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# A survey of the attitudes of Virginia's teachers concerning merit pay

Ira J. Mitchell

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A SURVEY OF THE ATTITUDES OF VIRGINIA'S TEACHERS  
CONCERNING MERIT PAY

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A Thesis  
Presented to  
the Graduate Faculty of the  
University of Richmond

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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Science in Education

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by  
Ira Jackson Mitchell

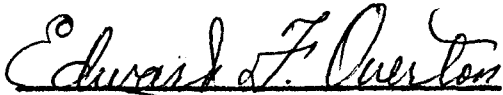
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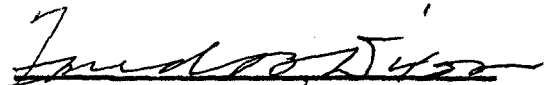
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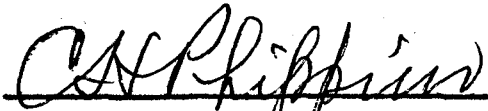
candidate for the degree of Master of Science in Education, and hereby certify their approval of its acceptance.



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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

The interest shown by the public in demanding quality in education is evidenced by the number of articles appearing in newspapers and magazines. In order that quality be developed and maintained, school systems will undoubtedly have to find a means of attracting and holding superior teachers.<sup>1</sup> One means by which some school systems might meet this challenge would be the establishment of a pay system which would be on a competitive basis with that of the business world. The purpose of this survey is to study the attitudes of Virginia teachers on merit pay. It is hoped that, after this study is completed, those persons interested in this means for improving instruction will have a more complete picture of the situation with which they will be faced.

It was not the intent of this writer to establish a case for or against merit pay. He became interested in this question after reading a statement by Governor Albertis S. Harrison in his address to the General Assembly of Virginia January 15, 1962:

I approve the principle of merit pay, or to express it differently, "career increment." If we are to attract capable and ambitious men and women to teaching, then ultimately the profession itself, or the General Assembly, will have to devise a plan for rewarding outstanding teachers. Merit pay will do

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<sup>1</sup>Albertis S. Harrison, Jr., Address To The General Assembly of Virginia, Monday, January 15, 1962, Senate Document 3-A (Richmond, Virginia: Commonwealth of Virginia, Department of Purchases and Supply, 1962), p. 14.



little for the weak or average teacher. It should provide an incentive for the ambitious and capable teacher. There are various means, ways and methods by which this can be accomplished which will benefit generally the cause of good education.<sup>2</sup>

Here the Governor offers the profession a challenge to solve this problem or have it solved by the General Assembly.

There are diverse meanings attached to merit pay; but ordinarily they may be placed under two categories: (1) acceleration means to advance by double or more than the normal increments which enables teachers to attain the maximum salary level prematurely, thus increasing their life earnings; (2) superior service maximums afford the teachers an opportunity to advance beyond the maximum salary scale which serves as an incentive for those who are career teachers.<sup>3</sup> In this study merit pay will be defined as a plan for differentiating salaries on the basis of performance of teachers holding similar instructional posts. The evaluation of the teachers will be done by supervisory or instructional personnel, or both. Merit rating could result in pay increases above regular increment or increases above and beyond the maximum salary scale.

The merit rating system has been used very successfully in industry and business. This is where it had its beginnings and this is where numerous articles advocating its adoption by education have

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<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 17.

<sup>3</sup>"Merit Salary Schedules for Teachers," Journal of Teacher Education, June 1957, p. 129.

originated. Some teachers resent this probably because they are members of a profession and do not appreciate this advice from outsiders.

Merit pay is not new to the educational field. Many school systems had a merit pay scale prior to the Depression. They were forced to drop it because they had to revise their pay scales on short notice because of lack of funds. Lynchburg (Virginia) dropped its merit pay scale after forty years because of a lack of an acceptable means of evaluation.<sup>4</sup>

The National Education Association has kept statistics on merit salary programs for school districts of 300,000 population. The percentages show a decline from 1938-39 to 1952-53. There was a slight rise in these percentages in 1956-57 and a rise in 1957-58 as shown in Table I.<sup>5</sup>

In 1963 the United States Office of Education investigated the practices of six school districts with respect to programs of merit pay:<sup>6</sup>

Canton, Connecticut - Established present salary system in 1957.

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<sup>4</sup>"Reasons Given For Abandoning Merit Rating Provisions From Teacher Salary Schedules." Mimeographed study by National Education Association, Research Division, January, 1958, p. 4.

