

## A PERSISTENT QUANDARY: BEREA COLLEGE AND THE RURAL SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, 1953-1957

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It is often thought that rural customs and cultural beliefs regarding mainstream education may be some of the most persistent forms of resistance to educational advancement in many parts of Kentucky. Indeed, small-town Kentuckians have often been wary of individuals from urban areas, including teachers. In the early twentieth century, consolidation of rural schools invited government intervention, which brought a shift away from traditional community ideas and values. Local residents often feared that centralized, government-supervised education would divert young people, who served as important bearers of cultural attitudes and economic resources, from home. Residents

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feared that this mass exodus from the mountains would effectively kill the tight-knit communities of rural Kentucky.<sup>1</sup>

For many young Kentuckians, however, modern education had the potential to improve their lives. It could open the door to careers that would offer more geographic mobility and more desirable economic conditions than were available in the rural communities. Although rural insularity has undoubtedly played a role in hampering educational reform in Kentucky, another problem has existed throughout much of the commonwealth's history: state government apathy. Historically, the General Assembly has been unwilling to create an equitable educational system in the commonwealth, one in which children in all of counties have access to a quality education.<sup>2</sup> As a result of this state apathy, educational reformers have often had to seek private sources of funding for reform projects. In April 1953, educators and administrators at Berea College submitted a grant proposal to the Ford Foundation. Directed by Berea president Francis S. Hutchins, the proposal asked for funding for the Rural School Improvement Project (RSIP), which would work to improve elementary and secondary education in the mountain counties of

<sup>1</sup> William E. Ellis, *A History of Education in Kentucky* (Lexington, 2011), 15, 59, 146-158, 153-155; Roy Silver and Alan J. DeYoung, "The Ideology of Rural/Appalachian Education, 1895-1935: The Appalachian Education Problem as Part of the Appalachian Life Problem," *Educational Theory* 36 (1986): 51-65; Alan J. DeYoung, "Constructing and Staffing the Cultural Bridge: The School as Change Agent in Rural Appalachia," *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, 26 (1995) 168-192.

<sup>2</sup> For example, in 1920, Woodford County boasted \$7,615 of taxable property per school-age child; Wolfe County, by contrast, had only \$545 per child. See *Public Education in Kentucky* (New York, 1922), 140-141, 202. The General Assembly passed a bill in 1954, which included the Minimum Foundation Program (MFP). This program was an attempt—to the first time—to equalize spending on education by school district. But the MFP was not fully funded, and as a result, failed to equalize school funding. Thus, in 1990, following a landmark state supreme court case, the General Assembly passed the Education Reform Act, which likewise was intended to end education inequality. See "Minimum Foundation Program," and "Education Reform Act of 1990," in *The Kentucky Encyclopedia*, John E. Kleber, ed., (Lexington, Ky., 1992), 641, 287-88. See also Richard E. Day, "Bert Combs and the Council for Better Education: Catalysts for School Reform" *Register of the Kentucky Historical Society* (hereafter *Register*) 109 (Winter 2011): 27-62.

eastern Kentucky. Thanks, in part, to a family connection at the Ford Foundation, Hutchins and Berea were awarded \$221,000 to fund the RSIP for four years.

A small liberal arts college located in the Appalachian foothills of Madison County, Berea was founded by abolitionist John G. Fee in 1855.<sup>3</sup> Already well-known for its unusual legacy of racial coeducation, the college made its first foray into the remediation of problems associated with public schooling and rural life in eastern Kentucky in 1917 when it established the Scaffold Cane School, where teacher training occurred under an agreement with the Madison County Board of Education.<sup>4</sup> Over the succeeding four decades Berea faculty and administrators experimented with teacher training schools, improved data collection, study of rural communities and their schools, the sharing of instructional materials with impoverished schools, the improvement of physical conditions at the schools, and health education. These efforts were best exemplified by the Rural School Improvement Project (1953-1957), which focused on improving teacher quality and stimulating a new interest in teacher supervision. Although the RSIP certainly had its successes, and might even have provided a useful model for other rural communities to follow, when funding from the Ford Foundation ceased, so did the program.

### **Early Efforts at Educational Reform by Berea College, 1890s-1920s**

In 1892, William Goodell Frost assumed the presidency of Berea College, and commenced a gradual shift of the school's primary mission toward educating the poor in the Appalachian region.<sup>5</sup> Frost was captivated by the communities of the region he termed "Appalachia." He wanted to improve the quality of secondary education

<sup>3</sup> Richard E. Day, Roger Cleveland, and June Hyndman, "Berea College—Coeducationally and Racially Integrated: An Unlikely Contingency in the 1850s," *Journal of Negro Education* 82 (2013): 35-46.

<sup>4</sup> John Adams, "The Berea College Mission to the Mountains: Teacher Training, the Normal Department, and Rural Community Development," *Register* 110 (2012): 24.

<sup>5</sup> Richard A. Heckman and Betty Jean Hall, "Berea College and the Day Law," *Register* 66 (1968): 35-52. See also James C. Klotter, *Kentucky: Portrait in Paradox, 1900-1950* (Frankfort, Ky., 1996), 153.

in rural areas, while cultivating future students for Berea College in the process. Rather than attempting to subsume Appalachia into the mainstream American culture, Frost spearheaded the movement to assist the communities in areas of necessity while still preserving what he and other outsiders considered to be the unique crafts, songs, and traditions of the mountain culture.<sup>6</sup>

In 1915, Frost's son Norman authored a statistical study that quantified the educational shortcomings and challenges in Appalachia. President Frost's main concern was the lack of structure characteristic of previous attempts to alleviate the problems plaguing rural Appalachian schools.<sup>7</sup> He chided county superintendents for their tendency to artificially inflate enrollment rates to create the illusion that rural schools in their county were more successful than they actually were. These superintendents typically only agreed to construct new schools or make repairs to existing buildings where citizens requested such improvements, regardless of the real needs within the region. School terms were also extremely short in Appalachian counties. In 1910, the average length of a rural school term nationwide was 137 days a year. This was over a month longer than the 104 day average term in ninety-eight mountain counties in southern Appalachia.<sup>8</sup>

According to Norman Frost's report, in 1912, there were seventeen counties in the commonwealth of Kentucky that did not contain a high school. The rural schools that did exist were often run-down and lacked the necessary resources for effective teaching. Because school budgets were small and state laws requiring schools to provide books for students who could not afford them were rarely enforced, Frost observed that children who lived outside of large cities could only obtain textbooks if they were furnished by their parents.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Henry D. Shapiro, *Appalachia on Our Mind: The Southern Mountains and Mountaineers in the American Consciousness, 1870-1920* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1978), 119-128. See also David Whisnant, *All That is Native and Fine: The Politics of Culture in an American Region* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1983).

