

## Chapter 2

# The Staff To Do the Job

THE HEAD OF THE SCHOOL, whether college president or high school principal, is an unofficial member of the annual staff and has much to do with its success or failure. By sympathetic co-operation and assistance he can smooth the path for the annual staff, or he can use delaying tactics that will make it virtually impossible to publish a truly representative yearbook.

The situation has been well stated by Laurence R. Campbell in his booklet, *A Principal's Guide to High School Journalism*, published by Quill and Scroll Foundation, Northwestern University, 1944. Mr. Campbell says:

Education costs money. How well every principal realizes this fact. No matter where he turns he discovers needs that stretch all his financial resources. Hence, he is usually glad to discover an activity that pays its own way if given a fair chance.

Just what is meant by a fair chance? Simply this: no publication staff should be expected to achieve results — educationally or financially — if it is hampered and hamstrung by policies or rulings that make it impossible to finance its program.

Like the professional newspaper, student publications have two chief sources of revenue — circulation and advertising. True, there are miscellaneous sources, too. With few exceptions, a well-organized business staff can raise adequate funds unless low ceilings are put on subscriptions and advertising.

. . . Usually school publications indicate that a school has a good principal. If a school newspaper or yearbook is a failure, often the principal must share much of the blame. Thus, the principal has a great responsibility in developing the possibilities of scholastic journalism.

The same statements are true when applied to colleges and college administrators. How, then, can the school administrator help the annual staff?

First, he can see that the members of the staff get an early start by providing for the appointment or election of the editor and the business manager early in the spring, more than a year before they are to publish the annual. There are many important events to be covered after the current annual goes to press, if the book is to be a complete history of one year of school life. A certain cotton planter once remarked, "It takes 13 months out of the year to raise a cotton crop." It takes at least 15 months out of the year to produce a successful annual.

Second, the school or college should provide an office or room where the staff can do its work, just as space is provided for the band and the orchestra to practice and for the athletic teams to perform. If an office is provided, the work on the annual can be done during activity periods when students have free hours, or after school. The staff will have a place to work and can make progress each day. This is essential if the undertaking is to succeed and if the book is to come out on time. It is necessary for the staff to have desks, sufficient typewriters, filing cabinets, a camera and other minor equipment.

Often the commercial department of a school has 20 to 40 typewriters that are used a few hours a day, but no typewriter is made

available for the yearbook staff. The same is true of darkrooms and other school facilities. It is sometimes difficult for the school administrator, because of crowded conditions in the schools, to allocate suitable quarters for the annual, but an equitable division of space can be made if the head of the school is interested in seeing that the annual staff is given a fair chance for success.

### **Appointment of Adviser**

Third, the principal or president can appoint some faculty member who has had sufficient training to advise the annual staff. If there is no one in the school qualified to do the job, he should follow the same plan used in securing an athletic coach or music supervisor. Often one of the journalism teachers can handle the work, but his teaching load should be reduced. Sometimes in a large high school or college, the head adviser is in charge of the editorial or production end of the annual, and assistant advisers are appointed from the bookkeeping or business school to advise the business staff. Often some member of the faculty aids in taking and processing pictures. However, one adviser should be in general charge of the production of the book and so be responsible for the proper co-ordination of all departments.

The adviser should be encouraged by the school administration to attend publication conventions and university summer courses on yearbook production. He should be given credit for work done during vacation months on magazines, newspapers or in publishing houses. Many improvements are being made each year in the graphic arts industries, and the adviser who is to do a good job must keep abreast of the times.

### **Work of the Adviser**

The position of adviser to the yearbook staff is a difficult one. To do a good job will probably require more time, preparation and study than any two courses he will have to teach. It is important that he do a thorough job, as his professional advancement and standing in the school and community will be determined in no small degree by the results he obtains.

The position of adviser is comparable in many respects to that of the publisher of a newspaper or magazine who employs an editor and business manager to do the detail work. His job is to see that the work of the staff is properly co-ordinated, that the book published is a good one, that it be delivered on time and that there is enough money to pay the bills. To accomplish this he must have a thorough grasp of the entire problem. The task will not be too difficult if the adviser has had proper training in English, journalism, social science, business, etc. If he has had experience working on a newspaper, magazine or for a publishing house, so much the better. The school administrator should take all these things into consideration when employing a teacher who is to be the adviser. If the adviser has not had training along these lines, he can often arrange to attend summer sessions of journalism schools, or take work in a field that will give him the information he needs. Several large universities have summer short courses on yearbook production that are a great help to advisers.

