Order Number 8802351

A comparison of superintendents' perceptions of their role with an exemplary model of the superintendency

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University of Washington, 1987

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A COMPARISON OF SUPERINTENDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF THEIR ROLE WITH AN EXEMPLARY MODEL OF THE SUPERINTENDENCY

by

Ellen Lee Wolf

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Education

University of Washington

1987

Approved by _____
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Abstract

A COMPARISON OF SUPERINTENDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF THEIR ROLE WITH AN EXEMPLARY MODEL OF THE SUPERINTENDENCY

by Ellen Lee Wolf

Chairperson of the Supervisory Committee: Professor John I. Goodlad
College of Education

Since change in the schools requires the superintendent's leadership, this study was designed to examine what superintendents are actually doing and what they should be doing in this era of demand for school reform. It outlines the historical development of the superintendent's role and reviews the relevant research.

An exemplary model of the superintendency was developed from the literature with input from educational administration experts. It contained thirty specific activities of the superintendent's role in six general categories and was the basis of two questionnaires sent to superintendents and principals in the State of Washington and to ten nationally known experts.

The data collected allowed the construction of a profile of the school superintendent from different perspectives for comparison and analysis.

Superintendents conclusively agreed that establishing mutual understanding and working relationships with the school board was the most critical activity of the role. They performed it personally, frequently, and were highly satisfied with their effectiveness in its achievement.

They gave very low priority to curriculum and instruction

activities, suggesting that teaching and learning were far from being their primary activities. They ranked low in importance, personal responsibility, frequency, and satisfaction. Superintendents spent more time on community relations activities than its importance ranking seemed to warrant. They focused inward on the organization, particularly in smaller districts and when in new assignments. In larger districts the demands of community involvement adversely impacted instruction and curriculum involvement. There was a clear, direct relationship between what superintendents considered important, did themselves, and with which they were satisfied.

Superintendents tended to reflect the same values as the experts. Both groups gave high priority to school board and organizational activities, and low priority to instructional activities.

Superintendents' perceptions differed dramatically from principals' perceptions of superintendents. Principals saw them as considerably more involved in improving educational opportunities and much less involved in school board activities, thus reflecting more closely their own ideal.

The data suggests the need for considerable refocusing of superintendent priorities toward teaching and learning to meet the demands of the current reform movement. Proposals for change are included as implications of this study.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am very grateful to Professor John I. Goodlad for his guidance and encouragement during the development of this dissertation. The cooperation of Professors Richard L. Andrews, Nathalie Gehrke, Kenneth Ostrander, and Robert Sasanoff who also served on my Supervisory Committee is appreciated.

The time and skill Chris Carlisle dedicated to this effort was invaluable. The continued encouragement of my family, colleagues, and friends supported my commitment to this goal. Martin and Kit provided strong inspiration.

Finally, I thank my husband, Jim Healy. Without his love and understanding, I could not have completed this dissertation. Throughout the process, he was critic, cheerleader, editor, and advocate.

Chapter 1

THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

INTRODUCTION

The position of school superintendent in the United States has changed dramatically since its emergence in the early 1800s. Initially hired as part-time secretary to the local school board, the superintendent was responsible for conducting faculty meetings as well as taking minutes at board meetings (Cuban 1976, 112). Today, as chief executive officer, the superintendent is responsible for the governance of a total school district in an environment of conflict, challenge, and change. Job descriptions require that superintendents be competent in budget management, communications, curriculum and instruction, personnel management, school board relations, human relations, and organizational development. The current reform movement that seeks quality and equality in the schools is a call to excellence, a call to improved teaching and learning, and above all, a call for strong leadership from the modern superintendent.

The general public, the educational theorists conducting research and writing in the field of educational administration, the

school board, other administrators in a district, and superintendents themselves, have clear expectations of how the school superintendent is to fulfill this leadership role. While it is reasonable to expect and demand the skills necessary for this task, the question is: Are these the skills the superintendent needs and uses once hired? or simply, What do school superintendents actually do in the 1980s, and what should they do? It is in the context of these expectations and questions that the present study developed.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The position of school superintendent is evolving. The focus and emphasis of the superintendency is determined by the demands of the times, the person of the superintendent, as well as by the position itself. In the 1980s, the school administrator is seen as a key figure in the effort to improve education. "Given that the literature on effective schools suggests that no school can become effective without the visible and active involvement of a principal hip-deep in the elementary school instructional program, then it also seems likely that no school board approving policies aimed at systemwide improvement can hope to achieve that condition without a superintendent who sustains a higher than usual involvement in the district's instructional program" (Cuban 1984, 146).

However, few studies of either the principal or superintendent have produced behavioral descriptions of what they actually do to improve schools. "No facts yet exist on superintendent behaviors that cause district improvement. . . Hence, what superintendents do daily to

create the conditions for instructional improvement and to influence students directly remains in the shadows of research-produced knowledge" (Cuban 1984, 146 & 147).

The field of sociology has made progress in the development of role theory and research designed to explain the behaviors of persons in certain positions and roles. Although the findings have not been fully integrated into a comprehensive body of knowledge, "role theory and research provide considerable information concerning administrative roles and promise to be a fruitful source for improving administrative practice" (Newell 1978, 149). One of the first interdisciplinary studies (sociology and educational administration) of role analysis was done by Gross, Mason, and McEachern (1958). They defined position as, "the location of an actor or class of actors in a system of social relationships" (p. 67). Position may be either assigned or achieved. For these authors, role is, "a set of expectations applied to an incumbent of a position" (p. 67). These expectations can be held by many persons including the individual who occupies the position. Every role expectation has two dimensions: direction and intensity. Direction indicates whether it should or should not be accomplished. Intensity places the expectation on, "a continuum which ranges from completely permissive, through the preferential, to the mandatory" (Gross, Mason, McEachern 1958). Role behavior is defined by them as, "an actual performance of an incumbent of a position which can be referred to an expectation for an incumbent of that position" (p. 67).

Studying the role of the superintendent through an analysis of the activities of the incumbents of the position should provide

information about what they are actually doing in this era of demand for school reform. Are they emphasizing instruction? Are they primarily managers? What are they doing to respond to the call for leadership?

Purpose of the Study

The major purpose of this role analysis study was to describe what school superintendents in Washington State consider to be the important activities of their role and to describe how they are actually functioning in this era of educational reform. This was achieved by: (1) comparing the superintendents' perceptions of the role with an exemplary model of the role, (2) comparing with each other the school superintendents' perceptions of the role, and (3) comparing the perceptions of the superintendents with the perceptions and expectations of school principals regarding the role of the superintendent.

Procedures Used

The following procedures were adopted so that these comparisons could be made.

From a review of the literature dealing with the role of the modern school superintendent, an exemplary model of the role was developed. This model was reviewed for accuracy and completeness by a group of experts in the field of educational administration and then revised to reflect their comments and suggestions. The revised model divided the role of school superintendent into six general categories of activity. Five specific activities were listed in each category for a total of thirty. A questionnaire, sent to superintendents, listed

these 30 activities in random order and the respondents were asked to complete the questionnaire in the following manner: 1) rate each activity for relative importance, 2) indicate if they or their delegate performed the activity, 3) how frequently each activity was performed, and 4) how satisfied he/she as superintendent was with the performance of each activity.

A second questionnaire was sent to principals. It listed only the six general categories of a superintendent's activity. The respondents were asked to rank order these activities, first, to reflect their own priorities, and second, to reflect what they perceived as their superintendent's priorities.

The group of experts received both questionnaires and they prioritized the general categories of activity and the specific activities, from a theoretical viewpoint.

Comparisons were then made among and between the responses of superintendents, experts, and principals.

Questions to be Investigated

This study of the role of the modern school superintendent focused on the following questions:

1. What are the perceptions of the superintendents on the relative importance of the specific activities associated with their role?

2. How do the variables of district size, years in present superintendency, sex, central office structure, total years as superintendent, and highest academic degree correlate with the superintendents' perceptions of the importance of the activities of the

role?

3. Which activities are performed by the superintendent and which are delegated, how frequently are the activities performed, and how satisfied are the superintendents with the performance?

4. What are the perceptions of the superintendents on the importance of, responsibility for, frequency of, and satisfaction with the general categories of activity associated with their role?

5. How do the variables of district size, years in present superintendency, total years as superintendent, and highest academic degree correlate with the superintendents' perceptions of the importance of, responsibility for, frequency of, and satisfaction with the general categories of activity of the role?

6. How do the perceptions of school superintendents regarding the importance of the activities of their role compare with the importance attached to them by a group of experts?

7. What are the school principals' perceptions and expectations of the role of the school superintendent?

8. How do the superintendents' perceptions of the role compare with the perceptions and expectations of the role by school principals?

9. Are there implications for change in such areas as administrator preparation, continuing education, and/or district operation?

Importance of the Study

Most observers of the daily operation of American schools would agree that the superintendent is central in the operation and

administration of these institutions. This observation, however, is based primarily on theory and expectation rather than on clear empirical evidence. This study was designed to generate such empirical data from superintendents themselves as they endeavored to meet the demands and expectations being placed upon them in 1986. It was then possible to compare a profile of the school superintendent gleaned from educational administration theory with the profile derived from the information supplied by a group of working superintendents in one state.

Limitations of the Study

The major limitations of this study were:

1. The study was conducted in Washington State in the Summer of 1986. The results may not be able to be generalized over time or in other locations.

2. Only those school districts having at least one high school, one junior high/middle school, and one elementary school were selected for the study. (This eliminated most of the school districts having less than 500 full time equivalent students.)

3. The exemplary model may not have included all of the categories or activities considered to be essential to the role of school superintendent.

4. The use of a forced choice questionnaire does not allow for a description of the special circumstances of a district or of the unique personal characteristics of the superintendent. Both of these influence the priority and performance of certain activities.

SUMMARY

Since its inception, the role of school superintendent has continued to change. Demands upon the superintendent and expectations of the role are now being strongly influenced by the movement for school reform. From the literature in the area of school administration and leadership, a profile of activities of the ideal superintendent emerges. How the real working superintendent of the 1980s compared to that ideal was the central issue of this study.

Chapter 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND RESEARCH

INTRODUCTION

The school superintendent carries out the responsibilities of his/her position at a particular point in history. The reality of contemporaneous socio-economic forces shape, in part, the role of the superintendent. The person of the superintendent and the administrative job itself further define the role. A review of literature on the historical development of the school superintendent role, and on the modern school superintendent provides background for this study.

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT ROLE

Before 1870

Nineteenth Century America was predominately rural with a dispersed population. Most schools were one room buildings. The governance and administration of these schools were the responsibility of the local school board. As cities grew and the performance of the duties of the school board became more burdensome and time consuming,

these part-time boards began hiring superintendents to assist with the duties. In 1837, the first school superintendent was appointed in Buffalo, New York. Some "clues to the self-image of the nineteenth-century school leaders . . . are: 'earnest', 'Christian character', 'pure', and 'true scholar'" (Tyack and Hansot 1982, 16). Tyack and Hansot go on to say that, "leadership in public education was often seen as a calling similar to that of church missionary, and in teachers' institutes superintendents were sometimes as interested in converting to religion as in evangelizing for schooling" (p. 16). Most of these early leaders were only part-time educational reformers who made their living as farmers, ministers, college professors, and businessmen. "School promoters were typically British-American in origin, Protestant in religion and entrepreneurial in economic outlook. Although they tried to speak for all Americans, they wore the blinders of their class, religion, and ethnic background" (Tyack and Hansot 1982, 21). History reveals that these educational leaders were engaged in an institution-building social movement which helped construct a common school system. However, on a day-to-day basis, they performed such tasks as inspecting classes, determining which students were to be promoted, examining applicants for teaching positions, arranging repairs, setting clocks, buying supplies, and meeting with parents and teachers. "Turnover was high and superintendents came from and went to a variety of occupations. Their powers were obscure" (Tyack and Hansot 1982, 96).

Late Nineteenth Century

In the late nineteenth century the outlines of the

superintendency became fairly well established. Superintendents tended to shape their own jobs, depending on local conditions, since there were no professional schools for administrators (Gilland 1935, 39). The lack of college programs was decried not only by critics of school superintendents like Charles F. Adams in his 1880 address to the National Education Association (NEA), but by many superintendents. They were worried by disarray in the ranks and lack of effective professional sanctions. They sought political clout, ways to counteract decentralization of governance, and were confused by conflicting lay and professional opinions about education (Tyack and Hansot 1982, 98).

By 1870, more than thirty of today's largest U. S. cities had appointed school superintendents. The U. S. Department of Education (without cabinet status) had been formed in 1865. Then in 1870, the National Association of School Superintendents, the National Teachers Association, and the American Normal School Association had joined forces to form the National Education Association. (Fenner 1945, 19-20).

The last quarter of the century witnessed the expansion and diversification of school programs in response to popular demand and growing educational vision. The need for administrative services became clearer, school boards become more accustomed to delegating duties to their executive officers, and they felt justified in providing them with expert staff assistance (The American School Superintendency 1952, 56).

Early Twentieth Century

The turn of the century in school leadership saw a move from

the part-time educational evangelist to a new group of professionals who made education a life-long career. They were influenced by business efficiency and scientific management. They were, however, the children of the mid-century leaders and no great discontinuity existed between the two eras. These reformers saw the source of their problems residing in "how schools were governed", and "persistent lay interference in the superintendent's business" (Cuban 1976, 113). They were products of a small-town, pietistic background converted to the values and methods of big business. They were dedicated to getting education "out of politics", namely into the hands of small boards of successful businessmen who would take responsibility for policy making. Their policies would then be administered by efficient, professional superintendents through application of practical prescriptions. The great mass of research studies in education were addressed to practical administrative and pedagogical concerns employing quantitative techniques. Although there was some basic research in education in the years 1890 to 1930 - the investigations of John Dewey, Edward J. Thorndike, and Lewis Terman - much of the applied research was aimed at providing data to support organizational reforms which, in turn, helped superintendents establish and perpetuate an educational "trust" (Tyack and Hansot 1982, 154).

Many of the leaders of this period were referred to as administrative progressives or the "educational trust" (Tyack and Hansot 1982, 106). Some of these men were: Ellwood P. Cubberley, San Diego School Superintendent and member of the Stanford University Education Department; Charles Judd, Dean of the School of Education at

the University of Chicago; James Russell, Dean of Teachers College, Columbia University; Frank Spaulding, Superintendent of five city districts and Professor at Yale University; and George Strayer, Professor of Educational Administration at Teachers College, Columbia University. They and their big city colleagues set out to change the role of the school superintendent. They did this through district practices and academic preparation. They formed a network of educational leaders who sought to develop a technology of educational administration comparable to that of business. They met for deliberations at such occasions as the NEA Department of Superintendence Conferences and the Cleveland Conferences. The Cleveland Conferences, formed in 1915, created an elite group of leading educators, "who could more advantageously consider certain educational problems and interests than was possible in the larger groups where educators came together" (Tyack and Hansot 1982, 13). These men began to sponsor students to their universities and then to appoint or place them in positions of school superintendent. It was the beginning of the "old-boy network".

The influence of the educational trust of the early 1900s cannot be denied. However, even during this period, most American superintendents were heads of small school districts with a local orientation. They spent their time teaching classes; worrying about muddy playgrounds; and interacting with parents, salesmen, board members, and leaders from local associations. What linked them to the administrative progressives of the large cities was a common set of background characteristics: married, white male, Protestant, American

native-born, from favored ethnic groups, and of rural origins. The large city school superintendents increasingly controlled their systems through rules and regulations, and by delegation of responsibilities. It was no longer possible for them to lead solely by personal knowledge and presence. However, "those charged with administrative responsibility for the schools kept learning and teaching at the center" (Goodlad, 1978, 322). They expanded school programs in response to society's needs. They saw the school as the "melting pot" for the great influx of immigrant children of different nationalities. They expanded vocational programs to meet the demands of the industrial work place. University courses in school administration were initiated during this period and the influence of the Department of Superintendence of the National Education Association increased through its conventions, yearbooks, cultivation of research, and its professionally competent services. By the end of the first quarter of the twentieth century, the era of "know how" was ending and the era of "know what for" was beginning in the history of the school superintendent. (The Status of the Superintendent 1923, 206).

1930 - 1950

In the second quarter of the twentieth century, marked as it was by economic boom and depression, world conflict and cold-war tensions, and by the emergence of the social or behavioral sciences, the purpose of education or the "know what for" of the superintendency became more important. The superintendent's dawning consciousness of his relationship and that of the schools to a dynamic, free society in which conflicting pressures are an inevitable part was a very

significant development (Newlon 1934, 301). Some of the topics presented to and discussed and disseminated by the American Association of School Administrators (AASA) during this period are illustrative of superintendent's concerns: Character Education, 1932; Educational Leadership in a Dynamic Civilization, 1933; Social Change and Education, 1935; and after World War II, Policies for Education in American Democracy, 1946; Schools for a New World, 1947; and The Superintendent in the Public Relations Program, 1950. The concerns implicit in such topics were signs of an awakening which brought the organized profession of administration to abandon whatever remained of previous ivory tower traditions and to take decisive positions on issues that impinge on education (The American School Superintendency 1952, 59).

1950 - 1975

The early 1950s were marked by a business-as-usual atmosphere. Familiar goals, systems of governance, programs, and professional norms seemed to exist. Education was seen by most as a means to improved social status. While this was a period of rapid growth in enrollment in most American schools, the number of school districts was halved through consolidation. These changes placed new demands on the role of superintendent. "The superintendent of schools was viewed as the head of the hierarchical organization of the schools and the final authority for the maintenance of all systems within the school organization" (Cunningham, Hack, and Nystrand 1977, 151). He/She was to act as executive manager, educator, and public relations officer. However, despite the surface calm, currents, previously somewhat submerged,

would soon cause turbulence.

