

CRITERIA PUBLIC SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS
CONSIDER WHEN HIRING FIRST-YEAR
AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION
TEACHERS

By

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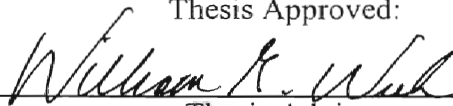
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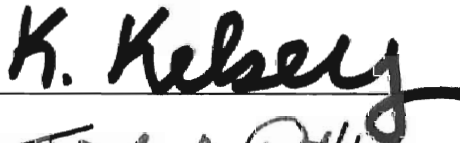
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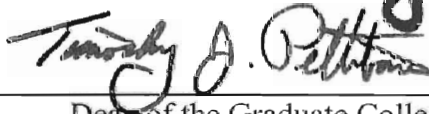
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Dean of the Graduate College

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“Life is like a dogsled team, if your not the lead dog, the scenery never changes.”
-Unknown.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background and Setting

According to supply and demand projections, the United States will need to hire 2.2 million educators in the next decade who are not currently teaching in elementary and secondary schools. In addition to the number of teachers needed, concern exists about teacher preparation and the quality of today's teaching force (Feistritzer, 1999).

Historically, vocational educational teachers have been treated differently from common school teachers. They were expected to be expert in two areas: the art of teaching and the trade to be taught (Schaefer, 2001). If only one of these were available, preference was given to employing vocational teachers who were deemed competent in their trade. Charles Prosser believed that if vocational teachers had to meet the same requirements as general education teachers, "the field would sacrifice technical proficiency." Prosser believed colleges and universities were ill equipped to prepare trade teachers and professional teacher education was impractical for most vocational educators. He asserted that vocational teachers should have practical experiences in their trade before teaching the youth of this nation (Prosser & Quigley, 1949). Thus, occupational experience replaced higher levels of education and provided vocational agriculture teachers with subject matter expertise (Prosser & Quigley, 1949).

This has made a different road map for vocational teachers as compared to general education teachers. The prevailing philosophy has been that teaching an

experienced trades person to teach is much easier than teaching a prospective (or practicing) teacher a trade, or business (The Quality of Vocational Education, 1998). Consequently, many vocational and technical education teachers were employed because of their extensive experience in a craft or trade.

An exploratory study of employment interview practices showed that little attention has been paid to recruiting teachers in secondary education. Faculty were central to the academic mission, which means that failure to hire good faculty can harm the institution for decades (Coady, 1990). Consequently, it was not surprising that the teacher selection process is one of the most important tasks that can face the educational administrator. Coady (1990, p. 46) allowed:

The costs and consequences of poor hiring practices can be monumental. The hiring process alone takes an enormous amount of time and can cost thousands of dollars. Hundreds of hours can be spent as academic departments, human resource departments, and members of the administration try to determine criteria for hiring. Then come the countless hours of wading through resumes and interviewing candidates. Even worse, poor hiring decisions take a toll first on the students. Faculty are eventually terminated, often leading to anger, hostility, and even lawsuits. This expensive, lengthy process of finding new faculty has to be repeated one year later, often because of poor hiring decisions.

Some believe this problem lies in teacher preparation and the teaching of pedagogy rather than a specified field (Schaefer, 2001). When dealing with teacher certification, state systems have been put into place to ensure that every teacher would

be qualified to teach, but a closer look at the way these systems worked in practice revealed that they did little to accomplish this goal (Schaefer, 2001). In most states, people received a license to teach only upon successful completion of a state approved teacher training program. Reports suggested teaching candidates entered training programs having low entry requirements, no exit requirements, scant subject matter content, and many pedagogical courses of dubious value (Schaefer, 2001). Frequently, this has led to an alternative certification approach to bypass many of the pedagogical courses as well as other requirements.

Rationale of the Study

The quality of teachers has a direct impact on students' achievements (Holmes, 2001). Having a better understanding of hiring practices will allow teachers to find the best route to teacher certification.

Statement of the problem

Little information exists concerning the criteria administrators consider when hiring agricultural education teachers.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to describe factors that public school administrators in Oklahoma consider when hiring first-year agricultural education teachers.

Objectives of the Study

The following objectives were formulated to successfully accomplish the purpose of this study.

1. Describe the importance administrators placed on candidate's academic achievement.
2. Describe the importance administrators placed on candidate's agriculture experience.
3. Describe the importance administrators placed on candidate's teaching practice.
4. Describe the importance administrators placed on candidate's interview.
5. Describe the importance administrators placed on candidate's references.
6. Describe the importance administrators placed on candidate's type of certification.

Scope of the Study

This study will include administrators that hired alternatively and traditionally certified first-year agricultural education teachers in the state of Oklahoma in the 2002-2003 academic year.

Definition of Terms

Administrator- Person usually (e.g., superintendent or principal) responsible for making the final hiring decision in the public school system.

Alternative Certification- Certification that was designed to attract prospective teachers who have a bachelor's degree in another field of study. Some alternative certification programs involve teaching with a trained mentor, and include instruction regarding the theory and practice of teaching.

Cooperating Teacher- Teacher responsible for supervising the student teacher during the student teaching experience. Duties consist of mentoring, critiquing lessons, and solid advice for the advancement of the student's teaching career.

Oklahoma General Education Test- Test designed to assess the general knowledge and skills required of entry-level educators in Oklahoma.

Oklahoma Subject Area Test- Test designed to assess the subject area knowledge of the field desired.

Oklahoma Professional Teaching Examination- Test designed to assess the professional knowledge and skills required of entry-level educators in Oklahoma (Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation and National Evaluation Systems, 1997).

Program Specialist- Person responsible for agricultural education teachers within their state district. Ensures that school spends state funds appropriately, and provides leadership for the agricultural education program.

Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE, i.e., "Project")- An essential component of student's experiential learning in secondary agricultural education. Also considered an opportunity in which students apply agricultural concepts and principles in their daily lives.

Traditional Certification- Certification that was obtained by completing a teacher education program approved by the state. Students are commonly required to take specific courses in pedagogy, child development, the foundations of education, and classroom diversity. Some states require a minimum college grade point average for entry into the program and many require prospective teachers to pass standardized tests. These programs typically require student teaching.

Assumptions of the Study

For the purpose of this study, the following assumptions were made:

1. Administrators would provide their honest opinions when answering the questions.
2. Criteria that administrators use are based on a true concern for student achievement in agricultural education.

