

FACTORS WHICH SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS IN CERTAIN
OKLAHOMA PUBLIC SCHOOLS ASSOCIATE
WITH THE SELECTION OF
SUPERINTENDENTS

By

LEAHN RECTOR WESTFALL

Bachelor of Science
Oklahoma State University
Stillwater, Oklahoma
1943

Master of Science
Oklahoma State University
Stillwater, Oklahoma
1949

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Thesis Approved:

Howard W. Hedberg

Thesis Adviser

San T. Smith

Robert Anderson

H. G. ...

430875

DEDICATION

This volume is dedicated to:

Eloise Juanita Westfall, my wife;

Darrell Leahn Westfall, my son; and

Karen Kay Westfall, my daughter.

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CHAPTER I

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Introduction

The position of school superintendent is recognized as essential to the organizational structure of public school systems in the United States. Authorities on educational administration agree that the effectiveness of the superintendency almost entirely depends upon the behaviors and personal characteristics of the person selected for the position. In most states the board of education of the local school district selects the person to be employed as superintendent. Although many boards of education select school superintendents each year, the behaviors and personal characteristics which influence board members to elect one applicant in preference to others have not been clearly identified. Identification of the behaviors and personal characteristics which influence board members to elect a particular person and reject others applying for the position of superintendent will be attempted in this study. The importance, legal status, and changing concepts of the superintendency as well as the responsibility for selection of the superintendent of schools should be considered in further clarification of the problem.

Current Importance of the School Superintendency

The position of superintendent of schools has become increasingly important since its establishment in the 1830's. The superintendent has, over the years, assumed the stature of chief executive officer of the board of education. The superintendent is responsible for making policy recommendations to the board. He provides educational and administrative leadership for one of the largest and most important enterprises in the nation. Superintendents serve public schools in the United States which are attended by approximately 26 million children at an annual cost to the tax payers of almost six billion dollars. The individual superintendent is one of the 100,000 professional school administrators of the United States.¹ School district reorganization, the enormous increase in public school enrollments, added demand for special services to school children, expanded academic programs, and other current problems of education, all are indicative of the need for competent leadership in the position of local school superintendents.

Legal Status of the School Superintendency

The position of local school superintendent was created as a result of local forces and needs. The first local city school superintendency in the United States was established at Buffalo, New York, in 1837 by the local authorities with benefit of legislative action. Other city school systems in the United States soon followed the example of Buffalo and appointed local school superintendents. In some instances, before a

¹David T. Blouse, Statistics of State School System, U. S. Office of Education Circular No. 285 (Washington, 1948-49), 8 pp.

local superintendent was appointed, a special act of the legislature was secured authorizing such action. Later, there was general legislation authorizing the position and defining functions of the superintendent.

Morrison² states that the duties and responsibilities, which by law have been placed directly upon the superintendent, have in general not been those through which leadership in an educational system is evidenced. The areas in which the board usually acts only upon the recommendation of the superintendent of schools deal largely with the general supervision of the schools and with attendance laws. In a few states, the areas in which the board usually acts only upon the recommendation of the superintendent of schools pertain to such matters as the appointment of teachers, attendance officers, and other employees; suspension of pupils; purchase of textbooks and supplies; and the transfer, promotion, suspension, and dismissal of teachers. Morrison reports that those things which are done independently of the board of education relate frequently to the preparation of certain reports, keeping of certain records, issuance of transfer cards and work certificates, and other routine matters. Seyfried³, in his study of the contractual status of California superintendents of schools, presents a somewhat similar picture. These studies provide evidence that the more significant duties and responsibilities of the superintendent of the schools have been and are largely extrastatutory. Laws of a few states, which make the school administrator the chief executive officer of the board of education, constitute an

²J. C. Morrison, The Legal Status of the City School Superintendent (Baltimore, 1922), p. 162.

³J. E. Seyfried: The Contractual Status of California City School Superintendents (University of California Publications in Education, Vol. 7, No. 2, [California, 1933/]) pp. 63-144.

important step in delegating larger statutory authority to him.

In recent years there has been a trend in the United States to vest larger statutory powers in the school administrator. This trend has indicated that board action on an increasing number of matters can be taken only upon the recommendation of the superintendent of schools. Geissinger⁴, in a study of the legal status of the city superintendency in four states, finds the superintendent gaining in strength through his power of recommendation and through his power of counter-signature in many official reports including the budget. Although many persons favor these trends, other question them. Dudley⁵ believes that the responsible executive who has powers delegated to him by the board of education rather than by law may in the long run provide better leadership, since he depends more largely upon public understanding and thus, is more likely to foster the development of intelligent public opinion.

Changing Concept of Administration

The public school administrator is no longer regarded merely as a superintendent of instruction or even of schools, in the narrow sense. Rather, he is attaining recognition as a leader of educational life in his community. The school administrator of today is more than a "manager." He is a leader in planning for community or commonwealth improvement. He is by no means always the overt director of the activity. He is often a covert agent in initiating and facilitating community action.

⁴J. B. Geissinger, Evolution of the Legal Status of the City Superintendent of Schools in Selected States (Pennsylvania, 1946), pp. 264.

⁵L. L. Dudley, The School and the Community (Cambridge, 1933), pp. 176.

This new concept of administration is nowhere better exemplified than in the emergence, within the last two decades, of the urban-rural community school superintendency. Out of the school district reorganization movement, in which several districts are merged into a larger and more efficient administrative unit, came a demand for an administrator who could unify a newly established school community, who could lead in the community planning of a school program compatible with the local culture, and who could also carry all the technical professional responsibilities commonly borne by school administrators.

Responsibility for Selection of the Superintendent

The evident importance of the school superintendency as a position of community and educational leadership places with the board of education the responsibility for choosing, from among a number of candidates, the person who can provide that leadership. The obligation of local boards of education to select competent educational leaders for the superintendency requires that judgments be made about the candidates by individual board members and that a consensus be reached concerning which candidate should be employed by the local board in a particular situation. The factors which influence board members to select one applicant and reject others are the primary concern of this study. These may be termed "critical" factors.

Statement of the Problem

The problem of the study is to identify the behaviors and personal characteristics of applicants which influence board members to select one applicant for a superintendency and reject others. The selection of

one applicant from among a number of applicants because of particular behaviors or characteristics establishes these behaviors or characteristics as critical factors in the opinion of a particular board member. A summation of the critical factors, reported by board members who elected an applicant to the superintendency for the 1956-57 school year, will be made. From this summation a model or pattern of personal characteristics and behaviors of successful and unsuccessful applicants for Oklahoma public school superintendencies will be developed. This model of characteristics and behaviors will be compared with those identified by researchers and authorities in the field to determine if any new characteristics or behaviors have been identified in this study. A basic assumption of the study is that a board member who participated in the selection process can accurately report why he voted for or against an applicant for the superintendency.

Significance of the Study

The proposed study will supplement and strengthen the existing school administrator job analyses reported in the literature in that it will point up the relative importance of administrator behaviors and characteristics as interpreted by school board members. The study will identify strengths and weaknesses of applicants which board members consider critical in the selection of superintendents.

The findings of this investigation should be valuable for:

1. counseling prospective students of school administration;
2. determining areas which demand emphasis in the professional preparation of school superintendents;
3. aiding boards of education in evaluating their practices in

- employment of superintendents;
4. determining in-service education needs of superintendents; and
 5. aiding applicants to a superintendency in presenting their qualifications in the best manner and prospective that is possible.

Prospective superintendents or superintendents in the field making application for a superintendency may know what authorities have stated to be essential in securing the position. Applicants may have had training considered by authorities to be essential in securing and retaining a superintendency but, without the knowledge of factors actually associated by school board members with the selection of superintendents, applicants may not know how to present their qualifications in a manner conducive to their selection for the position. In other words, information concerning the criteria applied by individual board members who have actually participated in the selection of a superintendent should be utilized by superintendents in preservice preparation; by candidates in making application for a superintendency; by counselors in counseling prospective superintendents; and by boards in evaluating their practices in employment of superintendents.

Definition of Terms Used

Certain terms which will be used frequently throughout the study are defined as follows:

School Administrator or School Superintendent. The person who is directly responsible to the board of education for the professional administration of a school system which has a four year high school.

School Board Member. A member of a legally constituted governing

board charged with operating the schools in a given school corporation.

Qualification. Any endowment or acquirement necessary for a candidate's selection as a superintendent.

Critical Factors. Influential characteristics or behaviors of a candidate for a superintendency as reported by board members voting for or against the candidate.

Personal Characteristics. Any physical or personal attribute of an applicant that distinguishes and serves to identify him.

Behaviors. Overt action of an applicant.

Summary and Prospectus

From a modest beginning in the 1830's, the public school superintendency has developed into a position requiring exceptional competence in the exercise of professional educational leadership.

Created as a result of local forces and needs, the local school superintendency has gradually become incorporated into the legal structure of education in the United States. Over the years, the duties and responsibilities of the office have increased in number, scope, and legal stature to the extent that the superintendent has become the chief executive of the board of education and the educational leader of his community.

The selection of a person to occupy the important position of public school superintendent in each school district is the responsibility of the local board of education. Choosing a superintendent requires that judgments be made by the individual board members who subsequently vote for or against the candidate for the position. The factors influencing board members to vote for one candidate and against others

are the problem of this study. The study will identify the "critical" factors associated with the selection or rejection of public school superintendents as reported by school board members in certain Oklahoma schools.

Information concerning these factors deemed critical by individual board members who have actually participated in the selection of a superintendent may be utilized by superintendents and prospective superintendents in pre-service preparation and in making applications for a superintendency, by counselors in counseling prospective superintendents, and by school boards in evaluating their practices in employment of superintendents.

A review of pertinent literature will be presented in Chapter II. Methods and procedure employed in the research with a description of the research design, selection of the respondents, and treatment of the data will be described in Chapter III. Findings of the study will be presented in Chapter IV. A summary of the study, conclusions, and recommendations will be presented in Chapter V.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The existence, identification, and influence of behaviors and characteristics of applicants for the superintendency as well as the effect which they have in the selection process have been discussed in a number of research reports. From other sources come acceptable and recommended characteristics and behaviors which have been considered necessary for applicants to the superintendency. Reports of representative studies and other authoritative literature concerning desirable characteristics and behaviors of superintendents are reported in this chapter.

Many studies have been reported in which the essential qualifications of school administrators were determined through job analyses. Other studies have been reported wherein committees or groups of qualified "experts" through discussion, have listed competencies which were deemed necessary for successful administrators.

Much information dealing with the desirable and undesirable qualifications of public school administrators, based upon general observation and professional contact with school administrators, may be found in the literature.

Cubberly indicates certain leadership qualities which apply particularly to the superintendent of schools:

He (the superintendent of schools) must learn to lead by reason of his larger knowledge and his contagious enthusiasm, rather than to drive by reason of his superior power. These powers and prerogatives which are guaranteed to him by law he

must know how to use wisely, and he should be able to win new powers and prerogatives from the board largely by reason of his ability to use them well. He must constantly remember that he represents the whole community and not any part or faction of it, and he must deal equal justice to all. As the representative of the whole community he will be wise not to ally himself at all closely with any faction, or division, or party in it.

He must, out of his larger knowledge, see clearly what are the attainable goals of the school system, and how best and how fast to attempt to reach them. From his larger knowledge, too, he must frequently reach up out of the routine of school supervision and executive duties into the higher levels of educational statesmanship. As a statesman, too, he must know how to take advantage of time and opportunity to carry his educational policy into effect.

By conferences, public and private, with leading citizens; by talks to parents at meetings at the schools; by taking the leaders among the teachers into his confidence; by dealing frankly and honestly with the press and the public; by his own written and spoken word, especially in his annual printed reports, and by inciting others to write and speak; and by tact and diplomacy mold such a public opinion that the recommendations which he makes will go by without serious opposition, and be readily accepted by the people of the community. He must remember, though, that Rome was not built in a single day; that it takes a long period of education to accomplish any really fundamental reform; and that it is usually necessary to rush important matters to an immediate consideration.⁶

Edmondson recommends eight qualities to consider when comparing the abilities of prospective school administrators:

1. Culture
2. Resourcefulness and vision
3. Administrative ability
4. Interest in people
5. Scholarship
6. Ability to stimulate others
7. Professional knowledge

⁶E. F. Cubberly, *Public School Administration* (Revised and enlarged edition, Boston, 1929), pp. 138-39.

8. Ideals and professional spirit⁷

He further states: Certain of these eight requirements may be called personal qualities or native characteristics, but to a degree they may be cultivated and developed through training and experience. Scholarship and professional knowledge, of course, may be improved through the right kind of training.⁸

In his book entitled "School Administration", Moehlman indicates as general requirements for the successful administrator:

....the ability to view a problem as a whole in its social as well as its organizational aspects, the ability to give individuals a desire to work cooperatively in the achievement of a purpose, the ability to understand people and their motive, and the ability to have a broad tolerance for differences in ideas and points of view. An administrator must have a sense of humor which provides balance and perspective; he should be able to project ideas and practices to professionals and laymen alike, and he should have a desire for this specialized work.