There had always been dissenters from the "educational trust" with its aims of scientific management from the top down. Some educational practitioners, like Ella Flagg Young at the turn of the century, had held a contrasting vision of democracy in education. Theorists like the very influential John Dewey, had challenged the progressives in two fundamental ways. Dewey maintained that teachers and students could engage in true education only if the purposes, contents, and methods of learning emerged from shared social activities. He also attacked the shallow scientism and conservative social values of the reformers (Dewey 1902, 22-23). Some educators, like Jesse Newlon, shared Dewey's concerns about applied research and had called for a training program which would give administrators a more liberal perspective on social issues. In Denver, Newlon pioneered an early form of democratic administration and his book, Educational Administration as Social Policy, published in 1934, concluded that if superintendents were to become educational and community leaders, they needed to study educational philosophy, curriculum theory, social sciences, and educational policy. He and some others envisioned a radical role for educational leaders but failed to influence a majority and it was not until the 1960s that similar radical voices would be heard.

There had been progress. Pioneers, like Leonard Covello in New York's East Harlem, prefigured many of the changes which would take place after 1954. In the 1920s and 1930s, in one of the largest educational bureaucracies in the nation, he created a school that was

community centered rather than subject or child centered. He used the school, its students and staff as an agency for organizing the people of East Harlem to improve their lives. Faced with the grim realities of the Great Depression and World War II, some superintendents became more aware of the relationships of the public school to a dynamic, free society with its inevitable conflicting relationships. At the same time, the growth and influence of the behavioral sciences was producing a new and deeper understanding of the whole scope of education. Administrators were being influenced by these advances in their pre-service and in-service education. In this regard, the yearbook of the AASA of 1952 provided a significant insight. In a lengthy section on professional training of superintendents it states, "the competent executive on this level of educational administration must have a solid foundation in the social sciences - in such fields as history, anthropology, sociology, economics and psychology. He should be able to draw from the vast content of these fields the knowledge that is most valuable to a people in solving their individual and group problems" (p. 388). The need to understand the community in which he works and to develop leadership skills, people skills, and openness to experimentation with new administrative procedures, was also stressed. The same yearbook advocated preparation programs that included three major elements: classroom instruction, research, and internship. Stringent State certification for superintendents were advocated. In-service programs were praised and a call was made for more and better programs.

Such calls were soon answered by those committed to improvement

of educational administration. Improved pre-service and in-service emphasized administrative theory that went beyond mere prescriptions to theories, providing "maps" rather than "itineraries" for the practice of administration as advocated by Coladarci and Getzels (1955, 7 and 8).

The topics discussed and the participants at two seminars sponsored jointly by the Midwest Administration Center and the Council for Educational Administration illustrate the new emphasis. Administrative theory in education was the subject of the eight major papers presented by social scientists and professors of Education in November 1957. More than 100 practicing school superintendents were added to the participants in 1959 when Administrative Theory as a Guide to Action was the subject of the seminar. Individuals who would greatly influence educational administration such as: Roald F. Campbell, W. W. Charters, Jr., Francis S. Chase, Luvern L. Cunningham, Jacob W. Getzels, Andrew W. Halpin, and Peter H. Rossi, were among the major participants. Both research and its practical application in education administration were given equal emphasis.

Because of these and similar developments, there were among the superintendents who faced the crises in American education between 1954 and 1975, some who were better prepared to deal with them. They were at least better able to understand them than many of their predecessors would have been.

The period between 1954 and 1975 had a profound impact on America's schools. Virtually every aspect of education, "from governance, financing, student and employee personnel practices

(hiring, assigning, promoting, testing, evaluating, disciplining, and so on), curricular content, school-community relations, and policy making came under attack" (Cunningham, Hack, and Nystrom 1977, 73). Rather than reacting to society's issues, the schools found themselves being acted upon by them. They were being shaped by desegregation, Sputnik, academic freedom, civil rights, Vietnam, and the war on poverty. It was an era of social reform. Many school superintendents found it difficult to share decision making with the new and often angry citizen groups. They discovered that the shape of the role of superintendent had changed and that they were required to possess the skills of politician, labor arbitrator, public relations expert, and systems analyst. Much more than common sense and efficient organization were called for.

Present Era of School Reform

The years from 1975 to the present, in education, were characterized by collective bargaining, increased categorical programs, restricted school finances, increased influence of the courts, declining enrollment, increased community influence, and a call for educational reform. The Gallup Poll, over the past years, indicates citizens were concerned about lack of discipline, drug abuse, and insufficient attention to the "basics". However, public opinion polls about education present a confusing picture. It is easy to interpret them to mean that Americans have abandoned an earlier faith. They must, however, be interpreted in the context of a growing skepticism about all leaders and institutions, including the family. In 1981, the Gallup Poll respondents gave public schools higher grades then they

gave parents, for raising their children to be "self-disciplined and responsible young people". In 1980, schools came in second, surpassed only by the church, among the institutions that serve the public's needs.

Since the mid 1970s more than 200 major school reform studies and/or reports have been completed. No attempt can be made here to do justice to the scope or validity of all of them. Several will be highlighted, however.

The National Commission on Educational Excellence, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education, conducted a two year investigation. The findings were set forth in the report A Nation At Risk. Among the major recommendations were: longer school days and year, higher expectations for academic achievement, and more exacting requirements for teacher preparation.

Sponsored by such foundations as Ford, Kettering, Mott, Spencer, and Danforth, John I. Goodlad and his colleagues conducted A Study of Schooling. They researched in detail, 38 schools in 13 communities across the country. Goodlad's book, A Place Called School, reports the findings of the inquiry. Some of his recommendations for school improvement were: clearly articulated goals for schools, decentralization of authority and responsibility to local schools, and increased use of a variety of instructional techniques by teachers (Goodlad 1984, Chapters 9 and 10).

Under the leadership of Mortimer J. Adler, a group of philosophers and educators conducted a two year study summarized in The Paideia Proposal. Some of their recommendations were: one-track system

of public schooling with the same objectives for all students; training of teachers in didactic, coaching, and socratic techniques; and increased leadership of the principal (Adler 1982).

The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching sponsored a study of 15 public high schools. Ernest L. Boyer authored the resulting book, High School, which provides the following proposals: clarify goals for schools, establish a core curriculum for students, increase instructional techniques and student expectations, and increase leadership for principals (Boyer 1983, Chapter 18).

Sponsored by the National Association of Secondary School Principals and the National Association of Independent Schools, A Study of High Schools was directed by Theodore Sizer. His resulting book, Horace's Compromise, outlined several challenges: high schools need a shorter, better defined list of goals; students must be more responsible for their learning; less, more in-depth curriculum (less is more); creating a slower pace with more time being dedicated to essential learnings; and more attention to the needs and potential of each student (Sizer 1984).

These and other reform studies call for improvement in the teaching and learning environment. They demand that leadership and direction be provided to the schools by the school superintendent. As Fullan (1982) indicates, "the district administrator is the single most important individual for setting the expectations and tone of the pattern of change within the local district" (p. 159). These challenges must be met within the socio-economic climate of education

in the 1980s characterized by collective bargaining, decreased funding, increased community influence, and stringent court decisions. It is important to discover how the superintendent is responding to these current challenges, to see how his/her role is evolving, and to ascertain what school superintendents in 1986 are actually doing.

RESEARCH ON THE MODERN SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT

Research on the school superintendency in the past decade was remarkably thin. As Bridges (1982) noted in his examination of the "state of the art" research on school administrators, "despite the importance of this administrative role [the superintendency] to education and society, less than a handful of studies analyzed in this review investigated the impact of the chief executive officer. This topic merits both reflection and empirical examination since nothing of consequence is known about the impact of the occupants of this role" (p.26). However, there is an on-going interest in the position and seemingly an increasing number of studies on the school superintendent role.

Some studies reviewed by this researcher (e.g., Bacharach and Mitchell 1983; Caldwell and Forney 1982; Blumberg 1985) were an out growth of the literature on organizational performance. The first two studies analyzed the relationships between the variables of role conflict and role ambiguity of the school superintendent and school principal to assess how they affected job performance, job satisfaction, and perception of the organizational characteristics. The participants in these two studies were superintendents and

principals from school districts in New York and Pennsylvania, respectively. Blumberg (1985) personally interviewed 25 superintendents, investigating the many job relationships which produced conflict for the superintendent. Some of these involved the school board, teachers' union, and the media.

Management or leadership style is a major factor in the successful accomplishment of the tasks required of an educational administrator. Two studies reviewed contribute to this literature. Barraclough (1973) reviewed several studies examining in detail the determinants and influences of managerial style. Being subordinate-centered and adaptive were two essential characteristics for effective leaders as indicated by this research. Ortiz (1986) reports on three separate leadership style studies of three different school superintendents in California. The objective of the report was to show the relationship between leadership style and organizational cultures as they relate to the delivery of educational services. The conclusion was that each of these superintendents, using his unique leadership style (namely: symbolic, intentional, and charismatic), "created" an appropriate, but distinct culture to provide the necessary educational services in the district.

A group of systematic studies of superintendent role behavior, utilizing the work activity methodology of Henry Mintzberg, were reviewed. Two of these (Duignan 1980; Pitner, and Ogawa 1981) gathered information describing the structure of superintendent work using these activity classifications: (1) unscheduled meetings, (2) scheduled meetings, (3) desk work, (4) telephone calls, (5) travel within the

system, (6) tours and visits, and (7) evening meetings. Duignan (1980) found that the superintendent spent approximately 49% of his/her average daily time in unscheduled and scheduled meetings. Over 67% of the superintendent's verbal contact time was spent with school trustees, central office staff, and school administrators. Pitner and Ogawa (1981) reported on three related studies conducted independently by the two researchers. The studies were observations and analysis of on-the-job behaviors of superintendents. The juxtaposition of the results of the studies show two clusters of patterns of behaviors emerging: superintending is communicating, and superintendents are constrained by social and organizational structures (p. 49). Another work activity study by Willower and Fraser (1980) was conducted to find out how 50 Pennsylvania superintendents felt about their work. The interview questions included what they liked and disliked doing, what they felt was important and unimportant, and what activities they wanted to do more or less often. The results indicated that paperwork was the dislike mentioned most often. Finance, staff relations, and curriculum and instruction were grouped together as things in their job the superintendents considered most important. The authors indicated a great mix in the variation and commonality of the responses and attribute this to "the particularistic way the superintendents assess their work" (p. 4).

The sociology based study of Gross, Mason, and McEachern (1958) was conducted in Massachusetts in 1952-1953 with 105 superintendents and 518 school board members. Each person was interviewed individually using a uniform set of role definition instruments dealing with

superintendent's performance, superintendent's attributes, school board members' performances, and expectations for division of labor. Comparisons were made among and between superintendents and school board members. Among the findings were that superintendents and school board members disagreed on all aspects of division of labor and that the two groups disagreed on over half of the items pertaining to superintendent performances, superintendent attributes, and school board performances (p. 116). In 46% of the latter three areas, the differences "could be attributed to differences in the 'direction' with which incumbents of the two positions expressed their expectations" (p. 141).

Another study of the role of the school superintendent was done by Murphy and Hallinger (1985). They examined the instructional leadership segment of the role of the school superintendent. Drawing on the effective schools research which indicates that effective schools have principals who are instructional leaders they sought to describe the instructional leadership practices of 12 of California's most effective school districts. They defined these instructionally effective districts as having "high overall levels of student achievement across subject areas, growth in achievement over time, and consistency in achievement across all sub-populations of students" (p. 5). They interviewed each superintendent during July 1984 with a scheduled standardized instrument and also collected the following data: district goal statements, principal evaluation forms, samples of evaluations of principals, district newsletters for the 1983-84 school year, agendas and minutes from the principals meetings from the 1983-84

school year, and the district organizational chart. "The reliance on self-report by district superintendents could lead to problems concerning the validity of the data. . . Document analysis was therefore often used to provide a second source of data to check the accuracy of superintendent perceptions" (p. 9). The results of this study indicate that these superintendents were actively involved in managing and directing the core activities in the areas of curriculum and instruction. "They controlled the development of goals both at the district and school levels; they were influential in establishing procedures for the selection of staff; they took personal responsibility for the supervision and evaluation of principals; and they established and regularly monitored a district-wide instructional and curricular focus" (p. 10).

Salley (1980) conducted a national study of 194 superintendents. The premise of the study was that the role of superintendent consists of a set of job functions which are relatively invariant from one district to another. However, the priority or importance given to each function by superintendents is influenced by their job situations, i.e., personal, district, and ethnic characteristics. The data gathering instrument used was the Job Functions Inventory for School Superintendents. Some of the findings were: the variables related to the organization and size of school districts accounted for the most differences in the ratings of importance of job functions, ethnic characteristics accounted for the second largest number of differences, socio-economic status yielded no significant differences, and personal characteristics of the

superintendent produced the fewest number of differences (p. 2). The Salley study was the only one found by this researcher that modeled the methods and procedures of this study.

As noted earlier by Bridges (1982), the literature on the impact of the school superintendent was remarkably thin. Most of the studies available for review by this writer probed the management portion of the role. It was intriguing and disturbing to find that only one study focused on the superintendent as an educational leader. The present literature does not appear to speak in terms of the superintendent as the chief teacher in the school district.

SUMMARY

Since the appointment of the first school superintendent in Buffalo, New York in 1837, the role has grown, developed, and dramatically changed. The early superintendents were part-time educational evangelists and reformers hired to assist the school boards. These were succeeded, around the turn of the century, by career professionals who were expected to be efficient managers by the successful businessmen of the school boards who hired them. As the public schools began to be acted upon by social and public issues and citizen groups in the mid-1950s, the efficient manager was also called upon to be a public relations expert and an astute politician. In the mid-1970s, the current school reform movement began to place new expectations and demands upon the superintendent to provide direction and leadership to improve the teaching and learning environment of the public schools. Today, as chief executive officer of the school board,

the superintendent is expected to remain the efficient manager, relate effectively to the board, secure adequate funding, maintain adequate facilities, relate well to the community, secure and develop highly effective educators, and improve educational opportunities for all students.

Although the studies and research on how and how well modern superintendents are meeting the demands of their role are somewhat limited, some do exist. Some are an out-growth of the literature on organizational performance; some analyze role conflict and role ambiguity as related to job performance and job satisfaction; some investigate the effects of management and leadership style on effectiveness; and others investigate role behavior.

Two recent studies relate more directly than the others to the subject of this dissertation. A national study by Salley (1980) concludes that although personal, district, and ethnic characteristics influence priority of importance of certain functions of the superintendent's role, the role does consist of a set of job functions which are relatively invariant from one district to another. A California study, by Murphy and Hallinger (1985), of 12 superintendents in carefully defined instructionally effective districts, concluded that these superintendents were successful instructional leaders because they: controlled the development of goals both at district and school levels, were influential in the selection of staff, supervised and evaluated principals, and established and monitored a district-wide instruction and curriculum focus. It was the only study found which focused on the superintendent as an educational leader.

These studies and the writings of such recognized experts as Cuban, Griffiths, Odden, and others formed the basis for the exemplary model of the school superintendent and the data gathering instruments developed for this study. The development and description of these, as well as the procedures for this study, are the subject of Chapter Three.

Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY

INTRODUCTION

The purposes of this study were: to describe what school superintendents, working in the State of Washington in 1986, considered to be the most important functions of their role; to discover what they were actually doing as superintendents; and to compare the picture of the superintendent that emerged, from the superintendents' perceptions and the perceptions of school principals, with an exemplary model of the school superintendent. This chapter describes the conceptual framework, the instruments for data collection, the data gathering process, and the prccedures for analysis of the data.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

One of the first steps in conducting a role analysis study is to determine the activities or behaviors which will form the foundation of the study. In reviewing numerous writings, a complete model of school superintendent activities was not presented, although the following authors each include elements to be analyzed further.

Griffiths et. al. (1962) discuss the functions of the superintendent under four categories: (1) improving educational opportunity, (2) providing and maintaining funds and facilities, (3) securing and developing personnel, and (4) maintaining effective relationships with the community. Cuban (1985) indicates that to be successful in the 1980s, superintendents must simultaneously play three roles: politician, manager, and teacher. In researching twelve superintendents Murphy and Hallinger (1985) found that superintendents who were instructional leaders: (1) controlled the development of goals both at the district and school level, (2) were influential in establishing procedures for the selection of staff, (3) were personally responsible for the supervision and evaluation of principals, and (4) established and regularly monitored a districtwide instructional and curricular focus. Although Blumberg (1985) does not specifically address the functions of the superintendent, words taken from the chapter titles provide insight into some facets of the role: Superintendent as Politician, Superintendent and the School Board, Superintendent and the Teachers' Union, Superintendent and the School Budget, and the Superintendent and the Media.

In reporting the results of a survey, Walters (1977) indicates that superintendents ranked the ten most important competencies for superintendents, in five categories (Curriculum and Instruction, Personnel, Organizational Management, Financial and Business Management, and School-Community Relations). The competencies (not in rank order) are: (1) involve staff, board, students, and the public in establishing instructional objectives for the school; (2) create and

develop staff development and supervision programs; (3) develop and use a continuous program for personnel evaluation; (4) direct the role of management in the collective bargaining process; (5) recommend to the board the allocation of resources (human, physical, financial) on a priority basis in order to effectively and efficiently implement board policies toward established goals; (6) recognize his/her strengths and weaknesses, and build a management team to complement his/her strengths and compensate for his/her weaknesses; (7) understand school law and relevant legal opinions; (8) administer the development and execution of budgets in order to implement district plans and programs; (9) generate a budget which includes educational, revenue, and expenditure plans; (10) identify the community power structure.

