

A SURVEY OF PUBLIC RELATIONS ACTIVITIES
USED BY OKLAHOMA AREA VOCATIONAL
SCHOOL DIRECTORS

By

LAWRENCE L. GEE

Bachelor of Science

Cameron University

Lawton, Oklahoma

1978

Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate College
of the Oklahoma State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the Degree of
MASTER OF SCIENCE
July, 1981

Thesis
1981
G2975
cop. 2



A SURVEY OF PUBLIC RELATIONS ACTIVITIES
USED BY OKLAHOMA AREA VOCATIONAL
SCHOOL DIRECTORS

Thesis Approved:

Clyde B. Knight

Thesis Adviser

Linda M. Vincent

Wm. D.razier

Norman D. Durham

Dean of the Graduate College

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Appreciation is expressed to many people whose combined efforts and support made this study possible. Without their help and support, this study would not have been completed.

Gratitude is expressed to the committee members, Dr. Clyde Knight, Chairman, Dr. Linda Vincent, and Dr. Don Frazier, for their guidance and assistance. A special thanks goes to Dr. Don Frazier, Coordinator of Research for the Oklahoma State Department of Vocational and Technical Education, for his effort and patience with the author.

Thanks is also extended to Larry Hansen, Assistant State Director of Area Schools Division, and his staff for assisting with the research project. Grateful appreciation is also extended to Dale Cotton, Career Information Officer for the State Department, for assisting in the development of the survey instrument.

A special note of thanks is also extended to all the superintendents, principals and administrative staff members who took time to assist with the completion of the survey questionnaires.

It would also have been difficult to complete the study without support of the administrative staff at Caddo-Kiowa Area Vocational-Technical Center.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
I. INTRODUCTION	1
Need for the Study	2
Statement of the Problem	3
Purpose of the Study	4
Objectives of the Study	4
Definition of Terms	5
Scope and Limitations of the Study	7
II. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE	8
Analysis	8
Planning	10
Communication	14
Evaluation	15
Similar Research	16
Summary	17
III. METHODS OF THE STUDY	19
Study Population	19
Development of the Instrument	20
Collection of the Data	21
Analysis of the Data	22
IV. PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE DATA	25
V. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS	46
Summary of Findings	47
Conclusions	49
Recommendations	50
A SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY	52
APPENDIXES	54
APPENDIX A - SCHOOLS PARTICIPATING IN STUDY	55
APPENDIX B - MAIL-OUT QUESTIONNAIRE	58

Chapter	Page
APPENDIX C - INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE	63
APPENDIX D - COVER LETTER FOR QUESTIONNAIRE	69

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
I. Table Showing Proportional Breakdown of Area Vocational Technical Schools by Enrollment	24
II. Comparison of the Frequency of Use of Media Efforts by Area Vocational Technical School Size	27
III. Percent of Local Media Persons Contacted for Public Relations Activities by Area Vocational Technical School Size	28
IV. Comparison of the Frequency of Use of Special Events by Area Vocational Technical School Size	28
V. Comparison of the Frequency of Use of Community Relations by Area Vocational Technical School Size	30
VI. Comparison of the Frequency of Use of School Relations by Area Vocational Technical School Size	31
VII. Percentage of School Relations Activities Conducted to Improve Communications by Area Vocational Technical School Size	32
VIII. Percent of Resources Available for Public Relations by Area Vocational Technical School Size	33
IX. Percentage of Staff Who Can Write, Take Pictures and Make Layouts by Area Vocational Technical School Size	35
X. Percentage of Staff Who is Responsible for Coordinating Public Relations Effort by Area Vocational Technical School Size	36
XI. Percentage of Staff Who Superintendents Think Should be Responsible for Coordinating Public Relations Efforts by Area Vocational Technical School Size	39
XII. Percentage of Outside Resources Available to Help With Public Relations Program by Area Vocational Technical School Size	40

Table	Page
XIII. Percentage of School Boardes Who Have Written Policies, Procedures and Goals Pertaining to Public Relations by Area Vocational Technical School Size	41
XIV. Comparison of the Frequency of Use of Evaluating Public Relations Programs by Area Vocational Technical School Size	43
XV. Comparison of the Frequency of Use of Special Public Relations Techniques Used by Area Vocational Technical School Size	44
XVI. Comparison of the Frequency of Use in Regards to Attitudes Toward Public Relations by Area Vocational Technical School Size	46
XVII. Summary of Mean Response by Public Relations Areas Used by Area Vocational Technical School Size	49
XVIII. Schools and Directors Participating in Survey	57

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Vocational Education programs have been providing training that teaches technical knowledge and skills to students since the Smith-Hughes Act of 1917.

But it was not until the Vocational Education Act of 1963 that funds were set aside for the purpose of establishing area vocational schools (Rice, 1959). The formation of area vocational schools was a new concept in vocational education. Vocational programs were conducted through the comprehensive high schools, but in 1963, the new act provided for separate facilities to house the area vocational centers, which in turn would serve several high schools within the newly formed vocational districts (Rice, 1969).

When administrators took over as heads of these new schools they had insufficient knowledge of the degree of acceptance the public would have and also of the number of students who would enroll (Rice, 1969). According to this statement, it would seem administrators did not communicate properly with students and parents on needs and interests. Rice's statement, coupled with the fact that this was a new concept in vocational education, would lead you to believe that administrators were lacking in the techniques of effective public relations with their school patrons (Beavers, 1975).

Since the formation of the first area vocational school in 1963, there have been approximately 2,000 vocational centers developed across the country and 25 of them in Oklahoma. It has been almost 18 years since the first school was developed. There are still a lot of people today that do not know what these vocational schools have to offer or how vocational education fits into the overall education system (Koble et al., 1978). This may be due largely to the lack of public relations being adequately conducted in some areas.

Need for the Study

The fact that many government programs are in the process of being cut back due to the rapid rise of inflation makes it clear that effective public relations for vocational education will be even more crucial in the future. If vocational education is going to continue to receive enough funding in the future to finance new curriculum materials, new facilities, and maintain a high caliber of teachers, it must intensify its public relations efforts on the national, state and local levels. However, it is the local districts that actually do the training that prepares students for the world of work, therefore, the major thrust of effective public relations lies at this level. Since the directors of these area schools are primarily charged with this responsibility, it is going to be up to them to take up this new challenge and see it carried out.

According to the 12th annual Gallup poll of "The Public's Attitudes Toward the Public Schools," published in the September 1980 issue of Phi Delta Kappan, the public is very interested in vocational education (Gallup, 1980). The Gallup survey asked the public to list

several important items to which they felt the Federal Department of Education should pay "special attention" in the future. Second on the list was vocational training that would help students get jobs. While the public feels that vocational training is important, it will also demand to be kept informed on what vocational educators are doing to help in this area. Here again, effective public relations is the answer.

Fred A. Shultz and H. Robert Terry (1971), investigated how the vocational image is perceived by the public categorized by occupational levels in Oklahoma. One of their recommendations from this study was:

Vocational education personnel should make a concerned effort to more adequately inform the general public concerning the opportunities available in vocational education. A large portion of this information should be disseminated by competent guidance counselors, teachers and school administrators (p. 20).

Since effective public relations activities are so vitally important to vocational education, it is necessary to know the different techniques being used in this area of education. No research has been done on the frequency of use of public relations activities by directors of area vocational schools in Oklahoma. Therefore, it is hoped that this research will give the Oklahoma State Department of Education and vocational administrators new ideas and methods that can be used to help improve public relations activities on both the state and local levels.

Statement of the Problem

The lack of knowledge of public relations activities being used by area vocational schools in Oklahoma is a problem for superintendents of

area vocational schools and staff members of the Oklahoma State Department of Vocational and Technical Education.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to survey the types and frequency of use of public relations activities engaged in by area vocational school directors in Oklahoma and to determine who is responsible for coordinating these activities.

Objectives of the Study

In order to accomplish the purpose outlined, the following objectives were organized:

1. To determine the frequency and use of public relations activities engaged in by area vocational school directors in Oklahoma.
2. To determine if directors of large, medium and small area vocational schools practice public relations differently.
3. To determine if directors of area vocational schools conduct public relations activities with or without a written plan.
4. To determine if directors of area vocational schools systematically evaluate their public relations activities.
5. To determine who should be the key person responsible for coordinating public relations activities.

Definition of Terms

Public Relations (PR): a process of communication between and among school and community for the purpose of increasing citizen and student understanding of educational needs and practices and encouraging intelligent citizen interest and cooperation in the work of improving the school, ". . . a two-way process -- a cooperative search for mutual understanding and effective team work between community and school" (Vocational Guidance, 1973, p. 1).

Area Vocational School (AVTS): refers to a public secondary school approved by the Oklahoma State Department of Vocational and Technical Education based on the minimum criteria that the school must provide a program of vocational education in five different occupational fields to meet the varying training needs of high school students in preparing them for gainful employment; make available as needed special programs of occupational training for potential school dropouts and other persons having academic or other handicaps preventing them from succeeding in regular programs of vocational education; and provide programs for adults as needed to prepare them for employment or provide them training or retraining to increase their knowledge and skills in present employment.