If the adviser is appointed on short notice and feels he needs information on the production of the annual, he can obtain it by writing the state and national school press associations. The schools of journalism located in the state where the adviser is employed often can suggest books that will give the desired information.

### **Place Responsibility on the Staff**

The adviser should place responsibility directly on the shoulders of the editor and business manager. Students will do a much better job if they are given responsibility. Often the job will not be done exactly as the adviser had visualized, but in a surprising number of instances the staff members will turn out something just as good and sometimes better. The adviser should discuss in detail with the editor and business manager all the major projects to be carried out. He should not be the boss who gives orders, but should see that the editor and business manager make all assignments to their respective assistants and assume responsibility for execution of the assignments.

The adviser should attend all staff meetings and discuss beforehand with the editor and manager what is to be done in the meeting. The meeting can be conducted by the editor or manager. The work to be done should be carefully outlined for the other members of the staff. A staff meeting must not be allowed to deteriorate into a debating society. It is the place to co-ordinate the efforts of the entire staff for the job to be done.

### **Censorship of the Annual**

The adviser should not act as a censor. If members of the staff are properly trained, they will have too much pride in their book and school to print anything that will discredit either. The adviser should tell the editor there are certain things that he must watch in accepting copy for the book. First, copyrighted material that has appeared in books, magazines and other publications cannot be reprinted without permission of the publisher. Second, postal regulations forbid mailing publications containing obscene material. Third, the libel laws prohibit written defamation of character.

If the editor is taught to understand the standards of good taste and fair play, there should be no need of faculty censorship. It is necessary to impress upon the staff the importance of accuracy in the annual, because after it is printed there is no chance to run a correction, as is done by newspapers when errors appear.

### **Course in Yearbook Production Required**

Many yearbook advisers who have journalism training insist that a regular credit course be required of major members of the annual staff. One effective plan is to arrange a course so that one hour a week can be given to recitation and two or three hours to laboratory work. In schools where a journalism course is already offered, it is an easy matter to divide the class so some of its members are assigned to work on the annual and others on the school newspaper.

Probably the greatest single advantage of having a class in yearbook production is the better possibility of producing the book on schedule. When the class meets two or three

times a week, there is no excuse for duplication of effort. Each individual can be given an assignment that needs to be done and one he has the ability to do. Thus an intelligent division of work expedites the production of the book. Most advisers who teach a course in yearbook production find it makes the job of advising the annual easier and produces a better yearbook.

### **Workshops for Planning the Annual**

Several colleges and universities are conducting summer workshops primarily for advisers, but some schools permit student members of the annual staff to attend. The major project for each individual attending the workshop is to plan in detail the yearbook to be published by his school during the following year.

If college credit is to be earned by those attending, admission is limited to individuals having college standing. Some workshops, on the other hand, are conducted for high school students only.

### **Selecting the Editor and Business Manager**

Perhaps the most satisfactory method of selecting the editor and the business manager of the annual is appointment by a publications board. Many schools have a board of publications composed of students and faculty, with the students usually in the majority. Quite often in a large school the dean of the journalism school is chairman of the board, and the faculty adviser should be a member. From three to ten students usually are elected members of the board at the general school election. In a small school the board could be composed of the principal, faculty adviser and one representative from each of the four classes.

In addition to electing the editor and the business manager, the board often determines general policies of the annual, approves important contracts and also may direct other publications in the school. Student members of the board are often better judges of student ability than are faculty members. However, because of their lack of experience they are often more harsh in their judgment of fellow students than are the faculty members. Then

too, student members of the board can be a great aid to publications because they have a better chance to know community opinion about the annual.

Most boards require a candidate for one of the major positions on the staff to have at least one year's experience working on the annual. Many capable editors and managers have served three full years on the staff before being elected to a major position. Even if the book is published by the senior class, there is no valid reason why minor staff positions cannot be held by students from the lower classes. It is neither fair to the student elected nor to the school to appoint an editor or manager who has had no previous experience on the publication. Editors are faced with a maze of problems of writing, editing, illustration, finance, circulation and production that cannot be successfully and efficiently handled by anyone who is new to such work.