<sup>7</sup> Norman Frost, "A statistical study of the public schools of the southern Appalachian mountains," *United States Bureau of Education Bulletin* 11 (1915): 29.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 13-14.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 11-12, 20-21, 31.

Following the retirement of William Frost in 1920, Berea's new president, William J. Hutchins, brought his own love and admiration for the wisdom of the mountain people to the college. But, by 1928, the agreement that produced the teacher training school at Scaffold Cane had fallen apart and Berea was left without a facility for teacher training. The dean of the normal department, Cloyd N. McAllister, who had been instrumental in establishing Scaffold Cane, set out to form a new rural teacher-training facility under the belief that "in a rural setting, practice teachers actually required more knowledge of the mountain customs than did other schoolteachers." McAllister wanted a rural school where as many as six teachers-in-training could be sent at one time.<sup>10</sup> In 1929, he secured an agreement with the Rockcastle County Board of Education to take over the school at Wildie for "demonstration and training of rural teachers" with Berea providing most of the financial support. The Wildie Demonstration School was situated in a wilderness swamp, complete with mosquitoes, and a creek bed for a road, which practically guaranteed the sixty young scholars would enter the school with wet feet. Hygiene remained a significant concern for the school as well as the broader community into the early 1940s.

### **Continuing Problems in Eastern Kentucky Schools, 1930-1952**

Poor local school conditions were compounded by concerns over local school sub-district trustees and superintendents who did not always have the best interest of their students at heart. The president of Eastern State Teachers College (now Eastern Kentucky University), H. L. Donovan, informally surveyed the county superintendents in 1931. Based on this survey, he decried the situation in a July 1933 speech to the National Education Association. He told the convention that nepotism, political chicanery, and in some cases "the actual sale of schools to the highest bidder" kept qualified teachers from being hired, while the half-educated "kept school" and led the public to discredit the entire profession. Donovan said that 25 percent of

<sup>10</sup> Adams, "Berea College Mission to the Mountains," 26-30.

the county elementary teachers were drawing pay for public services they were incapable of performing, while many good teachers were unemployed.<sup>11</sup>

In 1943, the Kentucky Board of Education invited seven Kentucky colleges to participate in an investigation of the inadequate scholastic conditions prevalent in rural mountain communities. Francis Stephenson Hutchins, who replaced his father as president of Berea College, accepted the invitation and developed a board of directors consisting of faculty members to launch an experimental project. After interviewing superintendents, and considering Wolfe and Leslie counties, the board chose Pulaski County as the most likely to benefit from the study and a pilot program was launched within the year.<sup>12</sup> The project received a grant from the General Education Board, John D. Rockefeller's philanthropic organization. Led by education professor and project coordinator Dr. Charles Graham, the education faculty of Berea College set out to investigate and ameliorate the inadequate quality of life in rural areas of Pulaski County by targeting subpar educational conditions.<sup>13</sup>

To sufficiently understand the issues facing Pulaski County schools, Dr. Graham moved to the county. He found the conditions alarming. Many of the isolated schools lacked quality instructional materials that were critical to student learning. The materials the schools possessed were often outdated, decrepit, and irrelevant to the subjects being taught. In response, Berea College collaborated with the Pulaski County Board of Education to create a "materials bureau" that would provide a cache of paper, books, bulletins, and other educational materials for teachers to access. The physical condition of the county's school facilities were also a major concern.

<sup>11</sup> H. L. Donovan, "Teacher Training for the New Age," speech given at the National Education Association conference, folder 1, box 101, collection 77A3, RG 2 Presidents Office, Donovan Papers, Eastern Kentucky University Archives (hereafter EKU), Richmond, Kentucky. See also Ellis, *History*, 205.

<sup>12</sup> Memorandum of Meeting, September 29, 1943, Charles N. Shutt file, folder 4, box 6, record group 4, Berea College Archives (hereafter Berea Archives), Berea, Kentucky.

<sup>13</sup> "Cooperative Enterprise in Education: Berea College-Pulaski County 1943-1946," file 6-20, box 6, record group 6.06, Berea Archives.

Many of the shoddy and dilapidated structures were surrounded by unkempt land that appeared uninviting and was often hazardous. Graham indicated that even the new school buildings were often in poor condition and littered with trash.<sup>14</sup> With the help of Berea, the environment began to change. According to a project report, 103 schools were painted, gullies were filled in ninety-four school yards, and sidewalks were added at fifty-four schools.<sup>15</sup> In fact, Graham reported that of the 117 schools he visited, only two failed to make noticeable improvement.<sup>16</sup>

Perhaps the most formidable challenge facing the schools of Pulaski County was the inadequate quality of teachers. The numerous untrained teachers were described as having “little preparation and little experience to bring to their work.”<sup>17</sup> As Graham noted, “One boy [at Hickorynut School] did not know how to multiply  $42 \times 2$  or subtract  $85 - 47$  or divide  $4 \div 84$ . She [the teacher] said, ‘Yes you do,’ then showed him, but went on to do something else. The blind [were] leading the blind.”<sup>18</sup> There were so many untrained or undertrained teachers in the classroom because there was a shortage of teachers across the state. State Superintendent Robert Martin reported, “At the time of Pearl Harbor, Kentucky employed 18,800 teachers who met full certification standards at the time and there was a large oversupply of qualified teachers. Before the close of the 1940-1941 school term Kentucky started running out of qualified teachers and issued 164 emergency certificates. The number [of teachers with emergency certificates] increased rapidly until it reached 5,300 in 1948.”<sup>19</sup> This

<sup>14</sup> Charles Graham notebooks, 1-4, Charles Graham file, box 20, record group 9, Berea Archives. These notebooks detailed the Pulaski County school visits.

<sup>15</sup> “Progress Report of the Educational Enterprise between Berea College and Pulaski County for 1944-45,” file 6-12, box 6, record group 6.06, Berea Archives.

<sup>16</sup> “Berea College and its relationship with Pulaski County,” January 19, 1945, FSH General Education Board file, box 45, record group 3.5, Berea Archives.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Charles Graham notebook #1, entry dated November 30, 1943, Charles Graham file, box 20, record group 9, Berea Archives.