Significance of the Study

Results of this study could be a valuable resource to the Oklahoma State University agricultural education faculty. This study may show the needs of the administrators and allow teacher educators to better prepare their students to meet those needs. The perceptions of administrators concerning alternative certification will also be assessed, possibly allowing faculty to review the traditional program and make changes accordingly. Oklahoma State University agricultural education faculty may gain a better understanding of the best ways to approach teacher education in agricultural education by studying first-year teachers' entry into the profession both traditionally and alternatively.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

The intent of this chapter is to present summaries of previously completed investigations and literature associated with criteria administrators consider when hiring teachers. Literature reviewed included publications, research studies, and journal articles. The review of literature was developed and arranged into five major areas:

1. Criteria administrators consider when hiring teachers
2. Interviews
3. Teacher quality
4. Alternative certification
5. Summary

Administrators' Criteria for Hiring Teachers

Shortage of jobs is a constant concern to prospective students across the country as competition for jobs increases. The current research was undertaken to determine if there is a common set of criteria public school hiring officials utilize in judging applicants for teaching positions. Such information could be valuable as new teachers seek positions in public schools.

Boulton (1979) studied administrators and the value that is placed on educational credentials when deciding on candidates to interview. Selected interviewees for teaching

positions were chosen based on cooperating teacher recommendations, college supervisor recommendations and the candidate's subject area concentration.

During the job interview, Seiferth (1979) found the personal impression job candidates leave on potential employers seemed to be the most influential consideration in the administrative hiring decision. The least important consideration was family ties in the community or school. Another relatively less important trait was a sizable number of personal and situational characteristics such as gender, minority group status, and marital status. The results support the findings of similar research studies done in the past (Seiferth, 1979).

Mortaloni (1984) studied public school administrators regarding several areas associated with teacher preparation programs. Factors considered most important in recruitment of teachers were the letters of reference by the cooperating teacher, college supervisor, and building principal for the candidate's cooperating center, and the candidate's grade in student teaching.

Interviews

Braun (1990) found that teacher candidates were often selected based upon recommendations made by inexperienced and often unskilled interviewers. In some cases, one person hired teachers on the basis of one interview. Whether an interview was meaningful depended on the skill of the interviewer as well as the personality of the teacher candidate. Also, interviewers were often administrators who may not be familiar with classroom realities. This resulted in decisions based upon personal judgment rather than significant objective criteria. Braun (1990) noted that, "candidates who are articulate, glib, and confident in dealing with adults may appear more capable than less

gregarious candidates who may be more effective teachers in the classroom” (Braun, 1990, p. 46).

Several theories underlie the interview process. Coady (1990) believes the problem was not the candidate’s value system, but it was the value system of the interviewer making the decision. Various psychological factors influence the evaluation process. Coady (1990) conducted research on several interview theories and concluded that the inference theory states that we infer the characteristics of a candidate on the basis of incomplete information based on similar candidates from previous situations.

Seiferth (1979) studied bias by the interviewer on his or her interviewing decisions. Preferential treatment was given to married candidates, candidate’s just beginning their careers, candidate’s with co-curricular expertise, and well-groomed, physically attractive candidates. The interviewing process was not standardized, making comparisons among several candidates difficult and more subjective. Seiferth found that the average interview lasted less than one hour with the interviewer talking 80% of the time. Often, the interviews were unstructured, featuring yes or no questions, leading questions, and irrelevant questions (Seiferth, 1979). As one researcher stated, “Often the administrator hires the applicant who seems to reflect his or her own attitudes” (Vornberg & Liles, 1983, p. 10).

Interviews may not necessarily be the objective and purposeful conversation that would lead to a carefully defined decision for hiring. Interviewers may typically arrive at their decisions within the first five minutes; the remainder of the interview is then used to gather supportive evidence backing up the initial impression. Interviewers who base hiring upon personal judgment risk potential complaints of age, sex, or racial/ethnic

discrimination, thus increasing the likelihood of school districts being vulnerable to hiring-decision-related law suits (Loehr, 1986).

Teacher Quality

Holmes (2001) concluded that in Tennessee, Boston, and Dallas there were dramatic differences between the performance of students who were assigned the best teachers and those assigned the worst teachers. No matter the motive, school reform will likely continue unless more teachers have the knowledge and skill to help all their students meet high academic standards.

Rosenshine and Furst (1971) studied selected characteristics of effective teachers. They found five common qualities that were consistent with effective teachers. They are as follows:

- Clarity
- Variability
- Enthusiasm
- Task Orientation
- Give students the opportunity to learn

However, Holmes (2001, p. 33) claimed that,

The biggest failing of our present arrangement is the many teachers who lack preparation in the subjects they teach. Teachers are often assigned courses outside their main teaching field as a cost-saving measure or administrative convenience, because of shortages in advanced subjects such as math and science, or because some schools have a high turnover of teachers.

Kelly and Kelly (1982) studied nine teachers who won “outstanding teacher” awards, and analyzed data for common qualities for an outstanding teacher. The qualities that were found most frequently included the following:

- Enthusiasm for teaching
- Love for his/her students
- Commitment to the students
- Respect for the students
- Strict rules with high expectations for the students
- Interest in the student’s achievement
- Well-organized
- Command of his/her subject matter
- Stamina and vitality
- Sense of humor

Stronge (2002) concluded that teacher effectiveness must include the following:

- Basic intelligence
- Academic achievement
- Appearance
- Emotional balance
- Empathy
- Sensitivity to different needs of students and knowledge of teaching them

Engel and Fredrick (1980) found that interviews are often not valid when the interviewer has had no interviewing training and instead, simply talks to candidates about qualifications. Often, interviews like these gloss over such important teacher qualities as

ambition, handling discipline problems, desire to teach, and the ability to effectively work with different ability students. Moreover, Hawley (1990, p. 33) posited that teacher certification is no guarantee of good teaching, and its greatest outcome has been that it has kept many fine prospective teachers from ever entering America's classrooms. However, the reformist approach would deregulate the teacher certification process. It would give power to principals to make crucial decisions about faculty and curriculum, and hold them accountable for student performance. To attract and keep good principals and good teachers, however, states and communities must give them the authority and compensation they deserve. In a reformed system, principals would have the means to reward good teachers, a power that current uniform salary schedules deny (Thomas B. Fordham Foundation, 2002).

Further Leedy (2000) concluded that the reformist approach was beginning to take hold. In the 1980s, there was a series of unsuccessful attempts to boost academic achievement by adding additional regulations on the public schools occurred, e.g., three years of high school science instead of two, so many minutes of homework per day, and adding new reading curricula. Many states and communities are experimenting with freedom, competition, and accountability for student performance. Individual schools are being authorized to make key decisions about schedules, curriculum, and personnel, while giving power to families to select those schools that best suit their children. Monitoring academic performance and making performance records are also important parts of the reform agenda. This approach trusts principals to run schools and parents to choose the best schools for their children, while using statewide academic standards and tests to audit and report on actual achievement.

Alternative Certification

The alternative teacher certification movement rose out of a need for more and better quality teachers. Faced with the threat of teacher shortages and concern about the quality of the teaching force, states have stepped forward to meet the demand. States have developed new avenues whereby people could come into the teaching profession through a process called alternative certification (Feistritzer, 1999).