Administration demands sound health, emotional stability, objectivity, a pleasing personality, a broad general professional education, a sound social and educational philosophy, physical and moral courage, and maturity developed through experience.⁹

In reporting the results of a study concerned with the administrative operational patterns of superintendents in six communities near New York City, Skogsberg describes their leadership qualities as follows:

The superintendent is in a key position to influence the development of the school. His professional competence and his way of approaching problems set the tone of how people work together. The superintendents of these adaptable schools show more likenesses than differences as administrators and as people. It is significant that in these schools so many different men show such striking similarities. These superintendents think of the whole staff, including themselves and business and custodial workers, as a team, a functioning unit working on a common problem. They are not jealous of power. They delegate responsibility and authority freely to those who can or will try to do the job at hand.

⁷J. B. Edmondson, J. Roemer, and F. L. Bacon, The Administration of the Modern Secondary School (New York, 1949), pp. 81-82.

⁸Ibid., p. 83.

⁹Arthur B. Moehlman, School Administration (Second Edition, Boston, 1951), p. 107.

Their attitude induces the feelings among their co-workers that the personal prestige of the team members come best from the accomplishment of the whole group. They are willing to learn from co-workers. They rely on the give-and-take of democratic discussion because they believe that the best solution to problems comes from this method. This personal demonstration of their belief in the effectiveness of the democratic process has a far-reaching influence among the staff and the community. The peculiar abilities of co-workers are freely recognized and every opportunity possible is utilized for each to have his place in the sun. Personally they are vigorous, highly trained, and self-critical men.¹⁰

He points out that the foregoing statement refers to qualities which every board of education should find in its chief executive. A marked absence of any of these qualities and attitudes may point to ultimate failure.

Certain qualifications have been reported in studies by committees or groups of qualified "experts" who, through discussion, have attempted to draw up lists of characteristics or traits which they deemed necessary for successful public school administrators.

The Committee on Certification of Superintendents of Schools of the American Association of School Administrators recommends that the minimum legislative requirements for persons entering the school superintendency be the following:

1. Twenty-five years of age
2. United States Citizenship
3. Evidence of sound physical and mental health based upon the written statement of an approved physician
4. Four years of both professional and cultural study in a standard and accredited college, plus a minimum of one year graduate study terminating in the master's degree
5. Three years of successful experience in the class room, administrative or supervising position in public school system.¹¹

¹⁰Alfred H. Skogsberg, Administrative Operational Patterns (New York, 1950), p. 25.

¹¹Committee on Certification of Superintendents of Schools, The Superintendent of Schools and His Work (Washington, D. C., 1940), p. 47.

In 1940 a committee on certification of the superintendent of the American Association of School Administrators recommended that the role of the school administrator be expanded. The opportunity for a superintendent of educational enterprises, rather than a superintendent of instruction or of schools, grows constantly larger as our societal organization continues to grow more complex. "It constitutes a challenge to all the resourcefulness, intelligence, patience, tolerance, and tact an individual has."¹²

The Committee on Certification of Superintendents of Schools questioned 503 lay people and school employees regarding traits desired in their "next superintendent." Replies from these lay people disclose twelve traits referred to in the following frequency¹³:

1. Character	413
2. Business ability, finance, etc.	391
3. Administrative or executive ability	383
4. Personality	378
5. Educational leadership	361
6. Sociability	328
7. Community leadership	291
8. Speaker	201
9. Culture	158
10. Writer	96
11. Married and children	84
12. Religion	47

¹²Committee on Certification of Superintendents of Schools, Standards for Superintendents of Schools (Washington, D. C., 1940), p. 56.

¹³Committee on Certification of Superintendent of Schools, p. 47.

The educational leader of the future must be competent in the respects indicated below, according to the 1952 Yearbook of the American Association of School Administrators:

First, the educational leader of the future should be competent in community leadership as it concerns the development of basic educational policy and program....

Second, the educational executive of the future should be highly competent as a leader in developing the content, experience, and methods which compose the needed instructional program of the schools and other educational agencies of the community....

Third, the educational executive of the future should be highly competent in selecting, organizing, and leading the school staff of the community....

Fourth, the educational executive must be competent in the philosophy and procedures of democratic leadership....

Fifth, the educational leader of the future should be highly competent in making the case for the necessary facilities of education....¹⁴

In addition to the above mentioned broad areas of competence deemed necessary for the successful future school administrator, certain other qualities described as being a result of inherited characteristics and of personal and professional development are presented in the Yearbook. They are as follows:

...intellectual capacity substantially above average, physical health and stamina or special skill in conserving one's store of energy, a liking for people at all age levels, ability to get along with individuals and groups, skill in communicating ideas simply and clearly in speech and writing, enthusiasm for educational work, and high personal integrity.¹⁵

The Fourth Report of the National Conference of Professors of Educational Administration presents a list of "Musts" as qualifications for the

¹⁴American Association of School Administrators, The American School Superintendency, Thirtieth Yearbook (Washington, D. C., 1952), pp. 389-91.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 391.

administrative leader:

He must have a broad general education which touches upon the various facets of human experience....

he must be widely informed in current events, in current social opinions, and in historical perspective....

he must know the education implications of the major philosophies, and he must know the trends of education at work....

he must be well grounded in educational psychology, in biology and anthropology, in the tools of research, and in major outcome of educational research....

the school leader must have a broad preparation which includes the principles and scientific bases upon which these professional educational techniques have been developed....

he needs to understand the interlocking pattern of local and state control, the law which governs education, the most effective patterns of school board operation, and in financial pattern by which taxation is--in the best instances--oriented to the support of public services....

the school leader needs a high degree of skill and know-how in the ministerial tasks related to his office....¹⁶

The report continues into the realm of "personal qualifications" by stating that the list of "Musts" presented above will not operate effectively if they represent a series of separate obligations pressing upon the individual. "They must be integrated in an individual possessing physical and mental health and the ability to maintain it."¹⁷ The personal qualifications are stated thus:

An administrator is a person with vision....An administrator is increasingly competent in employing democratic and democratic-tending techniques by group action....

¹⁶National Conference of Professors of Educational Administration, Administrative Leadership (Ithaca, 1950.), pp. 25-26.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 27.

An administrator assumes the responsibility for providing organizational machinery to facilitate the operation of democratic leadership....

An administrator fosters a psychological atmosphere in which democratic leadership can flourish. For good or ill, an administrator affects most critically the psychological-emotional "tone" of a school system....

An administrator, in the execution of his own legal responsibilities, exemplifies belief in democratic leadership relations....

An administrator sets the example of evaluating results in terms of total achievement toward democratic ideals, rather than solely in terms of some immediate objective....

An administrator consistently demonstrates his conviction that democracy leads to efficiency....

An administrator seeks to achieve--to exercise--leadership through the contributions he makes to the success of the group's efforts....

An administrator is a talent scout and a coach....

An administrator is responsible but not ever-burdened by his responsibility....¹⁸

Weaver presents a "check list" showing how to identify a superintendent of education in terms of his activities:

1. He works with his principals, supervisors, and teachers in developing a curriculum that uses community resources and prepares students to take their places in the industrial activities of the community.
2. He meets with representative groups in the community or with their officers in order to study the problems of young people and to determine ways in which these organizations can aid in an enlarged out-of-school educational program.
3. He meets with committees of principals, supervisors, and teachers to study curriculum offerings and to make adjustments that appear to be needed in the light of community cultural and vocational standards and requirements.
4. He keeps in close contact with the school vocational

¹⁸Ibid., pp. 29-30.

service counselor's activities which are designed (a) to anticipate the needs of the local home owners, housewives, and business and industrial concerns and (b) to determine the abilities and aptitudes of boys and girls and to help obtain the type of part-time or full time work in which they can be of greatest service to the community and in which they are most likely to succeed.

5. He serves on the public relations committees of such organizations as the Boy Scouts of America or the Camp fire Girls.
6. He maintains contact with the civic recreational committee and with young people's social committees of local churches.
7. He cooperates with and helps the public librarian and the public-library board in the work of guiding the reading interests of boys and girls.
8. He maintains close contact with the county agricultural agent and the vocational agriculture teacher in the school system in their work of guiding the activities of pupils who are transferred from township schools to the city schools under his supervision.
9. He concerns himself with the problems of school children who come before the juvenile court or the welfare boards and agencies.
10. He identifies himself with the parent-teacher association and gives assistance to parents who are trying to solve problems which relate to the activities of their children.¹⁹

Between 1925 and 1930 many studies of the supervisory function of the school administrator were made in an effort to discover and summarize the activities of the school administrator. Illustrative of these is a study conducted by Dyer,²⁰ who made a comprehensive study of the supervisory activities of elementary principals in cities of more than 50,000

¹⁹R. B. Weaver, "Check-List Showing How to Identify a Superintendent of Education," School Executive, June, 1943, p. 62.

²⁰W. F. Dyer, Activities of the Elementary School Principal for Improvement of Instruction (New York, 1927), pp. 102.

population. He reports a list of some 208 supervisory activities performed by them. Other studies to which attention may be called are those of Hughes and Melby,²¹ and Billett,²² who report the activities of high school principals; Ayer²³ and Melby,²⁴ who study the supervisory activities of the superintendent; Barr,²⁵ who reports the activities of special supervisors in Detroit, Michigan; and Fitch,²⁶ who reports the activities of the elementary school training supervisors in the state normal school and teacher colleges. Most of this work has emphasized a listing of duties with insufficient regard to their relative importance.

Two recent studies concern themselves with the attitude of school board members toward necessary attributes of the successful school administrator. The first of these was conducted by Yarbrough as a field study at the Colorado State College of Education. Yarbrough asked school board members of Colorado's First Class School Districts; "What would

²¹J. M. Hughes, E. C. Melby: Supervision of Instruction in High School, (Northwestern University Contributions to Education, No. 4 [Chicago, 1930]), 191 pp.

²²W. H. Billett, F. E. Englehardt, and W. H. Zeigel, Administration and Supervision, U. S. Office of Education, Bulletin No. 17 (Washington, 1933), 207 pp.

²³F. C. Ayer, "The Duties of Public School Administrators," American School Board Journal, Feb., Mar., Apr., May, Je., Aug., Oct., Dec., 1930 and Feb., Mar., and May 1931.

²⁴E. O. Melby, "A Critical Study of the Existing Organization and Administration of Supervision," Public Schools, 1929, 158 pp.

²⁵A. S. Barr, An Analysis of the Duties and Functions of Instructional Supervisors, University of Wisconsin, Bureau of Educational Research, Bulletin No. 7 (Madison, Wisconsin, 1926), 176 pp.

²⁶N. H. Fitch, An Analysis of the Supervisory Activities and Techniques of the Elementary School Training Supervisor in State Normal Schools and Teachers Colleges, Contributions to Education, No. 476 (New York, 1931), 130 pp.

count with you as a board member in selecting a new school administrator?" According to the opinions given him by school board members, a man desiring to be superintendent in these districts should have these qualifications:

1. He must enroll in college or university placement service.
2. He must be between the ages of thirty-six and forty-five.
3. He must have had five years of administrative experience.
4. He must have a minimum of a Master's Degree in Educational Administration; desirable is a Doctor's Degree in Education.
5. He must be able to solve the problems of teacher employment and retention and do considerable work with a building program.²⁷

Yarbrough made a list of fifty items considered important in the selection of superintendents. These items were drawn from the literature and divided into five groups: (1) Personal Attributes; (2) Professional Competence and Success; (3) Educational Philosophy and Relationship; (4) Interest and Acceptance in the Community; and (5) Special Considerations. Each board member contacted was asked to evaluate each item as to whether it was good or bad so far as selection of a superintendent was concerned. For each item that was marked as a "good" or a "bad" one, the board member was asked to qualify his answer by determining whether the item was "Very Important", "Important", or "Unimportant." The three classifications determined the weight given to "good" or "bad" answer. Twenty items chosen from the list of fifty reported in order of frequency of choice are:

²⁷J. E. Yarbrough, "An Inquiry into the Opinions of School Board Concerning the Selection of Superintendents in the State of Colorado" (Unpublished Filed Study, Colorado State College, 1951), 147 pp.

1. Here is a man with whom all like to work.
2. He is skilled at delegating responsibility.
3. He is morally upright.
4. We can rely on his wisdom in the choice of school employees.
5. He encourages his faculty to participate cooperatively in the development of a good educational program.
6. He makes decisions promptly and wisely.
7. He likes children and appreciates their viewpoints.
8. He has been successful for several years as an administrator.
9. He uses good English.
10. He is anxious to conserve the taxpayer's money, yet maintain a good educational program.
11. He believes that it is the task of the school to help meet the needs of all who enroll.
12. He would get things done.
13. He has had several years of successful teaching experience.
14. His educational preparation meets our requirements.
15. He has special skill in school finance.
16. He acts interested in sincerely wanting this position.
17. We like the sincere way in which he talks.
18. He makes a favorable public appearance.
19. He desires professional growth, achievement, and recognition for his staff and for himself.
20. He is a courteous listener and responds well to our questions.²⁸

A second study in this area was conducted by Baker²⁹ who attempted

²⁸Ibid., pp. 47-48.

²⁹J. E. Baker, "The Selection of Superintendents of Schools by Boards of Education" (Unpublished Ph. D. Thesis, University of Chicago, 1951), p. 14.

to answer the questions: "If you apply for a superintendency, what will you be asked, and what does the school board look for in candidates for the superintendency?"