<sup>19</sup> *Advancing Education in Kentucky: Challenges-Processes-Outcomes 1955-1957, 1958-1959*, (Frankfort, KY, 1959), 864.

problem was perhaps most acute in the mountain counties, though. In 1945, 53.5 percent of Pulaski County teachers held emergency teaching certificates.<sup>20</sup>

Berea's Pulaski County school initiative emphasized teaching hygiene and addressing previously neglected issues concerning health and cleanliness.<sup>21</sup> The general physical condition of Pulaski County students was abysmal. For example, only 59 percent of Pulaski students had received the smallpox vaccine. Berea responded by arranging for local nurses to establish a demonstration booth at a teacher workshop and discussing health issues with the teachers. The schools soon became a central hub for disseminating information throughout the community. As Pulaski County health department director Joseph Lachman disclosed in a letter to Berea's President Hutchins, "Superstition, tradition and a lack of understanding of modern health concepts are formidable barriers in our fight for good health." Lachman believed there was an overall lack of knowledge in the mountain communities regarding health practices, but that community members could be reached by bringing such knowledge into the schools. Many school children went home and told their parents about the tuberculin patch tests that they had received at school only to have the parents request patches too.<sup>22</sup> Many teachers expressed enthusiasm about the knowledge they received and thought that the information was valuable and relevant to their schools. Of the 151 schools in the county, 118 built designated shelves for lunches to avoid contamination, ninety-seven initiated mandatory hand-washing before lunch, seventy-one acquired first-aid kits, and sixty-eight established school lunch programs.<sup>23</sup>

Community involvement played a critical role in improving Pu-

<sup>20</sup> Wendell Butler, "History of Education in Kentucky: 1939-1964," *Commonwealth of Kentucky Educational Bulletin* 31 (November 1963): 101.

<sup>21</sup> For a discussion of these topics in an earlier era, see Sandra Lee Barney, *Authorized to Heal: Gender, Class, and the Transformation of Medicine in Appalachia, 1880-1930* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 2000).

<sup>22</sup> Joseph Lachman to Francis Hutchins, March 1, 1945, Folder 4, Box 6, record group 4, Series IX, Berea Archives.

<sup>23</sup> "Progress Report," 3, Berea Archives.

laski County schools. Pupils and parents formed committees to plan and execute school activities such as school lunches, picnics, dances, and school beautification projects. Teachers reported that parent involvement reached an unprecedented level during this time. Community members and parents also mirrored the recent beautification of the school in other community buildings and their own homes. For example, one teacher reported that shortly after community members painted the interior of the schoolhouse she noticed that the nearby church was also receiving a fresh coat of paint.<sup>24</sup> This project also united numerous agencies and businesses in Pulaski County in an effort to improve the school system. For example, a food production competition among the county schools brought participation from well over a dozen community agencies such as the Farmers Livestock Market, Tri-State Butter Company, Standard Oil Company, and First National Bank.<sup>25</sup>

Schools in Pulaski County were plagued by extremely low enrollment and attendance rates. During the 1943-1944 school year, only 77 percent of children at the elementary age were enrolled in school and approximately 13.5 percent of these children eventually dropped out. Enrollment rates dipped even lower as children aged. Only 8 percent of the enrolled students were at the high school level, and of those, 20 percent dropped out. Sadly, this was a more favorable statistic than many of the other surrounding mountain counties. With the initiation of scholastic support from Berea College, elementary school enrollment rates rose to 84 percent by 1945. Unfortunately, high school enrollment continued to indicate that three out of four students were not in attendance. However, eighty-two schools in Pulaski County reported a 100 percent enrollment rate the first year of Berea's involvement. Attendance rates also improved. In 1943-1944, the first, middle, and last month attendance rates for the semester averaged 88.7, 78.7, and 65.4 percent, respectively. In 1944-1945, the same measurements showed increases to 95, 83.8, and 73.6 percent.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 6-7.

<sup>25</sup> "Berea College and its relationship with Pulaski County," Berea Archives.

<sup>26</sup> "Progress Report," 8, Berea Archives.

Despite the project's successes, in 1947, state funding was discontinued and the program was halted. Many rural schools in eastern Kentucky continued to lag behind the rest of the state in academic achievement. As a result, Berea's Appalachian community focus continued; the college remained active in numerous academic improvement projects in the region. These included a supervisory role in the reorganization of Pine Mountain Settlement School in 1949 and assistance in the Rockcastle County in-service teacher training program in 1950.<sup>27</sup>

In 1952, the department of education at Berea initiated a survey of education needs in the area.<sup>28</sup> The collected data revealed appalling conditions in many of the schools nestled in the hills of rural Appalachia. It was estimated that, in 1949, 65 percent of Kentucky's one-teacher schools were located in these mountain counties. In this single year, twenty-two of these schools never opened their doors because of the lack of teachers willing to relocate to these remote areas. The investigators noted that teachers in the region were often poorly trained and lacked many of the necessary resources to instruct their students. This was often compounded by a lack of emphasis placed on education in the local community and substandard educational practices. Many of the children appeared to be in poor health and lacked access to potable water, nutritious food, and sufficient hygiene practices to maintain good health. Furthermore, inadequate transportation in rural areas often impeded teachers and students from accessing the school house materials, and it interrupted communications. Many of these ill-trained teachers displayed signs of stress and fatigue due to the isolation and the demands placed on them as educators.<sup>29</sup>

The 1950 national census indicated that Kentucky's median

<sup>27</sup> "Berea College RSIP Progress Report of third year," April 12-13, 1956, 8, file 10, box 29, record group 10, Berea Archives.

<sup>28</sup> R.V. Buckland, "Rural School Improvement Project 1953-1957 Follow up Report" (1960), 21, file 14-7, box 14, record group 10, Berea Archives.

<sup>29</sup> "Educational Conditions in the Mountain Counties of Kentucky: Data to be used in connection with proposal made by Berea College to the Fund for Advancement of Education," File 10-3, box 10, record group 10, Berea Archives.

educational attainment level was 8.4 years. By contrast, in the state's forty-four mountain counties it was 7.6 years.<sup>30</sup> An estimated 42 percent of mountain-county adults had not completed a full year of school.<sup>31</sup> A 1953 study of Kentucky dropouts—then called “early school leavers”—showed that most students left for work, but many suggested they might have stayed if schools offered specific vocational training.<sup>32</sup> The high rate of illiteracy in the area resulted in more than one third of young men in the region being rejected by the Selective Service, which was twice the national average at the time. In 1950-51, Kentucky employed approximately 20,000 teachers, only 53.5 percent of whom held a baccalaureate or master's degree.<sup>33</sup> Statewide, 5,013 schools (3,004 of them one-room schools) housed 532,133 pupils. Of that number, only 122 buildings met federal standards, while 2,357 were rated unsatisfactory, many lacking central heat, artificial lighting, and toilets. Between 1951 and 1953, school enrollment decreased by 16,459 children.<sup>34</sup>