Alternative teacher certification routes provided opportunities for people from various educational backgrounds and walks of life to become teachers. They have opened doors to teaching for persons from other careers, from the military, from liberal arts colleges, former teachers who want to upgrade their credentials and get back into teaching and for people who trained to teach years ago but never did (Feistritzer, 1999).

For decades, the dominant approach to quality control for United States teachers has been state regulation of entry into the profession. Requirements vary, but almost everywhere a state license is needed to teach in a public school. To obtain a license, one must complete a teacher education program approved by the state, which typically imposes a host of requirements. Students in these programs are commonly required to take specific courses (or a set number of courses) in pedagogy, child development, the foundations of education, and classroom diversity. Some states require a minimum college grade point average for entry into the program and many require prospective teachers to pass standardized tests of reading, writing, and math skills. It is common in the process to test knowledge of pedagogy and knowledge of the subject content for which they will be certified. In addition, these programs typically required supervised

student teaching. This approach created a teacher force that was heavily credentialed in pedagogy, but not in the subject matter they were expected to teach (Schaefer, 2002).

The National Center for Education Information (NCEI) has been polling the state departments of education annually since 1983 regarding teacher education and certification. They found a rapid development of alternative routes at the state level. By 1997, 41 states reported having some type of alternative teacher certification programs. States report a total of 117 programs available for persons who had a bachelor's degree and wanted to become licensed to teach. It is estimated that more than 75,000 people have been licensed through such state run programs. Thousands more are being licensed to teach who are participating in college alternative teacher programs. Other findings of NCEI's 1997 survey regarding alternative teacher certification include the following:

1. Interest in alternative teacher certification continues to escalate. 35 states report an interest in alternative teacher certification from "people wanting to get licensed to teach" has increased in the last five years.
2. Twenty-four states reported that state legislators have shown greater interest in alternative teacher certification.
3. The biggest increase in interest from a year ago stems from higher education officials in schools, colleges or departments of education.
4. Half the states report the number of individuals getting licensed to teach through alternative routes has increased in the last five years. (p.57)

Two competing sets of ideas about how teachers should be prepared and hired exist currently. One-model, which predominates today, holds that states need to ensure that prospective teachers graduate from high quality preparation programs. Professional

educators set the criteria for what makes a training program adequate and school districts can hire only from graduates of these programs. However, this model has been criticized by researchers who argue that effective teachers, teachers who boost student achievement, are more likely to be people who score well on standard measures of verbal ability (e.g., SAT) and who have solid knowledge of the subject they teach, not those who have received a lot of training in schools of education. Members of this “school of thought” argue that states must make it easier for talented college graduates to enter teaching without having to spend years in traditional training programs (Schaefer, 2001).

Most research comparing alternatively certified and traditionally certified teachers has focused on program descriptions and the demographic characteristics of teacher candidates. The research available about outcomes of alternative certification program and the competency of the teachers that they produce has been mixed (Miller, Mckenna, Mckenna, 1998). The programs were assessed using many different kinds of variables, including observations of teaching, tests of content and pedagogical knowledge, measurements of attitudes and opinions, and cost effectiveness. Given the different programs, populations, and variables measured, it is understandable that research into the success of alternative certification programs has produced inconsistent results (Sindelar & Marks, 1993).

Proponents of alternative certification programs argue that they produce competent teachers who are mature, have more real world experience, are more willing to work in urban settings, and are more representative of minorities than traditionally certified teachers. People who participate in alternative certification claim that traditional

certification attracts mostly white women in their twenties, which does not resemble the demographics of most classrooms. Hawk and Schmidt (1989) indicated that alternative certification attracts a more diverse group of candidates, specifically men, older adults and minorities. Supporters also allow that talented individuals with subject matter competency can improve quality of education because of their knowledge depth of the specific material to be taught. Several studies indicated that teachers with more explicit and organized content knowledge tended to provide instruction that increased conceptual connections and resulted in more meaningful student discussion than teachers with limited knowledge (Otuya, 1992).

Darling-Hammond (1990) concluded that supporters of traditional certification argue that, to improve the quality of education, it is imperative to ensure that both professional knowledge and subject matter competency are grounded in a solid foundation of pedagogical training. Other researchers agree and indicate that subject matter competency alone is inadequate for instruction because teaching requires the transformation of content knowledge into representations that enhance student's understanding and learning. Teachers who merely have expertise in subject matter, but lack training in pedagogy skills are less effective (Hawley, 1990).

Moreover, Darling-Hammond (2000, p. 45) contended that,

Another area of notable concern was the issue of teacher shortages. States were rapidly creating a variety of certification options for teachers entering the profession through nontraditional routes. Novice teachers are walking into K-12 classrooms and receiving training as they work. With standards and high-stakes testing driving curricula, parents want to be

assured that their children are well prepared by receiving intensified instruction that correlates with the tested standards from the first day of school. Teachers, who enter the profession without the pedagogical skills necessary to ensure learning, place their students at a tremendous disadvantage. Studies have shown that student achievement is directly linked to teacher qualifications; students of teachers who possess full certification with a major in their field of instruction significantly outperform students of teachers who enter the classroom lacking full credentials.

Non-certified teachers bear inordinate amounts of stress that could be greatly reduced if proper training was received before entering the classroom. Teachers who begin instructing students prior to being fully credentialed struggle with issues of classroom management and pedagogy to a much greater degree than their fully trained counterparts (Stronge, 2002).

Alternative methods of obtaining teacher licensure are less than ideal. By endorsing procedures such as these, the political officers recognized teacher education programs. Most teachers who enter the profession through nontraditional routes tend to leave the classroom within three years, while dropout rates among teachers completing traditional four-year preparation programs are significantly lower. The issue of attrition among graduates of extended five-year programs that include yearlong internships is negligible (Darling-Hammond, 2001). Further, Brandt (1991) asserted that,

It is sad to think that anyone can stroll into a school and start teaching. An individual who suddenly decides to become a doctor today would not walk

into a hospital and begin performing surgery tomorrow. It is just ludicrous to think that an untrained pre-educator can saunter into a classroom and provide pupils with the caliber of instruction they would receive from a teacher who holds bona fide credentials. Without question, specialized training prior to entering the occupation cannot be compromised. (p. 12)

While it is too early to understand fully the results of these programs, questions for evaluation can be framed. An important question concerns the teaching effectiveness of those who enter teaching through alternative routes. The existing state requirements for certification to teach have never been examined for their relationship to teacher effectiveness. Little basis exists for comparisons between traditional and alternative routes. Research from two related fields of study, vocational education and teacher program effectiveness, may help frame questions to evaluate the results of these programs. Vocational education research has been inconclusive about the effectiveness of teachers without traditional teacher education degrees possibly because of the wide range of experience and training of those with provisional certificates. This suggests that evaluation of alternative routes should include assessments of the background and previous experience of the teachers involved; these factors may explain differences in outcomes, and because evidence exists that professional studies do have an impact on the quality of education. The nature of professional studies in the alternative certification route should be described so that variation in program effectiveness may be explained by program differences. In other words, the individual teacher's previous training and experience and the specific alternate training program the teacher completes will greatly affect the programs results (Alternative Certification for Teachers, 1986).

