for the financial overseeing of project expenditures, and as the individual who assists with the preparation of both written reports and required verbal reports which might be provided to school personnel or boards of education as a part of a total project.



Services provided through the Center are divided into several general categories. One of the major activities of the Center has been to work with school systems on educational facility evaluation and improvement studies. With reference to this kind of project, a procedure that is usually followed is for a school district to request that the Center make a determination about existing facilities, usually looking toward the possibility of building a new facility which, in turn, often requires the initiation of a voter referendum. A facility study will, therefore, usually include a thorough examination of buildings, a review of building sites that are currently owned by the district, a determination of new sites which might be needed, and a determination of student population characteristics and future trends which provide an indication of building needs. The Center, on request, will also work with a designated architect in the preliminary development of sketches and space needs and will also represent or assist in representing the school district before the State Board of Education.

A second service provided by the Center is to conduct educational needs assessments which provide direction for curriculum planning. In conducting such a needs assessment, the Center typically will develop survey instruments that are specific to the school district or will use needs assessment instruments and materials that are already available. An additional part of an educational needs assessment contract will often include a systematic program of interaction between the Center staff and professional staff and citizen advisory groups within the district. As is the case with facility evaluation and improvement studies, a final written report is prepared and submitted to the local board of education at the conclusion of a project.

Another service activity of the Center is to work with a school system on the development and initiation of a program leading to administrative and management improvement within the district. This kind of contracted service usually entails a thorough review of administrative and management practice in the district followed by a suggested series of improvements and, when needed, a program of in-service training for administrative personnel. Again, a report is prepared and submitted to the district as a part of the administrative improvement contracted service.

The Center for Extended Services also makes available to school districts information concerning speakers for professional meetings and for other local speaking engagements. This kind of service is done simply as a courtesy to districts and is not a contracted service. The procedure usually followed for speaking engagements is for the local district to work out a consulting fee directly with the individual who might be identified through the Center

speaker referral. Speakers may or may not be members of the KSU faculty.

The Center also works with local school systems on the preparation of proposals for state, federal, and private foundation grants. This service usually is provided on a day-by-day consulting basis. The service typically involves the provision of technical writing assistance, a review of the proposal prior to submission by a KSU faculty member with particular expertise in the area under consideration, and where appropriate, assistance in interacting with granting agencies.

The Center also prepares and distributes to school personnel throughout the state periodic monographs and reports which are addressed to educational concerns and emerging topics of interests. These reports are distributed as a means of providing local school personnel with current information which is being compiled and prepared on the university campus as part of the on-going commitment to research and new knowledge which is a vital responsibility of the university.

Topics of educational interest which are currently being researched and which will be developed into monographs for distribution in the near future include effectively dealing with declining enrollment, issues relating to school consolidation, and procedures for developing administrative teams which are multi-district in composition.

It might be noted that the Center for Extended Services, as the name would imply, has been established not as a profit-making organization but rather as a unit of the College of Education which can provide services directly to school personnel at their on-site location in an effective and efficient manner. Contracts which are made with local school systems, therefore, are based on an estimate of actual expenditure needed to accomplish whatever project is being pursued. The kinds of costs that are typically incurred by the Center include consulting fee, materials and supplies, secretarial support expenses, travel and communication expenses, and printing costs.

It is anticipated in the future that the Center for Extended Services will perhaps become more actively involved in the development and coordination of on-site, in-service programs for teaching and administrative personnel. Such coordination, it is anticipated, will be done jointly with departments within the College. In addition, it is anticipated that while the state of Kansas will continue to be regarded as the major service area for the Center, there will be some expansion of effort in surrounding states. Such expanded efforts are particularly anticipated in reference to educational facility studies primarily as a result of the expertise available to the Center in conducting such studies.