### **The Rural School Improvement Project, 1953-1957**

In 1953, the Ford Foundation's Fund for the Advancement of Education sponsored the “Conference on Inequalities of Educational Opportunity” in Pasadena, California, to assess educational needs throughout the United States.<sup>35</sup> The progressive Ford Foundation

<sup>30</sup> Ibid. In 2014, the Appalachian Regional Commission identified fifty-four Kentucky counties in Appalachia, listed below. Berea's “Educational Conditions in the Mountains of Kentucky” (1953) identified forty-four counties (italicized): *Adair, Bath, Bell, Boyd, Breathitt, Carter, Casey, Clark, Clay, Clinton, Cumberland*, Edmonson, *Elliott, Estill*, Fleming, *Floyd, Garrard*, Green, *Greenup, Harlan*, Hart, *Jackson, Johnson, Knott, Knox, Laurel, Lawrence, Lee, Leslie, Letcher, Lewis, Lincoln, McCreary, Madison, Magoffin, Martin, Menifee, Metcalfe*, Monroe, Montgomery, *Morgan*, Nicholas, *Owsley, Perry, Pike, Powell, Pulaski*, Robertson, *Rockcastle, Rowan, Russell, Wayne, Whitley*, and *Wolfe*.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> S.E. Hecker, “Early School Leavers in Kentucky,” *Bulletin of the Bureau of School Service* (Lexington, KY, 1953), 78.

<sup>33</sup> Butler, “History of Education in Kentucky,” 101.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., 121-122.

<sup>35</sup> L. Smith, “Some Basic Principles for this Program of Educational Assistance: Data for the Fund for the Advancement of Education” (1953), file 5, box 43, Record Group 3.5, Ford Foundation Correspondence and Reports, Francis S. Hutchins Collection, Berea Archives.

funded projects “for scientific, educational and charitable purposes, all for the public welfare.” The Fund for Advancement of Education sought “to promote greater equality of educational opportunity; and to conserve and increase knowledge and enrich our culture.”<sup>36</sup> Berea College president Francis Hutchins attended the conference and presented the findings of the rural educational needs survey undertaken the previous year. He inquired about the possibility of a funded project to address the drastic improvements needed in the mountain counties near Berea.<sup>37</sup> The objectives of the fund and those of Berea College were well aligned, but Hutchins had another reason to be optimistic about a favorable reception. His older brother, Robert Maynard Hutchins, the former dean of the Yale Law School and immediate past president of the University of Chicago, served as associate director of the Ford Foundation and was in a position to direct the fund’s resources.<sup>38</sup>

The Hutchins family had a long tradition of Protestant evangelical works in the Social Gospel tradition through which ministry and education often intersected. The family valued strong character, held a belief in common schools to teach literacy, and provided family connections to a substantial social network. Robert believed in the progressive notion that experts should be brought together to solve social problems. He believed that model programs and centers had produced the greatest advancements in education and science. But, by 1952, some of the foundation board members expressed resentment that “half of the foundation’s disbursements were going to the . . . programs he oversaw,” and that a number of “grants were provided for his friends.”<sup>39</sup> He would soon add family to the list.

<sup>36</sup> Mary Ann Dzuback, *Robert M. Hutchins: Portrait of an Educator* (Chicago, 1991), 232. See also History, FordFoundation.org. Retrieved January 9, 2014, from <http://www.fordfoundation.org/about-us/history>; University of Chicago: <http://president.uchicago.edu/directory/robert-maynard-hutchins>.

<sup>37</sup> Conference on Inequalities of Educational Opportunity, Pasadena, California, January 3-4, 1953, program, 9-10, file 2, box 46, record group 3.5, Berea Archives.

<sup>38</sup> Dzuback, *Hutchins*, 231.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.* 3-7, 232, 238.

Encouraged by the Pasadena conference, Hutchins wrote a grant proposal to fund the Rural School Improvement Project (RSIP). The proposal emphasized the concept that “better teachers in the classroom will make an immediate improvement in the current situation” and hypothesized that qualified and enthusiastic teachers would join the cause, if support were secured. Berea would achieve this goal by selecting thirty recent college graduates who could meet the certification requirements to instruct in these classrooms. These teachers would be supervised and monitored on a regular basis by experienced educators in addition to becoming active members of their county teachers’ associations. In addition to their regular salaries, the teaching fellows would be awarded a \$750 stipend each summer after the successful completion of each academic year. This stipend was earmarked for furthering the personal education of the teaching fellows by paying for travel and college-level coursework; not only would the stipend serve as a recruiting tool, it would also broaden the knowledge of the teachers, thereby enriching classroom instruction. The grant proposal stated that fifteen new teachers would be added each year and the project would expand to new schools at the discretion of RSIP administrators.<sup>40</sup>

The proposal for the four-year grant was accepted in April 1953; the project was awarded a total of \$221,000 by the Ford Foundation.<sup>41</sup> Dr. Luther M. Ambrose, chair of the education department at Berea, was selected to direct the Rural School Improvement Project. Ambrose was a member of the National Education Association’s department of rural education, as were Berea education Professor Charles C. Graham and soon-to-be-named RSIP supervisor Mabel C. Jessee.<sup>42</sup> Ambrose immediately began recruiting qualified individuals and gathering

<sup>40</sup> “Proposal to the Fund for the Advancement of Education,” file 1, box 46, record group 3.5, Ford Foundation Correspondence and Reports, Francis S. Hutchins Collection, Berea Archives.

<sup>41</sup> Clarence H. Faust to Francis S. Hutchins, April 9, 1953, file 3, box 46, record group 3.5, Berea Archives.

<sup>42</sup> Robert M. Isenberg, ed., *The Community School and the Intermediate Unit: Yearbook* (Washington, D.C., 1954), 239.

resources for the 1953-1954 school year, which was just four months away. The needs of Kentucky's Appalachian counties were assessed to determine which would qualify for initial participation in the project. In choosing which counties would participate, Ambrose and his team took into consideration the number of one-room schools and teachers with emergency certificates, the inadequacy of teacher salary, and the prevalence of families living in poverty.<sup>43</sup> Once county needs were assessed, RSIP administrators chose to extend the invitation to participate in the project to schools in fairly close proximity to Berea College and those which had administrators who expressed willingness to cooperate with goals and objectives of the project.<sup>44</sup>

Four master's-level area supervisors were selected based on their familiarity with a particular area of the region, upon recommendation from the state department of education. Each supervisor was responsible for making planned and unplanned visits to each project school, maintaining contact with each teaching fellow through group and individual conferences, and assisting with teacher training. With the passage of time, each area expanded to include more schools and accommodate more children.