<sup>5</sup>Hazel Davis, "Where We Stand on Merit Rating as applied to Teachers' Salaries," National Education Association Journal, November, 1957, p. 3.

<sup>6</sup>James P. Steffensen, Merit Salary Programs in Six Selected School Districts, U. S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Office of Education (Washington, D. C.: U. S. Printing Office, 1962), pp. 5 and 6.

TABLE I  
PERCENTAGE OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS  
(SCHOOL POP. 300,000 OR MORE)  
WITH MERIT PAY PLANS

Year	Number of districts reporting	Some type of merit rating
1938-39	225	20.4%
1948-49	301	12.3%
1950-51	306	8.5%
1952-53	402	4.0%
1954-55	427	4.9%
1955-56	504	6.3%
1956-57	498	5.0%
1957-58	414	7.0%

Ladue, Missouri - Established present salary system in 1954.

Rich Township High School, Park Forest, Illinois - Established present salary system in 1953.

Summit, New Jersey - This district had an informal policy dating back to 1937 but established present system in 1959.

Weber School District, Utah - This district put its salary policy into effect in 1958.

West Hartford, Connecticut - A merit pay scale was established in 1953 but the present program was initiated in 1960.

The procedure used in obtaining the reactions to merit pay was to survey teachers by means of a questionnaire. The objective was not only to determine those for and against merit pay, but also to establish the reasons for their opinion as well as to analyze the qualifications, experience, position held and other pertinent facts about the respondents. The school year 1962-63 was the year the survey was made. The data obtained from this survey were tabulated and studied to determine the attitudes of teachers concerning merit pay.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

In recent years much interest in the question of merit pay has been reflected in the abundance of articles and studies published on this subject. Most of this material contains reports and surveys of opinions and attitudes of those questioned. Very few objective studies have been found to prove or disprove the feasibility of merit pay for teachers.<sup>7</sup>

One writer believes that in order for any such pay system to be established certain problems which might arise could be eliminated if proper care were taken during the planning stage. It is evident that early planning is paramount in the success of the program.<sup>8</sup>

For the most part, advocates of merit pay base the acceptance of such a system on the belief that incentive of salary increases will raise teaching quality and that merit pay will foster increased professionalization. A brief summary of reasons supporting this view are:

1. Greater financial support would mean better quality education.
2. An improved teacher would mean better teacher-pupil relationship.

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<sup>7</sup>W. S. Elsbree and E. Edmund Reuther, Staff Personnel in the Public Schools (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1954), p. 151.

<sup>8</sup>Robert C. Gibson, "Paying for Pedagogical Power," Phi Delta Kappan, January, 1961, pp. 148-51.

3. Merit pay would provide a stimulus for self-improvement.
4. Merit pay would provide a means for rewarding superior teachers.
5. Merit pay would make evaluation more meaningful.
6. The public would support an improved school system.<sup>9</sup>
7. Ambitious teachers would be rewarded.
8. Merit pay would increase life income for those teachers receiving merit rating.<sup>10</sup>
9. Merit pay has proved successful in other fields.<sup>11</sup>
10. Some teachers believe in a rating system because they are constantly rating pupils.<sup>12</sup>
11. Merit pay will serve as holding power for those competent individuals who might go into business and industry.<sup>13</sup>

A random sampling of active members of Phi Delta Kappa in 1959 showed a favorable attitude toward merit pay in principle. Those sampled doubted if an acceptable rating system had yet been devised although more than three-fourths of the respondents believed that merit

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<sup>9</sup>B. J. Chandler and Paul V. Petty, Personnel Management in School Administration (New York: World Book Company, 1955), p. 250.

<sup>10</sup>Elsbree and Reuther, op. cit., p. 152.

<sup>11</sup>Chandler and Petty, op. cit., p. 249.

<sup>12</sup>Clarence Hines, "To Merit Pay or Not To Merit Pay," American School Board Journal, August, 1958, pp. 9 and 10.

<sup>13</sup>National Education Association, "The Arguments on Merit Rating," National Education Association Research Memo, December, 1959, p. 2.

pay would be more widely used in the next decade.<sup>14</sup>

Most often, opposition to merit pay is based on the opinion that it has been all but impossible to implement an objective means for evaluating individual teachers. Another basis for opposition is the belief that merit pay would be used instead of rather than in addition to equitable salary schedules for teachers.

