

A CASE STUDY OF DOMINANT FACTORS WHICH  
APPEAR TO IMPROVE STATE VOCATIONAL  
ADMINISTRATIONS AMONG SELECTED  
STATE VOCATIONAL SYSTEMS

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Education in America is currently undergoing many changes due to various national reports which have been released. Changes in school structure, funding, teacher qualification, demographics, realignment, and integration of basic skills are just a few of the issues affecting state and local administration. Local educational institutions are examining their organizational structure to provide quality education to their students. Likewise, state agencies are also undergoing change and redesigning their organizations to assume a broader role in the support of education at all levels.

Vocational education is no exception. Since it has the vital role of educating people for employment and retraining, a strong state system is a requirement for providing leadership to meet the job needs of the state.

Oklahoma, Ohio, and Florida have been identified as states having strong state departments of vocational education. Peters (1987) conducted a case study of these three states to determine the dominant factors that appeared to make them so strong. Therefore, it seems necessary to learn whether the dominant factors that were identified by Peters exist in other state systems, and, if so, whether these same factors, indeed, measure relative strength in such other state systems, or could be used as references to improve a

given state's vocational delivery system.

Peters' study identified seven factors that were dominant and which characterized quality and improved delivery of vocational education within the three states.

One dominant factor related to administrative characteristic. Although the administrative characteristic was different in each state, strong support was given to vocational education by the chief state school administrator. Gentry (1976) found a variety of methods of state structure in operation in various states. Because of the diversification of structure in the state agencies, a recommendation for effective change becomes more difficult.

Another dominant factor related to the strength of the Oklahoma, Ohio and Florida systems as defined in Peters' (1987) study is the leadership style of the state directors and their reputations. Peters (1987) states ". . . [in] all three states the continuity of leadership involved long periods of tenure of the state superintendents or state commissioners, as well as state directors of vocational education, through periods of rapid economic, social and educational change" (p. 74).

The five other dominant factors identified in addition to administrative structure and leadership representation were: (1) mission of the state agency, (2) leadership continuity, (3) delivery system, (4) quality factors, and (5) state reputation.

A study of other state vocational education administrations could identify factors which are associated with state vocational educational systems in comparison with those in the states chosen for Peters' study (1987).



### Statement of the Problem

The problem is the lack of knowledge about the dominant factors that determine a state vocational delivery system in state vocational education administrations.

### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to conduct case studies of the dominant administrative factors identified by Peters' study in three selected states matched by similar 1990 total population and to compare them with the dominant factors in the three top-ranked states. In so doing, the identified dominant factors are to be validated, and recommendations may be made to state education leaders to assist them in the design of a state-level administrative structure for the delivery of vocational education services.

### Research Questions

The research questions answered are:

1. Are the seven dominant factors identified in Peters' study of the top three state vocational education systems dominant factors in three other selected states?
2. Were there other dominant factors identified in the three selected states of this study that were not identified in Peters' study?
3. What are the principal differences between the dominant factors of the two groups of states?

### Assumptions

The following assumptions were made:

1. State Directors identified the high quality state vocational systems.
2. Interviews with state staff are adequate to secure the data regarding state factors.
3. A state's system can best be assessed by state staff personnel because of their level of expertise in their system.

### Definitions

The dominant factors as identified in Peters' study were those elements that produced a marked influence in the vocational educational systems of a state.

This study used seven dominant factors noted above as they were defined by Peters (1987).

Administrative Characteristics - The organization of the vocational education division with the parent agency and the support given by the State Superintendent to the vocational education division.

Continuity of Leadership - The tenure length of the administration, namely the State Superintendent and the State Director of Vocational Education.

Delivery System - The means of providing vocational education to all levels of clients and businesses.

Leadership Style - The management style, credibility with various state leaders, the state legislature, and the relationship

with other state directors.

Mission of the State Agency - A clear and concise statement of the goals and objectives of the vocational education division.

Quality Factors - The commitment to establish high measurable standards for the implementation and conduct of vocational education programs at all levels.

Reputation - The recognition of the state vocational education system within and outside the state as rated by other state directors of vocational education.