Area 1 was centered in Pine Mountain, Kentucky, and supervised by Charles Kincer, who oversaw approximately twelve fellows in Harlan, Leslie, Letcher, and Perry counties. Mrs. Mabel Jessee of Pike County supervised thirteen teachers in Area 2, which was centered in Beattyville and included Clay, Owsley, and Perry counties, until her departure in 1957 for a UNESCO educational mission to Thailand. Area 3, centered at Berea, was the smallest. Supervised by Berea education professor Dr. Pat Wear (who eventually came to direct the RSIP in 1955), this area consisted of only two teachers in Rockcastle County. Area 4 was centered in West Liberty and included

<sup>43</sup> "Berea College Rural School Improvement Project Sponsored by Berea College-Financed by Fund for Advancement of Education: 1953-1957," file 1-1, box 1, record group 10, Berea Archives.

<sup>44</sup> R.V. Buckland, ed., *Rural School Improvement Project: Report 1953-1957* (Lexington, Ky., 1958), 30-31. A copy of this is located in box 5, record group 10, Berea Archives.

eleven teachers in Elliott, Morgan, and Breathitt counties, and in 1954, Wolfe County, all under the supervision of Warren Robbins.<sup>45</sup>

The selection of teachers for the project proved more difficult than that of supervisors. The plan called for the recruitment of twenty-four recent graduates as fellows for the first year of the project, but there was a shortage of qualified young teachers. The allure of higher salaries and more preferable living arrangements for marriageable young women in the larger cities contributed to this shortage.<sup>46</sup> The vetting process was done in extreme haste since there was a small time frame between receiving the grant and the beginning of the fall school year. As a result, only nineteen teaching fellows were selected for the program in its first year of operation. To broaden their applicant base, project leaders revised the recruiting procedures, by eliminating the requirement that teachers be “young” and deciding to accept husband and wife pairs. To further expand the reach of RSIP, project leaders also offered educational opportunities and travel benefits to teachers within the immediate region who were not RSIP fellows. Ultimately, a total of sixty-three teachers—forty-nine women and fourteen men—participated in the Rural School Improvement Project during the four years it existed.<sup>47</sup>

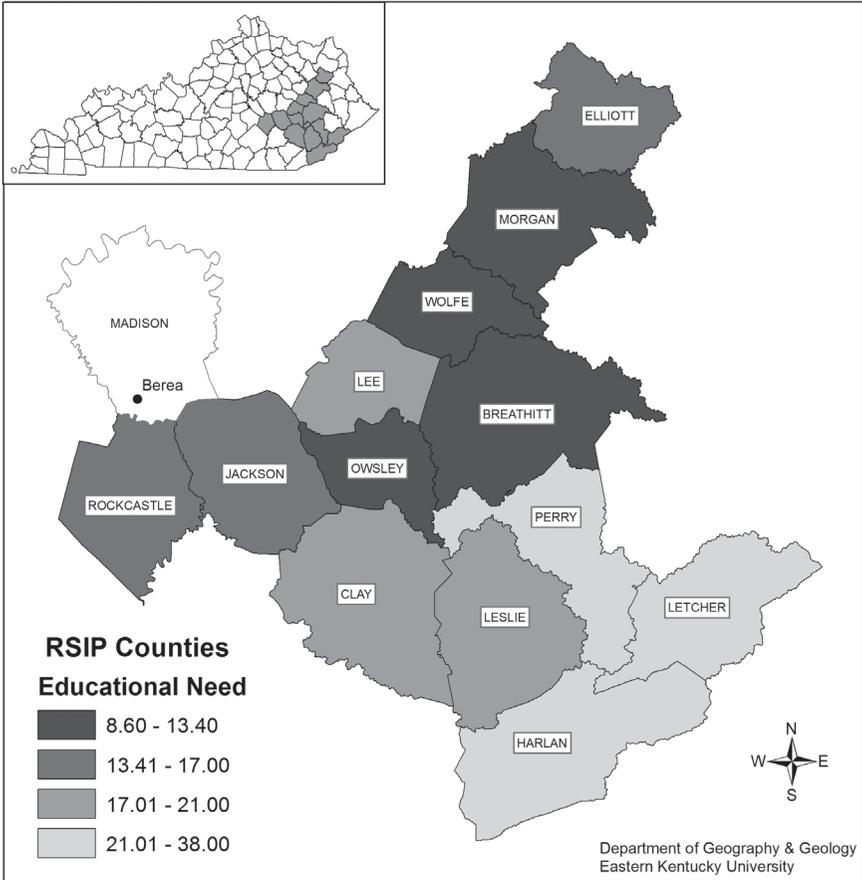
Despite difficulties launching the project, RSIP fellows reported tangible results, including feeling more competent as educators and benefiting from frequent supervision. Nineteen fellows began work toward obtaining a degree while involved with the project and forty-four (83 percent of the fellows) attended college after the project.<sup>48</sup> Those fellows who took advantage of the summer travel stipend reported that the experience broadened their horizons and served

<sup>45</sup> Buckland, *Report*, 29-36, 215; P.W. Wear, “Rural School Improvement,” *Berea Alumnus* (March 1957), 3-4. A copy of the latter can be found in file 21-2, box 21, record group 10, Berea Archives. Kincer supervised the southern part of Perry County, while Jesse supervised the northern part.

<sup>46</sup> Wendell Butler, “History of Education in Kentucky: 1939-1964,” *Commonwealth of Kentucky Educational Bulletin* 31 (1963), 129.

<sup>47</sup> Buckland, *Report*, 39.

<sup>48</sup> Buckland, “Follow up Report,” 6-7.



Map of Kentucky showing RSIP counties. Darker colors indicate greater educational need. Counties are displayed according to a ranking of “educational need” as defined by the Berea College department of education faculty using data from the Kentucky department of education and the 1950 U. S. census. Factors used in the ranking included: 1) number and percent of emergency teachers, 2) average annual teachers salary, 3) percent of population with family incomes under \$2,000, 4) ratio of assessment for taxes to actual value, 5) median family income, and 6) assessed value of property subject to tax per school child (Buckland, *Report*, 8-9). *Courtesy of the department of geography and geology, Eastern Kentucky University.*

as an additional teaching resource in the classroom. Fellows taught in small, rural communities, in which opportunities to travel were limited by meager incomes and impassable roads. It was not uncommon for the instructors to return from their journeys with stories and materials, which would be incorporated into lesson activities and shared with the remote communities. One fellow who traveled to Europe reported, "I have shared my travel experience of last summer (to Europe) with the Kiwanis Club, the Women's Club, members of the Baptist Church, and with others living in this county as well as others from the neighboring county."<sup>49</sup>

The summer travel-study aspect of the program served as an incentive for both project administrators and teaching fellows. By requiring that teachers travel or study for each summer following the completion of an academic year, administrators provided teachers with a broader knowledge base and respite from the routine of the classroom. RSIP fellows were permitted to request the nature of the study or travel and the estimated cost to go almost anywhere they desired. Portions of the project grant were then allocated after the proposal was considered by the project director, the area supervisor, and members of the Berea College department of education. RSIP teaching fellows traveled throughout the United States and abroad, including trips to Cuba, Canada, Mexico, and Europe.