Some of the opinions in support of this are:

1. The task of a teacher is highly complex, therefore difficult to evaluate.
2. Evaluators would not be fair.<sup>15</sup>
3. Teachers deal with developing intangibles which cannot be measured such as the products of industry are measured.
4. Varying salary scales will lead to class distinction among teachers.<sup>16</sup>
5. Parents will want their children in the classes of those teachers receiving merit pay.
6. It will require more supervision, thus more expense.
7. It is psychologically unsound due to the barrier it would create between administrator and teacher.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>14</sup>Phi Delta Kappa, "Do You Know the Score on Merit Rating? It's Changing," Phi Delta Kappan, January, 1961, p. 137.

<sup>15</sup>Finis E. Engleman, "Problems of Merit Rating," National Education Association Journal, April, 1957, p. 210.

<sup>16</sup>National Education Association Research Memo, op. cit.

<sup>17</sup>Chandler and Petty, op. cit.

8. Some of the best systems in the country don't use merit pay.
9. Staff evaluation based on sound counseling techniques would do more to improve the level of instruction than merit pay.<sup>18</sup>

Eight hundred and forty-nine teachers and eighteen administrators in suburban Philadelphia were in favor of merit pay but they had certain reservations about its operation, particularly with regard to evaluation.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>18</sup>Robert I. Sperber, "A Sound Staff Evaluation Program." American School Board Journal, July, 1960, pp. 15 and 16.

<sup>19</sup>Merle W. Tate and Charles F. Haughey, "Teachers Rate Merit Rating," Nation's Schools, September, 1958, pp. 48-50.



## CHAPTER III

### METHOD OF SURVEY

In conducting a survey the ideal would be to see that every person who would be concerned with the question is included in the survey. Since there were 35,827 elementary and high school teachers in Virginia in the 1962-63 session, it was all but impossible to achieve this ideal.<sup>20</sup>

The sampling technique of every tenth classroom teacher was selected. These teachers were contacted through the division superintendent's office if possible.

Preparation of the Questionnaire. In preparing the questionnaire certain information was considered to be pertinent. This information could also be related to the subjects' answers. The questionnaire was made as short as possible and could be answered with little effort. Most of the items could be answered by checking or by one word answers. The final question was open end allowing the subject to give his opinion on the question of merit pay. In order that there might be some common ground of understanding, the writer's definition of merit pay was included. Information which could possibly have significant bearing on the subject's opinion of the question was as follows:

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<sup>20</sup>"Virginia's Supply of Teachers, A Report for the year 1963-64," Virginia Department of Education Information Service Bulletin (Richmond, Virginia: State Department of Education, July, 1964), p. 1.

- a. Present instructional position
- b. Educational background
- c. Virginia certification
- d. Race
- e. Sex
- f. Marital status
- g. Experience
- h. Plans about continuing in the profession
- i. For or against merit pay
- j. Reason for opinion.<sup>21</sup>

Method of Sample for Virginia. A letter was sent to the 120 division superintendents.<sup>22</sup> The letters were mailed about May 6, 1963. Fifty-nine school divisions approved the request, some with a minor degree of limitation. This meant a forty-nine per cent participation of school divisions. The limitations placed upon the compliance of the request were that the superintendent did not wish to distribute or return the questionnaires and some did not wish to take the responsibility of returning them. In such cases the superintendent furnished a listing of teachers or principals and the matter was handled through them directly. Ten of the fifty-nine divisions were sampled in this manner.

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<sup>21</sup>Infra, Appendix, p. 35.

<sup>22</sup>Infra, Appendix, p. 36.

One thousand seven hundred and thirty-nine questionnaires were mailed to superintendents or to individuals. There was no means of checking returns from each division because the questionnaires were not marked in any way so as to identify school divisions. One small county did not return its questionnaires and one small city returned them unanswered. So, in the final analysis fifty-seven school systems were sampled as shown by Table II.

TABLE II  
PER CENT OF SCHOOL DIVISIONS SURVEYED  
CONCERNING MERIT PAY

Divisions Surveyed	School Divisions	Per Cent of Divisions Returning Questionnaires
57	117*	48.72

\*Fairfax City (sent pupils to Fairfax County)  
Prince Edward (no public schools)  
Chesapeake (Norfolk County and City of South Norfolk)

The 1,739 teachers receiving the questionnaires represented four and eight-tenths per cent of Virginia's classroom teachers. One thousand two hundred and forty-five questionnaires were completed and returned. This represents a seventy-one and six-tenths per cent return or three and three-tenths per cent of Virginia's teachers. This return is considered excellent since the questionnaires were sent out during May, the teachers' busiest time of the school year.