### **Written Applications Required**

Often the board of publications requires the candidate for an executive position on the yearbook to write a letter of application stating his qualifications in detail. The board should receive letters of recommendation or interview the editor, business manager and faculty adviser under whom the applicant has worked. It is a good idea to check the applicant's grades, interview his major instructors and talk with school executives to secure all the information possible about his ability and initiative.

Some schools have application blanks for applicants to fill out. Shown in Figure 2.1 is the application form used by the Board of Student Publications, Kansas State College.

Applicants for the positions of editor and business manager must realize the importance and scope of their work and the amount of time required to do the job. They should agree to make their work on the book their major activity for the year. Other activities must be limited so that plenty of time is available to work on the annual and to direct the efforts of their assistants.

There are probably other satisfactory methods of selecting the editor and the business

manager of the annual. However, there are three distinct advantages in the method outlined. First, it assures the selection of a student with previous experience in publishing the annual. Second, the selection is the combined judgment of several persons who have studied the qualifications of the various applicants. Third, a board representing the entire school is in a much better position than the adviser or school administrator to outline general policies, and if need arises, to remove from office appointees who are not satisfactory.

The board must be careful not to hamper the annual staff with petty regulations or attempts to dictate how the editor and business manager shall carry on the business of publishing. As soon as the appointments have been made, the general policy outlined and the major contracts approved, the responsibility for publishing the annual should be placed upon the shoulders of the editor and faculty adviser, and the board should step into the picture only in case of an emergency.

### **Duties of the Editor**

Election to editorship of the annual is a distinct honor for the student chosen, but like election to any important position, it entails duties and responsibilities. While the public is willing to give the editor credit for a job well done, it also feels free to criticize. The editor must immediately recognize his responsibility to the entire school and see that nothing is included in the book that gives special consideration to any political party, organization or clique to which he may belong.

There is no absolute dividing line between the work of the editor and business manager of the annual. On some phases they must work hand in hand if the book is to be a success. In general, the editor is the production manager and the business manager is in charge of circulation and finance.

The editor should exercise great care in selecting editorial assistants. The editor, together with the faculty adviser, can check the ability of all available applicants to determine each one's ability to do the job to

which he will be assigned. The editor must be careful not to appoint members to his staff because they happen to be personal friends and want the job because of the honor attached. Each member of the staff worthy of the name has an important and necessary job to do. If he fails, the editor or some other member of the staff must step into the breach. This is sometimes difficult because the editor has other duties.

These are general duties of the editor as production manager:

1. Selecting and supervising the work of editorial assistants.
2. Preparing the budget (with the business manager).
3. Planning the book.
4. Letting contracts (with the business manager, adviser and publications board).
5. Getting pictures to tell the story.
6. Making layouts and ordering engravings.
7. Preparing copy and ordering printing.
8. Planning and executing a production schedule that will insure delivery of the annual on time.

### **Tryouts for Staff Positions**

Some editors have adopted the policy of having tryouts for positions on the staff. When this is possible, it is a good plan. However, the appointment of assistants should not be delayed too long, otherwise most of the capable students will be working on the staffs of the school paper or other school publications and will not be available for work on the annual.

The size of the book will, of course, determine the number of assistants needed to do the job. Editorial assistants for a medium-sized annual are two or three assistant or associate editors, a photographic editor, administration editor, class editor, organizations editor, feature editor, sports editor and student photographer.

At least two or three of the assistant editors should be selected from the lower classes so they will be getting experience to aid in publishing the next year's book. Assistant editors should be capable of writing copy, headlines and cutlines, editing copy and reading proof. The section editors should work on the book from the very beginning of the school year. The editor can show each section editor the plans for his part of the book. The

section editor can aid in obtaining the photographs and identifications, and can be in an excellent position to write the copy needed when the section goes to the printer. A large university book sometimes has as many as 100 persons working on the yearbook staff. For example, the sports editor might need several assistants to complete the job on time. He may have different assistants in charge of major, minor, intramural and women's sports. Other large sections or chapters of the book also may require several individuals to do the job. Often 15 or 20 persons are needed to do typing, filing and mounting photographs, to issue photo and other receipts, to prepare an index of the book and to do needed office work. However, if the work is departmentalized with a capable section editor in charge of each chapter in the book, much greater efficiency is assured, and many of the details of the undertaking are taken off the shoulders of the editor.