In thirteen midwestern states, Baker solicited information from the individual members of each of 654 school boards. These school boards had selected a superintendent during the previous three years. Each of the 654 school boards employed a staff of ten or more teachers.

The following qualifications of the applicants are those believed by board members to be important factors for consideration in selecting a new superintendent.

	<u>No. of Boards</u>	<u>Pct.</u>
1. Range of professional experience	540	82.6
2. Salary terms acceptable	539	82.5
3. Ability to discipline students and teachers	512	78.4
4. Aggressive leadership in improving program	453	69.2
5. Advanced degrees in educational administration	427	65.4
6. Ability to supervise instruction	422	64.5
7. Skill in financial matters	412	63.0
8. Age of candidate	392	60.0
9. Size of community where candidate was working	390	59.6
10. Ability of candidate to work well with staff	382	58.4
11. Experience with school building program	328	50.2
12. Relationship with parents group and the public	324	49.6

13.	Health and energy of candidate	304	46.5
14.	Supervision of maintenance and custodial service	299	45.7
15.	Personal habits of candidates	270	41.3
16.	Church membership	245	37.5
17.	Professional leadership in areas outside local system	245	37.5
18.	Personal appearance	240	36.7
19.	Scholastic record	201	30.7
20.	Certificates held in specific teaching subjects	198	30.3
21.	Teaching skill	190	29.1
22.	Success in handling athletic program	187	28.6
23.	Writing and speaking ability	167	25.5
24.	Membership in civic and fraternal organization	151	23.1
25.	Business experience outside of school experience	135	20.7
26.	Issuance of a multiple term contract	107	16.4
27.	Published articles and materials	43	6.6
28.	Political beliefs and learnings	20	3.0 ³⁰

Summary

The three general areas of study reviewed in the foregoing paragraphs are directed toward an analysis of school administrator activities. The first and largest of the three areas includes research studies directed toward a determination and listing of the actual duties of the

³⁰Ibid., pp. 64-65.

administrators. A second area contains studies which describe the status of the school administrators. The last area includes studies which indicate the personal professional characteristics, traits, and qualifications philosophically derived and deemed necessary by authorities for the successful school administrator.

A persistent need for objective evidence concerning the qualifications, behaviors, and other characteristics of school administrators in order that the process employed in the selection of those educational leaders may be improved is apparent from the studies reported above. The present study is intended to supplement the work which has already been done in this field.

CHAPTER III

METHOD AND PROCEDURE

What are the "critical" factors which board members associate with the selection of an Oklahoma public school superintendent? The definition of the population from which data will be collected, the development of the instrument to collect data from the population, and the treatment of the data are presented in this chapter.

The Research Design

A model of personal characteristics and behaviors of a successful applicant for a superintendency was desired to meet the needs of the study. A research design that was practical in application, adequate in solving the problem, and defensible in practice was desired.

The study reported by Yarbrough³¹ in which school board members were asked to list those considerations which they felt were most important in the selection of a new superintendent of schools allowed for free response, but the considerations were not necessarily founded on actual situations. The present study was founded on actual situations in which board members had selected a superintendent.

In the study reported by Baker³² an instrument was used in which board members indicated by checking a prepared list of requirements

³¹Yarbrough, Loc. cit.

³²Baker, Loc. cit.

what they looked for in applicants for the superintendency. The instrument used had the aided recall feature which limited the respondent to those items listed in the questionnaire. The questionnaire used in the present study allows for free response and in no way prompts a particular response by suggestion.

The present study should supplement work of Yarbrough, Baker, and others in this field.

Selection of the Population

The research design demanded that the potential respondents be school board members who had recently participated in the selection of a superintendent so that information requested might be subject to quick and minute recall. Therefore, board members in Oklahoma public school districts who had selected from among applicants a superintendent for the school year 1956-57 were chosen as potential respondents.

Education directories are issued each year by the Oklahoma State Department of Education. These directories contain the name of the superintendent of schools in each school district of the state for the current year of the directory. Directories for the school year 1955-56 and the school year 1956-57 were obtained and compared. Schools found to have had a change in superintendents were considered as coming under the conditions of the study. There were 130 changes of superintendents in Oklahoma public schools between the school year 1955-56 and the school year 1956-57. The number of superintendencies in each county and the number of changes in superintendents in each county in Oklahoma are presented in Table I.

TABLE I

COUNTIES IN OKLAHOMA IN WHICH CHANGES IN SUPERINTENDENCIES
OCCURRED IN 1956-57

Counties:	No. of School Superintendencies:	No. of Changes:
Adair	5	0
Alfalfa	10	3
Atoka	5	0
Beaver	6	2
Beckham	10	2
Blaine	9	2
Bryan	15	3
Caddo	17	4
Canadian	7	1
Carter	14	1
Cherokee	2	0
Choctaw	6	3
Cimarron	4	1
Cleveland	4	0
Coal	5	0
Comanche	9	2
Cotton	5	2
Craig	7	1
Creek	14	2
Custer	8	1
Delaware	6	0
Dewey	7	3
Ellis	4	1
Garfield	13	2
Garvin	9	1
Grady	15	2
Grant	9	2
Greer	9	3
Harmon	6	3
Harper	5	2
Haskell	4	2
Hughes	11	2
Jackson	10	1
Jefferson	9	1
Johnston	11	1
Kay	6	0
Kingfisher	9	2
Kiowa	10	2
Latimer	4	1
Leflore	15	3
Lincoln	11	1
Logan	7	1
Love	7	3
Major	5	2

TABLE I (continued)

Counties	No. of School Superintendencies:	No. of Changes:
Marshall	2	1
Mayes	6	1
McClain	8	4
McCurtain	10	2
McIntosh	8	2
Murray	5	1
Muskogee	13	2
Noble	7	3
Nowata	6	2
Okfuskee	9	3
Oklahoma	12	1
Okmulgee	13	1
Osage	16	3
Ottawa	7	0
Pawnee	7	1
Payne	9	2
Pittsburgh	13	5
Pontotoc	11	0
Pottawatomie	15	2
Pushmataha	7	0
Roger Mills	5	2
Rogers	8	1
Seminole	15	3
Sequoyah	7	2
Stephens	9	3
Texas	9	2
Tillman	10	2
Tulsa	14	1
Wagoner	6	1
Washington	6	0
Washita	13	4
Woods	7	2
Woodward	8	0
Total	<u>666</u>	<u>130</u>

A study of the data in Table I shows that the 77 counties in Oklahoma had from five changes in superintendents as shown by Pittsburgh county to none as shown by 12 counties. Of the 77 counties listed, 66 had one or more changes in superintendents. Four counties -- Choctaw, Harper, Marshall,

and McClain -- had a 50 per cent turnover in superintendents.

One hundred thirty of the 666 superintendencies in Oklahoma evidenced changes in superintendents for the 1956-57 school year. These changes represent a turnover in approximately 20 per cent or one-fifth of all the superintendencies in Oklahoma. The school board members of the 130 school districts comprising this 20 per cent of the superintendencies in Oklahoma are the population for this study. The total potential population of respondents numbered 652 according to the list given by county superintendents. Each potential respondent was to be mailed a questionnaire at his home address.

Returns from this total population could not be anticipated. Reference to Parten,³⁵ Remmers,³⁶ and other authorities on mailed questionnaires indicate that returns of from ten to 50 per cent of the potential respondents may be expected. Failure to receive returns from all the potential respondents indicates a possible bias of the data to be used in the study. Because of this possible bias, the returns actually received would not necessarily be representative of the total population contacted. Therefore, several questions were included in the instrument concerning personal and situational information about the respondents which would permit further definition of the population from which the data of the study would be received.

Development of the Questionnaire

An open-end questionnaire (Appendix A) was used so that each factor

³³Mildred Parten, Surveys, Polls, and Samples (New York, 1950), 371 pp.

³⁴H. H. Remmers, Introduction to Opinion and Attitude Measurement (New York, 1954), 321 pp.

stated would be an original response of the reporting board member. The instrument was designed to obtain from the board member statements of factors that he deemed critical in his selection of a superintendent from among a number of candidates for a given position. "Critical", as defined by Webster's Unabridged Dictionary, pertains to a turning point. "Critical" factors, as used in the study, relate to characteristics or behaviors of applicants which were influential in causing a board member to vote for or against his employment in a given position. The questionnaire was designed to obtain from the board members a statement of critical factors that changed the board member's attitude and subsequent decision to take action by voting for or against an applicant for the superintendency. Critical factors, as defined, will eliminate most of the vast body of insignificant factors in any given situation and bring out those factors that are crucial in the selection of a superintendent. This should be true since the board member is asked to report only the characteristic or behavior of an applicant that influenced the election of the applicant. Factors abstracted from the responses will be factors that contributed to success or failure in securing a superintendency. A summation of the "critical" factors reported by board members will be made to develop a model of personal characteristics and behavior of successful and unsuccessful applicants.

In the questionnaire used for the study, the respondent was asked: "As a member of a board of education that has recently elected a superintendent, please tell in your own words a behavior or characteristic on the part of the successful applicant that influenced you to vote for him."

Two examples were given for the respondent to read so that he might

have better understanding concerning what he was to do. An example of behavior and an example of a characteristic was given. The examples were in fields foreign to the work of superintendents so that again there could be no prompting of the respondents. The questionnaire suggested that a merchant might relate an act on the part of a successful cashier applicant as follows: "He gave a demonstration of his knowledge and efficiency in using the cash register." Also, the questionnaire suggested that a football coach might relate a characteristic of a successful candidate for a scholarship as follows: "He was a big 'boy' weighing over two hundred pounds with the weight being evenly distributed over his body."

The second part of the questionnaire stated: "As a member of a board of education that has recently elected a superintendent, please tell in your own words a specific act or characteristic on the part of an unsuccessful applicant that influenced you in voting against him." On both questions the respondent was encouraged to use all the space necessary or desired in making his comments.

In order to define the population providing the data for the study, as was indicated in the section describing the population, each potential respondent was asked to give his age, sex, occupation, marital status, number of children in school, years experience as a member of the board of education, and highest level of formal education attained. The potential respondent was also asked to give the total school enrollment and the number of teachers in the school system for which he was a board member.

A letter designed to answer pertinent questions concerning the study and its purpose was prepared to accompany the questionnaire (Appendix A). The letter stated that no individual would be identified

or quoted in the completed study. Careful consideration of the questionnaire was requested so that its value might be enhanced.

In order to reduce to a minimum biases which might invalidate responses, preliminary critiques of the questionnaire were made by members of a county school master's organization, selected individual board members, and a university class in school administration. The suggestions of these groups were followed in the development of a questionnaire form to be used in the study.

Further proof of the adaptability of the questionnaire to the problem was desired. So, the questionnaire, the accompanying letter, and a stamped return envelope were mailed to twenty board members from the list of potential respondents. Eight board members completed and returned the questionnaire from this preliminary mailing. These responses were complete and coherent. So, additional questionnaires with accompanying stamped and return addressed envelopes were prepared and mailed to all of the potential respondents.

Certain weaknesses of the open-end questionnaire are recognized and will be mentioned later in this chapter.

Treatment of the Data

For the purposes of the study a pattern of the characteristics and behaviors of successful applicants for a superintendency, as indicated by board members, was desired. Mention has been made that such a pattern could be used by superintendents in the field in self-improvement; by counselors in counseling prospective superintendents; by boards of education in evaluating their selection procedures; and by prospective superintendents in preparing for a superintendency.

Answers to the questions concerning personal and situational characteristics of the board members were treated as follows: The responses were taken from the questionnaires and tabulated on sheets of graph paper especially prepared for ease in handling the data. The board member's age was given. The number of male and the number of female respondents was determined. The Dictionary of Occupational Titles was used to determine the occupational areas of the respondents. Marital status of the respondents was presented. The number of children in school for each board member was given. The number of years of experience on the board of education for respondents was given. The grade level of formal education attained by the board members was determined. The school enrollment and the number of teachers in each board member's school was given.

The characteristics and behaviors influencing a board member to vote for an applicant, as indicated by the board member, are presented under common themes. In abstracting this information from the questionnaires, the case study method of handling the responses was used. Statements were taken from the questionnaires in simple sentence form with ambiguous or irrelevant statements being discarded. Statements taken from the questionnaires were placed on cards two inches in width and four inches in length for sorting and studying. The statements were keyed to the questionnaires. Each questionnaire was numbered. The statements taken from the questionnaires carried the same number as the questionnaire from which it was taken.

The commonly related areas were determined by identification of a statement within a broad area found to be the most applicable in reporting the data. Most statements contained a characteristic or

behavior which could be readily identified with a specific area. For instance, 27 statements were made that referred to age. Obviously, an area entitled "Age" was necessary within which to group and report these statements. One hundred thirteen statements were made that referred to some aspect of administration. An area of "Administrative aspects" was necessary within which to group and report these statements. Similarly, all the statements were grouped and identified under some category. The data are reported under commonly related areas according to the frequency of statements within each area. The complete data were also summarized and reported as a pattern. The complete statements of board members relative to a successful and an unsuccessful applicant for a superintendency are given in Appendix B.

Limitations of the Study

Certain limitations of the research design should be recognized. Among these are the evident limitations of the open-end questionnaire. The open-end questionnaire is difficult to design so that it will elicit the type of information desired. The open-end questionnaire is even more difficult to interpret and report objectively and coherently by the researcher.