The writer was pleased since 1,182 of those returned were completed so that the information could be tabulated. Fifty-three were improperly marked and the information was not used. See figure I for a comparison of percentages showing that seventy-one and six-tenths per cent of the questionnaires were returned from forty-eight and seven-tenths per cent of the school divisions.

Divisions Surveyed	48.72%		
Questionnaires Returned		71.59%	

FIGURE I

COMPARATIVE PERCENTAGES OF DIVISIONS  
SURVEYED AND QUESTIONNAIRES RETURNED\*

\*The questionnaires returned represent seventy-one and six-tenths per cent, but due to incorrect marking only sixty-eight and five-tenths per cent were used.

The fifty-seven divisions included in the survey were placed in the rural or urban category in an attempt to show the distribution of the subjects. Questionnaires were returned from forty rural divisions and seventeen urban divisions. All of the rural divisions were counties; however, due to the extent of urbanization, Henrico and Fairfax were placed with the cities.

It is significant to note that of the 1,739 questionnaires sent out, 895 were sent to the rural (county) divisions. Eight hundred and

forty-four of the questionnaires went to urban (city) divisions.

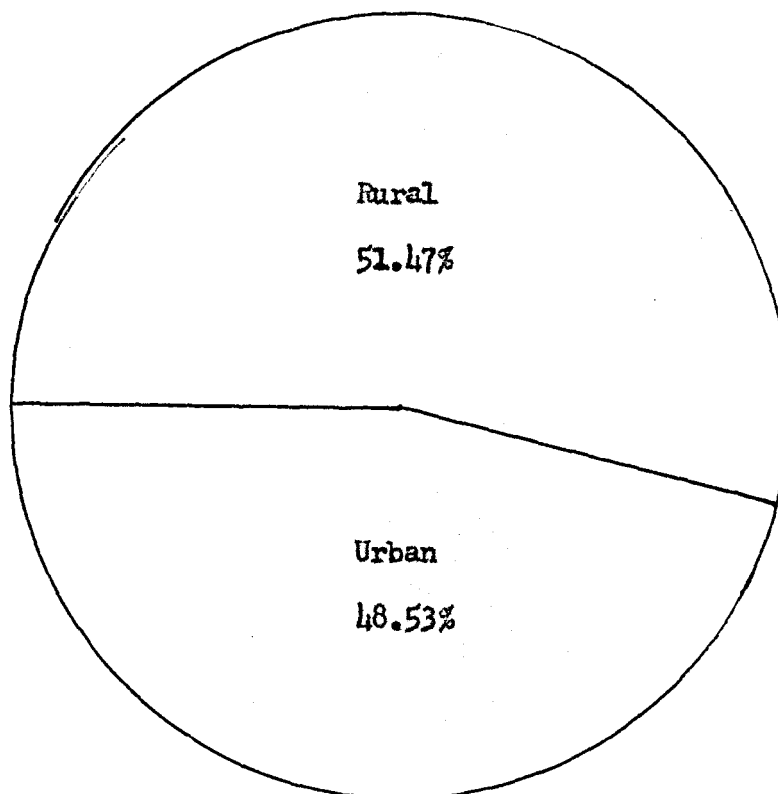


FIGURE 2

DISTRIBUTION OF QUESTIONNAIRES  
TO RURAL AND URBAN AREAS\*

\*Two of the divisions surveyed were composed of a county and a town. South Boston-Halifax was placed with the rural systems and James City-Williamsburg with the urban group.

## CHAPTER IV

### ANALYSIS OF THE SURVEY

Tabulation of Data. The findings were tabulated into the categories which were most easily identified with the results sought in the study. An attempt was made to present each question on the questionnaire in a manner so that it could be clearly identified. Even with the simplified method of marking there were certain questions which were left unanswered or were incorrectly marked. The question which presented the most difficulty in categorizing was the respondents' diversified reasons for their favorable or unfavorable response to merit pay. Certain questionnaires were not used because of illegible markings or double markings for the same question.

Statistical Analysis and Results. The questionnaires were tabulated into two basic categories--for and against--then into White and Negro, and finally by male or female. Six hundred and forty-three of the respondents were opposed to merit pay. Five hundred and five favored merit pay and thirty-four refrained from answering the question.