#### Scope of the Study

The scope of the study was limited to six state vocational systems in the United States. State directors were requested to list three states other than their own, which they regarded as having the highest quality state vocational systems. The three states receiving the highest ranking were studied through the case study approach by Peters (1987). Other states, however, may still have effective systems that meet the needs of their respective states.

From each state selected, three persons were interviewed in detail regarding their state's operational and delivery procedures in the fall of 1992. The major factors identified by the specific questionnaires for the Director Emeritus, State Director, and Occupational Program Supervisor interviews were used as a basis for the case study.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

#### Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to provide information about the status of state vocational systems and a review of the case study research methodology which was the research design used to answer the research questions posed. This chapter includes material directly related to state vocational systems as well as items which were indirectly related.

#### State Level Vocational Education Systems and Related Research

The commitment to provide quality level vocational education has been defined by the National Association of State Directors of Vocational Education (1980) in their position paper "Vocational Education: Purposes, Roles, Responsibilities." The directors stated that the main purposes of vocational education are:

- 1) provide individuals with the skills they need to attain economic freedom; and
- 2) enhance the productivity of local, state, and national economics. The state directors said, 'Vocational education has no particular constituency; it is a program for all people' (p. 2).

The state directors are committed to providing the highest quality programs and services to those who choose vocational education as a

means for employment. One dominant factor cited by the state directors as having substantial influence on vocational education is related to program standards and policies. These standards and policies should be related to all aspects of vocational education: administration, instructors, learners, curriculum, instructional programs, and research.

State and local governance of vocational education can be described by the multitude of different types of board structures, all having different composition and levels of authority. The diversity of state-level organizational structure authority has potentially significant impact on the extent to which the "sole state agency" for vocational education can effectively implement federal program initiatives (Hodes, 1979). Additionally, the local-level complexity has a variety of goals and objectives that are represented in each one of the systems.

Hodes (1979) suggests that the differences in the governance systems of state agencies can have an impact on not only the delivery system to students, but also on the instructors themselves.

Woodruff (1978) concluded that the organization and governance of vocational education at the state and local levels and its delivery systems did not have just one vocational education system. Instead, vocational education is fragmented into individualized systems serving individual states and territories.

Four different administrative characteristics were found to exist (Gentry, 1971). The four structures were:

- 1) one agency for all education,
- 2) an agency for elementary and secondary, including

- vocational education, plus an agency for higher education,
- 3) an agency for elementary and secondary, plus an agency for vocational education and a separate agency for higher education, and
  - 4) an elementary and secondary agency and for individual institutions of higher education with no statewide governing body (p. 6).

The primary method of state governance was found to be by the State Board of Education, and the next most widely used governance systems was by a separate board for vocational education (Gentry, 1971).

The state directors disclosed several common characteristics for a four-component state system model. The four components were internal influences, external influences, state agency operations, and state and local programs influence. Of the four, external influences appear to be the most dominant of the four components listed by the state directors.

The most significant factors relating to the quality of state systems were seven factors described by Peters (1987). These included:

- 1) continuity of leadership, 2) administrative structure, 3) mission of the state agency, 4) leadership, 5) delivery system, 6) quality factors, and 7) reputation. The four factors which had the most influence in determining quality were leadership, mission statement, delivery, and program standards. The administration structure of the states studied was unique to each state's system (p. 73).

#### Case Study Research

This section contains an overview of the definition, purpose, limitations, and procedures of the case study research techniques.

### The Case Study Defined

Several definitions exist for case study research: Hill and Kerber (1967), Spierer (1980), Stake (1978), and Wilson (1979). Hill and Kerber define case study research as follows:

. . . is frequently termed 'descriptive research' because it describes and interprets all pertinent cases. The case under study may relate to one organization, or a situation of the subject under study. It provides greater depth to the research, and as such contributes to a better and more complete interpretation of the situation or condition that otherwise might have been possible (p. 109).

Several themes comprise the definition and attributes of the case study method. These themes include:

Stake (1978) notes the case study is particularistic which focuses on events in a particular setting and can use systematic observation techniques (e.g. interviewing) or be highly abstract and statistical (p. 243).

This approach tends to focus upon a single enterprise, actor, or classroom to study the case. The case study is something which has been noted as something to watch. The case study is something we would not rate by a score, but something we want to understand in its own environment.