Odden (1980) indicates central office staff should be responsible to: (1) hire principals who are well grounded in strategies for effective instructional leadership; (2) offer training to principals already in schools in strategies needed for school improvement, (3) allocate resources to schools, and (4) develop school improvement plans that "fit" the community and the district. In discussing educational leadership Sergiovanni (1984) describes five leadership forces: (1) technical--derived from sound management techniques, (2) human--derived from social and interpersonal resources, (3) educational--derived from knowledge about education and schooling, (4) symbolic--derived from focusing the attention of others on the important school matters, and (5) cultural--derived from building a unique climate. Goodlad (1984) recommends that superintendents: (1) set district goals, (2) decentralize district office powers to form a

network of schools, (3) select and develop principals who can lead, (4) provide balanced curricula, and (5) encourage the development of a self-renewing capability among school personnel.

Peters and Austin (1985), in describing school leaders, refer to such behaviors as: (1) developing a philosophy or vision; (2) "Managing By Wandering Around"; (3) being "close to the customer" or "for the kids"; (4) permitting and encouraging autonomy, innovation, and experimentation; (5) "loose-tight" leadership, and (6) empathy, persistence, attention to detail, passion. The generic standards for the superintendent's credential in the state of Washington are: (1) organizational management and accountability; (2) facility and resource management and acquisition; (3) personnel management; (4) fiscal management; (5) community relations; (6) school law; and (7) legislative process.

Examination of these writings revealed minimal attention given to the role of the superintendent as the educational leader. Neither is this aspect of the role included in the generic standards for the superintendent's credential program in the State of Washington. Each of the behaviors, functions, and characteristics outlined above was considered for inclusion in the exemplary model of the school superintendent.

INSTRUMENTS

In building the original exemplary model of the superintendent, the following categories were used: (1) improving educational opportunity, (2) securing and developing personnel, (3) maintaining

effective relationships with the community, (4) providing and maintaining funds and facilities, and (5) organizational analysis, management, and improvement. Each activity, presented in the literature, was analyzed and placed under an appropriate category heading. Duplications were deleted. The completed model contained five general categories of activity descriptive of the superintendent's role with six specific activities in each category for a total of 30 activities (Appendix A). Although a number of the activities involved human relations skills, a separate category was not included because it could not be supported in the literature. The activities available for inclusion in the category Improving Educational Opportunity were limited due to the lack of emphasis in the literature on this area of the role of the school superintendent.

To ensure that this model was accurate and comprehensive, it was sent to the following experts in educational administration: Terry A. Astuto, Roald F. Campbell, Larry Cuban, Luvern L. Cunningham, Lorne Downey, Daniel E. Griffiths, Ruth Love, Martha McCarthy, Nancy J. Pitner, and Paula Silver. They were asked for their analysis and critique. Six of the ten (60%) responded with extensive analysis. They recommended changes, additions, deletions, and change of emphasis. The model was then revised to accommodate the suggestions. The final exemplary model contained six major categories of superintendent activities: (1) improving educational opportunity, (2) securing and developing personnel, (3) maintaining effective relationships with the community, (4) obtaining funds and maintaining facilities, (5) analyzing, managing and improving the organization, and the new

category, (6) relating effectively with the school board. A total of 30 specific activities was retained with five in each general category. There were consolidations, omissions, and additions. A copy of the final exemplary model is included as Appendix B.

Two questionnaires, one for superintendents and one for school principals, were then developed from the exemplary model. The questionnaire for superintendents listed the 30 specific activities associated with the role of the superintendent in random order (Appendix C). The general category headings were omitted. Respondents were asked to evaluate each activity for its relative importance on a scale of one (1) to five (5) with one (1) indicating most important and five (5) indicating least important. A modified Q-Sort technique was used to restrict the respondents to four choices each for most and least important, six choices each for more and less important, and ten choices for important. They were then asked to indicate if they or a delegate performed each activity, how often each activity was performed, and finally, the degree of their satisfaction with the performance of each activity. This questionnaire was used to determine the perceptions of school superintendents regarding the activities of the role.

To increase objectivity and to determine differences between superintendents and principals, a second questionnaire was developed for school principals (Appendix D). The six major categories of activity from the final exemplary model were listed and the respondents were asked to list the categories in the order of importance in which they considered their school superintendent viewed them. They were

also asked to list them in the order of importance in which they themselves viewed them.

DATA-GATHERING PROCEDURES

There were 299 school districts in the State of Washington. See Table 3.0. They ranged in size from the 40,000 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) pupils in Seattle, to several districts with less than 10 FTE pupils. The average number of FTE pupils per district was 2,272

Table 3.0

School Districts by Full Time Equivalent (FTE) Pupils

SIZE IN FTE PUPILS	NO. OF DISTRICTS	NET ANNUAL AVERAGE FTE PUPILS	PERCENT OF TOTAL FTE PUPILS
20,000 and over	3	89,319.11	13.14
10,000 - 19,999	13	174,412.55	25.67
5,000 - 9,999	22	157,575.64	23.19
3,000 - 4,999	23	85,492.20	12.58
2,000 - 2,999	21	50,777.06	7.47
1,000 - 1,999	47	64,967.28	9.56
500 - 999	46	32,642.25	4.80
200 - 499	55	18,660.46	2.75
0 - 199	69	5,690.97	.84
TOTALS	299	679,537.52	100.00

and the median was 735 FTE pupils. The total FTE pupils in the State, in grades K-12, was 679,537. The enrollment figures used in this study were official figures for the 1984-1985 school year.

The superintendents' questionnaire was sent to 132 of the 299 superintendents in the State of Washington. The districts of these superintendents contained 610,714 FTE pupils or almost 90% of the State's total. See Table 3.1. The questionnaire was sent to the superintendents of all 82 districts in the State with between 2,000 and 40,000 FTE pupils. These districts included 557,576 or 82% of the 679,537 FTE pupils in the State. It was also sent to the superintendents of 24 of the 47 districts with between 1,000 and 1,999 FTE pupils. These districts represented 33,873 or 5% of the State's

Table 3.1

Superintendent Questionnaire Distribution

DISTRICT SIZE FTE PUPILS	TOTAL DISTRICTS	AT LEAST 3 SCHOOLS	QUESTIONNAIRE SENT TO	NUMBER OF FTE PUPILS REPRESENTED	PERCENT OF TOTAL
2,000 or more	82	82	82	557,576.56	82.05
1,000 - 1,999	47	44	24	33,873.65	4.98
0 - 999	170	26	26	19,513.85	2.87
TOTALS	299	152	132	610,964.06	89.90

FTE pupils. Of the remaining 170 school districts in the State, only 26 had at least one school at each level, i.e., high school, junior high or middle school, and elementary school. The questionnaire was sent to the superintendents of these 26 districts which included 19,513 or almost 3% of the State's FTE pupils.

In the first group, (all districts with between 2,000 and 40,000 FTE pupils), 54 of 82 or 66% of the superintendents responded. Twenty-one of the remaining 50 or 42% responded, for a total of 75 from a possible 132, or 57% response rate. These 75 responding superintendents headed districts which contained almost 57% of the K-12 pupils in the State of Washington. See Table 3.2.

Table 3.2

Superintendent Questionnaire Returns

DISTRICT SIZE FTE PUPILS	NUMBER SENT	NUMBER RETURNED	PERCENT RETURNED	NUMBER OF FTE PUPILS REPRESENTED IN RETURNS
2,000 or more	82	54	65.85	364,432.66
1,000 - 1,999	24	8	33.33	10,799.96
0 - 999	26	13	50.00	9,397.52
TOTALS	132	75	56.82	384,630.14

The principals' questionnaire was sent to at least three principals in each of the 132 districts whose superintendents were contacted: one senior high, one junior high or middle school, and one elementary school principal. Three principals at each level were

contacted in the largest districts (over 20,000 FTE pupils), two principals at each level in the next largest districts (over 10,000 FTE pupils), and one at each level in the smaller districts. This process excluded 121 of the 124 school districts in the State with less than 500 FTE pupils because of these 124, 54 are non-high school districts and only three of the remaining 70 districts have three principals.

Of the 444 principals contacted, 312 or 70% responded. See Table 3.3. The response was almost equally divided among the three levels: 107 high school principals, 100 junior high or middle school principals, and 105 elementary school principals. One hundred eighty-four or 60% of the responding principals were from the same districts as the 75 responding superintendents. In 25 districts, the superintendent and at least one principal from each level responded to the questionnaire.

Table 3.3

Principal Questionnaire

DISTRICT SIZE FTE PUPILS	NUMBER SENT	NUMBER RETURNED	PERCENT RETURNED
2,000 or more	303	211	69.64
1,000 - 1,999	72	54	75.00
0 - 999	69	47	68.12
TOTALS	444	312	70.27

The original group of ten experts was sent the final form of

both the superintendent and the principal questionnaires. They were asked to weight the exemplary model from a theoretical viewpoint, by completing the importance section of the superintendent questionnaire and to rate the relative importance of the major categories of activities on the principal questionnaire, also from a theoretical viewpoint. Six of the ten or 60% responded by completing the two questionnaires and one responded with ideas in a narrative format.

TREATMENT OF THE DATA

This study was descriptive in design and the analysis of the data is presented primarily in a narrative format. As the design of the study was relatively straight forward, so was the treatment of the data.

The Statistical Package for the Social Studies (SPSS) system of computer programs was used as the foundation for the data analysis. A single program was developed to include the items from both the superintendents' and principals' questionnaires. Following the data entry, separate SPSS Save Files were created for the superintendent data, the principal data, and the expert data.

Frequency distribution tables and accompanying statistics were obtained for the 30 activities in the areas of importance, responsibility, frequency, and satisfaction; as well as for the demographic information from the superintendents' raw data file. The statistic used most often in analysis was the mean which also generated rank order data. After examining the distribution of each of these variables independently, an investigation of the relationships between

variables was begun. Contingency tables were generated comparing each of the 30 activities for importance, responsibility, frequency, and satisfaction with the variables of sex, total years as a superintendent, years in the present superintendency, district size, and highest academic degree. In all, a total of 720 contingency tables were created. The next level of analysis of the superintendent data was by categories of activities. Using a process called Multiple Response, the 30 specific activities were re-ordered into the six categories of activities. Frequency distribution tables, contingency tables, and accompanying statistics were obtained.

Frequency distribution tables and statistics were run from the principals' raw data file. These allowed analysis of the principals' rankings of the categories of activities. Contingency tables were then generated comparing each of the six ideal and six actual categories of activities with the variables of sex, total years as a principal, district size, years as a principal with the present superintendent, highest academic degree, level of school, and school size.

Frequency distributions and accompanying statistics were obtained only for the ranking of importance of the 30 activities, and the ranking of the categories of activities from the experts' raw data file.

The computer print-outs of these data were reduced to a manageable form for comparison and analysis. Most frequently, these were summary charts or data assembled on the exemplary model.

SUMMARY

Existing literature and the input of experts in the field of educational administration were used to construct the exemplary model of the role of school superintendent which was used in this study. It contained 30 specific activities grouped in six general categories of superintendent activity.

A questionnaire, based on this model, was sent to 132 school superintendents of the 152 districts in Washington State, having at least one senior high, junior high/middle, and elementary school. Seventy-five (57%) returned a completed questionnaire ranking the specific activities for relative importance and indicating which were delegated, frequency of performance, and degree of their satisfaction with performance.

A second questionnaire, listing the major categories of activity, was completed by 312 (70%) of 444 principals who received it in the same 132 districts. They rank ordered the categories of activity to first reflect their observations of their superintendents' priorities, and then to reflect their own priorities.

The ten experts originally consulted in the design of the model were asked to complete the importance ranking on both questionnaires from a theoretical perspective. Six (60%) complied and a seventh provided a narrative evaluation.

The data from the questionnaires were then analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Studies (SPSS) system of computer analysis to provide responses to the original research questions of

this role analysis study. These data are presented and interpreted in the following chapter.

Chapter 4

INTERPRETATION OF THE DATA

INTRODUCTION

The information for this role analysis study of school superintendents was gathered through two questionnaires distributed to superintendents and principals in the State of Washington in the Spring of 1986. The data from the returned questionnaires are presented and discussed under the headings of the original research questions posed in Chapter 1. The final research question, which deals with the implications of the data, will be included in Chapter 5.

THE PARTICIPANTS

The participants in this study were 75 superintendents and 312 principals, in the State of Washington, who returned completed questionnaires in June 1986. The following is a profile of the 75 responding superintendents.

Seventy-one (95%) were male, four (5%) were female; 45 (60%) held doctoral degrees, and 28 (37%) masters degrees. Sixteen (22%) were less than two years in their present superintendency, 40 (54%)

were five years or less in their present superintendency, and only one had held the present position for more than 20 years. See Table 4.0. Seven (9%), including three of the four female superintendents, had two or less total years experience. Twenty-one (28%) had five or less years experience and 31 (41%) had more than ten years experience as school superintendents. The 40 (53%) in the first five years of their present position outnumbered, by almost two to one, the 21 (28%) who had been superintendents five or less total years. Likewise, only 35 (46%) had been more than five years in their present position, while 54 (72%) had been superintendents for more than five years.

Table 4.0

Years in Present Position and Total Years in Superintendency

YEARS	PRESENT POSITION			SUPERINTENDENCY		
	NO.	PERCENT	CUM. PERCT.	NO.	PERCENT	CUM. PERCT.
0 - 2	16	21.3	21.3	7	9.3	9.3
3 - 5	24	32.0	53.3	14	18.7	28.0
6 - 10	23	30.7	84.0	23	30.7	58.7
11 - 19	11	14.7	98.7	24	32.0	90.7
20+	1	1.3	100.0	7	9.3	100.0

The sample for the study had a balance of district size and the responding group reflected that balance. Districts with at least one high school, one middle or junior high school, and one elementary school were selected and only 26 of the state's smallest districts (0 - 1,000 FTE pupils) met this criterion. Represented in the group of

respondents were: three quarters of the 16 districts in the State with more than 10,000 FTE pupils, two-thirds of the 22 districts of between 5,000 and 10,000 FTE pupils, more than half of the 23 districts of 3,000 to 5,000 FTE pupils, and one-third of the 68 districts with 1,000 to 3,000 FTE pupils. The remaining 12 represented the 170 State districts with less than 1,000 FTE pupils. Only 26 of these districts had the required three schools, and almost one-half of those school districts were represented. See Table 4.1.

Table 4.1

District Size by FTE Pupils

SIZE IN FTE PUPILS	NO. STATE DISTRICTS	NO. IN SAMPLE	NO. RESPONSES	PERCENT OF GROUP	CUML. PERCENT
20,000 & Over	3	3	2	2.67	2.67
10,000 - 20,000	13	13	10	13.33	16.00
5,000 - 10,000	22	22	16	21.33	37.33
3,000 - 5,000	23	23	13	17.33	54.66
2,000 - 3,000	21	21	13	17.33	72.00
1,000 - 2,000	47	24	9	12.00	84.00
500 - 1,000	46	23	11	14.67	98.67
0 - 500	124	3	1	1.33	100.00
TOTALS	299	132	75	100.00	

In summary, the respondents were predominantly male, almost two in three held doctoral degrees, over half were less than five years in

their present superintendency, but almost three-quarters had been superintendents for longer than that time. More than half of the latter group had ten or more total years experience. The 75 respondents were distributed among the State's school districts as follows: 28 (37%) were from districts with more than 5,000 FTE pupils, 26 (35%) were from districts of between 2,000 and 5,000 FTE pupils, and 21 (28%) were from districts of less than 2,000 FTE pupils.

PRESENTATION OF THE DATA

Presentation of the data is arranged topically to correspond with the research questions stated in Chapter 1.

Superintendents' Perceptions of Importance of Role Activities

The Superintendents in this study ranked the 30 role activities listed in the questionnaire by relative importance, using a scale of one to five, with one being most important, and five being least important. A modified Q-Sort technique limited the ratings to four choices each for most and least important, six choices each for more and less important, and ten choices for the middle position of importance (Appendix C). In responding, 20 of the 75 superintendents deviated, at least slightly, from these constraints. Therefore, the data on importance are from the 55 correctly completed responses. However, the other 20 questionnaires were analyzed and the data conformed to that found in the 55 correctly completed questionnaires. The rank order is based on the mean for each activity.

The data indicated that the superintendents considered the most important activities of their role to be:

1. Establishing mutual understanding and working relationship with the **school board**

2. Leading the **school board** in establishing district goals, philosophy, and policies

3. Building and working with a **management team** of board and administrators

4. Securing adequate **funding** for maintenance and operation of the district, including special grants and levies

Instructional leadership, curriculum, competent principals, and community relations, were the activities rated just below these as more important. See Table 4.2.

The four activities rated least important were:

27. Allocating resources to individual schools and programs

28. Dealing with special interest groups and issues

29. Accessing and using local, state, and federal political systems

30. Involving business in joint curriculum projects

Ranked just above these, in the less important group, were: transportation and safety, time in classrooms, learning the community power structure, rewarding performance, school improvement plans, and maintenance of facilities. The remaining ten activities were rated in the middle of the importance scale.

This group of superintendents clearly perceived creation of a good working relationship with the school board to be their most important activity. They saw a team style of goal setting and management to be of similar importance, giving all three of these a

Table 4.2

Superintendents' Rank of Role Activities by Importance

ACTIVITY	MEAN	RANK ORDER
<u>Most Important</u>		
Establish mutual understanding and working relationship with school board	1.673	1
Lead the Board in establishing goals, philosophy, and policies	1.945	2
Build and work with a management team of Board and administrators	1.964	3
Secure adequate funding for maintenance and operation of district, including special grants and levies	2.000	4
<u>More Important</u>		
Establish and/or monitor district instructional and curriculum focus	2.109	5.5
Attract and retain building principals who are grounded in effective instructional leadership	2.109	5.5
Set the district's strategic vision through long-range planning and evaluation	2.255	7
Supervise and evaluate principals and central office administrators	2.327	8
Listen to and communicate clearly with the community-at-large	2.473	9
Cooperate with the community to build pride in and support for schools	2.527	10
<u>Important</u>		
Empower others to excel	2.673	11
Establish staff selection procedures	2.727	12
Apply technically sound management principles	2.818	13
Construct, control & administer district budget	2.873	14

Table 4.2 (cont.)