The teachers that chose to use project funding to advance their education attended a wide variety of colleges including the universities of Kentucky, Wyoming, Maryland, and Colorado, as well as Southern Illinois, Western Carolina, Duke, Boston, and Temple universities, among others. At the closure of the project the number of academic degrees held by project teachers increased from fifty-three to seventy.<sup>50</sup> Twenty-eight percent of the RSIP teaching fellows thought that their professional and college course experiences were excellent, 32 percent believed they were good, 16 percent rated the experience as fair, and 8 percent believed their coursework was poor. Fellows gave

<sup>49</sup> Buckland, *Report*, 92.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, 136, 47-48.

the lowest rating to their experiences prior to student teaching while the off-campus student teaching experiences and conferences with supervisory teachers were rated the highest. Seventy-nine percent of teachers reported that the content of their college education courses was superior, excellent, or good. Content was rated highest in courses about teaching mathematics, physical education, and children's literature. Courses regarding instruction of music and art were considered to have the poorest subject content. Methods courses were rated the highest in physical education, children's literature, and instructional science. The lowest ratings were reported for teaching methods in mathematics, language arts, and hygiene. In general, the majority of the fellows reported that their experience in the project was helpful, valuable, and they were proud of their participation.<sup>51</sup> RSIP fellows were also influenced by the progressive ideology that children should be active participants in the education process. One teacher expressed, "I have recognized that the maladjusted, the slow, as well as the bright children, will be our citizens of tomorrow and that as a teacher I must put forth every effort to help these children to find their place in society so that they will be good citizens."<sup>52</sup>

Along with an emphasis on improving the quality of classroom instruction, RSIP administrators desired greater community involvement. RSIP leaders asked local people to serve as bus drivers, school board members, 4-H club workers, Bible teachers, and other school personnel. In addition, local residents assisted in painting schools, installing water lines, constructing or repairing roads, and planting flowers and trees near the schools community involvement in building and community improvements including painting schools, installing water lines, constructing or repairing roads, and planting flowers and trees near the schools. Local merchants, farmers, and professionals were encouraged to visit classrooms and discuss their trades or occupations with the children. In addition, health officials and interested observers often visited the schools to observe the progress

<sup>51</sup> Buckland, "Follow up Report," 5-9.

<sup>52</sup> Buckland, *Report*, 62-63.

of the project. Parents of the pupils were also encouraged to be more involved in the schools through parent nights and the establishment of parent-teacher groups in many locations.

Although these communities were poverty stricken, in every town with a RSIP school, members of the community made contributions towards school or community improvement.<sup>53</sup>

Students at project schools also became noticeably healthier as a result of the RSIP. In many mountain communities, isolation, poverty, and a lack of hygiene and nutritional education were exacerbated by the scarce medical and dental services. The poor physical condition of the schools also contributed to substandard student health. Teachers reported that children were often dirty, tired, and underweight. Potable water was often not available and buildings were not properly heated during the winter. With community help, structural deficits and sanitation issues were addressed in the schools, which alleviated poor health conditions. The project also established school lunch programs and increased nutrition and hygiene awareness in the schools.<sup>54</sup>

RSIP teachers met with local, state, and federal health agencies to assure that teaching fellows understood the latest health practices.<sup>55</sup> Fellows attributed much of their health conscientiousness to project programs such as the annual Health Day, in which nurses educated the teachers about the relationship between physical well-being and learning. Teaching fellows then related the health lessons to the students. Teachers reported improved skin coloration and healthier weight for pupils following health instruction. One of the most notable classroom lessons involved an experiment in which the students fed two rats different diets over a period of time, while monitoring their weight and physical appearance. One rat was given appropriate rat food and the other was given cake, soft drinks, and candy. The students used skills in mathematics, writing, and art during this project and reached the unanimous decision that nutritional health

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., 85-89, 111, 123.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid, 49-51, 106-108, 142-143, 146, 148.

<sup>55</sup> Isenberg, *Community School*, 83.

was indeed important and resulted in happier and healthier subjects. One RSIP fellow reported, “I have known the thrill of seeing minds open up and develop slowly and surely under patient guidance and new meaningful instruction. I have heard less profanity, seen less fighting, dirty faces become clean, personalities blossom out with increased confidence, students gain new enthusiasm and desire to learn, the first person to start high schools from this school—these have been my greatest achievements.”<sup>56</sup>

Modifications were made in curriculum, instruction, organization, school administration, and classroom relationships. Prior to project involvement, teachers typically adhered to the curriculum without consideration for individual needs. Students learned the material through rote memorization and drills. Group work was limited and the teacher was viewed as the commander of the classroom who acted as the absolute authority in all situations. Furthermore, the lack of teacher oversight and the lack of emphasis on the learning process often led to ambivalent educators and students. In reaction to these rigid instructional practices, RSIP schools conceived of learning as a journey and emphasized cohesion, democracy, and creativity. Rather than teaching each subject in a delineated block of time, project instructors would apply concepts of English, mathematics, art, and history into any applicable lesson.

Lessons were also expanded outside the classroom as students went on field trips and heard outside speakers. Field trips encompassed everything from nature walks to train rides into urban areas to visit various businesses. In addition, during the four-year existence of the program, project schools were visited by people from forty-four different countries including Afghanistan, Thailand, Kenya, Ireland, Greece, India, and Honduras. These visitors provided the students with exposure to a diverse group of professions, cultures, and people.<sup>57</sup> Many of the foreign visitors were students at American universities, particularly Indiana University, who heard of the program and won-

<sup>56</sup> Buckland, *Report*, 49-52, 55, 63-64 (quotation).