The case study is holistic. The study portrays the interplay of different factors which affect the enterprise, classroom, or actor in the different groups involved. The results describe the understanding and description of the program.

The case study is longitudinal. The study can tell a story over a period of time. It describes a "slice of life" which can be interpreted as moments in time.

The case study is qualitative. Qualitative methods, such as personal interviews and statistical records, are well suited for case

study research, due to utilization of prose and literary methods to describe the situations.

Further, Anderson and others (1975) define the case study as an "intensive, detailed analysis and description of a single organism, institution or phenomenon in the context of its environment" (p. 173).

In summary, the case study is a method to describe and analyze a program in depth and identify its complexities over a period of time in its own environment.

#### Case Study Limitations

Much can be said to support the case study method; however, case studies have some inherent limitation. Although on the surface they appear to be simplistic instruments, there are complex issues involved as they are put into practice. Interview methods must be perfected to sample the participant in soliciting the proper responses. A code of the retrieval information system is necessary to access data after the interviews have been completed. Caution should be noted so not to make the field of questions too broad and to keep well-defined boundaries.

Readers of case studies tend to examine the research for only what may be transferable to their situations; however, the detail of the study, which may be lengthy, must be written so the user can determine the differences and similarities between the reader's situation and the case study situation.

#### Case Study Process

Upon reviewing various sources of literature, numerous methods are outlined for the collection of data. Hill and Kerber (1967) suggest



five major phases of the case study method:

- 1) status of the situation or unit of attention;
- 2) collection of data, examination, and history;
- 3) diagnosis and identification of causal factors;
- 4) adjustment, treatment, and therapy; and
- 5) follow-up of the adjustment program (p. 186).

Others who suggest procedures in conducting case studies, Bogdan and Bilken, 1982 and Van Dalen, 1962, focus upon the qualitative methods of case study gathering. Bogdan and Bilken (1982, p. 127) suggest that "qualitative methods refer to research procedures which produce descriptive data." Three methods are well suited for data gathering: observing, interviewing, and gathering data unobtrusively. The focus of the case study approach is the interviewing technique as it applies to the collection of data for the determination of the "slice of time" within the state vocational system.

Interviews become more than questioning staff regarding their situation within a given environment. Both structured and unstructured questions may be used since some flexibility is needed for follow-up questioning from the structured questions. Interview questions are asked orally from a predetermined set of closed-ended questions. Further discussion regarding interviewing and questioning is addressed later in this chapter.

The National Center for Research in Vocational Education, Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio, under the direction of Robert E. Taylor, funded a project to review various evaluation procedures to complement the ones in use currently. The case study approach to evaluating findings appeared to be highly useful to program and policy level decision makers. Spierer (1980) prepared a handbook entitled, "The Case Study Method, Guidelines, Practices and Applications for

Vocational Education Evaluation" as a result of the National Center's effort. Although there are numerous procedures for case study reviews, the text by Spirer (1980) outlining 12 steps in three stages, was most applicable to this study.

#### Pre-Field Work Stage

Several steps must be initiated prior to gathering the pieces of information. The initial pre-field work stages relating to case studies are: setting boundaries, defining the unit of analyses, selecting a site(s), establishing initial contracts, developing data collection systems, and defining field work procedures. Discussion on each step follows (Spirer, 1980).

##### Step One: Setting Boundaries

Setting boundaries is considered laying a solid foundation for the study. Should the study answer one (or a few) questions in depth, or should it answer several questions of less depth? What will be the limits of the study? How will they be selected? Such boundaries must be set by those decision makers who need the information and not by the evaluator alone. Experts knowledgeable in the area must be consulted to determine the questions which need answers by the decision makers (Spirer, 1980).

##### Step Two: Determining the Unit of Analysis

The unit of analysis is the "thing" that is being studied. The unit may be schools, students, state agencies or types of programs. The type of information required in the case study determines the unit

of analysis (Spirer, 1980).

#### Step Three: Selecting a Site

Spirer (1980) notes several methods for selecting a site for the case study. Two sampling methods exist: random and purposeful. Random site selection is recommended for generalizing the findings from the entire sample. Samples based upon the random selection method may be a simple sample, cluster, or stratified sample.