Summary

Rosenshine and Furst (1971) found five common qualities consistent with effective teachers:

- Clarity
- Variability
- Enthusiasm
- Task-orientation
- Give students opportunity to learn

Boulton (1979) found that selected interviewees for teaching positions were chosen based on cooperating teacher recommendations, college supervisor recommendations, and subject area expertise. Stronge (2002) believed alternative certification would attract talented individuals with subject matter competency that could improve the quality of education delivered because of their knowledge depth of the material being taught. However, Darling-Hammond (2000) argued that to improve quality of education, it is imperative to ensure that both professional knowledge and subject matter competency are grounded in a solid foundation of pedagogical training.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter was to discuss the methods used to conduct the study. The study's design was directed toward interviewing administrators responsible for hiring agricultural education teachers. The purpose of this study was to describe factors that administrators in Oklahoma use to hire first-year agricultural education teachers.

In order to collect and analyze data pertaining to this purpose, the following steps were accomplished:

1. Determined the population of the study.
2. Developed an instrument that was appropriate for data collection.
3. Developed a procedure for collecting data.
4. Selected a method of data analysis.

Institutional Review Board (IRB)

Federal regulations and Oklahoma State University policy require review and approval of all research studies that involve human subjects before the investigator can begin their research. This review is required in order to protect the rights of individuals involved in behavioral and biomedical research. This study was reviewed by the Oklahoma State University Institutional Review Board and received permission to continue. Approval number is AG0326 (Appendix B).

Population

The population for the study included the 24 Oklahoma public school administrators who hired a first-year agricultural education teacher for the 2002-2003 academic year. Of those 24, five of the school districts hired an alternatively certified teacher. The researcher contacted the program specialist in each district to identify which administrator would be responsible for hiring agricultural education teachers.

Instrumentation

The development of the instrument began by reviewing literature on criteria considered when hiring teachers. The questionnaire was pilot tested on three public school administrators who did not hire a first-year agricultural education teacher and was reviewed by a panel of experts. The final instrument consisted of seven sections. The panel of experts was utilized to determine specific wording of the questions, content, and the sequence thereof. The researcher used the telephone interview for the sake of increasing the study's response rate.

Validity and Reliability

The researcher conducted all of the data analysis to avoid the threat of scorer variability. The administrators also knew they were being interviewed causing the effect of reactivity (Leedy & Ormord, 2001). Researcher bias was taken into consideration. The researcher was aware of personal bias as a threat to reliability. Meetings were held with the panel of experts. The panel assisted in enhancing content, construct, and face validity of the instrument, as they were knowledgeable about the desired content and target audience. The panel of experts was the researcher's committee members.

Data Collection

The collection of data was conducted by telephone interview. The researcher sought 100% response rate by calling and setting up appointments with administrators so that their schedules were accommodated. The researcher chose the telephone interview for increasing response rate, time efficiency, and feasibility. Leedy and Ormrod (2001) asserted that telephone interviews are less time consuming and less expensive (they involve only the cost of long-distance calls), than other data collection methods. The researcher collected data from administrators that hired a first-year agricultural education teacher for the 2002-2003 academic year. The researcher recorded the data by filling out the questionnaire while asking the administrators questions over the telephone. Each questionnaire was coded by replacing the name of the school with a number and then entered into a computer protected by a password ensuring confidentiality. The data was collected during a two-week period in May, 2003.

Data Analysis

Quantitative data were analyzed using the Statistical Software Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) 7.5 for Windows. Descriptive statistics were used in interpreting the data. Results of Likert-type questions were reported with frequency and standard deviation. Qualitative data were coded and frequencies were analyzed. Open-ended responses were summarized and placed in tables.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

Purpose

The purpose of the study was to describe factors that public school administrators in Oklahoma consider when hiring first-year agricultural education teachers.

Objectives

The following objectives were formulated to successfully accomplish the purpose of this study.

1. Describe the importance administrators placed on candidate's academic achievement.
2. Describe the importance administrators placed on candidate's agriculture experience.
3. Describe the importance administrators placed on candidate's teaching practice.
4. Describe the importance administrators placed on candidate's interview.
5. Describe the importance administrators placed on candidate's references.
6. Describe the importance administrators placed on candidate's type of certification.

The findings were analyzed using descriptive statistics (mean, frequency, and standard deviation) and then categorized using the following scale included in Table 1.

Table 1

Scale for Categorizing Findings

Score	Level of importance
1.00 – 1.50	Not important
1.51 – 2.50	Not very important
2.51 – 3.50	Somewhat important
3.51 – 4.50	Important
4.51 – 5.00	Very important

Findings related to objective 1: Importance administrators placed on candidates' academic achievement.

The first objective was to describe the importance administrators place on candidates' achievement. The objective was measured with five items on the questionnaire.

Administrators placed the most emphasis (mean=3.96) on the candidate's knowledge of agriculture as measured by the Oklahoma Subject Area Tests (OSAT). The General Education Test (OGET) was given the lowest rating (mean= 2.92). Table 2 gives the complete findings related to the first objective.

Table 2

Importance Placed on the Candidate's Standardized Tests Scores and College Grade Point Average by School Administrators (N = 24)

Assessment	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Level of importance
Knowledge of agriculture (As measured by OSAT)	3.96	1.04	Important
Knowledge of teaching (As measured by OPTE)	3.58	.88	Important
College grade point average	3.63	.49	Important
Standardized tests in general	3.00	.59	Somewhat Important
Knowledge of general education (As measured by OGET)	2.92	.65	Somewhat Important

Findings related to objective 2: Importance administrators placed on candidate's agriculture experience.

The second objective of this study was to describe the importance administrators place on a candidate's agriculture experience. The objective was measured by one open-ended question and by five closed-ended questions. The open-ended question asked, "Is there any specific area on which you place more emphasis? Explain." Every administrator responded that they wanted a well-rounded teacher who was competent in all areas in agriculture. One administrator said, "We want a well-rounded teacher who has a general knowledge about all aspects of agriculture." Another administrator said, "We look for an agricultural education teacher who has a broad spectrum in agriculture, someone who is well balanced and doesn't place emphasis on any one thing." Table 3 gives a summary of responses to the open-ended question. (Appendix A includes complete open-ended responses.)