ACTIVITY	MEAN	RANK ORDER
Involve staff, board, students & public in establishing and/or revising instructional objs.	2.964	15
Develop & use an ongoing program for personnel evaluation	2.982	16
Facilitate staff development programs	3.055	17
Direct management's role in collective bargaining procedures	3.127	18
Involve local citizens in school district activities	3.382	19
Build the capacity of the district to engage in improvement activities	3.436	20
Less Important		
Plan, provide and maintain school buildings and facilities	3.455	21
Develop school improvement plans to fit the community	3.527	22
Develop strategies to recognize and reward performance	3.564	23
Learn and keep abreast of the community power structure	3.655	24
Spend time in classrooms	3.764	25
Provide for student transportation and safety	3.782	26
Least Important		
Allocate district resources to individual schools and programs	4.018	27
Deal with special interest groups and issues	4.055	28
Access and use local, state, and federal political system	4.145	29
Involve business in joint curriculum projects	4.400	30

higher priority than funding. It was also clear that activities involving allocating resources to the individual schools, special interest groups and issues, use of the political systems, and district-business curriculum projects had the lowest priority for this group of superintendents.

Correlation of Variables

District Size. The variable of district size was examined by comparing the responses of superintendents from the eight largest districts (10,000+ FTE pupils) and those of the 13 smallest districts (2,000 or less FTE pupils) both with the total group and with each other. In general, there were clearer differences between the sub groups than between either group and the total group. See Table 4.3.

Superintendents of the largest districts rated the following activities significantly higher than did the total group or the group of smallest districts: accessing the political systems, listening to the community, keeping abreast of the community power structure, involving business in joint curriculum projects - all community relations activities. This group attached significantly lower importance than did either the total group or the group of smallest districts to: leading the board in establishing goals, philosophy, and policies; involving others in establishing and/or revising instructional objectives; and developing school improvement plans - all instructional activities.

Superintendents of the smallest districts viewed activities involving budget, buildings and facilities, transportation, allocating resources, and staff development as significantly more important than

Table 4.3

Rank Order of Importance by District Size

ACTIVITY	DISTRICT RANK ORDER			RANK DIFFERENCE		
	ALL	LARGE	SMALL	A/L	A/S	L/S
Establish mutual understanding & working relationship with school board	1	1	1			
Lead the Board in establishing goals, philosophy, and policies	2	8	4	- 6		
Build and work with a management team of Board and administrators	3	3	2			
Secure adequate funding for maintenance & operation of district, including special grants and levies	4	4.5	3			
Establish and/or monitor district instructional and curriculum focus	5.5	2	7			- 5
Attract & retain building principals who are grounded in effective instructional leadership	5.5	9	9			
Set the district's strategic vision through long-range planning and evaluation	7	12	12	- 5	- 5	
Supervise and evaluate principals and central office administrators	8	6	5			
Listen to and communicate clearly with the community-at-large	9	4.5	14	4.5	- 5	- 9.5
Cooperate with the community to build pride in and support for schools	10	11	16		- 6	- 5
Empower others to excel	11	10	22		-11	-12
Establish staff selection procedures	12	7	8	5		
Apply technically sound management principles	13	14	10.5			
Construct, control and administer district budget	14	15.5	6		8	9.5

Table 4.3 (cont.)

ACTIVITY	DISTRICT RANK ORDER ALL	LARGE	SMALL	RANK DIFFERENCE A/L	A/S	L/S
Involve staff, board, students and public in establishing and/or revising instructional objectives	15	26	18	-11		8
Develop and use an ongoing program for personnel evaluation	16	13	13			
Facilitate staff devlpmnt. programs	17	17.5	10.5		6.5	7
Direct management's role in collective bargaining procedures	18	15.5	19			
Involve local citizens in school district activities	19	23.5	23			
Build the capacity of the district to engage in improvement activities	20	17.5	20			
Plan, provide and maintain school buildings and facilities	21	22	15		6	7
Develop school improvement plans to fit community	22	28	26	- 6		
Develop strategies to recognize and reward performance	23	21	24.5			
Learn and keep abreast of the community power structure	24	19.5	27	4.5		- 7.5
Spend time in classrooms	25	23.5	24.5			
Provide for student transportation and safety	26	27	17		9	10
Allocate district resources to individual schools and programs	27	29	21		6	8
Deal with special interest groups and issues	28	30	28			
Access and use local, state, and federal political system	29	19.5	29	9.5		- 9.5
Involve business in joint curriculum projects	30	25	30	5		- 5

did the total group or their large district colleagues. They also gave involvement, communication, and cooperation with the community; and empowering others to excel a significantly lower priority than did the total group. In the whole area of community relations, they differed significantly from the total group and even more significantly from the group of large school superintendents. The number one priority, school board relationships, was constant for all groups. The low ranking of instructional activities by large school district superintendents and of community relations by small school district superintendents will be discussed in Chapter 5.

Tenure in Present Superintendency. The variable of tenure in present superintendency was examined to determine if it significantly effected the rank order of relative importance given to the various activities. The group of superintendents with ten or more years (N=10) and those with two or less years in their present superintendency (N=12) were compared with the total group and with each other. Only those activities having rank order differences of 4.5 (positive or negative) or greater were considered.

The longer tenured group saw budget management, collective bargaining, and student transportation as somewhat more important than did the full group and saw long range planning and evaluation and funding to be significantly less important. See Table 4.4. The shorter tenured group differed significantly from the total group by giving greater importance to principal/central office administrators evaluation, establishing instructional objectives, and student transportation. Lower priority was given to goal setting, staff

Table 4.4

Rank Order of Importance by Years in Present Superintendency

ACTIVITY	RANK ORDER ALL	10+ YEARS	0-2 YEARS	DIFFERENCE ALL& 10+	ALL& 0-2	10+& 0-2
Establish mutual understanding & working relationship with school board	1	2	1.5			
Lead the Board in establishing goals, philosophy, and policies	2	1	8		- 6	- 7
Build and work with a management team of Board and administrators	3	3.5	3			
Secure adequate funding for maintenance & operation of district, including special grants and levies	4	10	1.5	- 6		8.5
Establish and/or monitor district instructional and curriculum focus	5.5	5.5	5.5			
Attract & retain building principals who are grounded in effective instructional leadership	5.5	3.5	7			
Set the district's strategic vision through long-range planning and evaluation	7	17.5	5.5	-10.5		12
Supervise and evaluate principals and central office administrators	8	7.5	4		4	
Listen to and communicate clearly with the community-at-large	9	5.5	12.5			- 7
Cooperate with the community to build pride in and support for schools	10	7.5	10			
Empower others to excel	11	14	9			5
Establish staff selection procedures	12	10	16		- 4	- 6
Apply technically sound management principles	13	12	12.5			
Construct, control and administer district budget	14	10	14.5	4		- 4.5

Table 4.4 (cont.)

ACTIVITY	RANK ORDER ALL	10+ YEARS	0-2 YEARS	DIFFERENCE ALL& 10+	ALL& 0-2	10+& 0-2
Involve staff, board, students and public in establishing and/or revising instructional objectives	15	14	11		4	
Develop and use an ongoing program for personnel evaluation	16	16	17.5			
Facilitate staff devlpmnt. programs	17	17.5	14.5			
Direct management's role in collective bargaining procedures	18	14	19	4		- 5
Involve local citizens in school district activities	19	20	17.5			
Build the capacity of the district to engage in improvement activities	20	22.5	24.5		- 4.5	
Plan, provide and maintain school buildings and facilities	21	19	24.5			
Develop school improvement plans to fit community	22	22.5	21.5			
Develop strategies to recognize and reward performance	23	26.5	21.5			5
Learn and keep abreast of the community power structure	24	24.5	26			
Spend time in classrooms	25	28	24.5			
Provide for student transportation and safety	26	21	21.5	5	4.5	
Allocate district resources to individual schools and programs	27	26.5	27			
Deal with special interest groups and issues	28	24.5	28.5			
Access and use local, state, and federal political system	29	29	28.5			
Involve business in joint curriculum projects	30	30	30			

selection procedures, and building the capacity of the district for improvement activities.

The two groups differed significantly from each other on the relative importance of nine of the 30 activities. Significantly more important for those with least tenure were: securing adequate funding, setting the district's vision through planning and evaluation, empowering others to excel, and rewarding performance. Significantly more important for their longer tenured counterparts were: leading the board in goal setting, listening to the community, staff selection procedures, budget management, and collective bargaining. At first glance these emphases might be seen as a reflection of the training of older and newer superintendents. However, the majority of those superintendents with least tenure in their present position had as much experience in the superintendency as did the longest tenured. The implications of this will be discussed in Chapter 5.

Total Experience. The responses of the six most experienced (20+ years) and the five least experienced (0 - 2 years) were compared to each other and to the total group to test for significant variations in rank order of importance for the activities. See Table 4.5.

Those having more than 20 years experience gave greater priority to personnel evaluation, building the district capacity for improvement activities, and student transportation; and significantly less to long range planning and evaluation and empowering others to excel than did the total group. The group with least experience ranked long range planning, dealing with special interest groups, and establishing instructional objectives significantly higher than did the

Table 4.5

Rank Order of Importance by Total Years Experience

ACTIVITY	RANK ORDER ALL	20+ YEARS	0-2 YEARS	DIFFERENCE ALL& 20+	ALL& 0-2	20+& 0-2
Establish mutual understanding & working relationship with school board	1	3	1			
Lead the Board in establishing goals, philosophy, and policies	2	4	11.5		- 9.5	- 7.5
Build and work with a management team of Board and administrators	3	2	4.5			
Secure adequate funding for maintenance & operation of district, including special grants and levies	4	5.5	2.5			
Establish and/or monitor district instructional and curriculum focus	5.5	1	7.5	4.5		- 6.5
Attract & retain building principals who are grounded in effective instructional leadership	5.5	5.5	4.5			
Set the district's strategic vision through long-range planning and evaluation	7	17.5	2.5	-10.5	4.5	15
Supervise and evaluate principals and central office administrators	8	7.5	6			
Listen to and communicate clearly with the community-at-large	9	9	10			
Cooperate with the community to build pride in and support for schools	10	13	7.5			5.5
Empower others to excel	11	17.5	17.5	- 6.5	- 6.5	
Establish staff selection procedures	12	7.5	14	4.5		- 6.5
Apply technically sound management principles	13	11	13			
Construct, control and administer district budget	14	14.5	19			- 4.5

Table 4.5 (cont.)

ACTIVITY	RANK ORDER ALL	RANK ORDER 20+ YEARS	RANK ORDER 0-2 YEARS	DIFFERENCE ALL& 20+	DIFFERENCE ALL& 0-2	DIFFERENCE 20+& 0-2
Involve staff, board, students and public in establishing and/or revising instructional objectives	15	11	9	4	6	
Develop and use an ongoing program for personnel evaluation	16	11	11.5	5	4.5	
Facilitate staff devlpmnt. programs	17	17.5	17.5			
Direct management's role in collective bargaining procedures	18	17.5	15			
Involve local citizens in school district activities	19	23	19	- 4		4
Build the capacity of the district to engage in improvement activities	20	14.5	16	5.5	4	
Plan, provide and maintain school buildings and facilities	21	21.5	27.5		- 6.5	- 6
Develop school improvement plans to fit community	22	21.5	19			
Develop strategies to recognize and reward performance	23	25.5	23.5			
Learn and keep abreast of the community power structure	24	25.5	23.5			
Spend time in classrooms	25	28	25.5			
Provide for student transportation and safety	26	20	27.5	6		- 7.5
Allocate district resources to individual schools and programs	27	29	29			
Deal with special interest groups and issues	28	25.5	22		6	
Access and use local, state, and federal political system	29	25.5	25.5			
Involve business in joint curriculum projects	30	30	30			

total group. They saw leading the board in establishing goals, philosophy, and policy; empowering others to excel; budget management; and buildings and facilities as significantly less important. They differed most clearly from the most experienced group in the area of setting the district's vision through long range planning, which they ranked 15 places higher. This emphasis, coupled with their involvement with special interest groups and establishing instructional objectives seems to suggest an awareness of and commitment to the current school reform issues. The most experienced group ranked instruction and curriculum focus, staff selection, buildings and facilities, and student transportation as much more important than did their less experienced colleagues.

Degree. The variable of highest degree held was examined for significance in ranking by importance. Neither the group holding doctoral degrees nor the group holding masters degrees differed significantly from the whole group in their ranking. In a few activities, however, their rankings for importance differed from each other by a clear margin. Those holding doctorates gave higher priority to empowering others to excel and gave lower priority to allocating funds to schools. Those holding the masters degree gave more importance to building and budget management and gave lower importance to long range planning.

District Organization, Number of Principals, and Sex. The information gathered from the questionnaires regarding central office structure was not useful because it was inaccurate and/or incomplete for a large number of districts. The number of principals in each district was not used because it paralleled district size based on FTE

pupils and provided no new information. The variable of sex was not useful due to the small number of women superintendents.

Superintendents' Perceptions of Responsibility, Frequency, and Satisfaction of Role Activities

Responsibility. The respondents indicated which activities they performed and which they delegated. All 75 superintendents provided information in this area. A one on the questionnaire indicated that they performed an activity personally and a two indicated that they delegated the activity to others (Appendix C). The closer the mean was to one, the more responsible the superintendent was for that activity; and the closer to two, the more often it was delegated to another. The activities were ranked by mean for responsibility in Table 4.6 and the rankings for importance were also indicated.

The data suggested that the superintendents tended to perform personally the activities they considered most important. Three of the four activities which they listed as most important were performed exclusively by the superintendent: establishing mutual understanding and working relationship with the school board; leading the board in establishing goals, philosophy, and policies; and working with a management team. Four of the next six more important activities were performed almost exclusively by the superintendent. In all, 11 of the 13 most important activities were rarely delegated.

The superintendents tended to perform personally, some activities they did not consider of great importance. Dealing with the community power structure; the local, state, and federal political

Table 4.6

Superintendents' Rank of Role Activities by Responsibility

ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBILITY MEAN	RANK ORDER RESPON.	RANK ORDER IMPORT.
Establish mutual understanding & working relationship with school board	1.000	1.5	1
Lead the Board in establishing goals, philosophy, and policies	1.000	1.5	2
Build and work with a management team of Board and administrators	1.014	3	3
Learn and keep abreast of the community power structure	1.042	4	24
Set the district's strategic vision through long-range planning & evaluation	1.056	5.5	7
Listen to and communicate clearly with the community-at-large	1.056	5.5	9
Apply technically sound management principles	1.070	7	13
Attract and retain building principals who are grounded in effective instructional leadership	1.111	8	5.5
Supervise and evaluate principals and central office administrators	1.153	9	8
Access and use local, state, and federal political system	1.171	10	29
Empower others to excel	1.203	11	11
Secure adequate funding for maintenance and operation of district, including special grants and levies	1.211	12	4
Cooperate with the community to build pride in and support for schools	1.236	13	10
Deal with special interest groups and issues	1.254	14	28

Table 4.6 (cont.)

ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBILITY MEAN	RANK ORDER RESPON.	RANK ORDER IMPORT.
Direct management's role in collective bargaining procedures	1.264	15	18
Build the capacity of the district to engage in improvement activities	1.309	16	20
Spend time in classrooms	1.361	17	25
Involve local citizens in school district activities	1.528	18.5	19
Develop school improvement plans to fit the community	1.528	18.5	22
Establish staff selection procedures	1.548	20	12
Develop strategies to recognize and reward performance	1.551	21	23
Allocate district resources to individual schools and programs	1.557	22	27
Construct, control and administer district budget	1.611	23	14
Plan, provide and maintain school buildings and facilities	1.625	24	21
Involve business in joint curriculum projects	1.706	25	30
Involve staff, board, students and public in establishing and/or revising instructional objectives	1.708	26	15
Develop and use an ongoing program for personnel evaluation	1.722	27	16
Establish and/or monitor district instructional and curriculum focus	1.781	28	5.5
Facilitate staff development programs	1.806	29	17
Provide for student transportation and safety	1.958	30	26

systems; and special interest groups, while ranked 24, 29, and 28, respectively in importance, ranked 4, 10, and 14 in superintendent responsibility.

Finally, some activities were delegated to others. Based on this study, the superintendents delegated responsibility in the areas of: funds and facilities (budget, student transportation, and school facilities); personnel (staff selection, personnel evaluation, and staff development); and curriculum and instruction (joint curriculum projects, establishing instructional objectives, and monitoring district curriculum and instructional focus). Some of these activities were rank ordered high in importance but were still delegated to others. Examples of this were establishing and monitoring instructional and curriculum focus, establishing and/or revising instructional objectives, personnel evaluation, staff development, staff selection, and budget management. These ranked 5.5, 15, 16, 17, 12, and 14 in importance respectively, but ranked 28, 26, 27, 29, 20, and 23 respectively in superintendent involvement.

Frequency. The superintendents also ranked the 30 activities for frequency of performance. The questionnaire used a scale of one to five with one for weekly, two for monthly, three for quarterly, four for annually, for five for seldom (Appendix C). All 75 superintendents completed this section of the questionnaire.