Another limitation of the research design is the time lapse between the date of election of a superintendent and the date responses were recorded on the questionnaires. Superintendents are ordinarily elected prior to July first of each school year and assume office on July first. The questionnaires were mailed after the superintendent-elect had served the school district for five or six months. Board members may have allowed personal contact with their superintendents during this time

to influence their responses.

Summary

One hundred thirty of the 666 schools in Oklahoma had board members who were potential respondents for the study. These 130 schools represent 66 of Oklahoma's 77 counties. Six hundred fifty-two board members were potential respondents for the study.

An open-end questionnaire was designed for the study to obtain from each board member an original response of factors that could be termed "critical" in the selection of a superintendent. Board members who had selected superintendents for the 1956-57 school year were asked to describe in their own words specific acts or characteristics on the part of a successful applicant that influenced them in voting for him. A similar response was requested for a vote against an unsuccessful applicant. Since board members who had selected a superintendent during the 1956-57 school year were to be the potential respondents for the study, they were expected to describe a recent, typical case rather than a particularly old, unusual, or atypical one.

Relevant statements of board members were taken from the questionnaires and sorted into areas found to be the most suitable for studying the data. Areas were suggested by factors that had been grouped into common themes. A word or phrase which described the general theme of the statements in each grouping was chosen as an area title. Frequency of statements in each of the areas, as identified in the study, will be reported. The complete data will also be summarized and reported as a pattern within the identified areas.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

As indicated in Chapter III, the findings of the study are presented under two divisions. Selected personal and situational information relevant to the reporting board members which further defines the population is presented in the first division. Findings relative to the "critical" factors associated with the selection of a superintendent in certain Oklahoma public schools, as reported by board members, are presented in the second division.

County superintendents of the 77 counties in Oklahoma were asked to provide the names and addresses of board members in the school districts of their county wherein there had been a change of superintendents in the school year 1956-57. The questionnaire with accompanying letter and return addressed envelope was mailed to each potential respondent after names and addresses of potential respondents were received from county superintendents.

From the first mailing, 116 questionnaires were returned. Of these, 111 were complete, three were left blank because the potential respondent was no longer serving on the board, and two were returned blank because the potential respondents were reported deceased. A follow-up was necessary because the number of questionnaires returned represented only 17 per cent of those board members requested to complete the questionnaire.

Accompanying the second set of questionnaires was a special letter

addressed to the president of the board of education of each school coming under the conditions of the study. He was requested to make a special effort to get members of his board to fill in and return the questionnaires. From this second mailing 69 completed questionnaires were returned. This brought the total of returned and completed questionnaires to 180.

Possible bias in later returns would not permit continued mailings until every board member contacted had completed and returned a questionnaire. However, a third mailing was considered necessary. From this third mailing, 37 questionnaires were completed and returned. From all mailings of the questionnaires, the 217 returned questionnaires are the source of the data which were used in the study. This represents approximately 33 per cent of the selected sample.

TABLE II

RETURNS FROM FIRST, SECOND, AND THIRD MAILINGS OF QUESTIONNAIRES
TO 652 OKLAHOMA SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS

	Mailings:			
	1st	2nd	3rd	Total
Completed and returned	111	69	37	217
Returned blank because of change in board member	3	0	0	3
Returned blank because of death of board member	2	0	0	2
Not returned	536	467	430	430

The Board Member and His School

Failure to receive returns from all of the potential respondents

indicates a possible bias of the data to be used in the study. Because of this possible bias, the returns actually received will not necessarily be representative of the population contacted. Therefore, there were included in the instrument several questions concerning personal and situational information about the respondent which would permit further definition of the population from which the data for the study were received. This personal and situational information is presented in order that the data of the study may be more readily interpreted in relation to the characteristics of the respondents.

The Board Member

What type of board member was a respondent to the questionnaire and a recipient of a superintendency application in 1956-57? Information pertaining to the following items was requested: Age, sex, occupation, marital status, number of children in school, years experience on board of education, and highest level of formal education attained by the reporting board member.

Sex. Two hundred thirteen men and four women responded to the questionnaire.

Age. Age of board members is presented in Table III. Two hundred eight board members of the 217 returning questionnaires reported their age. Nine did not. The average age of the reporting board members was 46.4 with the median age falling in the 40 to 49 age range. Evidence is readily apparent from the distribution that the board members are mature citizens who might be expected to apply the experience of years to their responses.

TABLE III
AGE OF REPORTING BOARD MEMBERS

Age:	Number:
20-29	3
30-39	44
40-49	97
50-59	49
60-69	12
70 or over	3
Did not give age	9
Total	<u>217</u>

Occupations. The occupations of the reporting board members by areas as listed in the Dictionary of Occupational Titles are reported in Table IV. The largest group, 131 in all, represented the agriculture, fishery, forestry and kindred occupational area. A majority of the reporting board members were apparently engaged in agriculture and kindred occupations.

TABLE IV
OCCUPATIONS OF REPORTING BOARD MEMBERS

Occupation:	Number:
Agriculture, fishery, forestry and kindred	131
Clerical and sales	22
Professional and managerial	21
Skilled	16
Service	14
Unskilled	7
Semiskilled	3
Retired	3
Total	<u>217</u>

Marital Status. Two hundred fifteen of the reporting board members were married. Two were widows.

Children in School. The number of children of board members attending school is set forth in Table V. Approximately 80 per cent of the respondents had children attending school. The number varies from one to seven, with 186 reporting two or less. Only 131 reported more than two.

TABLE V
NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN SCHOOL OF THE REPORTING BOARD MEMBERS

Number of Children:	Board Members:
0	45
1	66
2	75
3	14
4	13
5	1
6	2
7	1
Total	<u>217</u>

Experience as a Board Member. A study of Table VI reveals years experience as member of the board of education as reported by board members. The average number of years experience of reporting board members was 5.3 years. Since 144 or approximately two-thirds of the reporting board members had had four or more years experience, this can be considered an asset to the study since the material reported represents predominantly the judgments of experienced board members.

TABLE VI

NUMBER OF YEARS EXPERIENCE ON BOARD AS REPORTED BY BOARD MEMBERS

Years Experience on Board:	Number of Board Members Reporting:
0-3	73
4-6	54
7-9	45
10-12	23
13 and over	22
Total	<u>217</u>

Level of General Education. The data in Table VII reveals the highest level of formal education attained by the reporting board members. The average and median of the highest level of education attained by the reporting board members was the 12th grade. This is an indication that the respondents had a level of formal education that was an aid in understanding and reporting coherently the information desired.

TABLE VII
HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION ATTAINED BY REPORTING BOARD MEMBERS

Educational Attainment:	Number Reporting:
1-8	3
Elementary graduate	27
9-12	33
High School graduate	67
College, 1-4	44
College degree	36
Did not report	7
Total	<u>217</u>

The Board Member's School

How large were the schools represented by the reporting board members? To answer this question the respondent was asked to give the number of teachers and school enrollment of the school he represented.

The school enrollment of the schools represented by the reporting board members is presented in Table VIII. More schools in the 100-199 enrollment group were represented than in any other group. The median

school represented was in the 200-299 enrollment group. The mean of the enrollment in the schools represented by the reporting board members was 586. The data in Table VIII indicated that respondents were predominantly from smaller schools.

TABLE VIII
SCHOOL ENROLLMENT OF SCHOOLS REPRESENTED BY THE REPORTING BOARD MEMBERS

Enrollment:	Number of Schools:
99 and under	23
100-199	65
200-299	35
300-399	25
400-499	20
500-599	10
600-699	3
700-799	4
800-899	5
900-999	3
1000-4999	18
5000 and over	6
Total	<u>217</u>

The number of teachers employed by the schools represented by the reporting board members is presented in Table IX. The largest number of schools represented were in the 7-10 teacher group. The median school was in the 11-15 teacher group. The mean of the number of teachers

of the schools represented by the reporting board members was 23.7. The data in Table IX indicate that respondents were predominantly representative of the smaller schools.

TABLE IX
NUMBER OF TEACHERS EMPLOYED BY THE SCHOOLS REPRESENTED BY
THE REPORTING BOARD MEMBERS

Number of Teachers:	Number Reporting:
1-6	13
7-10	74
11-15	48
16-20	28
21-25	7
26-30	5
31-35	10
36-40	4
41-45	7
46-50	4
51 and over	15
Not reporting	2
Total	<u>217</u>

The size of the schools reported in the study and presented in Tables VIII and IX may indicate the reason for mention of certain factors in the study that are unique in schools of this size. For example, one board member reported he voted against a candidate because he could not teach a particular subject. Superintendents do not teach subjects in larger

schools because all of their time is spent in administration.

Factors Associated with the Selection of a Superintendent

Factors associated with the selection of a superintendent are identified and classified within 25 areas. Each of the 25 areas consists of a word or group of words that comprise a statement within which factors mentioned by the respondents are contained. Statements of respondents are included in Appendix B together with the number of respondents who made each statement.

The areas within which factors associated with a board member's voting for an applicant are identified and presented in Table X. Twenty-five areas are identified. The number of statements in each area was given. Six hundred ninety-six statements were made by board members as factors influencing them to vote for an applicant.

The 25 areas are listed in order of the frequency of mention of statements in the area. The largest number of statements occurs in the area of administrative aspects. Eighty-eight of the 217 respondents made statements in this area. Another viewpoint reveals that 88 of the 696 statements were given in this area. Each factor mentioned has some significance but when a factor area has been indicated as "critical" in the selection of a superintendent by 88 of 217 respondents, those who wish to benefit from the study should read every statement made by board members in this area. Appendix B contains the individual statements made in this area.

TABLE X

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE SELECTION OF A SUPERINTENDENT AS INDICATED BY BOARD MEMBERS VOTING FOR AN APPLICANT

Area:	Statements in Area:
Administrative aspects	88
Experience	70
Education and general qualification	69
Character, habits, and morals	68
Civic, community, school, and patron attitudes	65
Personality	53
Appearance	39
Presentation of application	38
Religion	36
Discipline	23
Public relations	21
Marital status or factors involving family	21
Recommendations and references	19
Job attitudes	17
Age	13
Leadership, school and community	11
Teacher aspects	10
Curriculum	7
Speech	7
Board attitudes	7
Pressure and politics	4
Building or school plant aspects	4
Personal friend	3
Native of community	2
Salary	1
Total	<u>696</u>

Experience factors were mentioned by 70 board members. This would indicate the importance of a proper background of experience for a person preparing for a superintendency.

Sixty-nine respondents were influenced by the education and general qualifications of the applicant.

Character, habits, and moral factors were mentioned by 68 board members.

Civic, community, school, and patron attitudes were factors mentioned by 65 board members.

Personality, appearance, presentation of application, religion, discipline, public relations, marital status or factors involving family, recommendations and references, job attitudes, age, leadership in school and community, teacher aspects, curriculum, speech, board attitudes, pressure and politics, building or school plant aspects, personal friend, native of community, and salary are the remaining areas within which factors were mentioned in order of frequency of mention. Factors in the 25 areas were mentioned from a range of 88 statements for administrative aspects to one statement for salary.

Summation of the statements made in the area of administrative aspects and each of the other areas is given under the division entitled "Pattern for a Successful Applicant to a Superintendency" on page 53. The areas mentioned the greatest number of times are summarized for the pattern in order of frequency mentioned.

Six hundred ninety-six statements of factors influencing a board member to vote for an applicant were reported by the respondents. This is an average of more than three statements per respondent. Some responding board members mentioned only one factor while others mentioned five or more. The questionnaire allowed for free response and a board member should have mentioned only factors that were "critical" in his selection of a superintendent. Apparently, more than one factor can be termed "critical" for a board member to decide to vote for or against a candidate. The "turning point" for the respondent was apparently the result of a combination of factors.

The board members with the number of "critical" factors given as influencing them to vote for an applicant are presented in Table XI. This table contains information that indicates that most board members

vote for an applicant because of more than one "critical" factor. On the average the applicant of 1956-57 could expect three "critical" factors to influence his success in securing a position as a superintendent.

TABLE XI

SOURCE OF 696 "CRITICAL" FACTORS GIVEN BY 217 REPORTING BOARD MEMBERS WHO VOTED FOR AN APPLICANT

Number of Factors Reported:	Board Members Reporting:	Total Cumulative Factors:
1	35	35
2	45	90
3	46	138
4	45	180
5	26	130
6	17	102
7	3	21
Total	<u>217</u>	<u>696</u>

The 25 areas within which the number of statements made by board members as influencing them to vote against an applicant are identified in Table XII. Two hundred ninety-six statements were given as factors by board members as influencing them to vote against an applicant.

TABLE XII

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE SELECTION OF A SUPERINTENDENT AS
INDICATED BY BOARD MEMBERS VOTING AGAINST AN APPLICANT

Area:	Statements in Area:
Presentation of application	46
Character, habits, and morals	28
Administrative aspects	25
Civic, community, school, and patrons attitudes	24
Experience	21
Salary	21
Appearance	15
Age	13
Job attitude	11
Board attitude	10
Education and general qualification	10
Discipline	9
Religion	9
Personality	8
Pressure and politicing	8
Recommendations and references	8
Marital status or factors involving family	6
Speech	6
Leadership, school and community	4
Building or school plant aspects	3
Curriculum	3
Public relations	3
Teacher aspects	3
Native of community	2
Personal friend	0
Total	<u>296</u>

Forty-six of 296 statements or 46 of 217 board members mentioned presentation of application as being "critical" in influencing them to vote against an applicant. This is by far the most frequently mentioned factor. Character, habits, and morals ranked second, being mentioned 28 times. Factors concerned with the presentation of an application have not been reported in any of the studies reviewed, but the importance attached to the presentation of an application is obvious when it is mentioned by 46 board members as influencing them to vote against an

applicant with a frequency rank of number one in the study. This area, ranking seventh among all the areas, is mentioned by 38 board members as influencing them to vote for an applicant.