Table 3

Open-ended Responses to Specific Areas on which Administrators Placed Emphasis (N = 24)

Specific emphasis	Number of responses
First response	
Well rounded in agriculture content	24
Secondary response	
Leadership activities	4
Emphasis on classroom teaching	4
Emphasis on FFA activities	2
Emphasis on showing livestock	1
Emphasis on horticulture	1

Administrators placed the most emphasis on student **project** involvement and supervision of student projects (i.e., SAEs) with a mean of **4.67** giving it a rating of “very important”. Administrators placed the least amount of **emphasis** on experience in production agriculture with a mean of 3.46 giving it a rating of “somewhat important” when asked, “How important is experience in production agriculture?” Table 4 provides a summary of the directed-questions related to objective 2.

Table 4

Importance Administrators Placed on Selected Areas in Agricultural Education (N = 24)

Subject	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Level of importance
Supervision of student projects	4.67	.64	Very Important
FFA activities and programs	4.50	.59	Important
Experience in showing livestock	3.87	.54	Important
Experience in production agriculture	3.46	.59	Somewhat Important

Findings related to objective 3: Importance administrators placed on teaching practice.

The third objective of this study was to describe the importance administrators place on teaching practice. The objective was measured by seven questions.

Administrators rated classroom management skills as the most important (mean=4.96). Community relations skills, educating diverse students, and working with other faculty was also rated “very important.” Administrators put the least amount of emphasis on integrating other subject areas into the agricultural education curriculum. Findings related to objective 3 are shown in Table 5.

Table 5

Importance Administrators Placed on General Teaching Practice (N = 24)

Teaching practice	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Level of importance
Classroom management skills	4.96	.20	Very Important
Community relations skills	4.92	.28	Very Important
Educate diverse students	4.63	.49	Very Important
Work with other faculty	4.58	.50	Very Important
Educate students (special needs)	4.38	.71	Important
Integrate technology	4.25	.74	Important
Integrate other subject areas	4.13	.54	Important

Findings related to objective 4: Importance placed on candidate's interview.

The fourth objective was to describe the importance placed on candidate's personal interview. The objective was measured by five questions.

Administrators placed the most emphasis on oral communication skills (mean=5.00).

Administrators placed the least amount of emphasis on the candidate's marital status (mean=1.25). Findings for objective 4 are shown in Table 6.

Table 6

Importance of Specific Items Evaluated by Administrators During Interviews (N = 24)

Interview items	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Level of importance
Oral communication skills	5.00	.00	Very Important
Candidate's enthusiasm	4.58	.50	Very Important
Personal appearance	4.21	.66	Important
Distance between hometown/job	1.50	.61	Not Important
Marital status	1.25	1.02	Not Important

Findings related to objective 5: Importance administrators placed on recommendations.

The fifth objective of the study was to describe the importance administrators placed on recommendations. The objective was measured by administrators rating and then ranking five possible reference sources.

Administrators placed the most emphasis on the cooperating teacher's recommendation (mean=4.54). Administrators rated the candidate's personal references as the least important (mean=3.46). Table 7 displays the findings for objective five.

Table 7

Administrators' Ratings of Selected References (N = 24)

References	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Level of importance
Cooperating teacher	4.54	.66	Very Important
State program specialist	4.38	.71	Important
Administrators personal references	4.13	.68	Important
OSU teacher ed faculty	4.08	.58	Important
Candidate's supplied references	3.46	.83	Somewhat Important

Administrators were asked to rank the reference: “1” = “most important” . . . “5” = “least important.” Administrators ranked the cooperating teacher as number one (mean=1.83). Administrators ranked the references supplied by the candidate fifth (mean=4.29). Table 8 gives administrators’ rankings of references.

Table 8

Summary of References as Ranked by Administrators (N = 24)

References	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Cooperating teacher	1.83	.82
State program specialist	2.25	1.29
Administrators references	3.29	1.37
OSU teacher ed faculty	3.33	1.09
Candidate’s references	4.29	1.04

Findings related to objective 6: Importance placed on the candidate’s type of certification.

The sixth objective was to describe the importance placed on the candidate’s type of certification by the administrators who were interviewed. The objective was measured by two open-ended questions.

When administrators were asked if they would consider hiring an alternatively certified teacher, twenty administrators responded “No.” Fifteen of those twenty administrators responded that they wanted teachers who were trained to teach (meaning taking courses in teaching and going through student or practice teaching) and seven said they would only hire an alternatively certified teacher as a last resort. One administrator said, “No, I want someone with classroom experience, we like teachers who are qualified

to teach and who have taken classes in teaching.” Another administrator responded, “No, I want the best candidate for their needs, like someone who went through practice teaching and classes over teaching.” Table nine gives findings for the first open-ended question.

Table 9

Administrators’ Open-ended Responses When Asked about Hiring an Alternatively Certified (AC) Teacher (N = 24)

Response:	Number of responses
Yes-I would hire an AC teacher.	4
No-I would not hire an AC teacher.	20

*If no, then:

Wanted teachers who have been trained to teach	15
Wanted classroom experience	13
Alternatively certified teachers are less qualified	4
Would hire alternatively certified Ag teachers as last resort	7

*Note: The number of responses does not equal 24 (total population) because these are secondary responses after administrators answered no initially.

When administrators were asked what they thought of alternative certification in general, fourteen said it could work in areas, such as math or science. Three administrators indicated that they supported regularly certified teachers because alternatively certified teachers had no previous classroom experience (e.g., student teaching). Three other administrators thought alternative certification was acceptable. One administrator said, “Alternative Certification is okay in some areas, maybe for

professionals in the math or science field who go back to teach higher level or gifted students, but not common students on the account of lack of teaching knowledge.”

Another administrator responded, “In some areas it could be excellent. They must be older teachers that [sic] are professionals or experts in areas such as biology, calculus, or chemistry. Think it should be for elite students in those areas. They should stay away from normal students, and it is not for first-year teachers.” Table 10 provides findings for the second open-ended question.

Table 10

Administrators' Open-ended Responses When Asked What They Thought of Alternative Certification in General (N = 24)

Responses	Number of responses
Okay in other academic area	14
Completely against alternative certification	4
Not for first-year agricultural teachers	14
Think it's fine	3
Support regularly-certified teachers	3

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to describe factors that public school administrators in Oklahoma considered when hiring first-year agricultural education teachers.

Objectives

The following objectives were formulated to successfully accomplish the purpose of this study.

1. Describe the importance administrators placed on candidate's achievement.
2. Describe the importance administrators placed on candidate's agriculture experience.
3. Describe the importance administrators placed on candidate's teaching practice.
4. Describe the importance administrators placed on candidate's interview.
5. Describe the importance administrators placed on candidate's references.
6. Describe the importance placed on candidate's type of certification.

Summary of Findings

Administrators placed the most emphasis on the candidate's knowledge of agriculture tests as measured by the Oklahoma Subject Area Test. Administrators sought well-rounded agricultural instructors who were competent in all areas of agricultural

education. They viewed student projects (i.e., SAEs) and the teacher's involvement with those projects as the most important criterion. Administrators wanted candidates who managed the classroom and developed rapport with members of the community.