The activities divided into three groups by mean score: activities rank ordered 1 - 12 with means of 1.5 - 2.4; activities rank ordered 13 - 22 with means of 2.5 - 3.4; and activities rank ordered 23 - 30 with means of 3.5 - 4.0. See Table 4.7. In terms of frequency,

Table 4.7

Superintendents' Rank of Role Activities by Frequency

ACTIVITY	FREQUENCY MEAN	RANK ORDER FREQUENCY	RANK ORDER IMPORTANCE
Establish mutual understanding & working relationship with school board	1.521	1	1
Cooperate with the community to build pride in and support for schools	1.714	2	10
Listen to and communicate clearly with the community-at-large	1.722	3	9
Apply technically sound management principles	1.729	4	13
Empower others to excel	1.754	5	11
Build and work with a management team of Board and administrators	1.857	6	3
Spend time in classrooms	2.028	7	25
Provide for student transportation and safety	2.143	8	26
Involve local citizens in school district activities	2.155	9	19
Deal with special interest groups and issues	2.300	10	28
Learn and keep abreast of the community power structure	2.333	11	24
Construct, control and administer district budget	2.338	12	14
Establish and/or monitor district instructional and curriculum focus	2.521	13	5.5
Plan, provide and maintain school buildings and facilities	2.528	14	21
Facilitate staff development programs	2.597	15	17

Table 4.7 (cont.)

ACTIVITY	FREQUENCY MEAN	RANK ORDER FREQUENCY	RANK ORDER IMPORTANCE
Lead the Board in establishing goals, philosophy, and policies	2.662	16	2
Build the capacity of the district to engage in improvement activities	2.851	17	5
Develop strategies to recognize and reward performance	2.899	18	23
Access and use local, state, and federal political system	3.085	19	29
Supervise and evaluate principals and central office administrators	3.324	20	8
Develop school improvement plans to fit the community	3.403	21	22
Set the district's strategic vision through long-range planning & evaluation	3.437	22	7
Allocate district resources to individual schools and programs	3.449	23	27
Direct management's role in collective bargaining procedures	3.514	24	18
Secure adequate funding for maintenance and operation of district, including special grants and levies	3.563	25	4
Develop and use an ongoing program for personnel evaluation	3.586	26	16
Involve staff, board, students and public in establishing and/or revising instructional objectives	3.625	27	15
Attract and retain building principals who are grounded in effective instructional leadership	3.629	28	5.5
Involve business in joint curriculum projects	3.662	29	30
Establish staff selection procedures	3.708	30	12

the groups of activities could be labelled weekly/monthly, quarterly, and annually respectively. A careful analysis of the eight activities ranked 23 - 30 verifies that, in fact, they are performed on an annual schedule.

The activity performed most frequently by the superintendents was establishing mutual understanding and working relationship with the school board. This activity was also ranked number one for importance and for responsibility. The next four activities were: cooperating with the community to build school pride, communicating with the community, applying sound management principles, and empowering others to excel. These activities were ranked 2, 3, 4, and 5 respectively for frequency of performance while being ranked 10, 9, 13, and 11 respectively in importance. The activities rank ordered seven and eight for frequency of performance were spending time in classrooms and providing for student transportation and safety. These activities were ranked 25 and 26 respectively for importance. Although considered less important, they were performed frequently.

Satisfaction. Finally, the superintendents rated the 30 activities for degree of satisfaction with performance. They marked the questionnaire with one for very satisfied, two for satisfied, and three for dissatisfied (Appendix C). In general, the superintendents were satisfied with the performance level of most of the activities. All but one of the activities had means between 1.5 and 2.2. See Table 4.8. The exception and the activity with the highest level of performance satisfaction was establishing mutual understanding and working relationship with the school board. This

Table 4.8

Superintendents' Rank of Role Activities by Satisfaction

ACTIVITY	SATISFACTION MEAN	RANK ORDER SATISFACT.	RANK ORDER IMPORTANCE
Establish mutual understanding & working relationship with school board	1.444	1	1
Construct, control and administer district budget	1.507	2	14
Provide for student transportation and safety	1.536	3	26
Empower others to excel	1.571	4	11
Lead the Board in establishing goals, philosophy, and policies	1.606	5	2
Attract and retain building principals who are grounded in effective instructional leadership	1.625	6	5.5
Build and work with a management team of Board and administrators	1.634	7	3
Establish staff selection procedures	1.648	8	12
Apply technically sound management principles	1.681	10	13
Facilitate staff development programs	1.681	10	17
Direct management's role in collective bargaining procedures	1.681	10	18
Supervise and evaluate principals and central office administrators	1.704	12.5	8
Cooperate with the community to build pride in and support for schools	1.704	12.5	10
Listen to and communicate clearly with the community-at-large	1.708	14.5	9
Learn and keep abreast of the community power structure	1.708	14.5	24

Table 4.8 (cont.)

ACTIVITY	SATISFACTION MEAN	RANK ORDER SATISFACT.	RANK ORDER IMPORTANCE
Establish and/or monitor district instructional and curriculum focus	1.736	16	5.5
Secure adequate funding for maintenance and operation of district, including special grants and levies	1.746	17	4
Involve local citizens in school district activities	1.778	18	19
Allocate district resources to individual schools and programs	1.779	19	27
Set the district's strategic vision through long-range planning and evaluation	1.843	20	7
Plan, provide and maintain school buildings and facilities	1.887	21	21
Deal with special interest groups and issues	1.900	22	28
Develop and use an ongoing program for personnel evaluation	1.903	23	16
Develop school improvement plans to fit the community	1.917	24	22
Involve staff, board, students and public in establishing and/or revising instructional objectives	1.930	25	15
Build the capacity of the district to engage in improvement activities	1.940	26	20
Access and use local, state, and federal political system	2.114	27	29
Spend time in classrooms	2.125	28	25
Develop strategies to recognize and reward performance	2.157	29	23
Involve business in joint curriculum projects	2.179	30	30

activity was also rated the most important, was performed by the superintendent personally, and was performed most frequently.

The next four activities with which the superintendents were most satisfied were: managing the budget, student transportation and safety, empowering others to excel, and leading the board in establishing goals, philosophy, and policies. More easily evaluated activities involving budget management, student transportation, staff development, and collective bargaining were ranked high on the satisfaction scale (2, 3, 10, 10) yet low in importance (14, 26, 17, 18).

The five activities with which they were least satisfied were: building the capacity of the district to engage in improvement activities, accessing and using political systems, spending time in district classrooms, recognizing and rewarding performance, and involving business in joint curriculum projects. These five activities with which the superintendents were less than satisfied were also considered to be among the least important. In contrast, there were three activities which the superintendents regarded as quite important, but with which they were quite dissatisfied. These were: long range planning and evaluation, establishing district instructional and curriculum focus, and establishing/revising instructional objectives. They were ranked 7, 5.5, and 15 in importance; yet only 20, 16, and 25 respectively for satisfaction of performance.

Relationships Between Importance, Responsibility, Frequency, and Satisfaction

The relationships between the data from all four areas -

importance, responsibility, frequency, and satisfaction - provided answers to the questions: Were the most important activities frequently performed personally by the superintendent with a high degree of satisfaction? Did the superintendent spend time on activities ranked less or least important? What relationships existed between the activities the superintendent performed personally and the importance of those activities? Some answers have been suggested in the preceding sections of this chapter. This analysis of these relationships focuses on the five highest and the five lowest rank ordered activities in each area. See Table 4.9.

Total agreement existed among the superintendents in this study regarding the activity of establishing mutual understanding and working relationship with the school board. The consistent rank of one for importance, responsibility, frequency, and satisfaction placed it conclusively as the most critical activity of the superintendent's role which he/she frequently performed personally with a high degree of satisfaction. The next two activities: leading the board in establishing goals, philosophy, and policies; and working with a management team had consistently high rankirgs in all areas. Securing funding for the district ranked high in importance, but low in degree of satisfaction. Establishing and monitoring the district instructional and curriculum focus was ranked 5.5 for importance, but was the third most frequently delegated activity and the superintendents were only moderately satisfied with the performance. The frequency of delegation in this area seems to support the perception that many superintendents have an administration/management

Table 4.9

Activities Rank Ordered by Importance, Responsibility, Frequency, and Satisfaction

ACTIVITY	RANK ORDER			
	IMPORT.	RESPON.	FREQ.	SAT.
Establish mutual understanding and working relationship with school board	1	1.5	1	1
Lead the Board in establishing goals, philosophy, and policies	2	1.5	16	5
Build and work with a management team of board and administrators	3	3	6	7
Secure adequate funding for maintenance and operation of district, including special grants and levies	4	12	25	17
Establish and/or monitor district instructional and curriculum focus	5.5	28	13	16
Attract and retain building principals who are grounded in effective instructional leadership	5.5	8	28	6
Set the district's strategic vision through long-range planning and evaluation	7	5.5	22	20
Supervise and evaluate principals and central office administrators	8	9	20	12.5
Listen to and communicate clearly with the community-at-large	9	5.5	3	14.5
Cooperate with the community to build pride in and support for schools	10	13	2	12.5
Empower others to excel	11	11	5	4
Establish staff selection procedures	12	20	30	8
Apply technically sound management principles	13	7	4	10
Construct, control and administer district budget	14	23	12	2

Table 4.9 (cont.)

ACTIVITY	RANK ORDER IMPORT.	RESPON.	FREQ.	SAT.
Involve staff, board, students and public in establishing and/or revising instructional objectives	15	26	27	25
Develop and use an ongoing program for personnel evaluation	16	27	26	23
Facilitate staff development programs	17	29	15	10
Direct management's role in collective bargaining procedures	18	15	24	10
Involve local citizens in school district activities	19	18.5	9	18
Build the capacity of the district to engage in improvement activities	20	16	17	26
Plan, provide and maintain school buildings and facilities	21	24	14	21
Develop school improvement plans to fit the community	22	18.5	21	24
Develop strategies to recognize and reward performance	23	21	18	29
Learn and keep abreast of the community power structure	24	4	11	14.5
Spend time in classrooms	25	17	7	28
Provide for student transportation and safety	26	30	8	3
Allocate district resources to individual schools and programs	27	22	23	19
Deal with special interest groups and issues	28	14	10	22
Access and use local, state and federal political system	29	10	19	27
Involve business in joint curriculum projects	30	25	29	30

background and are not personally confident in the curriculum and instruction field. Their dissatisfaction perhaps reflects an attitude toward delegation which is discussed further in the conclusions of this study.

The fourth and fifth activities for which the superintendents took personal responsibility were learning and keeping abreast of the community power structure, and listening to and communicating with the community-at-large. However, the first of these was ranked very low in importance (24) and both were in the middle range of degree of satisfaction (14.5). Cooperating with the community to build pride in the schools, was the second most frequently performed activity; but was ranked 10 in importance and 12.5 in satisfaction. The superintendents personally spent a great deal of time on community activities, while ranking these same activities in the middle to low end of the importance scale.

The activities which ranked very high for satisfaction were district budget management (2) and student transportation and safety (3), but they were both ranked low in importance, 14 and 26 respectively; and they were the eighth and first activities delegated to others by the superintendents.

Among the activities of least importance, two were of particular interest: dealing with special interest groups (28); and accessing and using local, state, and federal political systems (29). Although considered very low in importance, the former activity ranked 10 in frequency of performance and the latter ranked in the upper third of activities the superintendent performed personally. Both activities

ranked at the low end of the satisfaction scale. Spending time in classrooms ranked 28 in satisfaction and 25 in importance, while ranking seventh in frequency of performance.

Categories of Activities

The analysis of the data on the importance, responsibility, frequency, and satisfaction of the 30 role activities of the superintendent revealed some clustering of related activities. For example, several school board activities clustered at the top of the importance scale; three curriculum and instruction activities clustered together at the low end of the responsibility scale, i.e., frequently delegated; and five community involvement activities were among the top eleven activities on the frequency scale. This clustering of related activities reflects the organization of the exemplary model, which contained six major categories of activities:

1. Improving Educational Opportunity
2. Securing and Developing Personnel
3. Maintaining Effective Relationships with the Community
4. Obtaining Funds and Maintaining Facilities
5. Analyzing, Managing, and Improving the Organization
6. Relating Effectively with the School Board

In each category there were five specific activities (Appendix B). These 30 specific activities were included on the superintendents' questionnaire and the rating of each for importance, responsibility, frequency, and satisfaction has been analyzed in the first sections of this chapter. A similar analysis was made by category of activities. Based on the total responses possible for each category of activities,

a category mean was calculated. This generated a rank order for each category in each of the areas: importance, responsibility, frequency, and satisfaction. See Table 4.10.

Table 4.10

Rank Order of Categories of Activities

CATEGORY	IMPORTANCE		RESPONSIBILITY		FREQUENCY		SATISFACTION	
	MEAN N=55	RANK	MEAN N=75	RANK	MEAN N=75	RANK	MEAN N=75	RANK
School Board	2.57	1	1.089	1	2.527	2	1.695	2
Personnel	2.64	2	1.468	4	3.368	6	1.712	3
Organization	2.949	3	1.237	3	2.534	3	1.838	5
Community	3.218	4	1.223	2	2.045	1	1.759	4
Funds/Facilities	3.225	5	1.592	5	2.804	4	1.691	1
Impr. Ed. Oppty.	3.352	6	1.616	6	3.047	5	1.977	6

Relating Effectively with the School Board was clearly identified as the most important category of activity by the superintendents in this role analysis study. The Personnel and Organization categories were ranked second and third. Improving Educational Opportunities was ranked lowest in importance of the six categories of activity. The superintendents, as a group, took most personal responsibility for School Board Relations and Community Relations, and least personal responsibility for Improving Educational Opportunity. They were involved most frequently in Community Relations activities and least frequently in Personnel and Educational Improvement activities. The respondents were most satisfied with the

Funds and Facilities category. They were least satisfied with Improving Educational Opportunities, the category which they ranked lowest on the importance scale and with which they were least involved personally. These latter rankings by superintendents in Washington State were some of the clearest and most disturbing findings of this study and call for more discussion and examination.

Correlation of Variables

Correlations with the variables of district size, total years as a superintendent, years in the present superintendency, and highest academic degree are presented here. A category mean for each variable in each of the four areas was calculated and from that the rank order was derived.

District Size. The significance of the variable of district size was examined by comparing the responses of the superintendents of the six smallest districts with those of the eight largest districts and by comparing each group with the total group.

The ranking of the categories for importance was almost identical. However, School Board Relations and Community Relations were rated slightly less important in the small districts and Funds and Facilities rated somewhat more important. Improving Educational Opportunities was slightly more important for both sub groups than for the total group. See Table 4.11. The responsibility rankings for all groups showed little variation. The rankings for frequency of performance showed Community Relations as the category most often engaged in by all groups. Educational Improvement and Personnel activities were least engaged in by all three groups. The satisfaction

of the small district superintendents with the Funds and Facilities category was less than that of the other two groups. The large district superintendents were slightly less satisfied with the School Board Relations category than the total or small district group, and both sub groups were clearly more pleased with their Community Relations progress than was the total group.

Table 4.11

Rank Order of Categories by District Size

CATEGORY	IMPORTANCE			RESPONSIBILITY			FREQUENCY			SATISFACTION		
	ALL	SM.	LG.	ALL	SM.	LG.	ALL	SM.	LG.	ALL	SM.	LG.
School Board	1	2	1	1	1	1	2	3	2	2	2	4
Personnel	2	1	2	4	4	4	6	6	6	3	5	3
Organization	3	4	3	3	2	3	3	2	3	5	4	5
Community	4	6	4	2	3	2	1	1	1	4	1	1
Funds and Facilities	5	3	6	5	5	5	4	4	5	1	3	2
Improving Education	6	5	5	6	6	6	5	5	4	6	6	6

Total Years in Superintendency. The responses of the 13 superintendents with three to five years experience as superintendents and the 15 with 11 - 19 years experience were examined to test the effect of the variable of experience on the perceptions of superintendents by category of activity.

The least experienced group considered the Community Relations category slightly less important than did the total group or the more

experienced group. Experience did not effect the responsibility or frequency rankings. The least experienced group was less satisfied with the Funds and Facilities category than were the other two groups. They were more satisfied with the Organization and School Board categories. See Table 4.12.

Table 4.12

Rank Order of Categories by Total Years Superintendent

CATEGORY	IMPORTANCE			RESPONSIBILITY			FREQUENCY			SATISFACTION		
	ALL	3-5 YRS.	11-19 YRS.	ALL	3-5 YRS.	11-19 YRS.	ALL	3-5 YRS.	11-19 YRS.	ALL	3-5 YRS.	11-19 YRS.
School Board	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	3	2	2	1	3
Personnel	2	2	2	4	4	4	6	6	6	3	4	2
Organization	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	2	3	5	2	5
Community	4	6	4	2	2	3	1	1	1	4	5	4
Funds and Facilities	5	4	5	5	5	5	4	4	4	1	3	1
Improving Education	6	5	6	6	6	6	5	5	5	6	6	6

Years in Present Superintendency. The significance of the variable of tenure in present superintendency was also examined. The superintendents with less than two years (N=15) and those with 11 to 19 years (N=10) in their present superintendency were the two groups compared to each other and to the total group. Again, few significant effects of tenure were apparent. There was almost complete agreement among the groups on the importance of the various categories. The

shortest tenured group ranked Community Relations as less important and the longer tenured group viewed the Organization as less important than the other groups. There were no major differences in responsibility or frequency rankings. The shortest tenured group were more satisfied with the Organization category and less satisfied with the Personnel category than were their colleagues. See Table 4.13.