Purposeful sampling is used for identifying sites where the evaluator intends to learn something about certain sites and does not need to generalize the complete population. Extreme samples may be studied where the most information may be gained by evaluating poor programs along with exceptional ones (Spirer, 1980).

#### Step Four: Establishing Initial Contacts

Upon determining the sites, it is time to gain approval for conducting the study within the sample selected. The researcher must be open and honest, follow protocol, and assure confidentiality where appropriate. Contacting the person who has the power to grant or deny permission is of utmost importance to assure that the information gained will be used in the correct manner (Spirer, 1980).

#### Step Five: Developing Data Collection Procedures

Bogdan and Taylor (1979), as noted earlier, described three ways for collecting qualitative information through observations, interviewing, and gathering data unobtrusively. The purpose of the study will determine the type of data collection method used. Each

method produces a different way of examining the same problem which will confirm or reject other findings (Spirer, 1980).

#### Step Six: Organizing Data

The data collected can be voluminous and difficult to assemble when making comparison which makes the retrieving of data important. Coding of data, whether from interview or from unobtrusive sources must be such that it conserves time, is easy to implement, and is cost effective (Spirer, 1980).

#### The Field Work Stage

Upon completion of the pre-field work stage as listed earlier, it is time to start the assembling and collecting of data, which constitutes the second stage of the case study. The steps of this stage are listed below (Spirer, 1980).

#### Step Seven: Staff Training

Staff should be trained to use the instruments designed for the specific method of data collection utilized prior to field work. Training needs will differ depending upon the researcher's time and fiscal resources. Staff assessment instruments may also be designed specifically for the case study to determine the needs of staff to assist in implementation of the training agenda. Step seven is considered critical to the completion of a successful case study (Spirer, 1980).

### Step Eight: Logistics of Field Work Operations

This step includes a variety of functions prior to entering the field for actual data collection. Steps include:

Scheduling. Arrange a date and time of interview well in advance and confirm the arrangement again shortly ahead of the actual interview. Select whom to interview and what to observe. The evaluator makes the selection of whom the interviewees will be.

Recording Responses. Written or taped notes must always be taken during the interview. A system must be implemented to record all responses and observations. The transcripts of notes and tape recordings must be recorded immediately upon completing the interview, so that all details may be recalled clearly.

Participation. The role of the interviewer should be relatively passive during the site interview. Interaction with the interviewee should be undertaken with caution. Information gathered from other interviews should not be shared.

When in Rome. Become familiar with the terms and language used at the selected sites for a better understanding of different meanings at that site.

Supplies. A list of supplies required which might assist in conducting the interview is recommended (Spirer, 1980).

### Step Nine: Data Collection

Data Collection during the case study may be through interviewing, observing, or gathering unobtrusive data, as discussed in earlier steps. It is important during the interview data-collection step to ensure that all the questions are answered by the interviewee, and that the interviewer is a good listener.

### The Analysis Verification and Synthesis Stage

#### Step Ten: Analyzing Data

Analysis of the data becomes a continuous process that begins upon capturing the first piece of data. As data are collected, new questions will arise requiring adjustments to be made during the interviewing process.

Following completion of the report, the findings must be tested for accuracy by having someone review the report at the case study sites to verify the draft. Again it is of utmost importance that the data be compiled quickly after gathering and be reviewed for accuracy by the expert selected (Spirer, 1980).

#### Step Eleven: Reporting the Findings

Reporting of the findings is considered one of the most challenging sections of the research activity. The actual structure for reporting may take various forms depending upon the intended audience. Certain points are to be included in the report, however, regardless of the form. These include purpose, method, time and length

of the case study, sites, limitations, relationships between the sites, checks on data, presentation of findings, and conclusions and recommendations (Spirer, 1980).

#### Step Twelve: Utilizing the Case Study Findings

The reporting design of the case study results is an item of consideration throughout the study. The results need to be stated precisely into a condensed summary to accommodate the readers. The final report should be disseminated to all interview participants in the case study and to the parties who can use the data at decision-making time (Spirer, 1980).