Administrative aspects, which was the most frequently mentioned area of factors influencing a vote for an applicant, is the third most frequently mentioned area for factors influencing a board member to vote against an applicant. Twenty-five responses fell into this area.

Civic, community, school, and patrons attitudes were factors mentioned by 24 respondents ranking fourth in frequency of mention in Table XV. This area is ranked approximately the same in Table XIV with a frequency of mention rank of fifth.

Experience, considered the second most important area for securing a vote for an applicant, was mentioned by 21 board members as an area for securing a vote against an applicant.

Salary was mentioned 21 times as a factor influencing a board member to vote against an applicant. Reference to Appendix B reveals that in most instances the board member felt the applicant wanted a salary inconsistent with the size of the school or was more interested in the salary the position might pay than he was in any other aspect of the position. This factor area was mentioned only one time as influencing a board member to vote for an applicant.

Factors in 18 other areas were mentioned dwindling in number from 15 statements for appearance to two statements for native of community. Factors in the 18 other areas in order of frequency of mention are: Appearance, age, job attitude, board attitude, education and general qualification, discipline, religion, personality, pressure and politicking, recommendations and references, marital status or factors involving

family, speech, leadership in school and community, building or school plant aspects, curriculum, public relations, teacher aspects, and native of community. Personal friend was not mentioned as a factor influencing a vote against an applicant and was mentioned only three times as influencing a board member to vote for an applicant.

The source of the 296 "critical" factors given by board members as influencing them to vote against an applicant are presented in Table XIII. An average of 1.36 statements per respondent were made. The data in Table XIII would indicate that on the average only one or two "critical" factors were responsible for failure of an applicant in securing a position as superintendent.

TABLE XIII

SOURCE OF 296 "CRITICAL" FACTORS GIVEN BY 217 REPORTING BOARD MEMBERS WHO VOTED AGAINST AN APPLICANT

Number of Factors Reported:	Board Members Reporting:	Total Cumulative: Factors:
0	30	0
1	106	106
2	61	122
3	15	45
4	2	8
5	3	15
	<u>217</u>	<u>296</u>

Only 296 statements were made as factors influencing board members to vote against an applicant while the same 217 board members mentioned 696 factors as influencing them to vote for an applicant. Apparently board members will report more "critical" factors for successful candidates than for unsuccessful candidates.

Pattern for a Successful Applicant to a Superintendency.

In Tables X and XII board members' statements of "critical" factors are grouped into common areas. Those statements relating to the administrative qualifications of the applicants are grouped under the category "Administration;" these statements relating to the in-service experience of the applicants are grouped under the category "Experience;" and similarly for each succeeding group of statements pertaining to a common area.

The data collected reveal that the board members' statements of "critical" factors fall into the same categories whether favorable or unfavorable to the applicants. However, a statement favorable to an applicant in any category was usually the opposite of a statement which was unfavorable to an applicant. Contrasting the favorable and unfavorable statements of board members in each category serves the purpose of pointing up the differences in behaviors and characteristics that board members observe among applicants. As has been previously stated, the incidence of these behaviors and characteristics, both with respect to number and prominence, cause members of boards of education to accept or reject applicants for the position of superintendent in their school districts.

For the purposes of the study, a summation of the statements of board members by areas is presented in each area. Characteristics and behaviors of applicants which influenced board members to vote for or against them are presented for contrast. The number of favorable and unfavorable statements in each area is reported. The language used in the summary is that of the responding board members.

Administrative aspects. Eighty-eight responses for successful applicants fell into this area. The successful applicant was able to organize a good teaching staff. He was able to supervise his teaching staff and command their respect and admiration. He had a broad knowledge of school financing. The applicant kept good records and was able to keep his spending within the finances available and yet do a good job. He had the knowledge and ability to be a good administrator and operated a well balanced, progressive school without "friction".

Twenty-five responses for unsuccessful applicants fell in this area. The unsuccessful applicant did not have the ability to organize and administer his staff. He had poor judgment, did not keep good records, and had a poor set of rules and regulations for all to follow. He couldn't get along with people or provide leadership. In general, he did not have ability of an administrator.

Experience. Characteristics and behavioral patterns reported for successful candidates in this area totaled 70. The successful applicant had a record of several years successful experience as a teacher, principal, or superintendent. In many instances this successful experience had been in the school to which he was elected superintendent.

A total of 21 responses of factors was made for unsuccessful applicants in this area. The unsuccessful applicant lacked experience in school management. He had changed jobs often and had a poor past record as superintendent. He had not accomplished much in his previous position.

Education and general qualification. Characteristics and behaviors in this area were mentioned 69 times for successful applicants. The successful candidate had the required educational background with a good transcript. He had good common sense or "practical intelligence" with

outstanding abilities and qualifications in general.

Characteristics and behaviors in this area were mentioned ten times for unsuccessful applicants. The unsuccessful candidate did not meet the general qualifications. He showed lack of proper education, culture, and general background.

Character, habits, and morals. Sixty-eight responses for successful applicants were made in this area. The successful candidate was a person of good character, had good personal habits, and was a good moral person being honest in all matters.

Twenty-eight responses for unsuccessful applicants were made in this area. The unsuccessful applicant had a poor character with poor moral habits. He was dishonest, lazy, had a bad temper, used tobacco, frequently used alcohol, vulgar with his language, too friendly with the women, and was undependable.

Civic, community, school, and patron attitudes. Factors identified by responses in this area for successful applicants totaled 65. The successful applicant worked and cooperated with civic organizations. He was liked by the communities in which he had worked and was able to adjust and fit into the community. He was interested in the community. The successful ~~candidate~~ was interested and willing to work in the best interests of the school. He was willing to shoulder more than his share of responsibilities and was interested in all activities of the school. He was interested in the students of the school. He placed their interests above all else. He had the ability to work with students and command their respect and liking. He was a good influence in molding the lives of his students. He had a good attitude toward people and was able to obtain the goodwill and cooperation of the people in his community.

outstanding abilities and qualifications in general.

Characteristics and behaviors in this area were mentioned ten times for unsuccessful applicants. The unsuccessful candidate did not meet the general qualifications. He showed lack of proper education, culture, and general background.

Character, habits, and morals. Sixty-eight responses for successful applicants were made in this area. The successful candidate was a person of good character, had good personal habits, and was a good moral person being honest in all matters.

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Twenty-four responses were identified in this area for unsuccessful candidates. The unsuccessful candidate either dabbled too much in civic affairs to the neglect of his school or avoided completely taking any part in civic affairs. He was not interested in the community and did not want to live in it. He wanted to change the customs of the community rather than adapt himself to the customs. This candidate did not show enough interest in the school. He spoke disparagingly of the past school administration, was unwilling to accept previous school policies, and was not interested in the school's financial standing. He had poor attitude toward school, in general.

Personality. Fifty-three responses concerning personality of successful candidates were made. The successful candidate was modest, not too eager to brag or boast. He was considerate of others and always courteous. He was a gentleman in every respect with a good sense of humor and a pleasant personality.

Eight responses concerning the personality of unsuccessful candidates were made. The unsuccessful candidate had a poor personality. He had an inferiority complex and a backward disposition.

Appearance. Thirty-nine responses for successful applicants were made in this area. The successful candidate had a good personal appearance. He was neat, clean, and modestly dressed.

Fifteen responses for unsuccessful applicants were made in this area. The unsuccessful applicant had a poor personal appearance. He was slovenly dressed and extremely untidy in appearance. In one case he was partially deaf and in another had poor health.

Presentation of application. Thirty-eight responses for successful candidates were made in this area. The successful candidate made a good

presentation for himself. He made a straight forward, honest approach to the board of education in presenting himself. He could state his plans, policies, and convictions firmly and convincingly. He was eager and willing to apply himself to making a success. He showed confidence in himself and his principles.

Forty-six responses were made for the unsuccessful candidate in this area. The unsuccessful candidate literally talked himself out of a job in many cases. He was boastful, overbearing, and conceited. If he did not make one or all of the foregoing mistakes he was just the opposite and appeared to lack confidence, was nervous, and seemed to shut out some of his past.

Religion. Thirty-six responses were made for the successful applicant in this area. The successful applicant was a Christian, active in church work, and of the Protestant faith. He was interested in the spiritual welfare of the community.

The unsuccessful candidate had nine responses made concerning him in this area. He was not a Christian and did not attend church. If he belonged to a church, it was one which would not be accepted in the community. In one case the unsuccessful applicant left the impression he intended to teach one certain religious faith in school.

Discipline. Twenty-three responses as factors for voting for an applicant were made in the area of discipline. The successful candidate was a good disciplinarian. He was capable of handling children and obtaining their full cooperation. He was firm yet congenial.

Nine responses were made for unsuccessful applicants in this area. The unsuccessful candidate was not capable of commanding the respect of the students. For various reasons he was unable to handle discipline in

the school.

Public relations. Twenty-one responses concerning the successful applicant fell into this area. The successful applicant had the ability to maintain good public relations. He had the ability to meet and mix with the people.

Three responses were made in this area concerning unsuccessful candidates. The unsuccessful candidate had poor public relations.

Marital status or factors involving family. Twenty-one responses relative to the successful candidates were made in this area. The successful candidate was married and had children. He had a family with children in school. His family was active in church. In the smaller schools, he had a wife who was capable and qualified to teach.

Six statements for unsuccessful candidates were made in this area. The unsuccessful candidate was single. He had poor marital status. His wife or family interfered with his work.

Recommendations and references. In this area 19 responses were made concerning successful applicants. He had good recommendations and references from former board members, the state department of education, and others.

In this area eight statements concerning unsuccessful applicants were made. He had poor recommendations and references.

Job attitudes. Seventeen responses for the successful applicant were made in this area. He was very sincere. He had a sincere desire to have the job. He was conscientious about his work and happy in it. He worked hard at doing a good job.

Eleven responses concerning the unsuccessful applicant fell in this area. He was not sincere in wanting the job. He had other business interests. He had moved because of integration. He thought of the job as a place

to retire. In one instance the teacherage was not large enough for his family.

Age. Thirteen responses concerning age were made for successful applicants. His age met the requirements of the board members. He was middle-aged or younger.

The same number of responses, 13, was made for unsuccessful applicants. The unsuccessful applicant was too old most of the time and in only three cases was he too young.

Leadership, school and community. Eleven responses for successful candidates were mentioned in this area. The successful candidate was a leader in the school and community. He would be outstanding in any community. He was capable of accomplishing what he attempted to do.

Four responses for unsuccessful candidates in this area were made. He lacked leadership ability.

Teacher aspects. A total of ten responses for the successful applicant fell into this area. The successful applicant had outstanding ability as a teacher. In the smaller schools, he was able to teach in a particular field.

Three responses for unsuccessful candidates were made in this area. The unsuccessful candidate neglected his classes and was absent from them most of the time.

Curriculum. Seven responses for successful applicants fell into this category. The successful applicant had a knowledge of and was desirous of improving the curriculum. He showed an interest in a well balanced and well planned curriculum.

Three responses for unsuccessful applicants were made for curriculum. The unsuccessful applicant had too much or too little athletics in school.

He had grievances toward some departments.

Speech. Seven responses for successful applicants fell into this area. The candidate had a good voice and was an excellent speaker. He was a good conversationalist.

Six responses were made in this area by board members voting against a candidate. The candidate could not express himself publicly. He carried on a poor conversation.

Board attitudes. Seven responses concerning successful candidates fell into this category. The successful candidate was interested in and concerned about finding out the present policies and expectations of the board of education. He was willing to work with the board of education and back their decisions even though his ideas might conflict with theirs at times.

Ten responses concerning qualities and behavior of unsuccessful candidates fell into this classification. The unsuccessful candidate criticized his past board members. He had the idea that school board members were not supposed to know much about running the school, but were to turn it over to the superintendent.

Pressure and politics. Four responses concerning successful applicants fell into this area. He administered his duties according to the dictates of his conscience and did not let pressure groups or politics influence him.

Eight responses for unsuccessful applicants fell into this category. The unsuccessful candidate did too much "politiking". He used dubious means to influence board members, such as membership in clubs, personal friends, or political pull from different sources.

Building or school plant aspects. Four responses were classified

in this category for successful applicants. The candidate was interested in and had good ideas for improving our buildings and school plant. He kept and maintained a good school plant.

Three responses were classified in this area for unsuccessful applicant. The unsuccessful applicant had a poor or run down school plant.

Personal friend. In three instances a board member voted for a candidate because the candidate was a personal friend.

Native of community. Two respondents stated that they voted for the successful candidate because he was a native of the community.

Two board members stated they voted against a candidate because he was a native of the community and known too well to make a success.

Salary. The fact that one candidate was not primarily interested in salary influenced a vote for him.