Three different methods were used to analyze the results. Primarily the use of the statistical technique of chi square was used to see whether the observed frequencies in the sample deviated significantly from those expected. The alleged restrictions on the use of chi square limit its use in certain cases. Table III presents results of chi square analysis. When chi square could not be used, percentages

TABLE III

CHI SQUARE ANALYSIS SHOWING RELATIONSHIPS OF VARIABLES  
TO RETURNS IN FAVOR OR AGAINST MERIT PAY

Variable	Chi Square
Sex (male vs. female)	14.52*
Race (White vs. Negro)	11.28*
Teaching Level (Elementary vs. High School)	17.22*
College Degree (No degree, Bachelor, Master or higher)	7.41*
Type of Certificate (Post Graduate Professional, Collegiate Professional, Collegiate, Normal Professional, Emergency **)	13.74*
Marital Status (Married, Single, Widowed or Divorced)	1.25
Years of Experience (1-3, 4-6, 7-10, 11-15, 16-25, 26-30, 31 plus)	10.39
Plans to Continue in the Profession (Yes, No, Indefinite)	1.20

\*Significant at the .05 level.

\*\*Includes all substandard certificates except Normal Professional.

of the total response on a given question were used. These results are given in Tables IV and V. Finally, tabulation of each question will be presented so that a thorough picture of the study may be given as shown in Table VI.

Those teachers opposing merit pay represent fifty-four and eight-tenths per cent of the tabulated returns. Forty-two and three-tenths per cent of the tabulated returns were in favor of merit pay. Only two and eight-tenths per cent had no opinion on the question, and in most cases the teacher's reason for no opinion was that he did not believe that he knew enough concerning the question to give an answer.

A greater percentage of men than women favor merit pay. This is probably due to the fact that in many cases the man's income is primary to his family. There were 142 men favoring and 120 opposing the question of merit pay. Returns from women show 362 in favor and 523 opposing merit pay. The chi square was found to be significant in this case at the .05 level. In 1962-63 the breakdown of male and female teachers was 7,045 males and 28,782 females.<sup>23</sup> The returns represent three and seven-tenths per cent and three and one-tenth percent of the teachers respectively.

The per cent of Negro teachers favoring merit pay is larger than the per cent of white teachers favoring it. Out of the 1,148 responses to this question, one hundred and eight Negroes favored and eighty-four

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<sup>23</sup>"Virginia's Supply of Teachers, A Report for the Year 1963-64," op. cit., p. 1.



opposed merit pay. Five hundred and sixty white teachers opposed and 396 favored merit pay. This could have been due partially to the impending desegregation movement. This is significant as shown by Table III. Negro teachers numbered 8,993 and white 27,834 in 1962-63.<sup>24</sup> This represents two and one-tenth per cent and three and four-tenths per cent respectively.

In comparing the results of elementary and high school teachers on the question, a greater per cent of high school than elementary teachers favor merit pay. The results in Table III show a value for chi square to be highly significant. One possible reason for the outcome in this particular category could very well be that the ratio of men to women in high schools is considerably more than it is in elementary schools. Statistics for 1962-63 show that of the 20,956 teachers in elementary school only 1,338 were male teachers whereas of the 14,871 high school teachers, 5,707 were men.<sup>25</sup> There is also the question of training at the two levels of instruction. By far the greatest number of teachers employed who are without standard certificates are in the elementary schools.<sup>26</sup> The return from high school teachers was three and two-tenths per cent of all high school teachers. The elementary returns represented three and one-tenth percent of the total elementary teachers.

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<sup>24</sup>Ibid.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., p. 3.

The type of degree which the teacher holds showed an interesting relationship to the responses. The results show the lower the degree or having no degree, the greater percentage were opposed to merit pay. This appears to be somewhat interesting because the whole idea behind merit pay is to pay according to one's worth rather than training. Those teachers without degrees would seem in a position to gain more. However, it is possible that the non-degree holders voted against merit pay because they feel their job security might be in danger if a more thorough evaluation were done under a merit pay system.

It is interesting to note that the non-degree teachers voted sixty-seven to thirty-six against merit pay and those holding bachelor's degrees were 458 to 353 against the question, but those with a master's or higher degree voted 110 to 107 in favor of merit pay. Here is a 2:1 ratio against by non-degree teachers and 4:3 ratio against by bachelor degree teachers, and a 1:1 ratio favoring merit pay by those with advanced degrees. On this particular category by the use of chi square the results were significant. The replies to this question represent three and two-tenths per cent of the total classroom teachers in the state.<sup>27</sup>

The replies by those holding the different types of teaching certificates vary a small degree from the results obtained from those holding different types of degrees. The difference appears in the post-graduate professional grouping and among those holding substandard

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<sup>27</sup>Ibid., p. 1.

certificates other than the normal professional. Those holding post-graduate professional certificates were seventy-five against and seventy-one for merit pay. This is different from the results of master's degree or higher with 110 for and 107 against merit pay. Also, those with emergency type certificates voted thirteen for and ten against merit pay which is a switch from the non-degree results of sixty-seven against and thirty-six for merit pay.