Administrators sought candidates who could orally present their knowledge of agriculture in an enthusiastic manner. Administrators placed the greatest value on cooperating teachers' recommendations. Administrators preferred candidates who were fully certified as compared to those who were alternatively certified.

Table 11

Selected findings

Criteria	Level of importance
Supervision of student projects	Very Important
Classroom management skills	Very Important
Oral communication skills	Very Important
Cooperating teacher's recommendation	Very Important
Knowledge of agriculture tests (OSAT)	Important

Conclusions

Conclusions related to objective 1: Importance administrators placed on candidate's academic achievement.

1. Administrators were most interested in the candidate's knowledge of agriculture and knowledge of teaching.
2. Administrators' interest in academic achievement in college was supported by the interest in the candidate's college grade point average.

3. Administrators viewed standardized tests as somewhat important, however, the researcher notes that several administrators were not aware that subject matter tests existed for agricultural education. The candidate's general education knowledge was not a significant concern for administrators as long as candidates were adequate in those areas.
4. Administrators differed in their viewpoints about standardized tests.

Conclusions related to objective 2: Importance administrators placed on candidate's agriculture experience.

1. Administrators sought well-rounded agricultural instructors who were competent in all areas of the agricultural education setting.
2. Administrators viewed involvement with student projects and the supervision of those projects as the most important job-related duty of an agricultural education instructor.
3. Administrators viewed candidate's experience in FFA activities and programs as well as their showing livestock as important criteria to consider when hiring a first-year agricultural education teacher.
4. Production agriculture experience was not viewed as important as other areas but some administrators still considered it.

Conclusions related to objective 3: Importance administrators placed on teaching practice.

1. Administrators wanted candidates who could manage the classroom, and who could develop rapport with members of the community. Educating a diversified

student population and the ability to work with other faculty were also considered desirable traits.

2. Administrators viewed educating students with special needs, integrating technology, and integrating other subject areas as important but did not place as much emphasis on those areas as compared to items discussed in bullet number one.

Conclusions related to objective 4: Importance placed on candidate's interview(s).

1. Administrators sought candidates who could orally present their knowledge of agriculture in an enthusiastic manner. Personal appearance was also desirable. This supports the Kelly and Kelly (1982) finding that enthusiasm for teaching was a common quality among outstanding teachers.
2. Distance between hometown and job location was not important in the hiring-decision nor was marital status. This supports Seiferth's (1979) finding that marital status was of no importance in the hiring of teachers.

Conclusions related to objective 5: Importance administrators placed on candidate's references.

1. Administrators valued cooperating teachers' recommendations the most. This supports research by Boulton (1989) and Mortaloni (1984) who found that selected interviewees for teaching positions were chosen based on cooperating teacher recommendations.
2. The state program specialist's, administrator's, and OSU teacher education faculty references were rated equally.
3. The candidate's personal references were not viewed as credible contacts.

Conclusions related to objective 6: Importance placed on the candidate's type of certification.

1. Administrators preferred first-year agricultural education teachers who were fully certified. They valued pedagogical preparation that gave teachers a foundation to enter classrooms prepared academically and philosophically. Darling-Hammond (1990) supported this conclusion.
2. Administrators preferred not to hire alternatively certified teachers.
3. Administrators believed alternatively certified teachers are less qualified, less experienced, and lacked the pedagogical knowledge to be effective teachers. Hawley (1990) also contended that teachers who have expertise in subject matter, but lack training in pedagogical skills are less effective. Administrators viewed alternatively certified agricultural education teachers as a last resort when considering hiring. If a traditionally certified teacher were not available, then they would seek other options. This finding was to the contrary of Darling-Hammond (2000) who found, "students of teachers who possess full certification with a major in their field of instruction significantly out perform students of teachers who enter the classroom lacking full credentials" (p. 58).
4. Administrators believed alternatively certified teachers were acceptable in other areas such as math or science, but only if the teacher was experienced in that field.

Recommendations

Recommendations related to objective 1

- Teacher education universities need to continue preparing individuals who have a strong foundation in all areas of agriculture to prepare them for the Oklahoma Subject Area Test. They also must continue to train and instruct students on a sound philosophy of teaching as well as the different techniques to prepare them to pass the Oklahoma Professional Teaching Examination.

Recommendations related to objective 2

- Agricultural education faculty need to stress the importance of student project supervision (i.e., SAE) and require that students participate in more supervisory related activities during their college preparation.
- Universities should consider offering courses specifically geared toward FFA activities and programs to better prepare future teachers for the FFA component of agricultural education.

Recommendations related to objective 3

- The student teaching experience should stress classroom management skills along with opportunities to acquire community relations skills. Community service activities could be required for the completion of selected university course work.
- University preparation should continue to stress the importance of using appropriate technology in the classroom as well as integrating other subject areas into the teaching of agriculture.

Recommendation related to objective 4

- University departments of agricultural education should hold workshops for successful interviewing techniques stressing the importance of oral communication skills and enthusiasm.

Recommendations related to objective 5

- Universities should continue to have strict guidelines for student teaching cooperating centers. Because administrators place great emphasis on cooperating teachers' recommendations, cooperating centers and teachers should be used where a high likelihood exists that students will learn classroom management, community relations skills, and student project supervision skills.
- Because administrators place important emphasis on the recommendations of the program specialists, more opportunities should be created in which pre-service teachers interact with program specialists in a professional context. Then, program specialists would be able to make more valid recommendations about prospective teacher candidates.

Implications

The study sought to better understand the criteria administrators consider when hiring first-year agricultural education instructors in the state of Oklahoma. It provided a better description of what administrators value in a prospective agricultural education teacher.

Since the publication of Understanding Agriculture New Directions for Education, a major swing away from production agriculture has been going on across the nation. For example, universities who prepare teachers have changed their pre-service

programs to meet perceived needs about what competencies entry-year agricultural education teachers should possess; although it was unknown if school administrators agreed with many of these changes. To this end, this study found that administrators were also de-emphasizing a teacher's experience in production agriculture.

It has been said that the student teaching experience is one of the most valuable steps in a teacher preparation program. Although not knowing if administrators placed student teaching in agricultural education in high regard, this study revealed that administrators did hold high value for that experience. Even in schools systems that hired alternatively certified teachers, the administrators responsible for those hiring decisions admitted that their teacher did not have the classroom experience desired. It was perceived that having no previous classroom experience, made them farther behind their traditionally certified peers, therefore, affecting their students' learning.

Most administrators stressed that alternative certification is not appropriate for first-year agricultural education teachers. While administrators stated these concerns, five of the 24 first-year agricultural education teachers hired for the 2002-2003 academic year were alternatively certified. This information may be valuable for reforming the current requirements concerning alternative certification. Alternative certification has been a hot topic across the United States. For example, Oklahoma allows individuals to by-pass student teaching and pedagogical courses as long as they pass specified state-mandated tests.