Area Vocational School Director: an individual employed by the local board of education to make all financial decisions of the school, hire all personnel, help set school policies and goals, and to see that a good public relations program is developed and conducted properly. Note: the term area vocational school director is used in place of area vocational school superintendent in this report.

Public Relations Evaluation: a system to keep checks and balances on the public relations activities being conducted. The evaluation should include a written plan for all public relations activities that will be performed throughout the school year and a procedure to see how effectively each of the activities has been carried out. It should also include an avenue for improving communications between the school and community.

Mass Media: refers to activities of communication primarily involving the media industry. Activities involving sight, sound and hearing are capitalized on in many ways. Working with the television, radio and the newspaper industry are some of the activities of mass media used in community relations (Forsythe, 1979).

Community Relations: a series of activities designed to gain the support of identified segments of the community (Forsythe, 1979).

School Relations: involves those associations made with close identification to the local school itself. These can involve the members of the school board, administrative staff, teachers, support staff, students and parents in activities pertaining to the school.

Special Events: activities that involve the students, the faculty and the community. Some of these types of activities include trade shows, open house, career day, contests, workshops and award assemblies.

Public Relations Resources: can be both equipment and personnel that are used to inform the students, parents and community leaders about the good things that are going on at the vocational school.

Special Public Relations Techniques: activities that go beyond the normal public relations activities to help insure good relationship between the school and its patrons. Some of the special

techniques could include holding school board meetings in different communities within the school district so more patrons would have an opportunity to attend, or developing a plan to handle information when a crisis arises at the school.

Scope and Limitations of the Study

This study is limited to area vocational school superintendents, directors and principals.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The purpose of this chapter was to present the reader with an overview of literature which describes how to develop and implement an effective public relations program for vocational education. There are four basic procedures that need to be followed in order to carry out an effective public relations program. They are analysis, planning, communication and evaluation (South Carolina State Department of Education, 1979).

Analysis

Before a newspaper reporter can write a story he/she must first gather facts and information, and before a carpenter can build a house he/she must first find out what type of house the customer wants and needs. Thus, it is true that before you can analyze a public relations program you must first find out what kind of program you have. Then through analysis you can improve it.

According to the "Handbook for Vocational Educators", published by the South Carolina State Department of Vocational Education (1979), you must discover both your strengths and weaknesses before you can develop an effective public relations program. This same manual listed eight basic steps of self-check questions you should use when beginning the analysis process. They are:

1. Do you have a formal PR program? Do policies, procedures and goals exist?
2. Do you know what type of image your school is projecting?
3. What message are you trying to communicate?
4. How are you communicating with the public?
5. Who is involved in your PR program? Is it an individual or group effort?
6. What "good things" are going on in your school? Does anyone know about them?
7. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the PR program?
8. To what audiences have you aimed your PR program?

However, in a similar handbook called "New Handbook for School Communications," (Bellis et al., 1978) it listed the first in developing a good public relations program is commitment. This handbook was produced through the combined efforts of the Texas Education Agency, the Texas chapter of the National School Public Relations Association and the Council of Communications of the state's 20 regional education service centers.

The commitment the Texas authors referred to started with the school board putting into writing a formal policy with respect to its public information program. The manual stated that the board should approve the new policy during a formal action of the governing body. Also, it stated the policy statement should be published in a policy and procedure manual and be reviewed annually, and that the board should commit both human and financial support to the information program.

Planning

Researchers at the National Center for Research in Vocational Education at Ohio State University published a handbook as a guide to vocational administrators. This manual, "Public Relations Handbook for Vocational Education," listed planning as one of the major functions of developing an effective public relations program (Koble et al., 1978).

At the top of the list was establishing a position of public relations coordinator. A review of the literature showed that one of the most common problems in establishing a good public relations program is a lack of funds to hire a full-time person for this position (Lejeune, 1977).

This fact was illustrated by Lejeune (1977), who surveyed vocational information programs in several states during a research on public relations for her master's degree at West Virginia University in 1978. Her report stated that West Virginia and most other states do not employ a full-time information officer.

Rather, a vocational school's information program is handled 'as time permits' by the school director, teacher, or staff volunteers. Consequently, it is most difficult to implement a planned public information program for the school (p. 13).

Another study that supports the theory of hiring a full-time public relations person for area vocational schools was illustrated during a research project to determine what the public needs to know about vocational education in Oklahoma. Authors of this study, Bob DeGuglielmo, Don Frazier and Bill Stevenson, (1975) used the Delphi technique and the committee technique to gather data for this report. Both methods ended up with nearly the same results. One of the conclusions of the study was "vocational education does not have a

positive image and the public feels that vocational education is for inferior students, non-college students, or everyone 'except my child'." Some of the recommendations from the report suggested that a full-time public relations person be hired at each area school, that a volunteer information program with civic minded citizens be established in each of the vocational districts and that more efforts be made to inform local counselors and non-vocational teachers about vocational education.

In a research paper, "The Relationship Between Public Relations Practices and Enrollment Patterns in Area Vocational Secondary Schools in Texas," by Beavers (1975), the review of literature revealed that vocational administrators showed a lack of training in the areas of public relations.

To be a public relations specialist requires special training and work experience. Industry realizes this and only hires people who are well qualified for the job, according to a research paper, "Hiring Criteria of Public Relations Employers," by Dennis Wilcox (1978). Wilcox's report stated that some of the criteria public relations applicants need in order to get a job included a bachelor's degree, news writing courses and appropriate work experience.

The other seven steps of planning an effective public relations program according to the Ohio State University's handbook were:

2. Identifying the audiences, both internal and external.
3. Assessing audiences needs.
4. Establishing goals and objectives for the PR program.
5. Designing program strategies and techniques.
6. Scheduling the program.
7. Implementing the program.

8. Evaluating the program (Koble et al., 1978).

Most researchers of vocational public relations programs agree that the audiences to be reached by these programs fall into internal and external audiences. The internal audiences include students, student organizations, administrators, other staff such as counselors, student activities directors, teachers, school board members and advisory committee members (South Carolina State Department of Education, 1979). The external audiences include parents, senior citizens, representatives from business, industry and labor leaders, professional organizations, civic organizations, government agencies such as local, state and federal offices, mass media, and state and federal legislators.

A good public relations program is the most effective way for vocational educators to show the community what is happening. It is an absolute must that a direct line of communications be kept with both the internal and external audiences at all times. Nagle (1968) stated that the American public school district is so dependent upon its public for support that it commits hara-kiri when it neglects the public.

Assessing audience needs is a very important factor in developing a public relations program. Both the internal and external needs should be identified. The Ohio State University handbook states that one of the easiest ways to identify information needs of the internal audiences is to listen when they talk about vocational education (Koble et al., 1978). The researchers said that negative opinions and attitudes which emerge can usually be eradicated by providing the internal audiences with correct information about goals and achievements

of vocational education programs. However, they said identifying external needs can be more difficult. They suggested a questionnaire or opinionnaire is one of the most effective ways of assessing their information needs. Bortner (1972) feels that questionnaires are an effective means of determining:

1. The general degree of understanding of and satisfaction with the schools.
2. The general degree of understanding of programs, policies and procedures.
3. The degree of understanding and attitudes of various community segments based on age, sex, occupation, income, children in school, etc.
4. Public readiness to support programs and innovations.
5. The popularity and effectiveness of various public relations media and techniques. (Kobel et al., 1978, p. 6).

Establishing goals and objectives for public relations programs is the fourth step to be completed in the planning stage. However, this step can not be completed until the needs assessment of the audiences has been compiled. The goals and objectives will be based on the needs assessment of the audiences which the program hopes to serve.

Designing program strategy, scheduling, implementing and evaluating the program is the basic order of procedure used by most public relations people. There are several different methods of accomplishing the strategies and techniques for the program. Each program must be evaluated on its own for this step and the best method picked for this purpose.

The scheduling of the public relations program should be written on the calander for the entire year (Koble et al., 1978). The various

activities to be accomplished should be analyzed and scheduled for the most appropriate time of the year.

Since implementing the public relations program will be the most difficult task it will take all the effort of everyone in the entire school, not just the public relations coordinator or the school's director (Koble et al., 1978).

There are many good forms that can be used to help keep up with the progress of the program's activities and evaluate the success of each event. Listed in the Ohio State University handbook are nine questions that should be answered on an evaluation of public relations information programs (Koble et al., 1978). They are:

1. Are goals and objectives for the PR program practical?
2. Can they be evaluated?
3. Are they worded clearly?
4. Does the program meet the stated goals?
5. Which activities are most effective in terms of numbers of people reached and times and money spent?
6. Which audiences was the PR program able to reach?
7. Which audiences were not served by the PR program?
8. Were the vocational education staff members involved in the PR program used effectively?
9. Does the staff share a strong commitment to the PR effort (pp. 8-11).

Communication

Communication is the actual implementation of everything you said you would accomplish in the planning stage. It should be remembered that good public relations is not just getting a few news stories

published in the newspaper every now and then (South Carolina State Department of Education, 1979). To have an effective public relations program, it must be a team effort of everyone in the entire school, all the way from the school board members to the janitors. Public relations is "A Way of Life for an Institution -- Not the Job of a Single Individual" (West Virginia State Department of Education, 1978).