Those holding collegiate professional certificates voted 434 against to 355 for, while those holding the collegiate certificate were forty-two for and thirty-four against merit pay. The normal professional certificate holders voted fifty-seven against and twenty-three for merit pay. The results returned were also significant by the use of the chi square as shown in Table III.

The results tabulated for marital status show no significant results.

The total results show 492 in favor of merit pay and 626 against. There were 1,118 returns which is three and one-tenth per cent of the total teachers.

Years of experience showed no significant difference by the chi square technique. The only group which voted in favor of merit pay was the one made up of teachers having four to six years service. Their vote was ninety-five in favor and eighty-nine against. The returns on this category represent three and one-tenth per cent of the total teachers.

Results on whether the teacher plans to continue in the profes-

sion yielded no significant difference of opinion by the use of chi square. The results were categorized under yes, no, and those giving an indefinite answer. All three groups were against merit pay. The returns represent three per cent of the state teachers.

The final question gave the subjects the opportunity to express their reason for their answer concerning merit pay as shown in Tables IV and V. Chi square could not be used due to its assumed restrictions. These results are presented in percentages. The reasons for and against were categorized into the main topics. Some of the subjects gave more than one reason so what appeared to be their main objection or support is what was tabulated. The results were placed under reasons for and against and further divided into male and female.

The main reason given in favor of merit pay was, merit pay would give added incentive for teachers to work harder and to seek professional growth. Some teachers favored merit pay but their reason was not valid. These teachers thought that teachers who performed extra duties should receive extra pay. Still another group favored merit pay but had certain reservations about how it could be implemented. The final group included reasons which did not fall into the other categories. The above results are in Table IV.

The largest group favored merit pay due to the added incentive to do a better job and to get teachers to seek more professional growth. This group made up forty-nine and three-tenths per cent of those favoring the question. Next in importance of the reasons was that teachers should be paid for extra duties such as supervising extra-curricular

TABLE IV  
 PER CENT AND RETURN DISTRIBUTION  
 OF REASONS FAVORING MERIT PAY

	Added Incentive for Professional Growth	Pay for Extra Work	In Favor But With Reservations	Not Included in Other Categories
Male	11.4% 58	11.6% 59	2.6% 13	2.1% 11
Female	37.9% 193	19.1% 97	13.0% 66	2.4% 12

functions. Those favoring merit pay for this reason were thirty and six-tenths per cent of the supporters of merit pay. Those favoring merit pay but with reservations about how it could be carried out were fifteen and five-tenths per cent of the returns favoring merit pay. The last group included only four and four-tenths per cent of the subjects in favor of merit pay.

Those favoring merit pay because it would pay for extra duties are not in the strictest sense answering the question. Merit pay by the definition used would be based on performance by those holding similar instructional posts. Their reason would have nothing to do with the quality of the job but rather the mere performance of extra duties which would surely be easy to judge and would present little or no difficulty.

In giving their reasons for being against merit pay the subjects stated two main objections as shown in Table V. First, they believed that there was no way to evaluate or administer a merit pay system. Sixty-nine and four-tenths per cent were against the question for this reason.

Next in importance was the belief that merit pay would cause friction and jealousy within a faculty. Nineteen and three-tenths per cent of those opposed to merit pay gave this as their reason. Those which fell into neither of these categories were approximately eleven per cent.

Complete results of the tabulated results are shown in Table VI.

TABLE V  
 PER CENT AND RETURN DISTRIBUTION  
 OF REASONS AGAINST MERIT PAY

	Cause Friction and Jealousy	No Way to Evaluate or Administer	Not Included in Other Categories
Male	2.2% 14	14.3% 93	1.7% 11
Female	17.2% 112	55.2% 361	9.4% 61

TABLE VI

DISTRIBUTION OF RESULTS BY PREFERENCE TO MERIT  
PAY, RACE AND SEX

	White Male For	White Female For	Negro Male For	Negro Female For	White Male Against	White Female Against	Negro Male Against	Negro Female Against
Elementary	26	159	6	61	23	312	9	48
High School	97	111	10	30	67	142	10	14
Bachelor of Arts	44	81	2	18	38	140	1	9
plus 0-15 hrs. credit	17	34	2	9	13	67		6
16-27	7	19		3	11	22		
28-50	7	4			7	10		
Bachelor of Science	41	114	8	45	27	199	9	35
0-15	14	55	3	29	12	90	2	16
16-27	12	14	2	6	2	26	3	3
28-50	8	4	2	4	5	6	2	3
Master's	40	38	6	26	33	47	9	16
0-30	23	11	5	14	19	20	5	8



TABLE VI (Cont.)