Research has indicated alternatively certified teachers are not as prepared as traditionally certified teachers (Darling-Hammond, 2000). From this study, administrators also believed that alternatively certified teachers were inferior to

traditionally certified teachers including the school districts that hired an alternatively certified teacher. So, questions arise concerning alternative certification. Should the Oklahoma Department of Education change the requirements for alternative certification? Should alternatively certified teachers be required to student teach? Moreover, should they be required to successfully complete selected pedagogical courses before being permitted to teach agricultural education in Oklahoma public schools?

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

RESPONSES TO OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

OPEN-ENDED RESPONSES

EXPERIENCE

Group: Well-balanced program

I want a teacher that will create a well-rounded program, so everything is important. I also like a teacher who is organized, responsible and just strong in their management skills.

We look for well-rounded teachers who have a general knowledge about all aspects of agriculture.

We look for teachers who have a broad spectrum on Agriculture, someone who is well balanced and doesn't place more emphasis on any one thing.

Look for teachers to be well-balanced being confident in all areas.

We like our agricultural education teacher to be strong in all areas, to have a general knowledge of all aspects especially FFA activities.

Our agricultural education teacher needs to be well-rounded and especially strong in agricultural leadership.

All areas are fairly important, we just like a well rounded teacher.

We look at all areas, we like a balanced teacher who is a strong leader.

We want a well rounded teacher who is strong in all areas.

We like our agricultural education teacher to be well-rounded and balanced in all areas.

A balanced teacher who is strong in leadership and who develops kids and not projects.

Everything is important; we just want a well rounded teacher.

We want a well-rounded, responsible teacher who is strong in leadership and are there for the kids.

We want an ag teacher who is good in the classroom, strong in leadership and well rounded in all aspects of agriculture.

We want someone who will diversify the program and who is well rounded having a balanced program.

We like a well-rounded teacher who is strong in horticulture.

We want well-balanced teachers who will set kids up with opportunities.

We want someone who is strong in livestock showing and who can manage the classroom, which is very important.

Want our agricultural education teacher to be well-rounded, not just into showing; just one strength would be a disadvantage.

Want someone who will create a good classroom environment and who is well-rounded in all areas.

All aspects are equally important; we just look for a well-rounded teacher.

Our ag teacher needs to be well-rounded and to know about all aspects of an agricultural education teacher.

We look for a well-rounded person who can relate to people.

We place more emphasis on projects and teacher involvement with those projects.

CERTIFICATION QUESTION 1

Group: Classroom experience

No, wanted someone with some classroom experience, we like teachers who are qualified to teach and who have taken classes in teaching.

No, like for them to have some classroom experience.

No, need teaching experience and instruction practice, teaching needs to be 1st priority.

No, wanting someone who has had classroom experience, someone who has been trained to teach.

No, we like for them to have classroom experience plus, we knew the candidate and did not consider hiring an alternatively certified teacher.

No, wanted candidate that has been trained to teach and who has had some experience in the classroom.

No, had many other candidates that were more **qualified with** classroom experience.

No, she was the best qualified and had **experience in the classroom**. Never really considered it, just looked at **Alternative certification as last resort**.

No, wanted the best candidate for their needs, **liked** someone who went through practice teaching and had classes over teaching.

No, wanted someone with classroom experience.

Prefer not, want someone with classroom experience.

Wanted someone who is trained in teaching who **has an educational background**.

No, would rather have someone with **experience in teaching**. Would not look at someone who was just alternatively certified that had no **professional experience**.

GROUP: LAST RESORT

No, never looked at alternative certification teachers **unless last resort**, and there were people available who were regular certified.

No, would hire only as last resort, like teachers **who have been trained** in the classroom.

Liked someone who has had classroom training, **alternative certification teachers** are somewhat a last resort, I feel they are less **qualified**.

No, the best candidate was not **alternatively certified**. Think of alternative certification as last resort, had several qualified candidates, **did not consider** hiring an alternatively certified teacher.

No, we had enough candidates that were regular **certified**, used alternative certification as last resort.

No, many other candidates that were more **qualified**, used **alternative certification** as last resort.

Used alternative certification as last resort, we **knew him** from high school, very well rounded and felt like he was **best candidate**, **didn't consider** hiring alternatively certified teacher.

GROUP: SCHOOLS WHO HIRED ALTERNATIVELY CERTIFIED
TEACHER

Yes, he was best candidate, his enthusiasm and appearance as well as his general knowledge in agriculture made him our best choice. Don't generally hire alternatively certified teachers.

Yes we did. He interviewed the best and knew him from hometown. He wasn't out of college making him somewhat older and he already passed his test, some of the candidates haven't passed the tests. Normally, we don't hire alternatively certified teachers, but this guy was married and settled down and came through the superintendents program and his agricultural education teacher was a good friend.

Yes, we did hire. He was the best candidate, had the best background in agriculture and his father was an agricultural education teacher.

Yes we did hire. Normally, we don't like to do that, he wasn't our first choice but our second. This guy was an exception because we don't like hiring alternatively certified teachers.

CERTIFICATION QUESTION 2
GROUP: OKAY IN SOME AREAS

Okay in some areas. Maybe for professionals in the math or science field who go back to teach higher level or gifted students, but not common students on the account of lack of teaching knowledge.

Could work in some areas, not a 1st year agricultural education teacher. Maybe for a math or science teacher who has had several years of real-life experience. Alternatively certified teachers should still take teacher training courses.

Could work in some areas like math or where there is a shortage of teachers.

Okay in some areas. Possibly gifted students for math or science. They must have work experience, not 1st year teachers just out of college.

It's okay in some areas, not for 1st year teachers having no career experience. It could work for upper level science courses.

It could work in some areas, could work with older professionals that is an expert in an area, not someone coming out of college.

Could work in some areas, not 1st year agricultural education teachers that have no experience of any kind.

Okay in some areas, not 1st year teachers coming out of college.

Okay in some fields, maybe for some engineer to come back and teach upper level gifted students in math and science.

Okay in some areas, but look at it as last resort or emergency teachers.

Could work in some areas, they are usually behind and the students end up suffering.

Okay in some areas, regular certified teachers are more qualified than alternatively certified teachers. Use alternatively certified teachers as last resort.

Good idea for some areas. Hired two last year, not good idea in agriculture, maybe biology or other sciences.

In some areas it could be excellent. They must be older teachers that are professionals or experts in areas such as biology, calculus, or chemistry. Think it should be for elite students in those areas. They should stay away from normal students. It is not made for 1st year agricultural education teachers.

THINK ITS FINE

Think alternative certification is fine. Regular certified are looked at first, if we can't find one then we go to alternatively certified teachers.