Evaluation

Continuous evaluation of the public relations program is essential in order to know if the objectives are being met. The South Carolina State Department of Education's handbook (1979), "Public Relations Handbook for Vocational Education," lists five methods that can be used in evaluating a public relations program. They are:

1. A running log be kept of every public relations activity undertaken. This also will list successes. For instance, TV stations probably will send a notice when they have used a public service spot. A newspaper clip file should be kept up to date.
2. Six months after the general public relations program begins, a questionnaire should be distributed to a random sample of the community/state citizens asking if they have heard good things about vocational education recently. If yes, can they recall specifically what they heard, where from, or through what medium, etc.
3. Similar follow-up surveys will be implemented after one year, 18 months, two years, three years, or until results are satisfactory.
4. Design and distribute a similar questionnaire to members of your staff to find out how successful internal communications are, if they understand the organizational structure, some information about persons and programs with which they do not work, the number of specialized vocational programs they can name. Staff will be asked to keep track of their personal contacts with the public which builds the image of vocational education.

5. If funds allow, organize a door-to-door survey of a random sample of homes in the community asking people **how** you can improve your vocational programs, if it serves the needs, and if they are aware of what it offers (pp. 10-11).

Similar Research

In a research study on "Public Relations Effects on Enrollment of West Virginia Vocational Schools," Lejeune (1977) found after conducting surveys of several states that most area vocational schools do not have a designated public relations person to conduct information programs. "Rather a vocational school's information program is handled 'as time permits' by the school's director, teacher or staff volunteer," (p. 5).

The primary responsibility for directing and coordinating an effective public relations program rests on the shoulders of the vocational school director (South Carolina State Department of Education, 1979). While it may be the initial responsibility of the school director to see that a good public relations program is developed, it is also the responsibility of everyone in the school, all the way from the school board members to the teachers and support staff, to take part in the special effort.

Also in another study entitled, "Relationship Between Public Relations Practices and Enrollment Patterns in Texas Area Vocational Schools," it was revealed that vocational administrators had a lack of training in areas of public relations (Beavers, 1975).

Billings (1970, p. 2) stated in a workshop for improving public information for vocational programs, "that little work had been done on the incoming lanes of the public information highways."

A report by Bottoms and Swains (1965) illustrated that extensive public relations improved enrollment in Georgia's vocational schools by 65 percent. On the other hand, the lack of information and communication can produce unwanted results on enrollment figures.

During research for the purpose of writing a "Public Relations Handbook for Vocational Education," the author's studies gave several reasons why vocational education needs public relations (Koble et al., 1978). One of these was decreased student enrollment in the educational community. Another was that good public relations programs help insure "informed" decision making, and is the most effective way for vocational educators to show the community what is happening.

Mellor (1975) stated that the more completely the public understands its schools, the more likely they will be ready to support the school financially and become involved in its improvements.

Jacobsen (1975) in an article published in the October-November 1975 issue of Technical Education News quoted the U.S. Office of Education as projecting that by 1980 75 percent of the nation's jobs will require vocational and technical training, while only 20 percent of all jobs will require a four-year college degree.

Summary

The review of literature presented background information with emphasis on the areas of: Analysis, Planning, Communications and Evaluation.

The rapid rise of inflation has not only hit the individual tax payers hard, but industry and schools also are going to have to tighten their belts in the future. A good public relations program will help

keep the tax payers informed as to what is going on in vocational education. Accountability is not just something that general education has to be concerned with, but vocational education as well is being faced with this strong issue.

While vocational schools do receive a lot of federal and state money, they still have to have local support. There have been many school bond issues defeated across the country recently. If vocational education is going to continue to receive its share of financial support in the future, it is mandatory that it keep the public informed by the use of effective public relations programs. Vocational education can help high school students and adult students become better prepared for the ever-changing job market of today. Thus as students join the work force, they then become tax payers which in turn helps fight the inflation spiral. An effective public relations program should be at the top of priorities for everyone connected with vocational education, and especially area vocational school administrators.

CHAPTER III

METHOD OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this chapter was to describe the methods and procedures used in conducting the study. The main purpose was to survey the types and frequency of use of public relations activities engaged in by area vocational school directors in Oklahoma and to determine who is responsible for coordinating these activities. Thus the purpose provided guidance for design of the investigation.

As has been stated in the review of literature, there are many factors involved in developing an effective public relations program for vocational education. The four areas which were used for criteria in the review of literature were analysis, planning, communications, and evaluating.

Study Population

Preliminary research indicated that several related studies had been done on public relations programs for general education. Research has pointed out the important need for effective public relations in vocational education. Research had been conducted in Texas and West Virginia on the effects of public relations on enrollment, but no research had been done in Oklahoma to determine the types and frequency of use of public relations techniques used by area vocational school directors. It was decided to administer a state-wide survey to

directors of areas vocational schools to determine the various types and frequencies of use of public relation activities used to help determine the effectiveness of these information programs. With approval from staff of the Oklahoma State Department of Vocational and Technical Education, a survey questionnaire was developed and mailed to 33 superintendents, directors and principals of area vocational schools in Oklahoma.

Development of the Instrument

In order to develop the questionnaire the writer set up definitions for different types of public relations activities used in vocational education and developed a frequency of use scale for these activities in order to serve as criteria in judging the effectiveness of public relations techniques.

Through research and in cooperation with staff of the Oklahoma State Department of Vocational and Technical Education, a definition with nine major elements was used. These nine elements were the outline for the specific questions or statements included on the survey instrument. Staff of the Public Information Office and the Research Unit of the State Department helped to critique and refine the survey form.

One hundred activity responses were listed on the survey form. Respondents were asked to indicate the frequency of use of these public relations activities.

A frequency of use response in the nine different categories was used to help determine the effectiveness of public relations activities used.

This research report was aided by a similar report on, "An Assessment of Community Relations Activities used by Oklahoma Vocational Agricultural Teachers." The agricultural research report was done in July 1979 by Steven William Forsythe.

The design and development of the survey instrument for this report was aided by five other research reports on public relations and vocational education. They were, "The Relationship Between Public Relations Practices and Enrollment Patterns in Area Vocational Secondary Schools in Texas," by Floyd Gene Beavers (1975); "New Handbook for School Communication," by June Bellis et al. (1978), representing the Texas Education Agency; "Public Relations Handbook for Vocational Education in Large Cities," by Daniel E. Koble, Jr. et al. (1978), representing Ohio State University; "Determining the Effects of Public Information Activities on Vocational Enrollment in West Virginia," by Julie M. Lejeune (1977); and "Public Relations Handbook for Vocational Educators," prepared by the South Carolina State Department of Education (1979).

Collection of the Data

The 1980-81 list of Oklahoma area vocational school directors was obtained from the Oklahoma State Department of Vocational and Technical Education. The directors' names, the schools' names and addresses were obtained for use in mailing the survey forms. Since there are only 25 area vocational schools in Oklahoma, a survey form was mailed to each superintendent, director, and principal. However, since the questionnaire contained eight pages, it was divided into two sections. The first section was mailed to the directors and the information for the

second half of the survey forms was obtained through a personal telephone interview with each director. The survey was conducted from February 15, 1981 to May 15, 1981.

Analysis of the Data

In order to give an overview of the statistical treatment of the data collected, the following description of the analysis procedure is included. Descriptive statistics including means, frequencies, and percentages were used in analyzing the data and describing the results.

Percentage figures for vocational enrollment that were used to rank the schools included secondary students, part-time and full-time adults. Disadvantaged and handicapped students were not included in the percentages.

Table I was developed to illustrate the population of vocational school students in each of the three stratified vocational school groups by size (large, medium and small).

TABLE I
 PROPORTIONAL BREAKDOWN OF AREA
 VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL SCHOOLS
 BY TOTAL ENROLLMENT

School Name	Small School 0-385	Medium School 447-710	Large School 740-1,481
1. Oklahoma Northeast, Fairview	113		
2. Belle Isle, Oklahoma City	137		
3. Indian Capital, Stilwell	137		
4. Oklahoma Northwest, Alva	148		
5. Kiamichi, Talihina	160		
6. Canadian Valley, Chickasha	214		
7. Indian Capital, Sallisaw	224		
8. Kiamichi, Idabel	257		
9. Kiamichi, Hugo	263		
10. Kiamichi, Poteau	336		
11. Central Oklahoma, Sapulpa	385		
12. Northeast Oklahoma, Pryor		419	
13. Kiamichi, McAlester		434	
14. Western Oklahoma, Burns Flat		446	
15. Northeast Oklahoma, Afton		447	
16. Pioneer, Ponca City		461	
17. Caddo-Kiowa, Fort Cobb		506	
18. Red River, Duncan		515	
19. Southern Oklahoma, Ardmore		545	
20. Mid-America, Wayne		685	
21. Canadian Valley, El Reno		699	

TABLE I (Continued)

School Name	Small School 0-385	Medium School 447-710	Large School 740-1,481
22. Indian Meridian, Stillwater	710		
23. Indian Capital, Muskogee			740
24. Gordon Cooper, Shawnee			764
25. Tri-County, Bartlesville			767
26. Foster Estes, Oklahoma City			823
27. Tulsa County, Peoria Ave.			845
28. Mid-Del, Midwest City			878
29. O. T. Autry, Enid			939
30. Moore-Norman, Norman			942
31. Central Oklahoma, Drumright			1,107
32. Great Plains, Lawton			1,252
33. Tulsa County, Memorial Ave.			1,481

CHAPTER IV

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

The purpose of this study was to survey the types and frequency of use of public relations activities engaged in by area vocational school directors in Oklahoma and to determine who is responsible for coordinating these activities. In order to accomplish the purpose of this study, the following objectives were formulated:

1. To determine the frequency and use of public relations activities engaged in by area vocational school directors in Oklahoma.
2. To determine if directors of large, medium and small area vocational schools practice public relations differently.
3. To determine if directors of area vocational schools conduct public relations activities with or without a written plan.
4. To determine if directors of area vocational schools systematically evaluate their public relations activities.
5. To determine who should be the key person responsible for coordinating public relations activities.