Twenty-one responses were made for unsuccessful applicants in the area of salary. The unsuccessful applicant was more interested in salary than the school. He asked for a salary that the budget could not afford and which was inconsistent with the size of the school.

Summary

Six hundred fifty-two board members were potential respondents to the study. After three mailings of the questionnaires, 217 of the potential 652 respondents had completed and returned questionnaires. These 217 questionnaires provide the data for the study. Since a 100 per cent return was not anticipated, selected personal and situational information concerning the respondent was requested and is reported for further definition of the population responding to the study. This information may

be used in interpreting the data in relation to characteristics of the respondents.

Two hundred thirteen men and four women responded to the instrument.

The average age of the reporting board members was 46.4 years. The median age fell in the 40-49 years of age range with 97 of the 217 reporting board members being in this category.

Two hundred fifteen of the reporting board members were married. Two were widows.

One hundred seventy-two of the 217 reporting board members had one or more children in school. The largest number of this group, 75, had two children in school.

The average years experience on the board of education of reporting board members was 5.3 years with 144 of the 217 reporting board members reporting four years or more experience.

The average educational attainment of reporting board members was that of senior in high school. The median educational attainment was graduation from high school.

Most of the board members, 168 in all, represented schools with an enrollment of less than 500 with the largest group, 65, represented in the 100-199 school enrollment group.

One hundred sixty-three of the 217 reporting board members served in schools that hired 20 or fewer teachers. The largest group, 74, represented the 7-10 teacher school.

Factors associated with the selection of a superintendent as indicated by board members voting for and against applicants are summarized under 25 headings. Each heading represents an area of factors identified

by the grouping of factors according to common themes. The number of factors which fall into each area is reported. A study of the source of the factors reveals that an average of approximately three factors per board member was reported for successful candidates with 696 total factors being reported. An average of 1.36 factors per board member with a total of 296 statements for unsuccessful candidates was reported.

Personal characteristics and behavioral patterns reported by board members voting for and against an applicant have been summarized for contrast under the 25 areas developed for the study. Contrast reveals that, almost without exception, personal characteristics and behavioral patterns of unsuccessful applicants are exact opposites of those reported for successful applicants.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

SUMMARY

This study attempted to identify "critical" factors associated with the selection of a superintendent in certain Oklahoma public schools as reported by employing board members.

An instrument was designed to collect the original information used in the study. Information gathered by the instrument was original in the sense that no suggestion that might influence the response was given in the form of a check list or example. Each respondent used his own words in reporting "critical" factors. The "critical" factors were characteristics or behaviors of an applicant that caused a "turning point" in the board members attitude toward the applicant and a subsequent vote for or against.

Board members in Oklahoma public schools who had selected from among applicants a superintendent for the 1956-57 school year were chosen as respondents since they had recently participated in the selection of a superintendent. One hundred thirty of the 666 public high schools in Oklahoma had a turnover of superintendents for the 1956-57 school year. Sixty-six of the 77 Oklahoma counties were represented by the 130 schools coming under the conditions of the study. From the original mailing and two follow-up mailings of the instrument, 217 completed returns, representing one-third of the potential respondents, are the source

of the data presented in the study.

To further define the population of the study, selected personal and situational information was requested and is reported. This information was used in interpreting the data in relation to characteristics of the respondents.

Two hundred thirteen men and four women responded to the questionnaire. Their average age was 46.4 years. The median age fell in the 40-49 years of age range with 97 of the 217 reporting board members falling in this category. Two hundred fifteen of the reporting board members were married and two were widows. One hundred seventy-two of the 217 reporting board members had one or more children in school. Seventy-five had two children in school. One hundred forty-four of the reporting board members reported four or more years experience as a board member. The average experience was 5.3 years. The average educational attainment was that of senior in high school. The median educational attainment was graduation from high school. Most of the board members, 168 in all, represented schools with an enrollment of less than 500 with the largest group, 65, represented in the 100-199 school enrollment group. One hundred sixty-three of the 217 reporting board members served in schools that hired 20 or fewer teachers. The largest group, 74, represented the 7-10 teacher school.

Factors associated with the selection of a superintendent as indicated by board members voting for or against an applicant were identified and reported in 25 areas. Areas were actually generalizations which appeared the most applicable for organizing and reporting the material in the study. Six hundred ninety-six factors were reported by board members as influencing them to vote for applicants. Only 296 factors were given

as reasons for voting against a candidate.

A summation of characteristics and behaviors pertaining to successful candidates for a superintendency as reported by respondents in the study reveal they were almost exact opposites of those reported for the unsuccessful candidates. Using the terminology of the reporting board members, a summation of characteristics and behaviors influential in the success of applicants in securing a superintendency as indicated in Chapter V are reported as follows:

Organizes a good teaching staff

Able to supervise his teaching staff and command their respect and admiration

Has a broad knowledge of school finance

Keeps good records and is able to keep his spending within the finances available and yet do a good job

Operates a well balanced, progressive school without "friction"

Has a record of several years successful experience as a teacher, principal, or superintendent usually in the school to which he was elected superintendent

Has the required educational background with a good transcript

Has good common sense or "practical intelligence" with outstanding abilities and qualifications in general

Has good character, good personal habits, and good morals being honest in all matters

Works and cooperates with civic organizations

Well liked by the communities in which he has worked

Able to adjust and fit into the community

Interested in the community

Interested and willing to work in the best interests of the school

Willing to shoulder more than his share of responsibilities

Interested in all activities of the school

Interested in the students of the school and places their interests above all else.

Has the ability to work with students and command their respect and liking.

A good influence in molding the lives of his students

Has a good attitude toward people

Able to obtain the good will and cooperation of the people in his community

Modest, not too eager to brag or boast

Considerate of others and always courteous

A gentleman in every sense with a good sense of humor and a pleasant personality

Has a good personal appearance

Neat, clean, and modestly dressed

Makes a good presentation for himself

Makes a straight forward, honest approach to the board of education in presenting himself

Can state his plans, policies, and convictions firmly and convincingly

Eager and willing to apply himself to making a success

Shows confidence in himself and his principles

A Christian active in a Protestant church

Interested in spiritual welfare of community

A good disciplinarian

Capable of handling children and obtaining their full cooperation

Firm yet congenial

Maintains good public relations

Has the ability to meet and mix with people

Married and has children

Has a family with children in school

Family is active in church

Had good recommendations and references from former board members, the State Department of Education, and others

Very Sincere

Has a sincere desire to have the job

Conscientious about his work and happy in it

Works hard at doing a good job

Middle-aged or younger

A leader in the school and community

Will be outstanding in any community

Capable of accomplishing what he sets out to do

Has outstanding ability as a teacher

Has a knowledge of and is desirous of improving the curriculum

Shows an interest in a well balanced and well planned curriculum

Has a good voice and is an excellent speaker

A good conversationalist

Interested in the present policies and expectations of the board of education

Willing to work with the board of education and back their decisions even though his ideas might conflict with theirs at times

Will administer his duties according to the dictates of his conscience and will not let pressure groups or politics influence him

Interested in and has good ideas for improving our buildings and school plant

A personal friend

Was not primarily interested in salary

The foregoing summation was developed by combining and summarizing statements of board members which essentially reported the same thing. This summation is further reinforced by statements of characteristics and behaviors of unsuccessful applicants which are almost exact opposites.

Certain limitations of the study should be taken into consideration in evaluating the findings. The open-end questionnaire is difficult to design so as to elicit the type of information desired. The open-end questionnaire is even more difficult to interpret and report by the researcher.

Another biasing influence of the study was the period of time elapsed between the election of a superintendent and the responses given to the questionnaires. Superintendents are ordinarily elected before July first of each school year and assume office on July first. The questionnaires were mailed after the superintendent-elect had served five or six months. Board members may have allowed personal contact with their superintendent during this time to influence their responses.

Conclusions

If the data in this study can be considered representative of Oklahoma public schools, the evidence provided in the study warrants the conclusion that personal characteristics and behavioral patterns exist that are critical with board members to the success or failure in an applicant securing a position as a superintendent of schools in Oklahoma. Further, evidence of the study indicates that each critical behavior or characteristic which influences a board member to vote favorably for an applicant has an opposite counterpart which would also cause him to vote against an applicant. In most cases, more than one factor can be termed "critical" for a board member to decide to vote for or against a candidate for the superintendency. A further conclusion is that characteristics and behavior of applicants for a superintendency, which are considered critical by board members, are not

significantly different from those reported by other researchers and authorities.

Recommendations

This study has suggested further investigation into various aspects of related research concerning the public school superintendent.

These include:

1. Improved studies of this type involving board members who have selected a superintendent in other states of the United States
2. Improved studies of this type every few years so that data might be current
3. Use of the responses in this study or in a similar study in making a study of relationships that may exist between characteristics of the reporting board member and his school and factors reported by him as influencing his selection of a superintendent

These three recommendations are indicative of the complexity of the problem and of the need for further research.

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Dear Sir:

A study is being made of the opinions of board members in selected Oklahoma communities concerning the factors influencing the selection of Oklahoma public school superintendents.

This is a graduate study which I am doing under the advisement of School of Education faculty members at Oklahoma State University. The completed study should furnish valuable information for board members, superintendents, and other educators and be of benefit to them in performing their duties.

Your contribution in filling the accompanying information sheet will certainly be appreciated. Careful consideration in filling in each item will lend to the value of the study. No individual will be identified or quoted. It is believed that the study will make a real contribution to the improvement of the school boards function in selecting its executive officer.

With appreciation for your prompt attention to this matter, I
am

Cordially yours,

L. R. Westfall

INFORMATION SHEET
DOCTORAL DISSERTATION

Please "do not" sign this or identify yourself.

CERTAIN FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE SELECTION OF
SUPERINTENDENTS IN SELECTED OKLAHOMA PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

Please fill in the correct response concerning you.

1. Age _____
2. Sex _____
3. Occupation _____
4. Marital Status _____
5. Number of children in school _____
6. Years experience on board of education _____
7. Highest level of formal education attained _____

Please fill in the correct response concerning your school.

1. School enrollment--all grades _____
2. Number of teachers in the system _____

As a member of a board of education that has recently elected a superintendent, please tell in your own words a specific act or characteristic on the part of the successful applicant that influenced you to vote for him.

Example: A merchant might relate an act on the part of a successful cashier applicant as follows:

He gave a demonstration of his knowledge and efficiency in using a cash register.

Example: A football coach might relate a characteristic of a successful candidate for a scholarship as follows:

He was a big boy weighing over two hundred pounds with the weight being evenly distributed over his body.

Please use all the space necessary or desired on the top of the next page in making your comments.

APPENDIX A

As a member of a board of education that has recently elected a superintendent, please tell in your own words a specific act or characteristic on the part of an unsuccessful applicant that influenced you to vote against him.

Please use all the space necessary or desired in making your comments.

II.

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE SELECTION OF A SUPERINTENDENT
AS INDICATED BY BOARD MEMBERS VOTING FOR AN APPLICANT

*A number following a statement indicates the number of times a statement was made by board members. Statements without numbers were made only once.

ADMINISTRATIVE ASPECTS

A. Faculty:

Ability to get along with the teaching staff was outstanding.-9

Could command the respect of his teachers.-2

Ability to have the confidence of his principals, teachers and school children.

Well liked by all the teachers.

Had the confidence of his teachers and the school patrons.

Willingness and ability to get along with others, including the ability to supervise both teacher and student.

Organize a good teaching staff.

Takes the side for his teachers when criticisms and complaints present themselves.

Could command the respect and admiration of his fellow teachers.

B. Finance:

Broad knowledge of school finance.-5

Ability to handle school business.-3

Capable of operating within the school budget.-2

Ability to handle the finances of a school.-2

Understands budgets.

Ability to keep finances under control.

A good business man.

Our school was in debt and I preferred him by his references he furnished.

Recommended very highly by the clerk of school board where he served as superintendent, as exceptionally good on school financing. (sic)

Business acumen.

Able to handle finances and operate within his budget.

Kept good records of all business pertaining to school work.

Helped improve other schools within the state by setting an example of what can be done even with financial limitations.

Kept records and finances most capable in spite of the fact that he had no secretary. (sic)

Knowledge was good in business. (sic)

Financial responsibility--Unless an individual can handle the personal finances he daily incurs, he is not able to handle public funds.

Very adept in obtaining money for a school that rightfully belongs to it.

Management of school funds.

Ability to take care of the business affairs of the school.

I was in a position to observe his knowledge of school finances.

Had previously proved himself in the handling of school financial business.

A successful business manager in the school.

C. General statements concerning administration:

The ability to be an administrator.-7

Ability to operate the school.-2

Possessed a broad knowledge of school administration.-2

Gave us an outline of his teaching policies.

Only interest is administration.

Philosophy on administration was good.

The knowledge he expressed on all phases of school administration

Keeps a good set of rules and regulations for all to follow.

The ability to organize.

Demonstrated ability as an administrator and business man.

Knew school administration

Well understood the administrative work of running a school.

Able to run a progressive school without any friction.

The executive ability that he demonstrates continuously.

Capable of handling school problems.

Efficient in maintaining a good school.

Ability to properly delegate authority.

Ran the school and did not listen to petty or minor gripes.

Makes his own decisions.

Very firm and not too easily influenced.