The editor should have time to read every line of copy that goes into the book, because he, and he alone, is held responsible for the job. He ought to outline to each assistant in detail the kind of copy he wants and insist that it be written as wanted. Above all, he must insist upon accuracy, accuracy, accuracy. He can inspire the staff to do a good job by his industry, efficiency and enthusiasm. He should give praise for work well done, and if some writer does an excellent job, reward him with a by-line.

### **Duties of the Business Manager**

It may sometimes seem to the business manager of an annual that most of the honors for the production of a good book go to the editor, but the business manager has just as important a job and often is kept busy doing it long after the editorial staff has written the last line of copy and sent the last proof back to the printer.

He must exercise the same judgment as the editor in selecting his assistants and can use much the same methods.

Business assistants required for efficient production of a medium-sized annual are two or three assistant managers, a circulation manager, advertising manager, office manager and bookkeeper.

# KANSAS STATE COLLEGE

## BOARD OF STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

(This form is to be accompanied by a letter stating qualifications in detail.)

Date ....., 19....

### NOTE

Applications for Royal Purple or Collegian executive positions filled by the Board of Student Publications of Kansas State College are made with the understanding that members of the business staff who are paid for their work agree not to solicit advertising or do other advertising work for any other publication, within the city limits of Manhattan, during the period for which they are employed. This prohibition includes vacation periods. The Board of Student Publications reserves the right to discharge any executive or other employee, for cause, at any time.

I, ..... hereby apply for the position of ..... for the .....  
I am carrying ..... hours during the current semester and expect to earn at least as many points as the number of hours carried (required for eligibility for this position).

My grade point average in all college work up to the beginning of this semester, was ..... for .....  
hours. After this semester, I expect to have ..... hours of college work left to complete for graduation.

My major field (curriculum) in college work is ..... and I am particularly interested in the following minor fields: .....

My journalistic experience or background includes the following:

1. Experience on Student Publications (give years of service in any capacity, staff positions held, etc.)

2. Experience on other publications (give name of publication, capacity in which you worked,—executive experience as well as other):

3. College journalism courses taken, if any, and grades in those courses:

4. Other special qualifications not covered above:

In making this application, I understand that the executives of student publications are representatives of the Board of Student Publications and as such responsible to the Board, which in turn represents the entire college and its student body. If I am selected, therefore, I expect to keep in mind the fact that the publication represents the entire student body, both on the campus and in the eyes of the people of the state.

SIGNED .....

Manhattan Address .....

Telephone .....

### REFERENCES

Following are the names of references who are acquainted with my background and capabilities (at least three, more if you wish).

	NAME	ADDRESS	OCCUPATION
1	.....	.....	.....
2	.....	.....	.....
3	.....	.....	.....
4	.....	.....	.....

FIGURE 2.1. This form requires the applicant to list his qualifications in an orderly manner. The last paragraph helps him to realize his responsibility to the annual and the school.

# Royal Purple Editorial

(Circle your opinion on each item)

1	2	3	4	5
Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Outstand- ing

- |  |   |   |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Ability to produce good results while working under pressure .....  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. Initiative .....<br>(Does this person take intelligent action on his own, or wait to be told what to do?)   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. Acceptance of responsibility .....<br>(Does this person willingly take over difficult and important assignments and show a willingness to be judged on the merits of his own work, or does he try to dodge such assignments and pass responsibility to others?) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. Influence on fellow workers .....<br>(Does this person tend to inspire others to work harder and produce better results, or is his presence a discordant factor?)   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. Adaptability to varied assignments .....  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. Contribution beyond the requirements of his job .....   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. Speed in completing assignments .....   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8. Thoroughness and accuracy in copywriting .....  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9. Meeting deadlines .....   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 10. Understanding of the mechanical problems bearing on year-book work .....   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 11. Attention to routine details .....   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 12. Ability to understand and to follow instructions .....   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Signature of person making ratings \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

FIGURE 2.2. The appraisal form for editorial workers requires the editor and adviser to rate each worker in 12 categories. The grade can range from one to five points in each category.