Findings of the study relative to the objectives of this study are presented in this chapter. Data presented in this chapter were obtained from superintendents and directors of area vocational schools in Oklahoma. The survey questionnaire was divided into two categories, a mail-out form and an interview form. The mail-out form contained questions about media, special events, community relations and school

relations. This form contained 60 questions and required some time to look up the statistics.

To obtain the rest of the information for the survey, the superintendents and principals of all vocational schools and sites were interviewed by telephone. The interview form contained information about resources, policies and goals, evaluation, special techniques used and attitudes toward public relations. A total of 100 per cent of the interview questionnaires were completed by telephone, while 88 per cent of the mail-out forms were returned. The information for both forms was collected between February 15 and May 15, 1981, and data was analyzed and summarized from these. The remainder of this chapter is devoted to presenting a **summarization and analysis of data thus collected.**

Data presented in Table II is a comparison of state-wide responses of 33 area superintendents and principals participating in the survey. The mean average, by school size and the overall mean average is given for 17 public relations activities related to media. Table II reveals that submitting articles to newspapers received the highest use. This was followed by use of radio announcements, newspaper advertisements and brochures and pamphlets.

Also under the use of media, Table III shows that all schools in the state contacted newspapers during the school year. Radio received a high percentage of contact by all three school sizes, while television contact was low in the small school category. This is due to the fact that there are not many television stations in the geographical area of the small school category.

In analyzing data presented in Table IV, which deals with the comparison of the frequency of use for special events by area

TABLE II
 COMPARISON OF THE FREQUENCY OF USE OF
 MEDIA EFFORTS BY AREA VOCATIONAL
 TECHNICAL SCHOOL SIZE

Type of Media	Mean Response School Size			Overall Mean
	Small	Medium	Large	
1. Newspaper articles	34.3	120	96	83.4
2. Newspaper advertisement	9.8	25.4	40	25
3. Television announcements	2.4	7	2.3	3.9
4. Radio announcements	10.2	30.7	57	32.6
5. Brochures/Pamphlets	6.1	12	50.21	22.7
6. Newsletters	2.3	3.5	4.3	3.3
7. School newspaper	3.8	1.6	8	4.4
8. Posters	5.2	10.9	7.4	7.8
9. Bulletin boards	4.7	18.6	6.5	9.9
10. Display in community	2.6	5.7	3.3	3.8
11. Radio guest show	1.6	6.8	10.4	3.5
12. Television guest show	.5	1.5	2.3	14
13. Letters to community	4.5	6.4	40.2	17
14. Letters to parents	13.2	2.2	2.1	5.8
15. Letters to feeder school staff	7.2	30.6	11.6	16.5
16. Letters to feeder school students	26.1	3.8	2.8	10.9
17. Use of bumper stickers	1.5	.6	.1	.73

TABLE III

PERCENT OF LOCAL MEDIA PERSONS CONTACTED FOR PUBLIC
RELATIONS ACTIVITIES BY AREA VOCATIONAL
TECHNICAL SCHOOL SIZE

Type of Media	Percent of Response School Size			Overall Percent
	Small	Medium	Large	
1. Newspaper	100	100	100	100
2. Radio	70	100	100	90
3. Television	10	70	90	56

TABLE IV

COMPARISON OF THE FREQUENCY OF USE OF
SPECIAL EVENTS BY AREA VOCATIONAL
TECHNICAL SCHOOL SIZE

Type of Event	Percent of Response School Size			Overall Percent
	Small	Medium	Large	
1. Trade show	.2	.4	1.4	.6
2. Open house	1	1.2	1.2	.7
3. Awards programs	.9	1.4	2	1.4
4. Contests	1.4	2.4	2.1	1.9
5. Panel discussions	.7	1.2	3.4	5.5
6. Career day	.7	3	3.6	2.4
7. PTA meetings	1	.3	1.1	.8
8. Workshops	4.3	14.7	9.8	9.6

vocational school sizes, it is found that workshops had the highest rate of use of the eight items listed to help improve public relations.

PTA meetings, open house and trade shows ranked at the bottom in the frequency of use for special events. Panel discussions and career day events came in second and third in this category.

Table V shows the comparison of the frequency of use for 13 different activities that helped to stimulate community relations. Industry groups, which includes tours to industrial sites by vocational students, was rated as being used 66 per cent more times than school board members on the overall mean frequency. The other two groups that showed any significant use were civic organizations and employment, which includes visiting with employers of vocational students and former students.

Analyzation of Table VI reveals that superintendents and principals marked the use of youth organizations, such as VICA and DECA, as being used the least to help improve school public relations. Administrators of the medium size area vocational schools use a majority of the 11 activities in the school relations much more than either the small or large size schools.

The medium size area schools ranked at the bottom of the list when it came to forming both internal and external public relations committees. Analyzation of Table VII shows that the medium size schools do not use either of the committees in their public relations committee and six of them utilize the help of an external committee to assist with the public relations programs. Three of the small size area schools use an external public relations committees and only one of them use an internal public relations committee.

TABLE V
 COMPARISON OF THE FREQUENCY OF USE OF COMMUNITY
 RELATIONS BY AREA VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL
 SCHOOL SIZE

Community Groups Contacted	Mean Response School Size			Overall Mean
	Small	Medium	Large	
1. Business groups	6.3	7.3	17.6	10.4
2. Industry groups	6.6	62.1	21	29.9
3. Legislators	2.9	8.2	7.4	6.1
4. City councils	1.1	.5	.4	.6
5. Mayors	1.9	1.4	2	1.7
5. Chamber of Commerces	4.2	12.3	6.1	7.5
7. Civic organizations	6.2	7.9	16.6	10.2
8. School board members	5.1	6.3	7.3	6.2
9. Service organizations	3.4	4.8	49.3	19.6
10. Police departments	2	1.8	8	3.9
11. Ministers	2.2	.7	1	1.3
12. Employment	16.6	4.8	49.3	19.6
13. Citizens	3.7	15.9	4.8	8.1

The small, medium and large area vocational schools rate about the same in most of the 13 areas dealing with equipment to assist in conducting a public relations program. Table VIII shows that the only area where the three school sizes show any significant difference in the type of equipment listed under Resources was in the area of slide

TABLE VI
 COMPARISON OF THE FREQUENCY OF USE OF SCHOOL
 RELATIONS BY AREA VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL
 SCHOOL SIZE

Type of Activity Conducted	Mean Response School Size			Overall Mean
	Small	Medium	Large	
1. Address feeder school classes	5.5	17	9.4	10.6
2. Schedule vocational counselor to address feeder schools	3.5	17.8	4.8	8.7
3. Schedule vocational teachers to address feeder school	4.8	6.7	2.4	4.6
4. Arrange for vocational students to address feeder school	3.4	3.8	3.3	3.5
5. Arrange for youth organizations (VICA and DECA) to address feeder school	.9	.2	1.5	.86
6. Organize tour of vocational school for feeder school classes	7.8	12.8	10.3	6.6
7. Administrator discusses vocational programs with feeder school principal	2.7	23	7	10.9
8. Administrator discusses vocational programs with feeder school counselors	9.2	20.6	7.3	12.3
9. Administrator mailed information material to feeder school student	3.1	4.6	7.8	5.1
10. Administrator mailed information material to students through feeder school staff	2.6	20.9	11.2	11.5
11. Administrators discusses vocational programs with feeder school teachers	3.9	7.5	3.3	4.9

dissolve units. Eight of the large size schools use the slide dissolve units, while only five of the medium and one of the small size schools utilize this special piece of equipment in color slide presentations. Many of the superintendents were not familiar with what the slide dissolve unit was used for and this could have counted for the low usage rate. Many slide shows by large industries and professional groups employ the aid of a slide dissolve unit to make the presentation more interesting. The dissolve unit uses two slide projectors and causes one image to fade out on the screen as the other image appears on top of the first image. More sophisticated dissolve systems utilize anywhere from three to a dozen projectors with one screen. The small size area schools also rated low in the areas of printing laboratories, and video tape cameras.