	White Male For	White Female For	Negro Male For	Negro Female For	White Male Against	White Female Against	Negro Male Against	Negro Female Against
31-55		2		2	5	2		1
56- ?	2					1		
Doctorate	1				1	1		
Postgrad. Professional	23	26	4	18	25	33	5	12
Collegiate Professional	80	193		70	55	329	14	36
Collegiate	18	12	12	2	13	19		2
Normal Professional	1	21		1		55		2
Emergency *	1	12				10		
Married	93	186	16	65	73	306	15	46
Single	29	62		16	26	103	5	11
Widowed	2	12		4	2	27		1
Divorced	1	2		5		7		4
Years Experience								
1- 3	31	46		6	21	57	3	11

TABLE VI (Cont.)

	White Male For	White Female For	Negro Male For	Negro Female For	White Male Against	White Female Against	Negro Male Against	Negro Female Against
4- 6	42	41	3	9	21	59	4	5
7-10	23	41	8	15	16	59	5	14
11-15	21	40	4	19	20	75	3	8
16-25	9	48	1	21	6	101	4	10
26-30	7	20		6	5	37		5
30- ?	1	30		12	6	61		8
<b>Plans to Continue</b>								
Yes	58	119	8	49	45	197	11	39
No	3	18	1	3	2	30		2
Indefinite	65	142	7	40	54	208	8	17

\* Emergency includes all other certificates.

## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This was not a study to support or oppose merit pay. The study attempted to ascertain the attitude of Virginia teachers concerning merit pay. For the purposes of this study, merit pay meant a plan for differentiating salaries on the basis of performance of teachers holding similar instructional posts. The evaluation of the teachers may be done by supervisory or instructional personnel, or both. Merit rating could result in pay increases above regular increment or increases above and beyond the maximum salary scale.

Merit pay has been used with some success in business and industry and there are sources who believe it could be of benefit to the field of education. There are currently several school systems in the country which use this system and there are some that have discontinued its use for various reasons.

In recent years much interest has been shown in the subject of merit pay. This is evidenced by the literature and the groups which have and are studying merit pay or merit rating.

A questionnaire, which gave the subjects the opportunity to express their opinion in support or opposition to merit pay and their reason for this opinion, was used. The questionnaire also included such information as present instructional position, training, Virginia Certificate, race, sex, marital status, experience and plans concerning continuation in the profession.

One out of every ten was selected as the sample for the survey. There were 35,827 classroom teachers in 1962-63.

After receiving the approval of the division superintendent's office, questionnaires were distributed to 1,739 teachers in fifty-nine school systems throughout the State.

One thousand one hundred and eighty-two acceptable questionnaires were returned from fifty-seven of the school systems. Six hundred and forty-three opposed merit pay, five hundred and five favored merit pay and thirty-four refrained from expressing an opinion.

The chi square technique, where it was applicable, was used to analyze the results. Chi square was used to show whether the observed frequency in a sample deviated significantly from expected frequencies. The results of the chi square calculations show that:

1. A greater per cent of men than women favor merit pay.
2. A greater per cent of Negro than white teachers favor merit pay.
3. The per cent of high school teachers favoring merit pay was greater than the per cent of elementary teachers favoring merit pay.
4. A larger per cent of teachers holding an advanced degree than those holding a Bachelor's degree or no degree favor merit pay.
5. The greater per cent of holders of the collegiate professional certificate oppose merit pay and the greater per cent of other groups of certificate holders favor merit pay.

6. There was no significant difference with regard to marital status, years of experience or plans concerning continuation in the profession.

The analysis of the reasons given for support or opposition to merit pay was reported in terms of percentages. Sixty-nine per cent of those opposing merit pay believed that there is no satisfactory means to evaluate teachers or to administer such a system. Second, teachers opposed merit pay because they presumed it would cause jealousy and friction. The largest group (forty-nine per cent) supporting merit pay did so because they believed it would give added incentive for teachers to do a better job and to gain in professional growth.

Some teachers favored merit pay but lacked a valid and acceptable reason for their opinion. One group believed that teachers should receive extra pay for the performance of extra duties. A second group favored merit pay but did not believe that an acceptable means of evaluation had been devised.