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, 163.

dered if the innovations brought by the RSIP could be applied to the educational problems facing their countries. In the past, outside visitors had been rare and viewed with skepticism; students learned about foreign cultures solely from textbooks. Teachers reported that students were often shocked by how similar they were to the foreigners who visited the schools and that such learning experiences led to better understanding of subject material and increased tolerance.<sup>58</sup>

Before the RSIP, classroom learning materials were scarce. Periodicals and illustrated materials were rarely displayed; student-made instructional materials were undervalued, and locally available learning materials were underutilized. RSIP's innovative approach to learning materials brought exciting new worlds to the students and contributed to academic success. Fellows augmented scant audio-visual resources with movie projectors and phonographs. RSIP leaders also encouraged the use of news articles, illustrative materials, and child-crafted learning materials to supplement traditional texts. Teachers were expected to read a variety of professional literature to expand their knowledge.<sup>59</sup>

The isolation of rural communities made it difficult to obtain new learning materials. County libraries in the region were rarely close to the schools and the limited holdings were generally not appropriate for children. RSIP fellows overcame this handicap by bringing the Berea College traveling libraries and State Extension Library bookmobile services directly to the communities. The number of books read during each year of the project grew dramatically and then tapered off at a still-high level: 24,310 books in 1952-1953, 38,920 books in 1953-1954, 69,320 books in 1954-1955, 65,100 books in 1955-1956, and 47,870 books in 1956-1957.<sup>60</sup>

In the years leading up to the project, teachers spent little time planning activities and the time that was allocated to instructional planning was used to rigidly teach each subject matter. When staff meetings were conducted, the principal typically dominated the

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 106, 61.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, 43, 77-78, 140.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, 57-60.

conversation and stifled discussions of pedagogy.<sup>61</sup> The administrative structure of RSIP schools permitted teachers to spend considerable time planning class lessons, which gave teachers a chance to incorporate materials from broader areas of interest. Staff meetings became more democratic and served as an opportunity for teachers to share and discuss their successes and their concerns. Community members were granted a role in planning school functions for the first time at many schools.

Changes in the structure of lunch periods also influenced the success of the project. Lunch periods were organized in a manner that facilitated incidental teaching opportunities to reinforce lessons concerning proper manners, hygiene, and nutrition. Project fellows believed that organized play would lead to increased self-esteem by reinforcing ideas of fairness. Play periods that followed the lunch time were well supervised and organized. Cumulative records and standardized assessments were also established for each pupil. These records were taken in accordance with observations of student behavior to determine individual strengths and weaknesses and personality differences that may have affected learning in the classroom. This academic evaluation assisted in identifying specific student needs rather than the previous practice of “labeling” students according to familial background or history.<sup>62</sup>

Consistent supervisory support for teachers also played a critical role in the success of the project. Little direct classroom supervision existed before the RSIP, which contributed to feelings of isolation, as well as a lack of ownership, pride, and direction among teachers. RSIP supervisors oversaw fellows through planned visits during which they would collaborate on specific materials or lessons that would be included during the visitation period. Unplanned visits also took place if a planned activity was cancelled at one school and another school was readily accessible. These visits were used for general observation periods and to provide support for teachers. RSIP fellows visited

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, 45-46.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, 42-47.

other schools within and outside of the project. Individual conferences between fellows and supervisors served as a time to focus on difficulties experienced in the classroom. Group conferences served as a forum for brainstorming and support. In-service education training sessions were typically formal and designed for specific purposes such as pre-school conferences, education association business, the summer travel-study program, or the annual Christmas Institute.<sup>63</sup>

In each December the program operated, the RSIP held a conference in which local teachers could interact with educational leaders from other parts of the country. Each Christmas Institute featured a guest lecturer who would present on a relevant topic and facilitate large discussions. Special lectures included "Problems of the Small Rural School" by Dr. Kate Wofford and Dr. Kimball Wiles of the University of Florida in 1953, "How to Understand Children as Persons" by Dr. Daniel Prescott of the University of Maryland in 1954, "School and Community Relationships" by Dr. Edward G. Olsen of the Chicago Region of the National Conference of Christians and Jews in 1955, and "What is a Good School?" by Dr. Pauline Hilliard of the University of Florida in 1956. Each year, the institute gave tutorials that emphasized RSIP goals. For example, in the first year of the RSIP, tutorials emphasized pupil welfare via structural improvement to academic facilities and relationship building among teachers, supervisors, and others central to the project. In the second year, tutorials focused on developing parent-teacher groups, school lunch programs, and the proper way to utilize community resources. During one institute, fellows broke into small groups to discuss solutions to issues related to dealing with troublesome students and parents, as well as how to motivate students. Evaluations of project success began taking place at the 1954 Christmas Institute and continued through the duration of the RSIP, becoming more specific and focused each year.<sup>64</sup>

In addition to the annual Christmas Institute, Berea College hosted a conference before the start of each school year, which was

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., 65-74; RSIP notes of follow-up boxes 9-13, record group 10, Berea Archives.

<sup>64</sup> Buckland, *Report*, 72-73.

intended to help RSIP teachers plan activities and curriculum for the upcoming year. Sessions at these conferences addressed formal academic planning, budgets, supplies, ideas for fundraisers, and the dissemination of suggestions for extracurricular activities. Area group meetings were conducted on a monthly or bi-monthly basis. At these meetings, teachers and supervisors discussed common frustrations, planning, and evaluation within their communities.<sup>65</sup>

At the outset, RSIP administrators had many goals for their project. In four years, 282 of 311 objectives were completed toward school and community improvement. Only twelve of these objectives were not completed at all and the other seventeen were viewed as being partially completed at the end of the project.<sup>66</sup> In addition to funds from the Ford Foundation, \$22,656 was contributed directly by community members and \$19,220 by participating local school boards. Playground equipment, maps, bulletin boards, and chairs were added or repaired in project schools. Parents, teachers, and students most frequently reported improvements observed in health and sanitation. The replacement of broken window panes, faulty roofs, and repairs to floors and walls were rated with the highest frequency as safety improvements. Beautification of school grounds through painting of buildings, repaired flag poles and curtains, the addition of books and book shelves, and landscaping improvements were also seen as very important to the community.<sup>67</sup>

Student work groups were reorganized by ability level and need of further instruction to facilitate more efficient learning. Fellows engaged the classes in group discussions, decisions, and shared responsibility to reinforce a sense of ownership and pride in education. One teacher expressed that the community and student attitude toward the school shifted during the project from *the school* to *our school*. Students took leadership roles in planning and maintaining

<sup>65</sup> Buckland, *Report*, 72-73; "First Annual Institute for Teaching Fellows of the RSIP of Berea College," December 28-31, 1953, file 1-3, box 1, record group 10, Berea Archives.