Table 4.13

Rank Order of Categories by Years in Present Superintendency

CATEGORY	IMPORTANCE			RESPONSIBILITY			FREQUENCY			SATISFACTION		
	ALL	0-2 YRS.	11-19 YRS.	ALL	0-2 YRS.	11-19 YRS.	ALL	0-2 YRS.	11-19 YRS.	ALL	0-2 YRS.	11-19 YRS.
School Board	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	3	2	2	3	3
Personnel	2	2	2	4	4	4	6	6	6	3	4	2
Organization	3	3	5	3	2	3	3	2	2	5	1	5
Community	4	6	4	2	3	2	1	1	1	4	5	4
Funds and Facilities	5	4	3	5	6	5	4	4	4	1	2	1
Improving Education	6	5	6	6	5	6	5	5	5	6	6	5

Highest Degree. The variable of academic degree had no discernible effect on any of the rankings in any area.

School Board Relations was the category of activity regarded as most important by all groups and all ranked Personnel in second place. The Improving Educational Opportunity category was always ranked lowest or second lowest by all groups. These three categories were uneffected by the variables examined. Superintendents took most responsibility

for the School Board Relations category of activity and least responsibility for Improving Educational Opportunity regardless of the variables. Without exception, Community Relations was the category of activity most frequently engaged in by superintendents. There was a high degree of satisfaction among all superintendents with accomplishment in the categories of Funds and Facilities and School Board Relations. All superintendents, in every group, were least satisfied with performance in Improving Educational Opportunities.

Comparisons Between Experts and Superintendents' Perceptions

The experts (N=6) rated the 30 activities for importance from a theoretical viewpoint. See Table 4.14. They were responding to the question, What should superintendents be doing in 1986? The most important activities, from their perspective, were:

1. Establishing mutual understanding and working relationship with the school board

2. Attract and retain building principals grounded in instructional leadership

3. Lead the Board in establishing goals, philosophy, and policies

4.5 Empower others to excel

4.5 Build the capacity of the district to engage in improvement activities

Included in their group of more important activities were: set the district's strategic vision, supervise/evaluate administrators, establish/monitor instructional and curriculum focus, staff selection procedures, and establish/revise instructional objectives.

Table 4.14

Activities Rank Ordered by Experts and Compared to Superintendents

ACTIVITY	EXPERTS MEAN	RANK ORDER EXPERTS	SUPTS.	DIFFER.
Establish mutual understanding and working relationship with school board	1.5	1	1	
Attract and retain building principals who are grounded in effective instructional leadership	1.67	2	5.5	
Lead the Board in establishing goals, philosophy, and policies	1.8	3	2	
Empower others to excel	2.0	4.5	11	- 6.5
Build the capacity of the district to engage in improvement activities	2.0	4.5	20	-15.5
Set the district's strategic vision through long-range planning and evaluation	2.2	6	7	
Supervise and evaluate principals and central office administrators	2.33	7	8	
Establish and/or monitor district instructional and curriculum focus	2.5	9	5.5	
Establish staff selection procedures	2.5	9	12	
Involve staff, board, students and public in establishing and/or revising instructional objectives	2.5	9	15	- 6
Develop and use an ongoing program for personnel evaluation	2.67	11	16	- 5
Develop strategies to recognize and reward performance	2.8	14	23	- 9
Construct, control and administer district budget	2.8	14	14	
Cooperate with the community to build pride in and support for schools	2.8	14	10	

Table 4.14 (cont.)

ACTIVITY	EXPERTS MEAN	RANK ORDER EXPERTS	SUPTS.	DIFFER.
Secure adequate funding for maintenance and operation of district, including special grants and levies	2.8	14	4	10
Develop school improvement plans to fit the community	2.8	14	22	- 8
Listen to and communicate clearly with the community-at-large	3.0	17.5	9	8.5
Build and work with a management team of Board and administrators	3.0	17.5	3	14.5
Apply technically sound management principles	3.2	19	13	6
Learn and keep abreast of the community power structure	3.4	21.5	24	
Deal with special interest groups and issues	3.4	21.5	28	- 6.5
Access and use local, state, and federal political system	3.4	21.5	29	- 7.5
Facilitate staff development programs	3.4	21.5	17	
Direct management's role in collective bargaining procedures	3.5	24	18	6
Allocate district resources to individual schools and programs	3.6	25.5	27	
Involve local citizens in school district activities	3.6	25.5	19	6.5
Provide for student transportation and safety	4.0	27	26	
Involve business in joint curriculum projects	4.2	28	30	
Plan, provide and maintain school buildings and facilities	4.4	29	21	8
Spend time in classrooms	4.8	30	25	5

The experts rated the following activities least important:

27. Provide for student transportation and safety

28. Involve business in joint curriculum projects

29. Plan, provide, and maintain school buildings and facilities

30. Spend time in classrooms

Learning the community power structure, dealing with special interest groups, accessing political systems, staff development programs, collective bargaining, allocation of district resources, and involvement of citizens in district activities were placed in the less important category by the experts.

Comparison of the experts' and the superintendents' rankings of the importance of the 30 activities revealed not only strong agreement, but also very clear differences. Both groups were in agreement on the single most important activity, establishing mutual understanding and working relationship with the School Board. They agreed on two of the three most important activities and both groups listed six of the same activities among the ten most important. The two groups also agreed on six activities in the group of ten activities ranked least important. Despite these agreements, however, the experts ranked several activities, of a more abstract and general nature, much higher in importance than did the superintendents. Building a capacity for improvement; empowering others to excel; developing school improvement plans; designing strategies to reward performance; using the local, state, and federal political systems; and dealing with special interest groups and issues were ranked 4.5, 4.5, 14, 14, 21.5, and 21.5,

respectively by the experts; but 20, 11, 22, 23, 29, and 28, respectively by the superintendents. The average rank order difference was greater than eight on the importance scale. The superintendents, in turn, ranked several more concrete and specific items much higher on the importance scale than did the experts. Building and working with a management team, funding, listening to and communicating with the local community, maintaining facilities, and involving citizens in district activities were ranked 3, 4, 9, 21, and 19 by the superintendents and 17.5, 14, 17.5, 29, and 25.5 by the experts. The average rank order difference was almost ten points lower on the importance scale. The remaining differences were not as marked. Establishment and revision of instructional objectives and personnel evaluation programs were ranked higher by the experts. Collective bargaining, sound management principles, and time in the classrooms were seen as more important by the superintendents.

The experts' ranking of the 30 specific activities indicated, as did the superintendents' ranking, some clustering of activities which reflected the construction of the exemplary model. The categories relating to the Organization, Personnel, and School Board were ranked first, second, and third in importance by the experts; but, based on the means, were of almost equal importance. See Table 4.15. The superintendents identified the same three categories as most important, but placed the School Board category in first position. Their ranking of the Organization in third position, compared to the experts' first place ranking, reflected the differences pointed out previously between the two groups' ranking of more specific and more

abstract activities. Both groups ranked the category of Community Relations in fourth position and interchanged the categories of Improving Educational Opportunities with Funds and Facilities in fifth and sixth position.

Table 4.15

Categories Rank Ordered by Experts and Superintendents

CATEGORY	EXPERTS		SUPERINTENDENTS	
	MEAN	RANK	MEAN	RANK
Organization	2.40	1	2.95	3
Personnel	2.48	2	2.64	2
School Board	2.63	3	2.57	1
Community	3.24	4	3.22	4
Improve Educational Opportunity	3.30	5	3.35	6
Funds and Facilities	3.52	6	3.23	5

The similarities between the superintendents' priorities and the priorities of those responsible for their training (the experts) were significant. Even their differences were along practical/theoretical lines and this whole relationship merits further examination.

Principals' Perceptions of School Superintendents

The Principals. A profile of the 304 principals in the State of Washington who returned correctly completed questionnaires follows. Eighty percent (244) were male and 20% (60) were female; 8.3% held a doctoral degree and 91.4% possessed a masters degree. There were an

equal number of elementary (101), middle/junior high (101), and high school (102) principals; 41.4% were in schools with less than 500 pupils, 42.1% of 500 to 1,000 pupils, and the remaining 16.5% were principals in schools with more than 1,000 pupils. Slightly more than one-third were from districts of more than 5,000 FTE pupils, one-third from districts of 2,000 to 5,000 FTE pupils, and the remaining one-third from districts of less than 2,000 FTE pupils. Three of four met at least weekly with their superintendents. About 30% had less than five years experience, 30% had six to ten years experience, and 40% had more than ten years experience as principals. Approximately one-third had worked with their present superintendent for more than six years, one-third from three to five years, and one-third had two or less years experience working with their present superintendent.

Comparison Between Principals and Superintendents. A questionnaire was submitted to 444 principals working in the same districts as the 132 superintendents who received the superintendents' questionnaires. Three hundred four or 70% were correctly completed and returned. Of these, 184 (60%) were from the same districts as the 75 responding superintendents. An analysis of these 184 principals' responses showed no differences in rankings from the total group of 304 principals. Therefore, the principals' data in this study was based on the responses of all 304 principals responding. In an effort to obtain more objective data than the superintendents' perceptions of their role, the principals were asked to evaluate their own superintendent. They were asked to rank order, by importance, the six categories of superintendent activity as they perceived their superintendent acting.

In an effort to determine the potential for conflicting role expectations, the principals were also asked to rank the six categories of activity in the order in which their ideal superintendent would rank them (Appendix D).

The data indicated that superintendents of the State of Washington, as observed at work by principals, considered Analyzing, Managing and Improving the Organization and Improving Educational Opportunities as their two most important categories of activity. See Table 4.16. Obtaining and Managing Funds and Maintaining Facilities, and Community Relations were ranked third and fourth for importance. Securing, Developing, and Evaluating Personnel was seen as the superintendents' fifth most important category of activity, while Relating Effectively to the School Board was clearly ranked sixth and lowest of the six categories.

Table 4.16

Comparison Between Principal and Superintendent Ranking of Categories

CATEGORY	PRINCIPALS		SUPERINTENDENTS	
	MEAN	RANK	MEAN	RANK
Organization	2.969	1	2.94	3
Improve Educational Cpportunity	3.003	2	3.35	6
Funds and Facilities	3.244	3	3.23	5
Community	3.302	4	3.22	4
Personnel	3.915	5	2.64	2
School Board	4.597	6	2.57	1

The superintendents, as perceived by themselves and as seen by principals, were clearly different. Superintendents ranked School Board Relations as their top priority. Principals rated it as the superintendents' lowest priority. The fact that much of the superintendent's work with the school board, if done well, is not seen by principals may explain this apparent contradiction. Superintendents ranked Improving Educational Opportunity activities as their lowest priority. Principals saw it as the superintendents' second highest, exceeded only by the Organization which the superintendents had relegated to third place. The principals rated Personnel fifth among the superintendents' priorities, yet the superintendents themselves ranked Personnel activities in second place on their scale of importance. These differences imply a need for better understanding between superintendents and principals, and have implications for superintendent preparation; both of which will be explored further.

The principals also ranked the six categories of Superintendent activity reflecting their expectations of an ideal superintendent. This ranking by the principals was much closer to the superintendents as they, the principals, saw them; than to the superintendents, as they saw themselves. Improving Educational Opportunities was clearly the highest priority of the principals' ideal superintendent. For the real superintendents, based on the principals' perceptions, this was the second highest priority, but as the superintendents saw themselves it was the lowest. School Board Relations was rated lowest in importance for both the principals' ideal superintendents and the real superintendents. However, this category was ranked most important by

the superintendents themselves. The principals' ideal superintendent gave second highest priority to Analyzing, Managing, and Improving the Organization. Based on the principals' observations, the real superintendents gave it the highest priority, while superintendents themselves ranked it third. The principals' ideal superintendent ranked Personnel as third in importance, their perceptions of the real superintendents ranked it fifth; but it was ranked second most important by the superintendents. Real superintendents, as observed by the principals, were more concerned with Funds and Facilities than was their ideal. See Table 4.17.

Table 4.17

Comparison Between Principals' Rank Order of Actual and Ideal Superintendents

CATEGORY	PRINCIPALS IDEAL MEAN	PRINCIPALS IDEAL RANK	PRINCIPALS ACTUAL MEAN	PRINCIPALS ACTUAL RANK	SUPERINTEN. MEAN	SUPERINTEN. RANK
Improve Educational Opportunity	1.742	1	3.003	2	3.35	6
Organization	3.140	2	2.969	1	2.94	3
Personnel	3.573	3	3.915	5	2.64	2
Community	3.701	4	3.302	4	3.22	4
Funds and Facilities	3.896	5	3.244	3	3.23	5
School Board	4.930	6	4.597	6	2.57	1

Twenty-five Complete Districts. Three or more principals from 25 school districts, whose superintendents had properly completed the questionnaire completed the principals' questionnaire. The responses

of these 86 principals were compared with the responses of the superintendents from the same 25 districts to assess the degree of agreement with the larger sample. These 25 districts reflected the profile of the total group. There were six districts of 10,000 FTE pupils, seven districts of 10,000 to 5,000 FTE pupils, six districts of 5,000 to 3,000 FTE pupils, and six districts with less than 3,000 FTE pupils. The superintendents' rankings of the categories of activities did not vary greatly from the total group of superintendents.

The group of principals, from these 25 districts, saw the ideal superintendent almost exactly as did the total group of principals. See Table 4.18. Their picture of their own superintendents also reflected the discrepancies that existed in the larger group. This group of 25 superintendents saw themselves as having almost identical

Table 4.18

Comparisons Between 25 Principals and Superintendents

CATEGORY	PRINCIPALS IDEAL ALL	PRINCIPALS IDEAL 25	PRINCIPALS ACTUAL ALL	PRINCIPALS ACTUAL 25	SUPERINTEN. ALL	SUPERINTEN. 25
Improve Educational Opportunity	1	1	2	1	6	5
Organization	2	2	1	2	3	4
Personnel	3	4	5	5	2	2
Community	4	3	4	3	4	3
Funds and Facilities	5	5	3	4	5	6
School Board	6	6	6	6	1	1

priorities as the total group, with School Board highest and Improving Educational Opportunities lowest, and the principals in these same districts perceived their superintendents' priorities to be exactly the reverse. These principals' ranking of categories of activity for the ideal superintendent was closer to their ranking of their real superintendent than either ranking was to the superintendents' self perceptions.

SUMMARY

Seventy-five superintendents from the State of Washington provided the majority of the raw data for this role analysis study. The group was a representative cross-section of school districts having senior high, middle/junior high, and elementary schools. District size, sex, experience, and tenure were proportionally represented.

The superintendents presented their perceptions of the relative importance of 30 specific role activities. They clearly identified establishment of a good working relationship with the school board and a team approach to goal setting and management as the most important activities in which they engaged.

When the variables of district size, tenure, experience, and highest academic degree were examined, some significant effects on the importance rankings were indicated. Large district superintendents attached greater importance to community relations activities and lesser importance to instructional activities. Superintendents in the smallest districts focused more on internal management activities and less on community relations. For almost one-third of the activities,

there were clear differences between those longest in their present position and those with shortest tenure. The former gave greater importance to more concrete management activities, the latter to more visionary and empowering activities. The most experienced superintendents clearly gave less importance to setting the district's strategic vision through long-range planning than did the whole group. The least experienced ranked this activity higher than did their colleagues. The variable of highest academic degree did not indicate significant differences. None of the variables altered the fact that the number one priority for all groups of superintendents was school board relationships.

The superintendents tended to take personal responsibility for the activities they considered most important. The exceptions were: those activities dealing with the community (less important with more personal involvement) and those dealing with instruction (more important with less personal involvement).

In the frequency section, about one-third of the activities were annual in nature and, hence, were ranked least important. Important activities tended to be performed more frequently with the exception of some community related activities performed frequently, but still considered less important.

Most of the activities were ranked in the mid-range of satisfaction. In general, superintendents were most satisfied with the activities they considered most important and vice versa. The exceptions were budget and transportation (lower in importance and higher in satisfaction); and instruction and curriculum focus (higher

in importance and lower in satisfaction).

Correlation of all four sections of data produced several conclusions. Some activities were not considered important, but were time consuming. Some were easier to measure and produced more satisfaction. Others were important and delegated. Those activities that were delegated did not produce the same degree of satisfaction with their accomplishment. However, the clearest conclusion indicated was that the most important, most personally performed, most frequently performed activity of the school superintendent was establishing a mutual understanding and working relationship with the school board. It was likewise, the one with which the superintendent was most satisfied. This was true for all superintendents in all groups.

The responses of the superintendents were also analyzed by category of activity. School Board Relations was clearly the most important category of activity for the responding superintendents and Improving Educational Opportunity ranked lowest of the six categories. Personnel, Organization, Community, and Funds and Facilities ranked second through fifth, respectively.

The same variables examined in the analysis of the specific activities were used with the categories of activity. The findings were almost identical, although of a more general nature. It was possible to also examine the responsibility, frequency, and satisfaction areas for each variable, thus generating more precise information in those areas.

The six experts in Educational Administration, who rated the 30 activities for importance, agreed with the superintendents on the most

important activity, namely; establishing mutual understanding and a good working relationship with the school board. They concurred on two of the three most important activities, and both groups listed six of the same activities among the ten most important. Similarly, both groups listed six of the same activities in the group of ten activities rated least important. Despite these agreements, the experts ranked several activities of an abstract and general nature, such as: empowering others to excel, building the capacity for improvement activities, much higher than did the superintendents. The superintendents, in turn, ranked several more concrete, specific activities much higher than did the experts. Building a management team, funding, and listening to and communicating with the local community were the most important examples. As with the superintendents, the experts ranking of the specific activities by importance was translated into ranking by the six general categories. There was agreement on the top three categories: Organization, Personnel, and School Board. These categories were of almost equal importance for the experts, but the superintendents ranked the School Board category in first position. Both groups ranked Community Relations fourth and interchanged the categories of Improving Educational Opportunities with Funds and Facilities in fifth and sixth position.