#### Chapter Summary

This chapter represents a review of direct materials relating to state vocational education systems. Much of the literature reviewed concerned itself with evaluation of an individual state system and did not focus upon the dominant factors relating to several states. The dominant factors identified in the case study research conducted by Peters (1987) were most beneficial in determining those dominant factors which related to quality state vocation systems. These factors were: (1) continuity of leadership, (2) administrative characteristics, (3) mission of the state agency, (4) leadership style, (5) delivery system, (6) quality factors, and (7) reputation. The four factors which had the most influence were: leadership, mission statement, delivery system, and quality standards. Only limited research was available directly relating to the questions posed.

The second section dealt with the review of specific literature relating to the case study approach and the recommended procedure to prepare, collect, and assemble the data collected. The major literature sources directly related the case study procedures to vocational education.



## CHAPTER III

### METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to compare the identified quality dominant factors among the top ranked state vocational education systems with states of similar total populations. The methodology was designed to answer the following questions.

1. Are the seven dominant factors identified in Peters' study of the top three state vocational education systems also the dominant factors in the other three states selected?
2. Were the other dominant factors identified in the three selected states of this study that were not found in Peters' study?
3. What are the principle differences between the dominant factors that characterize the two groups of states?

This chapter outlines the methodology for securing data to develop the case studies for each state vocational education system. Three major stages of the data gathering and analysis were utilized: (1) The Pre-field Work State, (2) The Field Work Stage, and (3) The Analysis, Verification, and Synthesis Stage (Spirer, 1980).

#### Pre-Field Work Stage

##### Setting Boundaries

The boundaries were established from the reported research results (Peters, 1987) and then were focused upon the dominant

factors influencing vocational education systems within the top states identified and other states of lesser ranking. The four questions posed for the study were basic to the research reported (Peters, 1987) and were expanded to include a comparison with other state vocational education systems for identifying these factors stated earlier.

#### Determining the Unit of Analysis

The unit of analysis for this study was the state vocational education system for each of the three top states and for each of the other selected states of similar total populations.

#### Selecting the Site

The selection of the original three states came from a survey conducted by the Executive Director of the National Association of State Directors of Vocational Education (Peters, 1987). The State Directors of each state, trust territory, and District of Columbia were asked to nominate three states other than their own who they regarded as having the "best" vocational education systems. Responses to the survey were based upon the state directors' perception of the state's reputation in vocational education. No specific criteria were outlined for making the nominations.

The states studied in this research focused upon states of similar size to those studied by Peters (1987); namely, Ohio, Oklahoma, and Florida.

The total 1990 census population was considered since the states studied by Peters served populations in public schools, area

vocational-technical schools, community colleges, higher education, and industry training, which includes both high school students and adults who may enroll in vocational-technical education. The states of Oklahoma, Ohio, and Florida population data were compared to individual state data to select the states which most closely compared to the population of the state studied in this research.

#### Establishing Initial Contacts

In each state the researcher initially contacted the Director Emeritus and the Occupational Program Supervisor after securing permission from the State Director. Phone contact was the first point of discussion about the research.

Discussion regarding the purpose of the research, time involved, and the questionnaires for the participants were explained. Written correspondence followed the verbal contacts to each participant (See Appendix A and B).

State staff members and Director Emeritus were interviewed using specific questionnaires relating to their area of responsibility. Assurances were made orally and in writing prior to and during the interviews that the information would be treated in a confidential manner. The data would be synthesized for each state and individual comments would be omitted.

#### Developing Data Collection Procedures

The data collected were from a questionnaire developed in the research conducted by Peters (1987).

Peters (1987) developed three separate interview schedules. The first was for the State Director Emeritus and contained 16 questions. The second was used for interviewing the State Director and contained 36 questions. The third was for the Occupational Program Supervisor and contained 27 questions. All persons interviewed were asked one common question with the balance of the questions overlapping among the interviewees. This procedure gave overlapping points of view.

The questions in the Peters (1987) case study were designed from the review of literature, informal focus groups, and from a conceptual framework for studying state vocational education systems.

The questions which were developed in Peters' (1987) study were circulated among peers for review and comment. Revisions were considered and incorporated based upon peer suggestions. The interview questions were pretested to identify ambiguous questions and to determine the time required for each interview. The pretest also provided the researcher a chance to gain skill in applying interview techniques.