Teachers in Virginia (1962-63) opposed merit pay because they believed that an acceptable means of evaluation of teachers had not been devised. Any school system wishing to adopt a merit pay system will need to overcome this major obstacle.

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A P P E N D I X

## QUESTIONNAIRE ON MERIT PAY

PRESENT POSITION: \_\_\_\_\_ GRADE: \_\_\_\_\_ SUBJECT: \_\_\_\_\_

DEGREE(S): B.A. \_\_\_ B.S. \_\_\_ M.A. \_\_\_ DOCTORATE \_\_\_

SEMESTER HOURS COMPLETED BEYOND DEGREE \_\_\_\_\_

TYPE OF CERTIFICATE: POST-GRADUATE PROFESSIONAL \_\_\_\_\_ COLLEGIATE \_\_\_\_\_

COLLEGIATE PROFESSIONAL \_\_\_\_\_ OTHER \_\_\_\_\_

RACE: \_\_\_\_\_ SEX: \_\_\_\_\_ MARITAL STATUS: \_\_\_\_\_

YEARS OF EXPERIENCE INCLUDING THE PRESENT YEAR: \_\_\_\_\_

DO YOU PLAN TO CONTINUE IN THE PROFESSION? \_\_\_\_\_ HOW LONG? \_\_\_\_\_

CHECK ONE: I AM FOR \_\_\_\_\_ A MERIT PAY SYSTEM AS DEFINED BELOW.  
AGAINST \_\_\_\_\_WHY? \_\_\_\_\_  
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## DEFINITION OF MERIT PAY:

A PLAN FOR DIFFERENTIATING SALARIES ON THE BASIS OF PERFORMANCE OF TEACHERS HOLDING SIMILAR INSTRUCTIONAL POSTS, THE EVALUATION OF THE TEACHERS TO BE DONE BY SOME PERSON OR PERSONS, EITHER SUPERVISORY OR INSTRUCTIONAL, OR BOTH. MERIT RATING COULD RESULT IN PAY INCREASES ABOVE REGULAR INCREMENT OR INCREASES ABOVE AND BEYOND THE MAXIMUM SALARY SCALE.

7303 Parkline Drive  
Richmond, Virginia  
May 6, 1963

Mr. Joe Doe, Superintendent  
Prince Edward County Schools  
Farmville, Virginia

Dear Mr. Doe:

As a graduate student at the University of Richmond, I am making a study of certain aspects of merit pay as a topic for my thesis. I am aware that a committee was appointed by the State Board of Education in compliance with a resolution by the General Assembly to study merit pay, but as far as I can determine from one or two members of the committee with whom I have spoken, the object of my research is not a duplication of any part of the committee's study.

My objective is to determine why teachers oppose or favor such a system of pay. My plan is to sample every tenth teacher in our state regardless of race. With your permission I would like to send you copies of the questionnaire, which I intend to use in making such a survey, to be distributed to every tenth teacher in your division perhaps through your principals or anyway you see fit. I enclose a copy of the questionnaire.

As a teacher I fully realize that you receive many requests from people doing research, but I hope you realize that such a service as I request of you can aid the cause of education and by no means is limited to the benefit of the writer. I feel that this study will be of interest to many people. If you would like to have a summary of my findings, I would be glad to send you a copy. Any significant findings that I uncover will be made available to the committee referred to above.

Be assured of my deep appreciation for your help and cooperation.

Sincerely yours,

I. J. Mitchell

## VITA

Ira Jackson Mitchell, Jr., was born February 2, 1934, the only child of Lisabeth Roberts and Ira Jackson Mitchell. His early years were spent in the town of Lawrenceville, Virginia, where he graduated from high school in 1951.

He enrolled in Richmond College during the summer of 1951 and withdrew during the 1952-53 second semester at which time he returned to Lawrenceville to accept employment. He re-entered Richmond College during the summer of 1953 and attended school until June, 1956, when he married Charlotte Ray Newby.

He began his teaching career in 1956 in Henrico County and taught seventh grade at Short Pump Elementary School. After teaching two years, he returned to Richmond College where he received his Bachelor of Arts Degree in History June 8, 1959. After receiving his degree he taught for four years at Brookland Junior High School, Henrico County. He began graduate work for a Master of Science in Education Degree in 1961.

He served as Principal of Longdale Elementary School from 1963 to 1965 and has been appointed Principal of Crestview Elementary School for the 1965-66 session.

He and Charlotte have three children, Kenneth, Michael and Diane.

Membership in professional organizations includes the Henrico and Virginia Education Associations, Elementary Principals' Division of the Virginia Education Association and Henrico Principals' Association.