A representative group of principals from the same 132 districts as the surveyed group of superintendents, returned 304 correctly completed questionnaires. They ranked the six categories by importance, first to reflect the superintendent's priorities as they

perceived them and; second, to reflect the priorities of what they considered an ideal superintendent. The superintendents, as perceived by themselves and as seen by principals, were clearly different. Superintendents rated School Board Relations as their top priority. Principals rated it as the superintendent's lowest priority. Superintendents ranked Improving Educational Opportunity as their lowest priority, while principals saw it as the superintendent's second highest. Managing and Improving the Organization, which the superintendents had relegated to third place, was seen as the superintendent's top priority by the principals. Superintendents ranked Personnel activities in second place, while principals saw them ranking it as their second to lowest priority.

Improving Educational Opportunities would clearly be the first priority of these principals' ideal superintendent. School Board Relations would be the lowest. In general, their ideal superintendent would be very unlike both their real superintendent's self perceptions and; indeed, the educational experts' ideal. However, their ideal superintendent would be a much closer image of their real superintendent, as perceived by the principals.

The implications, conclusions, and recommendations, based on these data, will be addressed in Chapter 5.

Chapter 5

CONCLUSIONS, DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS

INTRODUCTION

This role analysis study was designed to develop a clearer picture of modern, working school superintendents. It was hoped that such a picture would make possible a clearer analysis of how superintendents are responding to the demands being placed on their leadership by the current reform movement in education.

CONCLUSIONS

The conclusions of this study are presented topically to correspond to the research questions stated in Chapter 1.

Superintendents' Perceptions

The respondents in this study conclusively agreed that the specific activity of establishing mutual understanding and working relationship with the school board was the most critical activity of the role. The superintendents were personally responsible for this activity, performed it frequently, and were highly satisfied with their effectiveness in this area. In general, this consistent top ranking

for importance, responsibility, frequency, and satisfaction was not affected by any of the variables introduced. They ranked two other school board related activities as second and third most important and only then, in fourth position, was the activity of securing adequate funding included. Establishing the district's curriculum focus and hiring effective principals were ranked jointly in fifth position. These rankings would suggest that only after they had worked on the establishment of a strong working relationship with their school boards and had set a sound funding pattern for their districts did these superintendents turn their attention to curriculum and instruction goals and to hiring effective building principals to implement them. Perhaps in the ideal situation all of these activities could be engaged in simultaneously; however, in the real situation priorities must be set and time and effort is finite. While it is understandable that a busy superintendent's first concern would be a good relationship with the body that not only sets overall district policy, but also hires and fires superintendents; their low ranking of curriculum and instruction activities suggests that on a day to day basis teaching and learning was not the primary activity of these superintendents. They ranked the category Improving Educational Opportunity lowest of the six categories for importance, superintendent responsibility, and satisfaction. They ranked it second lowest for frequency of performance.

Some specific activities regarded as being of little importance by the superintendents related to the broad business and political communities within which the school district functioned. Thus, accessing local, state and federal political systems and involving

business in joint curriculum projects were rated very low. Although much of the superintendent's time was spent in community relations activities, they regarded such activities as low in importance and somewhat as a necessary nuisance. The clear focus of their attention was inward on the organization itself. This was especially true in the smaller districts where the superintendents focused on the nuts and bolts of the organization - budget, transportation, buildings - perhaps, because these districts tended to be more one-person operations. These districts were headed for the most part by the less experienced superintendents who saw Managing the Organization as the most important category of activity. These same smaller district superintendents were not overly concerned about community relations activities which would, of course, require less conscious attention in their small homogeneous communities. In the large districts, however, the superintendents were much more likely to focus outward on the larger community, the very diversity of which demanded greater conscious attention in responding to its varied needs. This outward focus and emphasis seemed to be paralleled by a de-emphasis of instructional activities. The ranking of two specific activities by the large school district superintendents is illustrative of this fact. Accessing and using the local, state, and federal political system was considered significantly more important by these superintendents than by the total group. At the same time, involvement of staff, board, students, and public in establishing and/or revising instructional goals was significantly less important. Furthermore, since the latter activity was also considered significantly less important than the

former by these superintendents in larger districts, they appear to have dealt with the dilemma of political versus instructional demands in favor of the political. Among the less experienced superintendents pre-occupation with the organization was somewhat understandable. However, this tendency also surfaced among superintendents who were new to a district, regardless of their previous experience as superintendents. (The study showed that most superintendents move from smaller to larger districts as their careers progress.) It appears that the demands of a new job, regardless of district size or superintendent experience, created a tendency to focus inwardly on the management of the organization. Efficient management may also have been an expressed or implied requirement of the board at the time of hiring, and new superintendents were simply responding to these expectations.

There was a clear, direct relationship between the activities superintendents considered important, took personal responsibility for, and with which they were most satisfied. It would be of interest, in the future, to probe the possible cause and effect relationships in these three areas. That superintendents in this study personally performed activities they considered to be important is clear from the fact that eleven of the thirteen activities which they considered most important were rarely delegated to others. There were two exceptions, however, which appeared significant. Community relations activities were considered low in importance, yet commanded much superintendent involvement. Some curriculum and instruction activities were considered highly important, but they received little personal attention from the superintendent. Further examination of the topic of

delegation surfaced some interesting tendencies and possibilities. The superintendents studied took personal responsibility for School Board Relations, Community Relations, and Managing the Organization. They delegated responsibility in the areas of Funds and Facilities, Personnel, and Improving Educational Opportunities. When the district was large enough to warrant any delegation, the Funds and Facilities category was the first delegated by the superintendent. When size made further delegation possible or necessary, the category of Improving Education Opportunities was the next to be delegated. These two categories were ranked least important by the superintendents; in these cases they delegated activities they considered unimportant. Superintendents considered School Board Relations activities most important, took personal responsibility for them, performed them frequently and were satisfied with the performance. At the opposite end of the scale was Improving Educational Opportunities which they considered least important, delegated to others, and with which they were least satisfied. Why did they delegate these latter activities? One obvious reason is they did not have enough time to personally perform all of the activities of the role. When they delegated in the area of Improving Educational Opportunities as different from Funds and Facilities where they were satisfied with the results, they appeared to delegate with timidity. As administrators with backgrounds primarily in management, were they acknowledging their inadequacies in this area of responsibility? Was there a mixture of personal inadequacy and fear of letting go? They seemed to lack confidence in their subordinates, as they were frequently dissatisfied with the performance of activities

they delegated. Might they be thinking, "If I don't do this myself, I should be dissatisfied"? Is it also possible that they were dissatisfied with the performance of others because they had not established accountability procedures or because they did not have effective standards to measure success?

Superintendents and Experts

The group of experts in educational administration and the superintendents were in agreement on the relative importance of many of the activities of the superintendent's role. What disagreement existed was in the tendency of the theorists to emphasize activities of a general, more abstract nature and the practitioners to stress those of a specific, more concrete nature. The fact that there was clearly more agreement than disagreement may indicate that superintendents tend to reflect the values and emphasis of those who trained them. Basic agreement between the experts and superintendents on the top three categories of superintendent activity - Management, Personnel, and School Board - suggested that superintendents focused on Educaticnal Administration, the area of these experts' focus. Agreement on the lower three categories, including Improving Educational Opportunities - the raison d'etre of schools - would seem to reflect the fact that the expert group did not include curriculum and instruction specialists. The findings of this study would at least generate the hypothesis that those who prepare superintendents and those prepared tend to share the same values. It also generates several implications for preparation and certification programs which will be discussed further.

Superintendents and Principals

It was clear from this study that what superintendents actually did or thought they did, and what principals thought they were doing were quite different. In direct contradiction of the superintendents' perceptions, principals saw School Board activities as the superintendent's lowest pricrity. A possible explanation of this contradiction may be that much of the superintendent's activity in this area is private, especially if it is effective. It is not generally discussed with principals and may only be observable when relationships with the board are poor. A similar contradiction was apparent between principal and superintendent perceptions of the priority given to Improving Educational Opportunities. Whereas superintendents themselves gave it lowest ranking, principals saw them ranking this category as at least of equal importance with Managing the Organization, at the top of their priority list. Such a difference in perceptions is puzzling to say the least. It is even more puzzling in light of the findings of a comparison between the perceptions of 25 superintendents and the perceptions of 86 principals from the same 25 districts which reflected identical differences in perceptions. The entire 111 individuals were, after all, talking about the same 25 superintendents. Here too, the matter of what is talked about by superintendents and what is not talked about may afford some insight. Perhaps words do sometimes speak louder than actions. It would be as unpardonable for superintendents to keep silent about Improving Educational Opportunities as to publicly discuss their dealings with the school board. The question is, How do they talk to principals? Is

it through abrupt intrusions into their world? "Our district's MAT scores will be raised by 20 points next year." "We need to add an emphasis, K-12, on writing across the curriculum". "All of our teachers will be trained in TESA by 1988." Such statements place responsibility on the curriculum departments and/or principals. As a result, these administrators may perceive the superintendent as emphasizing curriculum and instruction in the district, when, in fact, he/she may be giving isolated mandates. Even if the superintendents in this study issued such mandates, they did not regard certain specific activities that further educational opportunities as an integral part of their personal responsibility. They charged others with their accomplishment, and were not very satisfied with the results.

A further clue to understanding the discrepancy between superintendents' perceptions and principals' perceptions of superintendents may be found in principals' expectations as expressed in their profile of the ideal superintendent. They were in almost unanimous agreement that a superintendent's top priority should be Improving Educational Opportunities. Perhaps this expectation of a superintendent colored their perceptions of their own superintendents. Consequently, they saw more of what they wanted to see. Since their ideal superintendent gave lowest priority to School Board Relations, perhaps, they tended to perceive their own superintendents as doing like-wise. For whatever reasons, there were clear contradictions between the profile of superintendent that emerged from superintendents' perceptions and the profile that resulted from principals. This obvious gap in understanding between collaborators in

the educational enterprise must somehow be bridged and suggestions for doing so are among the implications of this study. The fact that principals saw superintendents as much closer to the ideal than superintendents saw themselves does not eliminate the potential for tension and misunderstanding. These very internal conflicts could be directing attention away from the issues of teaching and learning. These conflicting perceptions of superintendents and principals become even more puzzling when it is considered that most superintendents were former principals. It is logical to ask, therefore, if the time constraints and the political and fiscal realities they face when they become superintendents tend to dull the idealism they possessed as building principals? It is fair to wonder if board and community expectations lead superintendents, who as principals were throughly dedicated to Improving Educational Opportunities, to leave responsibility for such activities to similarly idealistic principals and to consider these activities less important because they are not doing them themselves? It may be unrealistic to hope that these principals who saw Improving Educational Opportunities as the first priority of the ideal superintendent will continue to do so should they become superintendents. Could it be that the system tends to exclude this kind of instructional leader from upward mobility in educational administration and to promote those with administrative, political, and public relations strengths? The profile of the large school district superintendents, previously discussed, might support this latter hypothesis.

DISCUSSION

An historical review of the role of school superintendent indicates that it is a changing role, a leadership position challenged and shaped by the socio-economic forces of each generation. Today's superintendents are being shaped and challenged by the reform movement, which seeks quality and equality in schools. There is a call to excellence, a call to improved teaching and learning, and a call to strong leadership from the school superintendent. In response to such expectations, the findings of this study when related to the reform movement research and literature, gave some reason for hope and indicated much room for improvement.

In their study of the superintendent, Murphy and Hallinger (1985) focused on the instructional leadership segment of the role. They found that the superintendents in the 12 instructionally effective districts in their study were personally involved in managing and directing the core activities in the areas of curriculum and instruction. The superintendents were instructional leaders because they: controlled the development of goals at both the district and school levels, were influential in the selection of staff, personally supervised and evaluated principals, and established and monitored a district-wide instruction and curriculum focus. The Washington State superintendents in this study ranked these four activities of the role as highly important to them and one of the activities, goal development, was ranked as the second most important of all 30 activities. They took personal responsibility for goal setting and

principal supervision and evaluation activities, although they delegated responsibility for staff selection procedures and district-wide instruction and curriculum focus. They ranked all of these activities in the middle to low range for frequency of performance and were reasonably satisfied with their performance.

Despite such positive indications provided by the findings of this study, there were also indications of much room for improvement if superintendents are to meet the demands of the reform movement. Even when allowances are made for the "thinness" of the literature on the curriculum and instruction component of the role of superintendent accounting for some weakness in the specific activities of the Improving Educational Opportunities category of the exemplary model used in this study; and even though the experts who participated in the model's construction and evaluation were all from an administration rather than from an instructional background; it is still quite clear that the superintendents in this study, when making choices between activities competing for their time and attention, gave a very low ranking to those pertaining directly to Improving Educational Opportunities. More direct, personal involvement in the areas of curriculum and instruction and staff selection, greater attention to empowerment issues, recognition and reward for performance for the specialists in these areas, and clearer focus by superintendents on themselves as improvers of educational opportunities are necessary if superintendents are to answer the call for leadership implicit in the reform movement. The choice seems clear: become reform leaders or simply exist in an era of reform. The newest breed

of superintendents, the group with the least experience, may give reason for optimism. They ranked long range planning and establishing and/or monitoring district instructional and curriculum focus higher than did the total group. They were also significantly more committed to setting the district's strategic vision through long range planning than were their most experienced colleagues. Although this specific activity was included in the Managing the Organization category, the present educational environment demands that such a strategic vision strongly emphasize curriculum and instruction.

Cuban (1985) asserts that "to exercise real leadership, a superintendent must play three roles, often simultaneously" (p. 29). In his terms, the superintendent is: politician, manager, and teacher. The political role includes public relations, community leadership, and school board and policy setting activities. The role of manager requires knowledge of business, budget, facilities, transportation, and organizational management. The superintendent, as teacher, informs the school board, makes presentations to the community, sets district objectives, and provides instructional management aimed at improving the performance of students. Cuban goes on to say that, "the current strong interest in having superintendents exert leadership in the areas of curriculum, instruction, and assessment acknowledges anew the historic role of the superintendent as teacher. Indeed, the teaching role provides the focus for the superintendent's political and managerial skills" (Cuban, 1985:30).

Acceptance of this would further challenge the superintendents in this study to place greater emphasis on the activities of their role

directly associated with Improving Educational Opportunities, the category of activity they ranked lowest in importance and direct involvement. These activities of the role of the teacher provide direction to the other facets of the role. The superintendents in this study emphasized the roles of manager and politician. Superintendents in the larger school districts focused more on the role of politician, while those in small school districts emphasized the role of manager. Without a sense of direction from the role of teacher, the political skills can become ends rather than means and the managerial skills are dedicated exclusively to keeping the machinery running (Cuban, 1985:30).

Goodlad (1978) projects that educational leaders of the future must be committed to the educational program (p. 327). In discussions with superintendents he found them wanting to be educational leaders rather than negotiators or business managers. He goes on to assert that superintendents, realizing they are ultimately responsible for all that goes on, must delegate major portions of the role to others. "What he or she delegates is most revealing" (Goodlad 1978, 326). He claims that superintendents will "retain two sets of responsibilities: chairing the sessions of the management team and serving as liaison with the board" (p. 327) and the respondents in this study appeared to be doing this. They ranked the former activity third for both importance and responsibility and the latter activity first for importance and second for responsibility. These superintendents delegated responsibility for Funds and Facilities, Personnel, and Improving Educational Opportunities. They appeared to spend their

discretionary time (the time available to them to make choices about) on Community Relations and Managing the Organization. Goodlad emphasizes that the discretionary time of the superintendent should be focused on the center of the educational enterprise, the individual school. If this is the direction of the future, the superintendents in this study must drastically redirect the priorities that control the use of their discretionary time. They need to center their attention on the essence of schools, teaching and learning. In this area, the superintendents' self perceptions would indicate much more room for improvement than would their principals' observations of them. Perhaps principals are content with a "top down" directive and delegated approach to the exercise of the superintendent's responsibility for teaching and learning. However, a "hands on", direct and on-going personal involvement by the superintendent would make for more effective schools.

IMPLICATIONS

The following implications result from the conclusions and discussion of this study:

1. The superintendents in this study gave lowest priority to instructional activities, mirroring the lack of emphasis on this aspect of the superintendent's role in the literature. They also delegated responsibility for these activities and were dissatisfied with their performance. Since one of the demands of the current reform movement is a new commitment to educational leadership, aimed at improving the performance of students, it would seem that this facet of the

superintendent's role must be revitalized by making the essence of schools - namely teaching and learning - their central focus. Superintendents must see curriculum and instruction issues as more important in their own day to day activities and take more personal responsibility for them. In larger school districts, where it seems necessary for superintendents to delegate these activities, they must retain ultimate responsibility for them. All superintendents need to establish clear expectations in the areas of teaching and learning, design realistic accountability procedures, and continue to stress the importance to the district of these central issues.

2. School Board Relations activities were perceived as most important by the superintendents studied and this perception was reinforced by the experts in educational administration. Direct instruction, including specific content and skill development in this area, needs to be included and emphasized in superintendent preparation programs. It is not uncommon in some existing credential programs to receive no instruction in this critical facet of the superintendents' role. The practicum also needs to include more opportunities for direct experience in dealing with the school board.

3. Superintendents in this study personally spent a great deal of time in Community Relations activities, yet ranked them low in importance. They spent little time in local, state, and federal political activity which they also judged of low importance. It seems important to clearly identify "political" activities as an acceptable component of the role and to emphasize in preparation and inservice programs both the art and the skills involved in the necessary

political activity of the superintendent. Experts in the field of political science certainly could be helpful in designing and conducting such programs.

4. Four of the five most frequently performed activities of the role of the superintendent clearly involved human relations and communication skills. However, these superintendents were only moderately satisfied with the performance of the activities. The literature reviewed for this study was virtually silent on the specific human relations skills required by the role. It seems important to recognize the reality that superintendents are facilitators and communicators and prepare them with the necessary skills. For current superintendents, workshops in these skill areas could be included in annual conference agendas or they could be the sole topic of a regional inservice day. Preparation programs could explore inter-departmental cooperation to provide candidates with specialized instruction in these skills.