The questions which were developed for Peters' study were used with the other interviewees in the states selected. A pretest of the questions was given to state staff members in the researcher's own state to further gain experience in questioning and interviewing techniques. Trial data collection methods were implemented during the experimental interview.

Guidelines for interviewing were reviewed. Backstron and Hursh (1963) listed criteria which must be followed.

1. Always follow instructions carefully.
2. Always study the questionnaire until you are familiar with all the questions.

3. Always use the brief introductory approach written into the questionnaire.
4. Always be completely neutral, informal, and conscientious.
5. Always read questions just as they were written.
6. Always ask all of the questions.
7. Always ask questions in the order they appear.
8. Always record comments accurately.
9. Always interview only the proper person at the housing unit designated by your procedure.
10. Always check each questionnaire to make sure you have completed every item.
11. Always interview people you do not know, and interview them alone (pp. 308).

### Organizing Data

The data were organized into a coding system to identify the seven dominant factors of state systems (Peters, 1987). Post-interview documentation was completed after the interviews. Classifications of unobtrusive data were further coded into major factors relating to the dominant factors identified. Documentation was sorted by site and position, in addition to the sorting by factors as noted above.

### Field Work Stage

#### Staff Training

The research was conducted by only one researcher, therefore, the training was minimized. Reviews of interviewing techniques in various research publications were studied. Practice sessions on interviewing techniques were implemented on the researcher's own state staff members to gain competence in the interview methodology.

The interviewer's check list developed by Backstron and Hursh

(1963) included the following items the interviewer must adhere to:

You must be:

1. Completely honest in your work.
2. Reliable and conscientious.
3. Utterly objective in your manner of asking questions.
4. Faithful and neutral in recording answers.
5. Willing to write answers fully and legibly.
6. Interested in people and understanding.
7. Able to inspire people's confidence and put them at ease.
8. Inconspicuously, but neatly dressed (pp. 334).

Recorded transcripts of the interview were made after a thorough review of the recording procedure with the interviewee.

#### Logistics of Field Work Operations

Phone contact with participants and written confirmation of the interview schedule were utilized. The confirmation letter confirmed date, time, location, and approximately the time needed for the interview. The letter also listed unobtrusive data needed to support questions asked in the interview.

A tape recorder, the use of which is familiar to the researcher, was found to be absolutely essential for recording data. Needed supplies were also gathered and made available during the interview.

The location chosen for the interview was a quiet, private area which eliminated interruptions and distractions during the staff dialogues.

#### Data Collection

State directors were asked to furnish unobtrusive data such as financial, enrollment, staff organizational structure, and annual reports. These data were reviewed prior to the interview to provide

the researcher background information about the state system.

The interview was conducted in a quiet, private area within the time allotted. Taped transcripts of the interview provided the researcher the means of classifying the data gathered when questions arose after the interview.

The interviewer check list was reviewed and followed prior to, during, and after each interview to provide a consistent interview procedure.

### Analysis, Verification, and Synthesis Stage

#### Analyzing Data

Data collection and analysis occurred in the same stage. Review of the unobtrusive data and questioning confirmed the existence or nonexistence of the dominant factors and also expanded the area of review into other themes. In-depth questioning was required to ensure that other factors which were not identified earlier were not dominant factors (Peters, 1987).

The data were continuously triangulated to obtain the most accurate reflection of what was actually occurring in the state system.

Draft reports of findings were sent to the interviewees to solicit their comments on the accuracy of the site interviews.

Phone calls were made to secure approval or to entertain suggestions or verification or modification of the reports from the interviewees.

### Reporting the Findings

The report of findings included a summary of its evaluation purpose, methods used to conduct the studies, length of time spent to study the sites, site designation, limitations of the case study, case-study relationships, data collection checks, presentation of the findings and conclusions, and recommendations. The report will be made available to state agencies for vocational education.

### Utilizing the Case-Study Findings

The findings were utilized to evaluate various state vocational systems and assist state leaders to make decisions for the improvement and expansion of vocational education in their respective states. Summary copies were provided to state directors of vocational education for their use in making decisions regarding state agency operations.