## Royal Purple Business

(Circle your opinion on each item)

	1 Poor	2 Below Average	3 Average	4 Above Average	5 Outstand- ing
1. Ability to produce good results while working under pressure .....	1	2	3	4	5
2. Initiative ..... (Does this person take intelligent action on his own, or wait to be told what to do?)	1	2	3	4	5
3. Acceptance of responsibility ..... (Does this person willingly take over difficult and important assignments and show a willingness to be judged on the merits of his own work, or does he try to dodge such assignments and pass responsibility to others?)	1	2	3	4	5
4. Influence on fellow workers ..... (Does this person tend to inspire others to work harder and produce better results, or is his presence a discordant factor?)	1	2	3	4	5
5. Meeting deadlines .....	1	2	3	4	5
6. Contribution beyond the requirements of the job .....	1	2	3	4	5
7. Effort to improve own work .....	1	2	3	4	5
<b>MARK FOR OFFICE STAFF ONLY:</b>					
8. Competence in following instructions .....	1	2	3	4	5
9. Accuracy .....	1	2	3	4	5
10. Regular in attendance .....	1	2	3	4	5
<b>MARK FOR ADVERTISING STAFF ONLY:</b>					
8. Ability to make layouts that truly visualize the finished advertisement .....	1	2	3	4	5
9. Understanding of mechanical problems bearing on advertising .....	1	2	3	4	5
10. Attendance at meetings .....	1	2	3	4	5

Signature of person making ratings \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

FIGURE 2.3. The appraisal form for business staff members requires that each student be rated on the basis of ten categories. The first seven points are the same for all members of the business staff, while three special categories are set up for office workers, and the last three shown are for the advertising staff members only.



Most of the assistants listed will need several persons to help them. The circulation manager, even in a small school, will require a circulation assistant in each class to sell the annuals and collect the money. In a large university he often has as many as 50 salesmen in the different schools, organizations and dormitories.

His general duties can be summarized as:

1. Selecting and supervising the work of business assistants.
2. Preparing the budget (with the editor and the adviser).
3. Letting contracts (with the editor).
4. Conducting book sales campaign.
5. Selling advertising and preparing it for the printer.
6. Exploiting all sources of revenue as planned in the budget.
7. Supervising bookkeeping and business records.
8. Distributing the annual and closing up the book affairs.

### **Building Staff Morale**

One of the most effective ways to build staff morale is to give some kind of special recognition near the end of the year to staff members who have done meritorious work on the annual. A certificate, or better still, a gold key or pin can be presented to these students at a special banquet or assembly. The gold key seems to be more prized by the students, and the fact that the pins are worn with pride encourages other students to try for this special recognition.

The students to be thus honored can be nominated by the editor, business manager and faculty adviser with the approval of the board of publications. Adequate publicity should be given in the local and school newspapers and, of course, the students' names and pictures ought to appear in the annual.

The individuals who receive special recognition must be selected with the greatest of care and with absolute fairness, or the purpose for which the award is being made will

lose its significance. All staff members should know early in the year the basis on which the selections are made. The plan of the Royal Purple, Kansas State College, Manhattan, Kansas, is to have the editor and business manager rate each student on the respective staffs, using an appraisal form developed for the purpose. The adviser fills out the same form for all students on the staff. Thus the opinion of the individuals who should know about the work of each student is a matter of record.

The appraisal form used to rate the editorial staff is shown in Figure 2.2, and the one for the business staff in Figure 2.3. These forms can be posted in the yearbook office in the fall so all workers will know the requirements for winning an award.

### **Maintain Staff Morale**

Of course, the most effective way to maintain staff morale is to build a tradition of high performance and success by producing the best annual possible year after year. Several schools in America have built great traditions for winning sports teams. Too few have done as well in the field of publications.

Building a tradition of success in producing outstanding yearbooks is a slow and arduous task. In the beginning the esprit de corps will be as a small trickle of water in a dry creek, but can become as a mighty river if properly nurtured. The goal can be accomplished by selecting staff members of fine ability and high character and by constantly feeding their imagination with the wine of high resolve to live in the tradition of the editors who have gone before.

How the editor and business manager are to accomplish their several duties will be discussed in later chapters. If the annual is to have a fair chance for success, the staff must be selected early. It also must have the whole-hearted support and assistance of the school administration and faculty adviser.