TABLE VII

PERCENTAGE OF SCHOOL RELATIONS ACTIVITIES CONDUCTED
TO IMPROVE COMMUNICATIONS BY AREA VOCATIONAL
TECHNICAL SCHOOL SIZE

Type of Activity Conducted	Percent of Response School Size			Overall Percent
	Small	Medium	Large	
1. Formed internal public relations committee	10		50	20
2. Formed external public relations committee	33		20	6.6
3. Surveyed local teachers to see what they have heard good about their school	20	20	30	23.3

TABLE VIII
 PERCENT OF RESOURCES AVAILABLE FOR PUBLIC
 RELATIONS BY AREA VOCATIONAL
 TECHNICAL SCHOOL SIZE

Equipment Available	Percent of Response School Size			Overall Percent
	Small	Medium	Large	
1. Electric typewriter	100	100	100	100
2. Photocopying facilities	100	100	100	100
3. Cameras and flash equipment	70	100	100	90
4. Movie projectors	100	90	100	96.6
5. Slide projectors	100	100	100	100
6. Slide dissolve units	10	54	72	45.3
7. Overhead projector	100	100	100	100
8. Photography lab	50	82	100	77.3
9. Printing lab	60	82	100	80.6
10. Tape recorders	100	100	100	100
11. Video tape cameras	50	91	91	77.3
12. Portable public address system	60	91	100	83.6
13. Combination slide-tape projectors	90	91	100	93.6

Table IX reveals that the large area schools utilize full-time public relations persons plus teachers and administrators to do most of the actual work of taking pictures, writing stories and making layouts for brochures and other public relations events. The table indicates that 11 of the large size area schools had a total of five full-time and one part-time public relations people working in this area during the 1979-80 school year. The 11 small size area schools did not have a single full-time public relations person, but did have one part-time staff member at one school working in this area. Three of the medium schools had part-time public relations persons and one school in this category had a full-time person.

Table IX also shows that the public relations duties for the medium size schools were divided among most of the seven different areas listed on the table, while the small size area schools had most of this type of work done by staff and faculty. The only difference between the areas of staff and faculty and teachers and administration is that the staff includes some clerical workers. There was one small school that indicated there was no one at this particular school who could perform these public relations skills and tasks.

Since the majority of the area vocational schools in Oklahoma do not have full-time public relations directors, the responsibility of coordinating public relations efforts usually is accepted by the superintendents according to the data listed in Table X. This is true for both the small and medium size schools, but not necessarily so for the larger size schools. Table X shows the large size schools had five public relations directors and six schools where the superintendents and administrative staff did this type of work. However, it was

surprising that out of all 33 schools that one of the large size schools indicated there was no one responsible for coordinating public relations activities.

TABLE IX

PERCENTAGE OF STAFF WHO CAN WRITE, TAKE PICTURES
AND MAKE LAYOUTS BY AREA VOCATIONAL
TECHNICAL SCHOOL SIZE

Type of Personnel Who Perform Public Relations Skills and Tasks	Percentage of Response School Size			Overall Percent
	Small	Medium	Large	
1. Full-time public relations person.		9	45.5	18
2. Part-time public relations person.	9	27	9	15
3. Full-time media person.		18		6
4. Part-time media person.		9		3
5. Staff and faculty.	82	18		33.3
6. Curriculum specialist.		9		3
7. Teacher and administration.		9	45.5	18
8. No one	9			3

TABLE X

PERCENTAGE OF STAFF WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR
COORDINATING PUBLIC RELATIONS EFFORT BY
AREA VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL SCHOOL SIZE

Who is Responsible for Coordinating Public Relations Activities	Percent of Response School Size			Overall Percent
	Small	Medium	Large	
1. Superintendent	54	54	18	42
2. Assistant superintendent	36			12
3. Public relations person		18	45	21
4. Superintendent and media person		18	9.5	9.1
5. Administration and staff	10			3.3
6. Administrative assistant		10	18	9.3
7. No one			9.5	3.1

Table XI statistics list the type of personnel who superintendents and principals believe should have the responsibility for coordinating public relations activities. By looking at the overall mean response on Table XI it is easy to see that the majority of administrators feel this responsibility should be done by someone trained in the areas of public relations. During the telephone interviews, administrators of the small size schools were reluctant to say they feel that their particular schools should have a full-time public relations coordinator. The majority of superintendents of all school sizes said that the main reason why they do not have full-time personnel in this area is due to a lack of funds. Nearly all of the superintendents and principals said

having someone trained in the area of public relations is very important. Most of the superintendents of the larger size schools said they would rather handle their own public relations activities by hiring personnel for these duties. Many of the superintendents and principals of the small and medium size schools said they realize that funds probably will not become available for this purpose. They said that help from the Oklahoma State Department of Vocational and Technical Education in the areas of taking pictures for news releases and public relations slide shows would be of great assistance. Being able to get more indepth information from the superintendents was the reason for dividing the survey into a mail-out form and an interview form. The interview form had room for comments on each of its questions, while the mail-out form dealt with yes or no questions and statistical numbers.

Table XII list five areas of outside resources that could be available to the area schools in the area of public relations assistance. The Oklahoma State Department of Vocational and Technical Education has a full-time staff in the area of public relations to assist area schools if they request the service. Table XII indicated that only about half of the area schools requested any help during the 1979-80 school year. However, most of the superintendents indicated that they thought assistance from the State Department would be beneficial to their schools. Superintendents and principals of the smaller size schools said they would welcome help and training in the areas of public relations by the State Department. They indicated that they would like to see someone trained in the areas of writing and taking pictures come by their school several times during the school

year and assist them with their public relations programs. Table XII also indicated that two of the medium and three of the large size schools were members of the Oklahoma School Public Relations Association. None of the small size schools were associated with either of the professional associations. Both the state and national organizations sponsor public relations workshops and send out literature on how to improve school public relations several times each year.

Another area where the interview style of gathering information provided more details was in the area of finding out which schools have written policies, procedures and goals pertaining to public relations. Under this area, Table XIII indicates that most schools rated very low in the area of formal written board policies dealing with specific public relations activities. At first glance at the statistics on this table, it seems that most of the area schools in the state conduct their public relations programs without any written plans or goals. But by using the interview method, the interviewer was able to find out that many of the schools make their public relations plans verbally or use an informal written plan. Three superintendents when asked if they have formal written plans that listed specifically the activities to be done in the area of public relations said no, but planned to develop such a plan in the future. Several other administrators also indicated that a formal written plan was a good idea.

Table XIV deals with the area of evaluation for public relations programs in area vocational schools. Only eight of the 33 area schools have printed forms to keep accurate records of public relations activities. Most of the school administrators said they evaluate their public relations programs on an informal basis by discussing the effec-

TABLE XI
 PERCENTAGE OF STAFF WHO SUPERINTENDENTS
 THINK SHOULD BE RESPONSIBLE FOR
 COORDINATING PUBLIC RELATIONS
 EFFORT BY AREA VOCATIONAL
 TECHNICAL SCHOOL SIZE

Who Superintendents Think Should be Responsible for Coordinating Public Relations Activities	Percent of Response School Size			Overall Percent
	Small	Medium	Large	
1. Superintendent		9		3
2. Assistant superintendents				
3. Public relations person	54	82	82	72
4. Superintendent and public relations person	18			6
5. Administration and staff		9	9	6
6. Administrative assistant	10			3
7. Need help	18			6
8. Every one			9	3

TABLE XII
 PERCENTAGE OF OUTSIDE RESOURCES AVAILABLE
 TO HELP WITH PUBLIC RELATIONS PROGRAM
 BY AREA VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL
 SCHOOL SIZE

Type of Resources	Percent of Response School Size			Overall Percent
	Small	Medium	Large	
1. Asked State Department of Vocational and Technical Education for help with public relations program	40	63	54	52.3
2. Think assistant from State Department of Vocational and Technical Education would be helpful	90	90	82	87
3. Member on staff have attended public relations workshop sponsored by State Department of Vocational and Technical Education Department	20	82	82	61.3
4. School is member of Oklahoma School Public Relations Association	0	18	27	15
5. School is member of National School Public Relations Association	0	18	18	12

TABLE XIII
 PERCENTAGE SCHOOL BOARDS WHO HAVE WRITTEN POLICIES,
 PROCEDURES, AND GOALS PERTAINING TO PUBLIC
 RELATIONS BY AREA VOCATIONAL
 TECHNICAL SCHOOL SIZE

Areas Written Plan Covers	Percentage of Response School Size			Overall Percent
	Small	Medium	Large	
1. Does board policy include a formal written plan listing major public relations activities to be conducted during school year.		18	36	18
2. Area public relations policies, procedures and goals printed in handbooks and given to school staff.	36	45	63	48
3. Does written plan include a time table for public relations activities.		45	72	39
4. Does written plan include specific procedures for evaluating the public relations program.	10	27	63	33.3
5. Does the plan give specific procedures for the release of information during a crisis at the school.	18	45	45	36

tiveness of the activities among the administrative staff. Many of the superintendents and principals said their public relations programs were not evaluated at all. Out of the programs that are evaluated, monthly was the time period most superintendents said they check the evaluation of activities conducted. Only nine schools survey their students, parents of students and community leaders to determine the effectiveness of their public relations programs.

In analyzing the data presented in Table XV, which deals with the frequency of use of special public relations techniques used by area vocational schools, it is revealed that about 60 percent of the superintendents have discussed with their staff and faculty the correct procedure for giving out information to the news media or others during a crisis at their schools. The table also deals with methods of school board procedures that help create good public relations. Out of the seven areas listed to help improve public relations at school board meetings, an overall mean point average of 3.3 shows that distributing agendas to all present at board meetings was used the most by superintendents. The technique used the least by board members was to schedule meetings in different communities and at different times in order to give more people an opportunity to attend. Other methods that were used about 60 per cent of the time were sending agendas to the news media before the meeting was held and also sending information to members of the media who were not present after the meeting was held.