## CHAPTER IV

### THREE CASE STUDIES: STATES A, B, AND C

This chapter is organized into three parts: (1) State A case study, (2) State B case study, and (3) State C case study. Each case study is divided into six major areas of study: (1) General Description, (2) Governance, (3) Administrative Characteristics, (4) Delivery System, (5) Quality Factors, and (6) Leadership Styles.

#### States in the Study

The original three states (Peters, 1987) were selected from a survey conducted by the Executive Director of the National Association of State Directors of Vocational Education. The state directors of each state, trust territory, and the District of Columbia, were asked to nominate three states other than their own which they regarded as having the "best" vocational education systems. Responses to the survey were based upon each state director's perception of a state's reputation in vocation education. No specific criteria were outlined for making the nominations.

The additional states studied in this research focused upon those states who compared in total population size to the original states studied, namely Ohio, Oklahoma, and Florida.

## State A: Case Study

### General Description

The total secondary enrollment (9-12) in State A was 327,031 students in the 1991-92 school year. During the same period there were 21,560 full-time vocational adult students enrolled with a total adult post-secondary enrollment of 296,162 students. In FY 1992, the total state and federal funds available for vocational education was \$88,172,905 with an allocation of \$48,259,731 for secondary programs. Forty community college districts and 536 school districts offer vocational education programs. Each school district offers between 12 to 15 programs.

### Governance

State A is governed by the State Board of Education which also serves as the Board of Vocational Education. Board members, one from each of the judicial districts, are appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate. The State Board of Education considers vocational-education-related matters along with all other education items.

The Vocational Division is a part of the Department of Education and is headed by a State Director of Vocational Technical Education who is appointed by the State Superintendent and serves at his pleasure. The State Director of Vocational Education is responsible to the Deputy State Superintendent who reports to the State Superintendent.

The State Director has complete authority over vocational education matters, personnel, funding, program evaluation, program approval at secondary, post-secondary levels, and general administrative responsibilities within the division.

The governance structure was changed in 1975 from being centered in a separate Board for Vocational Education to being integrated into the Department of Education when the State Director became an associate State Superintendent. Currently the position of State Director of Vocational Education is several levels below the Superintendent level. The past State Director indicated that the former governance structure provided more strength and visibility than did the current structure.

The state has continually received increases in state funding during the past several years. Most recently an appropriation of three million dollars was approved for implementation of Tech Prep programs. Although there has been an increase in funds, there has been a decrease of 30 to 40 staff persons from the time of the past State Director to the present, due to downsizing of state government.

The role of the Vocational Education division is to be the sole state agency in administering state and federal funds and laws at the secondary and post-secondary level. Along with the regulatory duties as outlined by law, the division provides leadership for education changes, setting the pace for others and providing vision for local schools as they develop quality vocational education programs. These functions are conducted in cooperation with the community college board.

Three state directors have served during the past 25 years, with the past state director having served 12 of the 25 years. The current director has served three years. Prior to the current Director, there was a two-year period without a designated director.

The current director must coordinate all vocational education matters through the state superintendent in relationship to the legislature, governor, or other state agencies. The former director, due to the organizational structure, had more freedom to work directly with the State Superintendent, Governor, and legislature.

#### Administration Characteristics

The state staff has decreased during the past several years with the only added positions being those required through the Carl Perkins Act funds. Some of the staff members are organized as program consultant (such as in Agriculture, Home Economics and Trade and Industry) with responsibility for both secondary and post-secondary programs, while others have responsibility for either secondary or post-secondary program areas, separately.

The vocational education evaluation system is characterized a program improvement activity for assisting schools to improve their programs. However, there have been fewer on-site teacher assistance visits per teacher due to the decrease in staff; regional meetings are emphasized in lieu of on-site assistance. Compliance functions as required by law are also a function of the state staff evaluation effort, if it is found that no progress is made by a program. Programs are evaluated on a five-year cycle through a self-evaluation

process. A new statewide evaluation system is being designed, based upon outcome standards rather than process standards.

Priorities of the Vocational Education Division in earlier years focused upon regionalization of vocational education programs, the sharing of vocational education programs within schools, and coordination with community colleges through a written cooperative agreement.