<sup>66</sup> Buckland, *Report*, 108.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, 140-44, 160-62.

the classroom. Previously drab and austere classrooms morphed into colorful places of learning adorned with books and completed student assignments. It was not uncommon for a pupil to triple or quadruple their reading level in a single year. One teaching fellow described the change in attendance as being attributed to student investment in the school: “[C]hildren came to love school and to regard attendance as a pleasure rather than just something to be done or not to be done as their ‘whelm’ struck. Our average attendance was almost 90 per cent and would have been higher except for unfavorable weather conditions.”<sup>68</sup> This was an incredible improvement given that most of the schools in counties served by RSIP had attendance rates well below the state average.<sup>69</sup>

The inclusion of people of color was another socially progressive element of the RSIP, which had the potential to be incendiary, yet seemed to pass without local backlash. Feelings of race hatred were very pronounced in some schools at the beginning of the project, causing one young teacher to remark that, “racial prejudice was strong in this community. Some of the children who had never seen a member of another race, just hated them.” But another teacher reported her students’ pleasure with meeting foreign visitors. She had prepared the students for a worthwhile experience. After the visit her students expressed their amazement: “Why didn’t you tell us they were real people?” The foreign visitors made the students feel “important to someone” for the first time. Further, RSIP hired African American teaching fellows in an effort to reduce inequalities of educational opportunity. One fellow commented, “As a Negro teacher in the state, I was astonished at the successful outcome of my first experience, on a professional basis, with white teachers....In the RSIP we have not at any time made references to each other as to race but we have all been in the same group with the same goals and with no preference shown to anyone.” Another fellow reported, “Being one of the Negroes in the group, I was pleased at the warmth, sincerity,

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, 60.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, 15.

and acceptance by members of the RSIP. At no time was I made to feel that I was not welcome.”<sup>70</sup>

In 1960, Berea College conducted a follow-up study of the project and found that 68 percent of RSIP fellows remained in Kentucky after the RSIP ended; twenty-five of thirty-six respondents were still teaching in their former project counties. The former fellows who transferred out of state most commonly mentioned higher salaries, promotion opportunities, and husbands transferring as the reason for leaving their RSIP teaching positions. However, these teachers continued to contribute to public education in their new locales. Nineteen teachers also reported that the education they received through RSIP funding had contributed to advancement in their career. But, twenty-three of the fifty-three respondents stated that their experience with the RSIP was of no special value to them. Only twenty-one individuals described the RSIP as valuable (nine respondents did not reply to this question).<sup>71</sup>

Another follow-up report authored by Berea faculty member Maureen Faulkner documented her visits to former RSIP schools in the 1960-1961 school year. Faulkner found that former RSIP schools were either closely abiding by the philosophy of the program or they had abandoned it altogether. In other words, there were no “in between” schools observed. Three former RSIP schools were viewed as exceptional according to the author. Not surprisingly, former RSIP teachers (or those who were project supporters) were still involved with these schools and maintained the philosophy of sound teaching methodology through inventive lesson plans and warm relationships in the classroom and in the community.<sup>72</sup>

In contrast, the equipment and facilities of the struggling schools showed neglect from the RSIP era. In several of the schools the indoor sinks that were provided by the project were either absent or rusting, Faulkner noted. Three of the ten inadequate schools still

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, 61-62, 97.

<sup>71</sup> Buckland, “Follow up Report,” 3.

<sup>72</sup> Maureen Faulkner, “Report of 1960-61 Visits to Former RSIP Schools” (June 1961), 1, file 14-8, box 14, record group 10, Berea Archives.

had ties to the RSIP through a school principal or a former fellow. Feelings of ambivalence, nostalgia, and disappointment about losing the desirable project salary were reported by these individuals as their schools relapsed to pre-RSIP levels.<sup>73</sup> The seven schools that no longer possessed an affiliation with former RSIP teaching fellows were even more appalling, according to Faulkner. In addition to the blatant neglect of facilities, many of these schools appeared filthy and unkempt. Teaching methods had regressed to rote memorization and repetition in many subjects. Community relations were also difficult to ascertain. Faulkner found that existing teachers viewed the relationship between the community and the school as unimportant. She attempted to decipher the current state of community involvement in the schools by questioning residents in the community in small shops and a few residences. Few individuals could discuss differences in the schools during and after the project, but many of the older students who had project teachers had attempted to keep in contact with their former instructors.<sup>74</sup>

From the start, Berea found itself short on time, but more critically, short on qualified young teachers who might form a cadre of progressive educators to serve the region for years to come. Faulkner found that the educators who remained in Kentucky were either older or they had family ties to the region. The former project teachers who remained continued the mission of the RSIP in their classrooms; most of their younger counterparts tended to migrate to more populated areas, attracted by more desirable salaries and eligible bachelors.<sup>75</sup> Faulkner concluded that the rapid withdrawal of supervision at the end of the project resulted in a decline in academic expectations, and consequently, produced a substandard level community-scholastic collaboration in the schools. School district commitment to continued supervision might have helped turn the RSIP into a self-sustaining county program.<sup>76</sup>

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, 7-8.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, 14.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, 15.

Berea College presented the Ford Foundation with an unsuccessful grant extension request for the 1957-1959 academic years. However, Robert Hutchins was no longer in a position to direct funds having moved on to Ford's Fund for the Republic in 1954. Under the school's proposal, Berea would have focused on pre-service teacher training, the development of a five-year experimental supervisory education program for current teachers, assessment of curriculum content, and a study of the effectiveness of certain teaching methodologies in rural schools.<sup>77</sup>

The RSIP represented the current thinking of national leaders of rural education who promoted improved administration of the schools combined with an active community engagement program based on "full respect for human personality" and "shared judgments."<sup>78</sup> The Rural School Improvement Project worked directly with more than five thousand children and sixty-three teaching fellows in thirty-eight different schools in thirteen counties and one independent school district. Project estimates claimed an indirect impact on approximately forty-five thousand children within the RSIP school districts.<sup>79</sup> Although these figures were impressive, it is no easy task to gauge the impact of a program like the Rural School Improvement Project on the children and communities of southeastern Kentucky. Like the educational reform projects that came before it—and those that came after—the challenges facing the Appalachian region and other rural areas of Kentucky kept educational equity at bay. Indeed, it would take another thirty-two years before the landmark Kentucky Supreme Court decision in *Rose v Council for Better Education* declared the state's inequitable and inadequate school system to be unconstitutional.<sup>80</sup>

<sup>77</sup> Berea to Ford Foundation, Untitled grant extension request for RSIP to the Ford Foundation, file 2, box 46, record group 3.5, Berea Archives.

<sup>78</sup> Isenberg, *Community Schools*, 34-38

<sup>79</sup> Buckland, "Follow up Report," 119.

<sup>80</sup> Day, "Bert Combs and the Council for Better Education," 27-62. See also Richard E. Day and Jo Ann G. Ewalt, "Education Reform in Kentucky: Just What the Court Ordered," in *Kentucky: Government, Politics and Public Policy*, James C. Clinger and Michael W. Hail, eds. (Lexington, Ky., 2013), 259-274.