Table XVI presents information on the comparison of frequency of use in regards to attitudes toward public relations by area vocational school administrators. Out of all the 33 superintendents and princi-

TABLE XIV
 COMPARISON OF THE FREQUENCY USE OF EVALUATING
 PUBLIC RELATIONS PROGRAMS BY AREA
 VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL
 SCHOOL SIZE

Time Period of Evaluation	Mean Rate of Technique School Size			Overall Mean
	Small	Medium	Large	
Which time period is the evaluation of the public relations program conducted at your school	3.2	3.7	5.2	4
1. Not at all				
2. Every two years				
3. Yearly				
4. Monthly				
5. Periodically				
6. Weekly				
7. Daily				

Type of Evaluation	Percent of Response School Size			Overall Percent
	Small	Medium	Large	
1. Do you have printed forms to record public relations activi- ties showing how much they cost and how effective they are?	27	18	27	24
2. Do you survey students, parents and community leaders to determine effectiveness of public relations programs?	36	45		27

TABLE XV

COMPARISON OF THE FREQUENCY OF USE OF SPECIAL PUBLIC
RELATIONS TECHNIQUES USED BY AREA VOCATIONAL
TECHNICAL SCHOOL SIZE

Methods to Keep From Having Negative Public Relations	Percent of Response School Size			Overall Percent
	Small	Medium	Large	
1. Has discussed correct procedures for giving out information to news media or other during a crisis at your school.	82	54	63	66.3
Method of School Board Procedures to Create Good Public Relations	Percent of Response School Size			Overall Percent
	Small	Medium	Large	
1. Send agenda to news media before meeting	1.9	2.72	2.8	2.4
2. Prepare detail background on material for reporters	2.2	2.9	2.2	2.4
3. Distribute agenda to all present at meeting	3.7	3.72	2.7	3.3
4. Tape record proceedings	3.1	1.72	2	2.2
5. Call members of news media not present and give details of meeting	2.1	2.5	2.2	2.6
6. Encourage people in community to attend meetings	1.9	2.5	2.5	2.3
7. Schedule board meeting in different community to give more people oppor- tunity to attend	2.5	1.8	1.1	1.8

pals, only three administrators from the small size schools rated the use of public relations as "very important." Thirty of the superintendents said their schools were putting "above average" amounts of effort into public relations and all but five of them said they believed that a "great amount" of effort should be put into public relations.

TABLE XVI

COMPARISON OF THE FREQUENCY OF USE IN REGARDS TO
ATTITUDES TOWARD PUBLIC RELATIONS BY AREA
VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL SCHOOL SIZE

Attitude Toward Public Relations	Mean Rate of Attitude School Size			Overall Mean
	Small	Medium	Large	
1. Superintendent, value of public relations for vocational education and their school on a scale of not important, moderately important, important, very important and extremely important.	4.7	5	5	4.9
Amount of Effort for Public Relations	Mean Rate of Attitude School Size			Overall Mean
	Small	Medium	Large	
1. Superintendents rated amount of effort their school puts into public relations on a scale of little, below average, above average and great amount.	3.2	3.6	3.6	3.4
2. Superintendents rated the amount they feel should be put into public relations by their school on a scale of little, below average, above average and great amount.	3.7	3.8	4	3.8

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this study was to survey the types and frequency of use of public relations activities engaged in by area vocational school directors in Oklahoma and to determine who is responsible for coordinating these activities. In order to accomplish the purpose of this study, the following objectives were formulated:

1. To determine the frequency and use of public relations activities engaged in by area vocational school directors in Oklahoma.
2. To determine if directors of large, medium and small area vocational schools practice public relations differently.
3. To determine if directors of area vocational schools conduct public relations activities with or without a written plan.
4. To determine if directors of area vocational schools systematically evaluate their public relations activities.
5. To determine who should be the key person responsible for coordinating public relations activities.

Data were collected by the use of mailed questionnaires and telephone interviews from 33 area vocational school superintendents and principals throughout the state of Oklahoma. An 88 per cent return on the mailed questionnaires was received, while 100 per cent of the telephone interviews were completed.

Summary of Findings

Table XVII was constructed to present a summary comparison of findings of the study to frequency of use of selected public relations areas by three different sizes of area vocational schools.

According to the overall mean averages of all the activities in each of the 15 different areas of public relations in this study, Table XVII reveals that the larger size area vocational schools had a higher rate of use in nine of the categories. The middle size area schools scored higher in six of the public relations areas, while the smaller size schools did not rate first in any of the areas. This table shows the frequency of use of all the public relations areas and also that the three sizes of area schools do practice the use of these activities differently.

Data in Table XIII indicates that none of the smaller size area schools use a formal written plan to conduct their public relations policies, procedures and goals. The same data shows that two of the medium size schools and four of the larger size schools do have written plans to guide them in the direction of a public relations program. Further analyzation of the data on Table XIII also shows that 11 of the 33 area schools systematically evaluate their public relations programs. The breakdown of evaluation of public relations programs is one for the small size schools, three for the medium size schools and seven for the large size schools. Table XIV revealed that out of the schools that do evaluate their public relations programs, that the overall mean rate of evaluation was a four out of a seven point scale where one equals "not at all" and seven equals "daily." This same table shows that one of the small size schools, two of the medium size schools and three of the larger size schools used printed forms to record the vital

TABLE XVII
 SUMMARY OF MEAN RESPONSE BY PUBLIC RELATIONS
 AREAS USED BY AREA VOCATIONAL
 TECHNICAL SCHOOL SIZE

Selected Public Relations Areas Used in the Survey	Overall Mean Comparison		
	Small	Medium	Large
1. Type of media used	8	16.8	20.2
2. Mass media contacted	60	90	93
3. Special events	1.2	3	3
4. Community relations	4.7	10.5	8.8
5. School relations	4.3	12.2	6.2
6. Special school relations	10	6.6	33
7. Resource equipment	76.1	90.8	97.1
8. Resource personnel		9	45
9. Responsible for public relations		18	45
10. Who superintendents think should be responsible for PR	54	82	82
11. Outside resources	30	54.2	52.6
12. Written policies for PR policies, procedures and goals	12.8	36	34.8
13. Evaluation of PR programs	20	22.2	25.7
14. Special PR techniques used	2.4	2.5	2.2
15. Attitudes toward PR	3.8	4.1	4.2

This chart is a mean of the 15 tables used to describe the survey results of this study.

statistics on how effective the public relations activities were during the year.

Analyzation of Table XI reveals who the 33 superintendents and principals think should be in charge of coordinating the public relations programs at their schools. The data shows that 24 administrators feel the public relations activities should be coordinated by a person trained in the area of public relations. The remainder of the school officials indicated that a certain type of personnel should be in charge of the programs. These were: one for superintendents, two for superintendents and public relations directors, one for administrative assistants, two for administration and staff, and one for everyone at the school. Two administrators said they did not know who should actually be in charge of the public relations programs, but they did need help in this area at their schools.

Conclusions

An analysis of the data collected in this study was used to develop certain conclusions. The investigator feels justified in concluding the following.

1. Out of the 17 different public relations activities in the area of media, newspaper articles was used by far the most for all three sizes of area schools.
2. The three different sizes of area vocational schools do practice the use of public relations differently.
3. A majority of the area schools do not have written plans giving specific details how public relations programs will be funded, and how specific activities will be conducted by given time tables.
4. Some of the area schools do evaluate their public relations programs on an informal basis, but very few of them do it formally and systematically.

5. Most of the area schools do not have a full-time public relations person to coordinate efforts in this area. However, a majority of the school administrators feel that specially trained personnel in the area of public relations would be of great benefit to their schools.

Recommendations

Based on the summary of this study, the author has made the following recommendations:

1. Each of the area school officials should write a detailed plan listing specific public relations activities to be conducted throughout the school year. This plan should include funding for the program and personnel to run it. It should also include a time table for the major public relations events to be conducted. This written plan should be voted on and made an official board policy during a school board meeting.
2. A specific procedure should be set up at each school for the systematic evaluation of each public relations program. An adequate time period should be established for the evaluation of activities and printed forms should be developed for the recording of vital information of the evaluation.
3. A full-time person trained in the areas of public relations should be hired at each school for the purpose of coordinating public relations activities. If the school budget will not allow the hiring of a full-time person, then establish these responsibilities as part of the duties of someone already on the staff or faculty. Make sure at least half of each day is set aside for the duties of public relations without interference from other job duties. The public relations person should receive job duties and orders only from the superintendent.
4. A policy should be established at each school that makes everyone at the school aware of how important they are to the development of a good public relations program. Both an internal and external public relations advisory committee should be established and should become active in the promotion of developing a good image for each school.
5. The staff of the Oklahoma State Department of Vocational and Technical Education should look into the possibility of expanding job duties of current employes to assist area schools in the areas of taking pictures and writing stories for news releases and brochures, and help to

train staff members at area schools who have been assigned the duties of taking pictures, developing pictures and writing stories.