A man that will stand on his own two feet for the right principles.

I was in a position to observe his ability to run a school in a business like manner.

An unannounced visit to his school while he was being considered, merely demonstrated his efficiency and thoroughness and progressive ideas.

Able to select a very able staff.

The ability to handle the business of school management.

Could be depended upon to execute any plans made by him or the board.

Ability to run a well balanced school.

The ability to run the school properly.

Had his school running smoothly.

Able to discuss school problems that are most common in my district in a school law way

Ideas of running a school were sound.

EXPERIENCE

The record of his past experience was very good.-7

Previous experience in operating a school.-6

Had been our principal.-2

Experience as a teacher.

Demonstrated ability as a principal.

Record of efficiency.

Taught in our school for nine years.

Previously been high school principal for five years.

Past experiences were alright.

Past experience and administrative ability were sufficient.

Superintendent for twelve years in his previous school.

Recommendation of past experience was good.

A highly successful record as a teacher.

Several years of past experience.

After an eleven year tenure, we couldn't find one person that was not a strong supporter of him.

An experienced man.

Previous experience as junior high principal was very satisfactory.

Had done a fine job as a teacher, coach, and high school principal.

I was impressed with his ability as an administrator by my observation of him as our principal of the high school.

Previous employers hesitated to release him.

A record of success in previous schools.

Had been in the school system he was leaving for seventeen years.

Previous record of being superintendent twelve years at his first school and six years at his second.

Had been our high school principal.

Experience as a teacher, principal, and superintendent.

Formerly been principal of our school under a very good superintendent with whom he cooperated very well.

Had taught in our grades for four years.

Past record as superintendent of another school was outstanding.

Held his former job for ten years operating the school efficiently.

Past record was good.

A successful superintendent for nearly twenty years in his past school.

We interviewed all kinds of people in his past school and not a one was against him that we could find although he had been in his past school fourteen years.

Served as principal of our school for seven years and had proven himself a good man in our community.

Principal of the school at the time he was hired and was familiar with our school system, bus routes, bus problems, etc.

Work of the past years as principal was proof to me he would do good work as school superintendent.

Very capable record both in the previous school systems and his business records with various organizations.

A successful superintendent in the school where he had spent the past ten years.

Served a number of years at the same school previous to coming to our school.

Twenty years of experience.

Eight years of experience.

Past experience showed he was well liked by students.

Demonstrated most clearly his abilities as a leader.

Principal for several years at his previous school with success.

Had been our coach and worked well with us and for us.

Past experience as school superintendent impressed me.

Had been successful for a number of years at his school.

Taught and was coach in our school for several years.

Had served as a teacher in the school for six years.

I was in a position to observe his school work.

Past record as a superintendent was good.

Taught in our school for six years.

Several years of teaching experience.

Record of success as a teacher and administrator.

Served successfully as our principal for two years.

Personal experience was good.

The good record he had made in the school system he was leaving.

At the time he was elected superintendent, he was our principal.

This man had been in his previous school for thirteen years.

EDUCATION AND GENERAL QUALIFICATIONS

A. Education:

Education was sufficient for the position.-2

The degree of education this person has is found to show that he should be qualified for the position so far as an education is concerned.

Education was sufficient.

Had the education required for a superintendent.-3

Qualified for the position as far as education was concerned.-2

Well educated.

Educational qualifications are high.

Academic background was good.

Record of knowledge was good.

Scholastic record was good.

Transcript of college was good.

Had necessary degrees.

Gave his viewpoints on education in general.

Degree was sufficient.

Had acquired the proper educational background.

B. Common Sense:

Had a lot of good common sense.-3

Had a lot of horse sense.

Impressed me as certainly being a brilliant man.

Had good judgment.

Had a good sense of value.

Had a good business head on him.

Had the ability and "horse sense" to cooperate and solve school problems.

Had good sound judgment.

Showed mental alertness, which includes insight on community affairs, as well as formal schooling, or it may be expressed as 'Practical Intelligence'.

C. General:

Qualified.-20

Outstanding as a boy growing up.

Teaching qualifications were up to standard for this position.

Professional.

Some outstanding qualifications.

Qualified in all phases of school administration.

Good qualifications.-4

A good all-round man.

I think he is a good man for the job.

Met the qualifications specified by the board of education.

A very capable man as to qualifications.

Had all necessary qualifications for a school administrator.

Knowledge of school affairs.

Ability was good.

Philosophy was good.

An excellent background

Well qualified as an administrator.

CHARACTER HABITS AND MORALS

A. Character:

A person of good character.-15

A good reputation.-3

Character was sufficient for the position.

Character was above reproach.

Reputation was of the best.

B. Habits:

Good habits.-3

Conduct was good.

Did not smoke.

Prompt.

Very kind.

C. Morals:

A good moral person.-8

Moral attitude, both in and out of the class-room was good.

High moral standards.-3

A good moral background.

Moral qualifications were good.

A good moral man

Moral standards and that of his family were good.

A good moral reputation.

High ideals.

D. Honesty:

Honest.-14

Treats each pupil as he would want to be treated.

Answered all questions without evasion.

Truthful.

Honest in money matters.

Treats the other man as he would want to be treated.

Can be trusted.

A straight forward man.

Considerate of all the people and treats all alike.

CIVIC, COMMUNITY, SCHOOL, STUDENT, AND PATRON ATTITUDE

A. Civic:

Interested in all community improvement.

A good social worker in his community.

An active member of the boy scout committee.

Willing to work and cooperate with civic organizations.

Believed in working with any organization that promoted a better understanding and filled a needed place in community affairs.

B. Community:

Take part in county affairs.

Active in community affairs.-2

Well liked in the community.-2

Tried to stay clear of community disagreements.

Well liked where he came from.

Able to cooperate with the community.

Wants to be a part of the community and works at it.

Ability to adjust himself to conditions and fit into community.

Has good standing in the community.

Ability to work out community problems with the full cooperation of the patrons.

Liked by everyone.

The whole town was behind him.

The people where he was working liked him.

Worked well in the community.

Community interests.

Ability to get along with the community.

Active in community affairs.

Interest of community at heart.

C. School:

Good over all attitude toward better schools.

Looked ahead to the future of the school as well as the present.

Interested in the school.

Genuine interest in the school system.

Temperate in all phases of school work.

Main interest was the school and community.

Willing to accept more than his share of responsibilities in regard to problems that arise in school.

Very interested in the school problems and activities.

Willing to work for the betterment of the school.

Interested in all activities connected with the school.

D. Students:

Ability to get along with the pupils.-2

Can command the respect of the students.

Helpful to all children.

Ability to understand boys and girls, and deep interest in them.

Very interested in the youth and wants to see them get a full rounded education.

Ability to consider the good of the student now and in the future to the best of ability regardless of outside pressure.

Liked young folks.

Able to hold the respect of the student body.

Ability to get along with the pupils.-3

Good influence on pupils.

Understood boys and girls and seemed to be interested in making and molding their lives.

Willing to work for the betterment of the students.

A man that wanted first of all to see his boys and girls get an education that would help them in future years.

Get along with young people and children well.

Had good attitudes towards children.

Made it very plain that he was going to operate the school for the benefit of the children and their advantage.

E. Patrons:

Good at working with people and helping work out their problems.

Ability to get along with patrons.

Ability to work with people of all ages.

Ability, eagerness, and desire to cooperate with all people in town.

Could command the respect of patrons in the community.

Ability to get along and cooperate with others.

Helpful to parents.

Knew the best interest of the people of the community.

Good attitude toward all people in general.

An unusual ability to obtain the good will of the people of the community.

PERSONALITY

A. Humble, considerate, courteous:

Manner was courteous.-2

Had consideration for me and my work and made appointment for later discussion.

I was influenced more by the impression of the successful applicant's unassuming personality. During his interview he expressed confidence in his ability to adequately meet the requirements of the position without creating the impression of egotism, arrogance or superiority.

A regular fellow.

Had the quality of accepting defeat.

Isn't overbearing and has a smile for everyone.

Very modest, not too eager to brag or boast on himself.

Didn't think he knew it all, or knew more than anyone else.

A proper sense of humility and modesty.

Could see his own faults as well as the other fellow.

Has humility.

Treats the other fellow as he would want to be treated.

Can give as well as take.

B. General:

A very nice personality.-34

A good sense of humor.
 A gentleman.
 A good disposition.
 A pleasant manner.
 Straight forward manner.

APPEARANCE

Personal appearance was good.-10
 Neat in appearance.-9
 Appearance was very good.-6
 A good general appearance.-3
 Clean.-2
 The appearance of being an all around good leader for the community.
 Good looking.
 A good forceful appearance.
 Appearance gave one the impression that he was dedicated to his work.
 Well dressed.
 Well polished.
 Appearance was sufficient for the position.
 Modestly dressed.
 Presented an appearance of efficiency.

PRESENTATION OF APPLICATION

A. Confidence:

Confidence in himself.-3
 Confidence in being able to conduct us a good school.
 The most important act that influenced me was his confidence in his principles.

B. Willingness to work:

Very alert.-2

Eager to make good.-2

Willing to work.-2

A very aggressive type person.

Applies himself to making a success.

Seemed to be very ambitious.

Progressive.

Willing to work to achieve his goal.

Full of vigor and vitality.

Energetic.

Always trying to improve the school from every standpoint.

C. General:

Presented himself well.-2

Had straight forward manner of answering questions. He made clear concise, well thought out statements.

Had straight forward, honest approach to the board of education, in presenting himself.

Had a better way of selling or putting over his program.

Showed apparent willingness to hear what you had to say, then give a frank, plain, to-the-point answer.

Spoke as one having experience.

Gave his idea in general as to how he thought our school should be operated.

His ability to voice his opinions on the responsibilities of a school superintendent.

Very definite in his opinion of what would be necessary in order to have a good school system.

Positive thinking in regard to what a good school system should have for the future.

Could discuss school problems with an air of authority, or that of one who knew what he was talking about.

During the period of time in the interview used in asking questions, he would answer very promptly and strictly to the point anything asked concerning his duties as superintendent.

Could state his plans and policies firmly and convincingly.

Didn't have too much to say in his own behalf but when questioned he gave direct answers and didn't try to straddle the issue as too many applicants do.

Knew what he was doing.

Seemed to know what was expected of a superintendent.

Had a mind of his own.

Had the courage to back his convictions. Opposition does not frighten him; praise does not flatter him.

RELIGION

A Christian man.-17

Of the Protestant religion.-2

A Christian; active in church work.-2

A church worker.

Tolerant of religious views.

Attends church regularly.

Family are all church members.

A man with Christian ideals.

A good church leader.

Demonstrates a Christian spirit.

Had religious standing.

Worked well with the church.

An active church member; also taught a S. S. Class.

He and his family were church-going people.

Had Christian character.

A Christian and interested in the spiritual welfare of the community.

Family fits into church work well.

A church member and goes regular.

DISCIPLINE

Ability to handle students.-3

School was orderly and well disciplined.-2

Good with the pupils.

Capable of obtaining the full cooperation of students.

Firm with pupils, yet congenial and it has proven out.

Ability to maintain discipline among students.

Able to keep good order in school.

Capable of handling children and understanding their problems.

Ability to maintain discipline among the students.

Know how and when to discipline children.

Capable of handling children.

Ability to enforce discipline.

A very good disciplinarian.-5

Believed in strict discipline which our school needs.

Philosophy on discipline was good.

Convinced me that he could say yes or no and stay with it.

PUBLIC RELATIONS

The ability to maintain good public relations.-7

A good mixer in the community.-2

The ability to meet people.-2

Friendly.-2

Could meet people.

Positive attitude in public relations.

Knew how to deal with people.

Always has a smile for everyone.

Ability to get along with people in school and out of school.

Could serve the school and also please the patrons.

Friendly and a good mixer.

Seemed to be able to meet strangers easily.

MARITAL STATUS OR FACTORS INVOLVING FAMILY

A. Marital Status:

Married.-2

Had a wife and three children.

A family man.

Has a wife and family.

Is a married man with children.

B. Factors involving family:

Had children in school.-2

Had a nice family.

Had reared a fine family.

A family man with six children at home.

Wife was capable and qualified to teach.

Family fit well into the community.

Had a good home life.

A man that can run his own home.

Had a well respected family.

Wife does not teach which I think is good.

Has a very lovely wife who is an excellent grade teacher, and has training in directing and accompanying vocal music.

Family fits into church work well.

He and his family were church-going people.

Family are all church members.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND REFERENCES

A. Recommendations:

Recommendations were very good.-4

Highly recommended by the State Department.-4

Recommendations from former board members.-2

Recommendations that the applicant brought with him from the previous school he taught in were good.

Highly recommended by his past superintendent.

Had the qualifications the State Board requires for a superintendent.

Had association and rating with the different State agencies pertaining to education.

Very highly recommended by superintendents who were a success and were in contact with him.

B. References:

Had good references.-4

JOB ATTITUDES

A. Sincerity:

Very sincere.-5

Showed sincerity in school work.-2

Showed apparent sincerity.

I was plowing almost $\frac{1}{2}$ mile from the road. He walked through plowed ground and apparently was very sincere about the job.

A sincere desire to have the job.

B. General:

Very conscientious about his work.

Satisfied where he was working.

No petty grievances.

Seemed to be very sincere at trying to do a good job.