It okay, we had a science teacher that was alternatively certified. It was the best teacher we had, so some good can come out of it.

We are pleased with it, never had any problems with alternatively certified teachers.

BEHIND OTHER TEACHERS

He's the only one ever hired, alternatively certified teachers students miss a lot. The students that are in the 1st and 2nd year of his or her class miss out on a lot. The teacher spends more time teaching himself than the students.

It's been okay, we picked the individual not the certification. Alternatively certified teachers must work harder and are usually farther behind than normal teachers.

They are usually behind normal teachers. It takes them 4 to 6 weeks to get into the swing of things. They need to have classroom experience before the job and need to have practice teaching. They are behind in several areas.

TOTALLY AGAINST THE IDEA OF ALTERNATIVE CERTIFICATION.

Think of it as a last resort, I don't like the idea of teachers entering the classroom with no experience or instruction on teaching.

It is not a good idea to bring in-experienced teachers into the classroom that have no background in education. They need to be trained for classroom instruction before starting a job.

I have problems with it, actually I'm totally against it. I don't like the idea of teachers not going through a teacher education program. No matter what is being taught in teacher education, they still need to go through it.

Not good, they may have skills and knowledge, but they don't know how to teach those skills and knowledge, it is not good to enter into a job with no classroom experience. Our school board likes student or practice teaching.

APPENDIX B

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

Oklahoma State University
Institutional Review Board

Protocol Expires: 5/20/2004

Date: Wednesday, May 21, 2003

IRB Application No AG0326

Proposal Title: CRITERIA CONSIDERED WHEN HIRING SECONDRY AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION
TEACHERS: PERCEPTIONS OF PUBLIC SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

Principal
Investigator(s):

Jeremy Cantrell
448 Ag
Stillwater, OK 74078

William G. Weeks
448 Ag Hall
Stillwater, OK 74078

Reviewed and
Processed as: Exempt

Approval Status Recommended by Reviewer(s): Approved

Dear PI :


Your IRB application referenced above has been approved for one calendar year. Please make note of the expiration date indicated above. It is the judgment of the reviewers that the rights and welfare of individuals who may be asked to participate in this study will be respected, and that the research will be conducted in a manner consistent with the IRB requirements as outlined in section 45 CFR 46.

As Principal Investigator, it is your responsibility to do the following:

1. Conduct this study exactly as it has been approved. Any modifications to the research protocol must be submitted with the appropriate signatures for IRB approval.
2. Submit a request for continuation if the study extends beyond the approval period of one calendar year. This continuation must receive IRB review and approval before the research can continue.
3. Report any adverse events to the IRB Chair promptly. Adverse events are those which are unanticipated and impact the subjects during the course of this research; and
4. Notify the IRB office in writing when your research project is complete.

Please note that approved projects are subject to monitoring by the IRB. If you have questions about the IRB procedures or need any assistance from the Board, please contact Sharon Bacher, the Executive Secretary to the IRB, in 415 Whitehurst (phone: 405-744-5700, sbacher@okstate.edu).

Sincerely,



Carol Olson, Chair
Institutional Review Board

APPENDIX C

QUESTIONNAIRE

SURVEY INSTRUMENT (TELEPHONE INTERVIEW)

Name of Administrator _____

School Name _____

Good _____, I am Jeremy Cantrell. Currently, I am working on my thesis for the completion of my masters degree in Agricultural Education at Oklahoma State University.

You were chosen for this study because you hired an first-year ag-ed instructor last academic year. Can I have a couple of minutes of your time to ask you questions pertaining to your hiring decision? This study and your responses will remain confidential. Your participation is strictly voluntary.

I'm going to ask you questions relative to hiring an ag-ed teacher. After each of the questions, I'll ask you to respond on a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being not important and 5 being most important. It will take about 10 minutes.

After a set of questions, I'll give you the opportunity to elaborate on those questions.

ACHIEVEMENT	
In general, how important are candidate's scores on standardized teaching tests?	1 2 3 4 5
Specifically, how important is general education as measured by the OGET test?	1 2 3 4 5
Specifically, how important is their knowledge of agriculture as measured by OSAT test?	1 2 3 4 5
Specifically, how important is their knowledge of teaching as measured by OPTE test?	1 2 3 4 5
How important is the candidate's college grade point average?	1 2 3 4 5
EXPERIENCE <i>Now I'm going to ask you about experiences the candidates have in specific fields in agriculture.</i>	
Is there any specific area on which you place more emphasis? Explain.	

<u>How important:</u> is the candidate's experience with FFA programs and FFA activities.	1 2 3 4 5
experience in production agriculture?	1 2 3 4 5
student project involvement and supervision of student projects?	1 2 3 4 5
experience in showing livestock?	1 2 3 4 5
PRACTICE: <i>I'm now going to read general statements regarding general teaching practice, again rate the statements 1-5 with 5 being most important.</i>	
<u>How important:</u> is the candidate's classroom management skills?	
is the candidate's use of technology in the classroom?	
is the candidate's ability to work with other faculty?	1 2 3 4 5
is the candidate's community relations skills?	1 2 3 4 5
is the candidate's ability to integrate other subject areas in their teaching?	1 2 3 4 5
is the candidate's ability to work with students with special needs?	1 2 3 4 5
Is the candidate's ability to educate a diverse student population?	1 2 3 4 5
INTERVIEW: <i>These next questions are specifically regarding the interviews conducted with candidates.</i>	
<u>How important:</u> is the candidate's oral communication skills?	1 2 3 4 5
is the candidate's enthusiasm?	1 2 3 4 5
is the candidate's personal appearance?	1 2 3 4 5

Do you have other teachers who are alternatively certified?	Y/N
ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION <i>This last section deals with general information about your school district and your teaching field.</i>	
What is your primary teaching field?	
Do you prefer to hire teachers who are native to local geographic area?	Y/N
Do you require that teachers live in the school district in order to teach in the district?	Y/N

Any questions or assistance, please contact Dr. Carol Olson (colson@okstate.edu) or Sharon Bacher (sbacher@okstate.edu) at (405) 744-5700



VITA

Jeremy Dane Cantrell

Candidate for the Degree of

Master of Science

Thesis: CRITERIA CONSIDERED WHEN HIRING SECONDARY AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION TEACHERS: PERCEPTIONS OF PUBLIC SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

Major Field: Agricultural Education

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in Ft. Smith, Arkansas, August 9, 1979, the son of Cleon Cantrell and Jan Garner.

Education: Graduated from Stigler High School, Stigler, Oklahoma, May 1998; received a Bachelor of Science in Agricultural Education from Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma, May 2002. Completed the requirements for the Master of Science in Agricultural Education degree at Oklahoma State University in August 2003.

Professional Experience: Graduate Teaching Associate, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma, 2002-2003.

Professional Organizations: Oklahoma Agricultural Education Teachers Association, Agricultural Education Graduate Student Association.