6. Area schools that do not have a full-time public relations person and can not afford one might look into the possibility of forming a consortium and hiring someone qualified in the area of public relations to perform these responsibilities for all of the schools.
7. The author of this study would recommend that further research be made in Oklahoma to investigate the feasibility of hiring full-time public relations coordinators at all area vocational schools.

A SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Beavers, Floyd Gene. "The Relationship Between Public Relations Practices and Enrollment Patterns in Area Vocational Secondary Schools In Texas." College Station: Texas A&M University, Final Reprot, 1975.
- Bellis, June, et al. "New Handbook for School Communication." Austin, Texas: National School Public Relations Association and Texas Education Agency, Final Report, 1978. (ERIC ED 164 644).
- Billings, Jack. "Vocational Education: A Blurred Image." Paper presented at workshop for improving public information programs for vocational education, Ohio State University, March 1970.
- Bortner, Doyle M. "Public Relations for Public Schools." Cambridge, Massachusetts: Schenkman Publishing Co., 1972.
- Bottoms, J. E. and E. Swains. "The Effect of Program Development on Area Vocational-Technical School Enrollment." The Vocational Guidance Quarterly, 1965, 15, 267-272.
- DeGuglielmo, Bob; Don Frazier and Bill Stevenson. "A Study of the Needs of Oklahoma Citizens for Information About Vocational-Technical Education." Stillwater, Oklahoma: Oklahoma State Department of Vocational and Technical Education, Final Report, 1975 (ERIC ED 122 076).
- Forsythe, Steven William. "An Assessment of Community Relations Activities Used by Oklahoma Vocational Agriculture Teachers " (Unpub. M.S. thesis, Oklahoma State University, 1979).
- Jacobsen, David V. "A State-wide Promotional Program for Vocational and Technical Education." Technical Education News, 35, October-November 1975, 19 (ERIC ED 123 893).
- Koble, Daniel E., Jr., et al. "Public Relations Handbook for Vocational Education in Large Cities." Columbus, Ohio: Ohio State University, 1978 (ERIC ED 173 580).
- Lejeune, Julie M. "Determining the Effects of Public Information Activities on Vocational Enrollment in West Virginia." Morgantown, West Virginia: West Virginia University, Final Report, 1977 (ERIC ED 143 786).
- Mellor, David K. "Developing a Public Relations Program." The Agricultural Education Magazine, 47, April 1975, 224.

- Nagle, John M. "How to Tell What Your Public Really Thinks." The American School Board Journal, 1968, 156, (6), 8-11.
- Gallup, G. H. "The Public's Attitudes Toward the Public Schools." Phi Delta Kappan, 1980, 41-44.
- Rice, Arthur A. "Schools Must Revamp Their Public Relations Programs." Nation's Schools, 1969, 83, (4), 14-16.
- Schultz, Fred A. and H. Robert Terry. "Selected Aspects of Vocational Image as Preceived by a Public Categorized by Occupational Levels." Stillwater, Oklahoma: Oklahoma State Department of Vocational and Technical Education, Final Report, 1971 (ERIC ED 062 555).
- South Carolina State Department of Education. "Public Relations Handbook for Vocational Educators." Columbia, South Carolina, 1979 (ERIC ED 181 252).
- Vocational Guidance Summer Institute. "Public Relations in the Public Schools." Texas A&M University, 1973 (Mimeographed).
- West Virginia State Department of Education. "Promoting Vocational Education." A Guide for Vocational Educators. Charleston, West Virginia, 1978.
- Wilcox, Dennis L. "Hiring Criteria of Public Relations Employers." Seattle, Washington: A paper presented at the annual meeting of the Association for Education in Journalism, Final Report, 1978 (ERIC ED 163 495).

APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

SCHOOLS AND DIRECTORS PARTICIPATING IN SURVEY

TABLE XVIII
SCHOOLS AND DIRECTORS PARTICIPATING IN SURVEY

Area Vocational Schools in Oklahoma	Sites	Directors
Northeast Oklahoma AVTS	Afton	Bob Reed
Oklahoma Northwest AVTS	Fairview	Merlin Freed
Oklahoma Northwest AVTS	Alva	Austin Baragee
Southern Oklahoma AVTS	Ardmore	Jack Stone
Tri-County AVTS	Bartlesville	Kenneth Phelps
Western Oklahoma AVTS	Burns Flat	Jerry Kirk
Canadian Valley	El Reno	Roy Peters
Canadian Valley	Chickasha	James Moore
*Eastern Oklahoma Co. AVTS	Choctaw	Bill Phillips
Central Oklahoma AVTS	Drumright	John Hopper
Red River AVTS	Duncan	Delbert Morrison
O. T. Autry	Enid	J. W. Ridge
Caddo-Kiowa AVTS	Fort Cobb	Orbra Hulsey
Kiamichi AVTS	Hugo	Charles Wibben
Kiamichi AVTS	Idabel	Troy Nichols
Kiamichi AVTS	McAlester	Charles Boyd
Kiamichi AVTS	Poteau	Dick Wilkerson
Kiamichi AVTS	Talihina	Natha Carman
Great Plains AVTS	Lawton	Bruce Gray
Mid-De1 AVTS	Midwest City	Jack Kale
Indian Capital AVTS	Muskogee	Chester Hendrix
Indian Capital AVTS	Sallisaw	Neal Pack
Moore-Norman AVTS	Norman	Frank Coulter

TABLE XVIII (Continued)

Area Vocational Schools in Oklahoma	Sites	Directors
Belle Isle AVTS	Oklahoma City	Si Bowlan
Foster Estes AVTS	Oklahoma City	Phil Myers
*Francis Tuttle AVTS	Oklahoma City	Gene Callahan
Pioneer AVTS	Ponca City	James Carpenter
Gordon Cooper AVTS	Shawnee	John Bruton
Indian Meridian AVTS	Stillwater	Fred Schultz
Tulsa County AVTS	Memorial Drive	Joe Lemley
Tulsa County AVTS	Peoria Ave.	T. J. Allen
Mid-America AVTS	Wayne	Kenneth Carleton
Northeast Oklahoma AVTS	Pryor	Harold Anglin
Central Oklahoma AVTS	Sapulpa	David Main
Indian Capital AVTS	Stillwell	Jerry Panter

*These area vocational school districts are newly formed area schools and did not have any students during 1979-80. However, the superintendents did participate in part of the interview portion of the survey.

APPENDIX B

MAILING SURVEY FORMS

PUBLIC RELATIONS SURVEY

Mailing Forms

Name _____ Position _____
 School _____ Date _____
 Site _____ Ph. No. () _____

This survey is concerned with public relations techniques--written, oral and visual methods of informing your "public" (students, parents, staff and the community) about your vocational education programs and facilities. The first half of the questionnaire may require more time to complete, therefore it was decided to mail this portion of the instrument in order to help give a more accurate response. The second half of the questionnaire will be completed by personal telephone interview with each of the vocational directors and superintendents.

Please answer the questions on the first section of the questionnaire by writing the number of times each activity was conducted. If you used a method not included on the list, please indicate the method and frequency in the column headed "other."

I. MEDIA EFFORTS:

- A. Keep in mind that each separate newspaper article, pamphlet, newsletter and the like that your school prepared during the past fiscal year (1979-80) is counted as one. For example, one pamphlet of 500 copies would be counted only as one prepared pamphlet.

Method	Approximate Number Of Times Used
1. Newspaper Articles	_____
2. Newspaper Advertisement	_____
3. Television Announcement	_____
4. Radio Announcement	_____
5. Brochure/pamphlets	_____
6. Newsletters	_____
7. School Newspaper	_____
8. Posters	_____
9. Bulletin Boards	_____
10. Displays in Community	_____

- 11. Radio Show Guest _____
- 12. Television Show Guest _____
- 13. Letters to Community Organizations _____
- 14. Letters to Parents _____
- 15. Letters to Feeder School Staff _____
- 16. Letters to Feeder School Students _____
- 17. Use of bumper stickers to promote vocational education _____
- 18. Others not mentioned _____

B. Indicate which of the following local media persons you contacted the past fiscal year (1979-80) for news coverage at your school.

- 1. Local Newspaper ()Yes ()No
- 2. Local Radio ()Yes ()No
- 3. Local Television ()Yes ()No
- 4. Others not mentioned ()Yes ()No

II. SPECIAL EVENTS:

A. Community support and school participation can be encouraged by hosting special events at your school. Please indicate the number of times each of the events listed below was held at your school.

Event	Approximate Number of Times Held
1. Trade Show	_____
2. Open House	_____
3. Awards Programs	_____
4. Contests	_____
5. Panel Discussions	_____
6. Career Day	_____
7. PTA Meetings	_____
8. Workshops	_____
9. Others not mentioned	_____

III. COMMUNITY RELATIONS:

A. The following list includes community leaders and organizations that you or someone from your school contacted during the past fiscal year (1979-80). Indicate the number of times you or representatives from your school had discussions about your school with the following community groups.