5. The superintendents from small school districts in this study indicated that Personnel was more important and Community Relations were less important than did either the whole group or their large district colleagues. This may be so because it is easier and more natural to communicate and interact with people in small communities, and more difficult to attract and retain staff. In this context it should be noted that the average number of FTE pupils per district in 1984-1985 in Washington State was 2,272 and the median was 735 FTE pupils. Washington is a state of small school districts. Therefore, Washington superintendent credential programs should place

special emphasis on some of the unique aspects of being a superintendent in a small school district.

6. The potential for serious role conflict exists between superintendents and principals based on the opposite priorities they gave to School Board Relations and Improving Educational Opportunities. Principals do not see or understand the centrality of school board - superintendent relations; they want their superintendent to be an instructional leader. It appears essential to include formal instruction on the role of the superintendent, especially as it relates to school board relations, in principal preparation programs. There also seems to be a need for superintendents and principals in school districts to dialogue together regarding role definitions and expectations, the place of teaching and learning in the district, and school board - superintendent relations in an effort to reduce potential conflict.

7. Providing significant staff development opportunities for chief executive officers is a difficult task. They are self assured individuals often at the height of their career possessing extensive experience, knowledge, and skill. However, as has been discussed, there are changing demands on school superintendents in the late 1980s and 1990s. There appears to be a strong need for on-going education for them as they face these demands and provide leadership for the changes. Extended skill building sessions at annual conferences or regional workshops need to focus on the skills needed by these superintendents for the future, without denigrating their present knowledge and expertise. A non-threatening atmosphere encouraging

professional development would seem most effective. Continuing education in the medical and/or business fields may provide good models.

8. The differing perceptions of superintendents and principals on the role of the superintendent and the fact that most superintendents were former principals raises questions regarding the "making of a superintendent". Educators pursuing superintendents credentials usually hold full time positions and take course work at night or during summer school on a part-time basis. Typically, they complete the internship with no release time and have little opportunity to observe or shadow the supervising superintendent. This entire process warrants careful examination on the part of both school districts and universities.

9. Superintendents of the future may need different skills and background than those currently in the position. School board members hire superintendents. If hiring to meet such changes is to take place, boards of directors need to develop new selection criteria. One means of assisting them would be to include information and workshops at their annual conferences on the demands for educational reform and the expanding role of the school superintendent.

10. Several observations have been made in this study regarding superintendent preparation and credential programs. If these programs are to prepare leaders for the future rather than to replicate the past, some modifications should be considered. Presently, there is no generic standard for the Washington State superintendent credential in the area of instructional leadership. This absence needs examination in this era of demand for educational reform and because it affects

content included in the college and university preparation programs. Such diverse knowledge and skills as finance, curriculum and instruction, personnel management, organization development, and law are demanded of school superintendents. While it may not be possible to have experts in all of these areas in one department of educational administration, such experts are available. Inter-departmental cooperation and/or contracting with successful practitioners would provide superintendent candidates with the most qualified instructors available in these diverse fields.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

Along with the conclusions and implications of this study several questions arose which suggested topics for further investigation. They are briefly outlined here.

1. Conducting this study with a different group of experts whose background is in curriculum and instruction rather than administration should be pursued to discover if their perspective would significantly alter the results. A similar design could be used having them make additions to or deletions from the exemplary model and then rank the 30 activities of the role of the superintendent. Would the activities included be significantly different from those validated by the experts in educational administration for this study? Would there be any shift of emphasis in their rankings of the activities?

2. A study of the nature of delegation by school superintendents would seem valuable. Their motivation in delegating, the criteria used to determine what is delegated, the relationship

between delegation and degree of satisfaction with accomplishment, the effect of job description clarity and accountability procedures on degree of satisfaction, and the relationship between superintendent's strengths and weaknesses and their satisfaction with the performance of their delegates are all questions worthy of further exploration.

3. This study suggests that there are constraints inherent in very large and very small school districts which can limit the superintendent's instructional leadership. A study concentrated on the effect of district size on the instructional leadership aspect of the superintendent's role might answer questions about optimum district size for effective instructional leadership.

4. Are preparation programs truly equipping candidates for the realities of the superintendency? A field study matching the competencies required by the Washington State generic standards with the demands made on beginning superintendents would provide evaluative data to address the question. A design using triangulation interviews with superintendents, principals, and school board members could ensure a breadth of viewpoints.

5. The impact of the school superintendent's instructional leadership on the development and operation of instructionally effective school districts should be studied. This study would require a clear definition of and selection of instructionally effective school districts. An analysis of the instructional leadership behaviors of the school superintendent would follow. There are several designs possible, an example of which is a replication of the Murphy and Hallinger (1985) study.

Such studies would deepen understanding of the superintendent's role and would contribute to the effectiveness of superintendents as they face the leadership challenges that the final decade of the twentieth century presents.

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APPENDIX A

ORIGINAL EXEMPLARY MODEL OF THE SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT

IMPROVING EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

Establishing and/or monitoring instructional and curriculum focus for district.

Involving staff, board, students and public in establishing and/or revising instructional objectives.

Setting district goals and philosophy.

Developing school improvement plans to fit the community.

Spending time in the district classrooms.

Supplying personal expertise about education and schooling.

SECURING AND DEVELOPING PERSONNEL

Establishing staff selection procedures.

Supervising and evaluating principals.

Developing and using a continuous program for personnel evaluation.

Operating and developing staff development programs.

Interviewing and hiring building principals who are grounded in

effective instructional leadership.

Engaging in personal professional growth activities.

MAINTAINING EFFECTIVE RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE COMMUNITY

Learning and keeping abreast of the community power structure.

Understanding and working closely with the School Board.

Building community pride in, and support for schools.

Communicating clearly with the community-at-large.

Involving local citizens in school committees.

Being personally involved in non-school community affairs.

PROVIDING AND MAINTAINING FUNDS AND FACILITIES

Constructing, controlling and administering district budget.

Planning, providing and maintaining school buildings and facilities.

Allocating district resources to individual schools and programs.

Providing for student transportation and safety.

Securing adequate funding for maintenance and operation of district, including special grants and levies.

Interpreting and applying school law to district operation.

ORGANIZATIONAL ANALYSES, MANAGEMENT AND IMPROVEMENT

Engaging in long range planning.

Studying and applying technically sound management practices.

Working with school board to allocate resources to implement

board policies.

Building and working with a management team.

Learning and applying problem solving strategies.

Dealing with teachers' union on behalf of district.

APPENDIX B

FINAL EXEMPLARY MODEL OF THE SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT

1. IMPROVING EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

Functions:

Establishing and/or monitoring instructional and curriculum focus for district.

Involving staff, board, students and public in establishing and/or revising instructional objectives.

Involving business in joint curriculum projects.

Developing school improvement plans to fit the community.

Spending time in the district classrooms.

2. SECURING AND DEVELOPING PERSONNEL

Functions:

Establishing staff selection procedures.

Supervising and evaluating principals and central office administrators.

Developing and using an on-going program for personnel evaluation.

Facilitating staff development programs.

Attracting and retaining building principals who are grounded in effective instructional leadership.

3. MAINTAINING EFFECTIVE RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE COMMUNITY

Functions:

Learning and keeping abreast of the community power structure.

Dealing with special interest groups and issues.

Cooperating with the community to build pride in, and support for schools.

Listening to and communicating clearly with the community-at-large.

Involving local citizens in school district activities.

4. OBTAINING FUNDS AND MAINTAINING FACILITIES

Functions:

Constructing, controlling and administering district budget.

Planning, providing and maintaining school buildings and facilities.

Allocating district resources to individual schools and programs.

Providing for student transportation and safety.

Securing adequate funding for maintenance and operation of district, including special grants and levies.

5. ANALYZING, MANAGING AND IMPROVING THE ORGANIZATION

Functions:

Building the capacity of the district to engage in improvement

activities.

Developing strategies for recognizing and rewarding performance.

Setting the strategic vision for the district through long range planning and evaluation.

Empowering others to excel.

Applying technically sound management principles.

6. RELATING EFFECTIVELY WITH THE SCHOOL BOARD

Functions:

Building and working with a Management Team of Board and Administrators.

Directing the role of management in collective bargaining procedures.

Establishing mutual understanding and working relationship with the School Board.

Providing leadership to the Board in setting district goals, philosophy and policies.

Accessing and using local, state, and federal political systems.

APPENDIX C

SUPERINTENDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire is designed to determine how you, an experienced school superintendent, assess some of the specific activities connected with your position. Thirty (30) such activities are listed. Two things are requested of you:

1. Evaluate the relative importance of each, and
2. Indicate by whom they are performed, how frequently, and your degree of satisfaction.

IMPORTANCE (Circle the number of your choices) Using the scale in the left hand column, indicate your assessment of relative importance. Please distribute your responses in the following manner: Four (4) items each in categories **MOST and LEAST**; Six (6) items each in categories **MORE and LESS**; and Ten (10) items each in category **IMPORTANT**.

RESPONSIBILITY, FREQUENCY, SATISFACTION Using the scales in the right hand columns, indicate: Who performs the activity; Approximately how often it is performed; and, the Degree of your satisfaction with the performance. (Circle the number of your choices.)

MOST	MORE	IMPORTANT	LESS	LEAST		SUPERINTENDENT	DELEGATE	WEEKLY	MONTHLY	QUARTERLY	ANNUALLY	SELDOM	VERY SATISFIED	SATISFIED	DISSATISFIED
1	2	3	4	5	Establish and/or monitor district instructional and curriculum focus	1	2	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3
1	2	3	4	5	Establish staff selection procedures	1	2	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3
1	2	3	4	5	Cooperate with the community to build pride in and support for schools	1	2	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3
1	2	3	4	5	Provide for student transportation and safety	1	2	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3
1	2	3	4	5	Apply technically sound management principles	1	2	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3
1	2	3	4	5	Involve staff, board, students and public in establishing and/or revising instructional objectives	1	2	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3

MOST	MORE	IMPORTANT	LESS	LEAST		SUPERINTENDENT	DELEGATE	WEEKLY	MONTHLY	QUARTERLY	ANNUALLY	SELDOM	VERY SATISFIED	SATISFIED	DISSATISFIED
1	2	3	4	5	Supervise and evaluate principals and central office administrators	1	2	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3
1	2	3	4	5	Listen to and communicate clearly with the community-at-large	1	2	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3
1	2	3	4	5	Secure adequate funding for maintenance and operation of district, including special grants and levies	1	2	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3
1	2	3	4	5	Involve business in joint curriculum projects	1	2	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3
1	2	3	4	5	Build and work with a management team of Board and administrators	1	2	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3
1	2	3	4	5	Develop and use an ongoing program for personnel evaluation	1	2	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3
1	2	3	4	5	Involve local citizens in school district activities	1	2	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3
1	2	3	4	5	Direct management's role in collective bargaining procedures	1	2	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3
1	2	3	4	5	Develop school improvement plans to fit the community	1	2	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3
1	2	3	4	5	Facilitate staff development programs	1	2	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3
1	2	3	4	5	Establish mutual understanding and working relationship with school board	1	2	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3
1	2	3	4	5	Build the capacity of the district to engage in improvement activities	1	2	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3
1	2	3	4	5	Spend time in classrooms	1	2	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3
1	2	3	4	5	Attract and retain building principals who are grounded in effective instructional leadership	1	2	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3
1	2	3	4	5	Construct, control and administer district budget	1	2	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3
1	2	3	4	5	Develop strategies to recognize and reward performance	1	2	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3
1	2	3	4	5	Lead the Board in establishing goals, philosophy, and policies	1	2	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3
1	2	3	4	5	Access and use local, state, and federal political system	1	2	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3

MOST	MORE	IMPORTANT	LESS	LEAST		SUPERINTENDENT	DELEGATE	WEEKLY	MONTHLY	QUARTERLY	ANNUALLY	SELDOM	VERY SATISFIED	SATISFIED	DISSATISFIED
1	2	3	4	5	Plan, provide and maintain school buildings and facilities	1	2	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3
1	2	3	4	5	Set the district's strategic vision through long-range planning and evaluation	1	2	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3
1	2	3	4	5	Learn and keep abreast of the community power structure	1	2	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3
1	2	3	4	5	Allocate district resources to individual schools and programs	1	2	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3
1	2	3	4	5	Empower others to excel	1	2	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3
1	2	3	4	5	Deal with special interest groups and issues	1	2	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA:

SEX

(1) ____ Female

(2) ____ Male

YEARS IN PRESENT SUPERINTENDENCY

(1) ____ 0- 2

(2) ____ 3- 5

(3) ____ 6-10

(4) ____ 11-19

(5) ____ 20- +

TOTAL YEARS AS SUPERINTENDENT

(1) ____ 0- 2

(2) ____ 3- 5

(3) ____ 6-10

(4) ____ 11-19

(5) ____ 20- +

HIGHEST ACADEMIC DEGREE

(1) ____ Bachelor

(2) ____ Master

(3) ____ Doctorate

NUMBER OF F.T.E. STUDENTS

(1) ____ 0- 500

(2) ____ 500- 1000

(3) ____ 1000- 2000

(4) ____ 2000- 3000

(5) ____ 3000- 5000

(6) ____ 5000-10000

(7) ____ 10000-20000

(8) ____ 20000- +

CHECK THE POSITIONS IN YOUR CENTRAL OFFICE STRUCTURE

(1) ____ Superintendent

(2) ____ Asst. Supt.

(3) ____ Admin. Assistant

(4) ____ Director

(5) ____ Supervisor

(6) ____ Business Mgr.

NUMBER OF PRINCIPALS

(1) ____ 1- 3

(2) ____ 4- 6

(3) ____ 7-11

(4) ____ 12-20

(5) ____ 21-30

(6) ____ 30- +

APPENDIX D

PRINCIPAL QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire is designed to determine how you, a school principal, view the role of school superintendent.

A. How frequently do you meet or associate with the superintendent in your school district and have occasion to either converse with him/her or listen to him/her speak?

(1) _____ daily

(2) _____ two (2) or three (3) times per week

(3) _____ weekly

(4) _____ monthly

(5) _____ two (2) or three (3) times per year

(6) _____ annually

B. When you meet with the superintendent (as in item #A above), to what extent are his/her remarks, comments, directions, centered in one of these six (6) areas? Rank order them to reflect the extent, with one (1) being **Extensive**, and six (6) being almost **Non-existent.**

(1) _____ Improving educational opportunities for students

(2) _____ Securing, developing, and evaluating personnel

(3) _____ Maintaining effective relationships with the community

(4) _____ Obtaining and managing funds and maintaining facilities

(5) _____ Analyzing, managing and improving the organization

(6) _____ Relating effectively to the School Board

C. Of the six (6) areas listed below, please rank order them as to the relative importance you believe a school superintendent should give each, with one (1) being **Most Important**, and six (6) being **Least Important.**

(1) _____ Improving educational opportunities for students

(2) _____ Securing, developing and evaluating personnel

(3) _____ Maintaining effective relationships with the community

(4) _____ Obtaining and managing funds and maintaining facilities

(5) _____ Analyzing, managing and improving the organization

(6) _____ Relating effectively to the School Board

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA:

SEX

(1) ____ Female

(2) ____ Male

YEARS AS PRINCIPAL WITH PRESENT SUPERINTENDENT

(1) ____ 0- 2

(2) ____ 3- 5

(3) ____ 6-10

(4) ____ 11-19

(5) ____ 20- +

TOTAL YEARS AS PRINCIPAL

(1) ____ 0- 2

(2) ____ 3- 5

(3) ____ 6-10

(4) ____ 11-19

(5) ____ 20- +

HIGHEST ACADEMIC DEGREE

(1) ____ Bachelor

(2) ____ Master

(3) ____ Doctorate

NUMBER OF F.T.E. STUDENTS IN YOUR SCHOOL

(1) ____ 0- 500

(2) ____ 500- 1000

(3) ____ 1000- 2000

(4) ____ 2000- 3000

PRINCIPAL OF

(1) ____ Elem. Sch.

(2) ____ Middle/Jr. Hi. School

(3) ____ Sr.Hi. Sch.

ELLEN L. WOLF

CERTIFICATION AND EDUCATION

Initial Superintendent Certification for State of Washington
Continuing Elementary and Secondary Principals Certificate for State of Washington
Continuing Elementary and Secondary Teaching Certificate for State of Washington
Doctor of Education Degree, In progress, University of Washington
Master of Education, Eastern Washington University, 1978
Master in the Teaching of Physical Science, Idaho State University, 1970
Bachelor of Science in Education, Marylhurst College, 1964
High School Diploma, Holy Names Academy, 1957

ADMINISTRATIVE AND TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Administration

Assistant Superintendent, Curriculum and Instruction, Monroe School District No. 103, 1986 - Present
Administrative Assistant for Instructional Services, Monroe School District No. 103, 1980 - 1986
Elementary School Principal, Monroe School District No. 103, 1978 - 1980
Graduate Fellow, Eastern Washington University, Robert Reid Laboratory School, 1977 - 1978
Elementary School Principal, Tacoma, 1976 - 1977
Elementary School Principal, Spokane, 1969 - 1976

Teaching

Adjunct Professor, Eastern Washington University and Seattle Pacific University
I.T.I.P. Trainer, Monroe School District No. 103
College Instructor, Fort Wright College, Summer 1975
Teacher, grades four through eight, 1961 - 1969

HONORS

Recipient of Rachel Royston Scholarship, 1982 and 1985
Recipient of WASA Leadership Award, 1987

PUBLICATIONS

"The Making of a Principal - 1979", SIRS, Slant, February 1979

PERSONAL

Date and Place of Birth: September 24, 1939 - Spokane, WA.