A very hard working man in the school.

Very eager to stay in administrative work.

Not too anxious for the job.

AGE

A. Young:

A young man.-4

Young, ambitious and ready to get the job done.

B. Middle age:

A middle aged man.-7

C. General:

Age met my requirements.-2

LEADERSHIP, SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY

A leader in his field.-4

Had some very good ideas about certain problems that confront all school boards.

A good record of being able to be a leader in working with other students and teachers.

Gave a demonstration of his knowledge and efficiency in assisting us as a board of education in a difficulty we were in before we employed him.

A man that would be outstanding in any community.

Ability to accomplish what he set out to do.

Seemed qualified for the leadership the position called for.

A good leader in school activities.

TEACHER ASPECTS

A good teacher.-2

The man hired has a teaching field necessary for a superintendent in our school.

The only applicant that could teach math.

Outstanding ability as a teacher.

Qualified to teach Science.

Experience in coaching basketball.

Demonstrated ability as a teacher.

Teaching field fit our curriculum.

Outstanding ability as a coach.

CURRICULUM

Knowledge of high school curriculum.

Always shown a major interest in a well balanced and well planned school program.

Interested in all departments of the school.

Worked well with the 4-H Club.

Had some excellent ideas for improving curriculum.

Used teachers in their major field if possible.

General attitude toward all phases of the school program was good.

SPEECH

A good speaker.

Ability to carry on a good conversation

When he talked to us we enjoyed being with him.

Speech was good.

An excellent speaker.

A good voice.

Tone of voice was good.

BOARD ATTITUDES

Interested in our board policies.

Cooperative

Willing to back decisions of the board of education even though his ideas might conflict with theirs at times.

Interested and concerned in finding out our present policies and expectations.

Had always had the confidence of the board.

Willing to cooperate with the school board in all policies.

Strict adherence to rules and regulations.

PRESSURE AND POLITICS

Treated everybody alike but didn't play politics.

Stayed out of politics.

The ability to stand firm on what he believed. His decisions weren't influenced by a few individuals.

I felt that he would administer his duties according to what he felt was right or wrong and would not let pressure groups within the PTA influence him.

BUILDING OR SCHOOL PLANT ASPECTS

The suggestions he gave for improving our school plant.

Interested in things relating to progress and building up our school.

The kind of school plant and system he had.

The attitude of the faculty and student body was excellent and this attitude was reflected in the nice appearance of the physical plant itself.

PERSONAL FRIEND

I knew him personally.

I knew him personally for many years.

I was already acquainted with our new superintendent of schools and believed him to be our best applicant.

NATIVE OF COMMUNITY

A native of this community.

A home town boy and needed a job.

SALARY

Salary wasn't main interest.

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE SELECTION OF A SUPERINTENDENT AS
INDICATED BY BOARD MEMBERS VOTING AGAINST AN APPLICANT

*A number following a statement indicates the number of times a statement was made by board members. Statements without numbers were made only once.

PRESENTATION OF APPLICATION

Talked too much.-5

Seemed to lack self confidence.-5

Was very nervous.-3

Seemed to try to shut some of his past out.-2

Bragged too much.-2

Too sold on himself.-2

Tried too hard to sell himself on his ability to handle the job.-2

Willing to do most anything to get the position.

Talked too much making his abilities sound windy.

Boisterous and not too gentle mannered.

Overbearing and had a tendency to push himself forward.

So aggressive in his applications and further correspondence that you at once were suspicious.

Seemed too eager for the job.

Too much ego.

This man was big I and little You.

Tried too hard to sell himself.

Wanted the job too badly.

Too enthusiastic.

Put the personal flattery to the Board of Education.

Talked too much about his school troubles.

Too forward in telling of his achievements.

Overconfident.

Talked too much about what he had done or could do.

Took it for granted that he could improve on the preceeding superintendent regardless of the reason for the retirement.

Presented too many letters of recommendation and newspaper clippings of past deeds and achievements, many of which were irrelevant, with their presentation occupying the greater part of the afternoon.

Didn't seem sure of himself.

A poor mixer.

Not at ease with people.

Couldn't look at me and talk.

Would not speak for himself, but depended on a friend to recommend him.

Kept telling, "how he told someone off."

The applicant came to see me and when he was ready to leave his car wouldn't start. I found out from the conversation that followed that he had been having the same trouble for some time. Didn't seem very business like for him to come with his car in faulty operation knowing he was having this trouble before.

CHARACTER, HABITS AND MORALS

A poor character.-5

Poor moral habits.-4

Dishonest.-3

Undesirable habits.-2

Too lazy.-2

Dishonest with the students.

Would cheat when grading a student's paper.

Too friendly with the women.

A poor reputation.

Moral reputation as a teacher where he was teaching was poor.

Had a bad temper.

Smoked.

Admitted the frequent use of alcohol.

Very nasty about his language.

Held company with the wrong kind of people.

Would not pay his bills.

Not dependable.

ADMINISTRATIVE ASPECTS

Couldn't cooperate with the other teachers.=3

Inability as an administrator.-2

Couldn't get along with people.-2

Didn't know how to approach a problem.

Was not definite in the program he had outlined in order to have the confidence of those who would be employed in the system.

Spoke more of his ability as a baseball player than an administrator.

Inability to delegate authority.

Failed to keep harmony prevailing in the school faculty.

Did not seem cooperative.

Let other teachers boss and tell him where to head in.

Lacked decisiveness in dealing with his teachers.

Was just plain hazy on some important parts of our overall school program.

Wasn't able to voice his opinions on the responsibilities of a school superintendent.

A poor set of rules and regulations for all to follow.

Didn't have the ability to organize and administer.

Poor judgment.

Poor ideas on leadership.

Hired an extra teacher with school money.

One track mind.

Did not keep a good set of records.

Wanted to be cooperative but showed no stability to take a position.

CIVIC, COMMUNITY, SCHOOL AND STUDENT ATTITUDE

A. Civic:

Dabbled in outside affairs too much to suit me.

More interested in Civic organizations than he was in school duties and activities.

Didn't believe in taking part in community affairs. He stated that he avoided completely taking part in civic affairs, that painting was his hobby and all of his time away from school was devoted to this hobby.

B. Community:

Did not want to live in the community.-3

Lacked community interest.-3

Spoke some very disparaging remarks about his home town minister.

Had never lived in this community before.

Wanted to change the community from the customs they had instead of adjusting himself to their customs.

Lack of interest in the patrons.

Attitude toward the community.

C. School:

Did not show enough interest in school.-3

Was not willing to accept previous school policies.

Ran down the school's past administration.

Was not enough interested in our financial standing.

Had gone back to teaching from some other job in industry.

Poor attitude toward school.

D. Student Attitude:

Chose "Teachers pets."

EXPERIENCE

Lacked experience in school management.-5

Changed jobs too often.-3

Past record as superintendent was poor.-2

The lack of experience in larger schools.-2

Seemed to move around every year.

Served as superintendent only one year in his past position.

No experience in administrative work.

Unsuccessful experience.

Experienced in city work and our school was rural. I was afraid he wouldn't fit in with our community.

Hadn't accomplished much in the school he was leaving.

Years of experience.

Had been in a bad school fight.

SALARY

Was more interested in salary than school.-9

Wanted too much money.-5

Primarily interested in pay.

Financial requirements inconsistent with the size of the school.

Applied for this job starting out by telling me that we weren't paying nearly as much as we could pay. That he would like to have the job but we would have to pay him much more than our present man gets.

Asked a salary that our budget would not allow.

Indication of more interest in cash reimbursement than welfare of school children.

Stated a salary which seemed a little too high to us considering the fact we furnished a nice rent free house for a superintendent to live in.

APPEARANCE

A poor personal appearance.-7

Sloppy.-2

Slovenly dressed.

Extremely untidy in appearance.

Not neat and well groomed.

Personal appearance was not what I expected in a school superintendent.

Deaf.

Poor health.

AGE

Too old.-9

Too young.-3

Did not fit my age requirements.

JOB ATTITUDES

Had other business interests.-3

Moved from previous job because he was not willing to accept integration.-

Well qualified, but didn't seem to care much whether we hired him or not.

Lack of sincerity in presenting his application.

I had a candidate who was within a few years of retirement, who came to us well recommended. He was leaving his school because a near by government installation had made necessary its enlargement. He made the remark that he did not want to do the work it involved.

Was looking forward to retirement and social security.

Indicated he would not be without a job if not chosen, which indicated to me that he really wasn't too interested in the job.

The teacherage wasn't large enough for his family.

BOARD ATTITUDE

Left the idea that school board members weren't supposed to know much about running school, just turn it over to the superintendent.

Criticizes his past board members.

To him the Board of Education was only a group to pay all bills.

Repeatedly disagreed with opinions of his past board members.

Very firm in his opinions regardless of circumstances.

Intended to have the entire say on all school matters.

Felt like the board should leave all decisions to him.

Wanted too much authority.

Had been in the system before and started out by saying what he would do and who he would dismiss if hired.

Wife was teacher also and he didn't apply for a job for her, but made the statement that if he were hired he would work her in the system somewhere.

EDUCATION AND GENERAL QUALIFICATION

Didn't meet the qualifications.-4

Education was inadequate.-2

Did not seem capable.

Showed lack of culture.

A poor background.

A poor philosophy in general.

DISCIPLINE

Seemed to put himself on a level with high school pupils in certain actions and activities.

Too lenient in his attitude toward school discipline.

Gave me the opinion or impression of running a disorganized and poorly disciplined school, and this is exactly what we found upon visitation.

Did not get proper respect from high school students.

Seemed unsure of the matter of handling discipline problems among students.

Lacked the ability to enforce discipline in school.

Inability to consider the good of the student now and in the future to the best of his ability regardless of outside pressure.

I thought a superintendent should hold himself apart from the children completely.

Too wrapped up in his own child to take full responsibilities of other children.

RELIGION

Wasn't a Christian.-3

Did not attend church.

Was a member of a Roman Catholic Church.

Had church prejudices.

Was of a Jewish Religion.

Left the impression he intended to teach one certain religion in school.

Religious belief which would not be accepted in the community.

PERSONALITY

A poor personality.-5

An inferiority complex.

A backward disposition.

A poor personality that left the impression he would be unable to cope with situations that might arise.

PRESSURE AND POLITIKING

Did too much politiking.-2

Used his friends as pressure.

Used dubious means to influence me, such as their memberships and activities in clubs, etc.

Seemed to dwell on influential people he knew.

Tried to pressure me through mutual acquaintances to consider him for the position.

One applicant, hounded at me three or four times a week for five weeks giving me references (all of which I checked, and none were real good and some were very poor) wanting to meet with the board or call a meeting of the board and get the hiring done so he could get started.

Tried to impress me by political pull he had and the fact that he was on a state board. I got the impression that he might be so busy with his politics that he wouldn't have time to run the school.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND REFERENCES

References were poor.--3

Stories didn't seem to check with his references.

People in his home town did not know him well.

Produced poor references from former schools.

Didn't produce any past recommendations from his past employees.

Had poor recommendations.

MARITAL STATUS OR FACTORS INVOLVING FAMILY

Single.

Poor marital status.

We found he had a wife who had been a trouble maker in the schools he had taught in.

Family didn't qualify.

Let his wife, who was not a teacher, interfere with his work.

Wife had to have a teaching position in the system and did not think her field was suitable for our needs.

SPEECH

Inability to express himself publicly.-3

Couldn't meet the public.

Difficult for him to speak before a group.

Carried on a poor conversation.

LEADERSHIP, SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY

Lacked salesmanship.

Was not a leader.

Was too easily satisfied.

Reserve attitude was not acceptable as a group leader.

BUILDING OR SCHOOL PLANT ASPECTS

Had a poor school plant.-2

Let his school run down until it was in bad condition.

CURRICULUM

Too much athletics in school.

Too little athletics in school.

A grievance toward some departments.

PUBLIC RELATIONS

A poor public relations man.-2

Inability to meet the public.

TEACHER ASPECTS

Absent from his classes most of the time.-2

Neglects his teaching.

NATIVE OF COMMUNITY

A "local man."

Known too well. I wanted a man that wasn't known with some new ideas.

PERSONAL FRIEND

None were mentioned in this category.

VITA

Leahn Rector Westfall

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Thesis: CERTAIN FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE SELECTION OF SUPERINTENDENTS IN SELECTED OKLAHOMA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Major Field: Educational Administration

Biographical:

Personal data: Born near Carney, Oklahoma, December 5, 1923, the son of Iva A. and Stella Ethel Westfall.

Education: Attended grade school in a one room country school known as Red Mound near Carney, Oklahoma; graduated from Carney High School in 1940; received the Bachelor of Science degree from the Oklahoma State University, with a major in General Business, in May, 1944; received the Master of Science degree from the Oklahoma State University, with a major in Business Education, in August, 1949; completed requirements for the Doctor of Education degree in January, 1959.

Professional Experience: Superintendent of schools at Canton, Oklahoma since 1955; superintendent of schools at Greenfield, Oklahoma from 1951 to 1955; superintendent of Cheyenne Valley School, Orienta, Oklahoma from 1949 to 1951; high school principal at Carney, Oklahoma from 1945 to 1949. President of Blaine County Education Association for two terms; member of O. E. A., N. E. A., and Oklahoma School Administrator's Association.