Community Groups	Approximate Number of Times Held
1. Business Groups	_____
2. Industry Groups	_____
3. Legislators	_____
4. City Councils	_____
5. Chamber of Commerce	_____
6. Mayors	_____
7. Civic Organizations	_____
8. Service Organizations	_____
9. School Board Members	_____
10. Police Departments	_____
11. Ministers	_____
12. Employment Services	_____
13. Citizens Advisory Committees	_____
14. Others not mentioned	_____

IV. SCHOOL RELATIONS:

A. The following list includes types of activities that you or someone from your school have done to improve communications and relations among your school and the feeder schools that your center serves. Please indicate the number of times you or your representatives participated in the activities listed below.

Activities Conducted	Approximate Number of Times Participated In
1. Address feeder school classes	_____
2. Scheduled vocational counselor to address feeder schools	_____
3. Scheduled vocational teachers to address feeder schools	_____
4. Arranged for vocational students to address feeder high schools	_____
5. Arranged for youth organizations students (VICA, DECA, ect.) to address feeder classes	_____
6. Organize tour of vocational school for feeder school classes	_____
7. Administrators discussed vocational programs with feeder school principals	_____
8. Administrators discussed vocational programs with feeder school counselors	_____

9. Administrators discussed vocational programs with feeder school teachers _____
10. Administrators mailed information materials to feeder students _____
11. Administrators distributed information materials to students through staff at feeder schools _____
12. Formed an internal public relations committee composed of administrators, counselors, teachers and support staff ()Yes ()No
13. Formed an external public relations committee composed of civic leaders, industry leaders and business leaders ()Yes ()No
14. Surveyed vocational teachers and support staff to see what they have heard good about your school ()Yes ()No
15. List any others not mentioned _____ ()Yes ()No

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW SURVEY FORMS

PUBLIC RELATIONS SURVEY

Interview Survey Forms

Name _____ Position _____
 School _____ Date _____
 Site _____ Ph. No. () _____

This is the second half of the public relations survey and it will be completed by telephone interview with each of the directors and superintendents of area vocational schools in Oklahoma

V. RESOURCES:

A. Check below any of the physical materials you have available at your school to help conduct your public relations program.

Resources Available	Comments
1. Electric typewriters	_____
2. Photocopying facilities	_____
3. Cameras with electronic flash	_____
4. Movie projectors	_____
5. Slide projectors	_____
6. Slide dissovle units	_____
7. Overhead projectors	_____
8. Photography labs	_____
9. Printing labs	_____
10. Tape recorders	_____
11. Vido tape camera	_____
12. Public address system	_____
13. Combination slide-tape machine	_____
14. Others not listed _____	_____

B. Do you have someone on your staff that can write, take pictures and make layouts for brochures, newsletters and news releases?
 () YES () NO

Comments _____

C. Who is coordinating public relations efforts at your school?

Comments _____

- D. Who do you think should be responsible for coordinating all public relations efforts at your school?

Comments _____

- E. Have you ever asked the Oklahoma State Department of Vocational Education for assistance with your public relations program?

Comments _____

- F. Do you think assistance from the Oklahoma State Department of Vocational Education would be helpful in conducting your public relations program?

Comments _____

- G. Have you or anyone on your staff attended the public relations workshop sponsored by the Oklahoma State Department of Vocational Education's Public Information Department during the past fiscal year (1979-80)?

Comments _____

- H. Is your school a member of the Oklahoma School Public Relations Association (OKSPRA)?

Comments _____

- I. Is your school a member of the National School Public Relations Association (NSPRA)?

Comments _____

VI. PUBLIC RELATIONS POLICIES, PROCEDURES & GOALS:

- A. Does your school have a formal written plan listing the public relations activities to be conducted during the year?

Comments _____

- B. Are the public relations policies, procedures and goals printed in a policies and procedures manual and distributed to the school faculty?

Comments _____

C. Does the plan include a time table for each public relations activity to be completed?

Comments _____

D. Does the plan include specific procedures for evaluating your public relations program?

Comments _____

E. Does plan state specific procedures for the release of information to the mass media and the public when a crisis occurs?

Comments _____

VII. Evaluation:

A. Do you systematically evaluate your public relations program? If yes, please mark an "X" in the bracket that most accurately represents the frequency of evaluation.

- () Not at all
- () Daily
- () Weekly
- () Monthly
- () Yearly
- () Every two years

Comments _____

B. Do you have printed forms that contain procedures for recording the different public relations activities conducted, how effective the activities were and how much they cost?

Comment _____

C. Do you send survey forms to students, parents and community leaders in an effort to help determine the effectiveness of your public relations effort?

Comments _____

VIII. Special Public Relations Techniques Used:

A. Have you discussed the correct procedures for handling a crisis with the administrative staff, teachers and support staff in detail in order to keep from having a negative public relations effect?

Comments _____

B. Another way of conducting good public relations techniques is through local school board meetings. Please mark an "X" in each of the activities listed below that you do in connection with announcing your school board meetings.

- 1. Send agenda to news media before meeting is held Never Sometimes
 Many times Always

Comments _____

- 2. Prepare detailed background on materials for reporters Never Sometimes
 Many times Always

Comments _____

- 3. Distribute agenda to all present at meeting Never Sometimes
 Many times Always

Comments _____

- 4. Tape record proceedings for future references Never Sometimes
 Many times Always

Comments _____

- 5. Call news media members not present or mail them detailed accounts of meeting Never Sometimes
 Many Times Always

Comments _____

- 6. Encourage representatives of community to attend meeting Never Sometimes
 Many times Always

Comments _____

- 7. Schedule board meetings in different communities & different times of day to give more people chance to attend Never Sometimes
 Many times Always

Comments _____

IX. ATTITUDES TOWARD PUBLIC RELATIONS FOR VOCATIONAL EDUCATION:

A. Place an "X" in the block below that indicates your value of public relations for vocational education, and more specifically in your school.

1. () Not important
2. () Moderately important
3. () Important
4. () Very important
5. () Extremely important

B. Rate the amount of effort your school is putting in public relations.

1. () Little
2. () Below average
3. () Above average
4. () Great amount

C. How much effort do you feel should be put into public relations by your school?

1. () Little
2. () Below average
3. () Above average
4. () Great amount

APPENDIX D

COVER LETTER FOR QUESTIONNAIRE



OKLAHOMA STATE DEPARTMENT OF VOCATIONAL AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

FRANCIS TUTTLE, DIRECTOR • 1515 WEST SIXTH AVE., • STILLWATER, OKLAHOMA 74074 • A.C. (405) 377-2000

January 10, 1981

MEMORANDUM 81-33

TO: Area Vo-Tech School Administrators
and Site Directors

FROM: Larry Hansen

SUBJECT: Public Relations Research Project

The Area Schools Division is cooperating with a research project to determine what type of public relations techniques are being used at area vocational centers throughout Oklahoma.

Part of this research includes a survey to learn what public relations practices are succeeding and are not succeeding in the state. Your school is one of thirty-three facilities selected to participate in the survey. You will be asked to supply information about the type and number (frequency) of public relations activities your school has used in the past fiscal year, 1979-80.

Enclosed is the first half of the survey which you are asked to please fill out as accurately as possible and return to the Area Schools Division office by February 20. The second half of the survey will be conducted by telephone interview with each of the area school directors and superintendents. Larry Gee, who is conducting the survey in fulfillment of his master thesis in Trade and Industrial Education, will be calling each of the vocational administrators on February 20 and 27 to complete the survey.

We believe that the data accumulated in this research project will provide helpful information that can, in turn, be useful to individual schools throughout the state. Your cooperation in providing the needed data will ensure the successful completion of the project. A copy of the final report will be provided for you at its completion.

LG:LH:slk

Enclosure

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER

VITA^a

Lawrence L. Gee

Candidate for Degree of

Master of Science

Thesis: A SURVEY OF PUBLIC RELATIONS ACTIVITIES USED BY OKLAHOMA
AREA VOCATIONAL SCHOOL DIRECTORS

Major Field: Trade and Industrial Education

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in Lawton, Oklahoma, January 28, 1938,
the son of Mr. and Mrs. Elbert S. Gee.

Education: Graduated from Lawton High School, Lawton, Oklahoma,
in 1956, received a Bachelor of Science degree from Cameron
University, Lawton, May, 1978, with a major in Technology;
completed requirements for the Master of Science degree at
Oklahoma State University in July, 1981.

Professional Experience: Newspaper reporter and photographer for
the Lawton Constitution and Morning Press, Lawton, Oklahoma,
from May, 1956 to July, 1976. Taught Graphic Arts at Great
Plains Area Vocational-Technical Center, Lawton, from
August, 1976 to May, 1979, and taught Offset Printing at
Caddo-Kiowa Area Vocational-Technical Center, Fort Cobb,
Oklahoma, from May, 1979 to present.

Professional Organizations: Member of the Oklahoma Press
Photographers Association from 1970 to 1976, served as
president of the organization from 1972 to 1974; member of
the National Press Photographers Association from 1970 to
1976; and served as regional newsletter editor during
1975 and 1976; member of the Oklahoma Vocational Association,
National Association of Trade and Industrial Teachers and
the Oklahoma Education Association for the past five years.

Leadership Activities: Served as delegate to the Oklahoma
Education Association Delegate Assembly during 1979 and
1980, and served as secretary and vice chairman of the
Printing Trade Group at August Conference.