Current vocational education priorities are the integration of academic content and vocational education, articulation between secondary and post-secondary programs, services to special populations, developing partnerships between business, education, and labor, improvement of performance standards and development of work-site training programs. The priorities as set by the vocational education division may be included in the overall department's priorities, but the division may also have priorities unique to the vocational education efforts.

#### Delivery System

The division has an increasingly good relationship with the secondary schools due to its involvement in the K-8 occupational information programs (these programs are infused into classes; they are not add-on courses) and through stressing integration of academic and vocational education teams working together to improve the overall curriculum. Secondary programs are offered on block hour bases at high schools and area vocational schools.

The state is organized into 61 separate regional vocational education systems, making a consortium of separate school districts.

There is a trend for the number of high school vocational education programs to increase, mostly because students prefer to attend their own high school rather than to travel to the area vocational school. During the past four years, six area vocational schools have closed. Area vocational districts are formed by either single districts administering the area vocational schools with other schools paying tuition for their students, or by a group of districts forming an area vocational school district.

Post-secondary vocational education is offered in the two-year community college system. Programs of full-time and part-time length are conducted. Special industry training programs for new and expanding industry are conducted at the community college level. The funds for industry specific training were transferred to the community college board and removed from the vocational education process. Federal and state funds for post-secondary training both for full-time and part-time programs are approved by the vocational education division. A limited number of adult programs are offered through community based organizations, tech institutes, universities, and area vocational schools, with the vocational education division also approving their funds and programs. The State Legislature mandated in 1965 that all community colleges must have vocational education programs offered in their institutions.

Staff development for local staff is a high priority for the state staff. Due to the downsizing of state personnel, it has become increasingly important to share the in-service training with the teacher education institution. The decrease in federal funding has

changed the role of the teacher education institution and has caused an entrepreneurship attitude toward teacher education with the local educational agencies. The teacher education institution has turned to the local school districts to secure contracts for teacher in-service activities. The direct relationship between vocational education and universities has been lessened due to the change in federal funds. Funds which are available for teacher education are used for statewide coordination of teacher education programs.

Vocational student organizations are considered an integral part of the institutional programs. The state supports vocational student organizations with funds and personnel through a contract with an executive director for each vocational student organization area. A state staff person is assigned to provide advice to the specific vocational student organization executive director.

#### Quality Factors

The quality factors which best describe the ability of the state vocational education agency to deliver high quality vocational education programs were: (1) the political savvy of the State Director, (2) the ability to work with different groups to get them to do what needs to be accomplished for the advancement of vocational education, (3) a chief State School officer who supports vocational education and provides leadership in that area to local school administration, legislators, and (4) a superintendent who speaks openly about vocational education. Strong leadership at the state level, with a commitment and support for vocational education, was also noted.

### Leadership Style

The leadership style of the current state vocational education administration is characterized by enthusiasm, commitment to vocational education, team orientation, utilization of the strengths of staff, involvement of staff, and dedication and hard work on the part of the staff, itself. The past state director functioned as a strong leader with the staff working under his leadership.

### State B: Case Study

### General Description

The total vocational secondary enrollment (9-12) in State B was 107,920 in FY 1992. During the same period there were 9,525 full-time adults enrolled in vocational education programs and 47,524 part-time adults enrolled. In FY 1992 the total state and federal funds available for all levels of vocational education was \$84,559,951 with an allocation of 19,927,341 Title II C funds for secondary vocational education programs. Ninety-six institutions provide vocational education for post-secondary students and 589 high schools offering 3,391 vocational programs in FY 1992.

### Governance

The governance of vocational education is outlined by legislation with authority given to the Secretary of Education through the Commissioner of Education to the Director of Vocational Education. The governance structure has not changed, but the number of staff members has been reduced.



The State Board of Education and the State Board of Vocational Education are one and the same, although they function as separate boards. The Board conducts two meetings the same day, one for vocational education and one for general education matters. The State Director represents vocational education at the board meetings. The Secretary and Commissioner report to the State Board of Education. Items common to both areas are presented to the State Board of Education. The State Board members are appointed by the Governor. Nineteen members serve on the State Board.

The State Director of Vocational Education is approved by the Commissioner and approved by the Secretary of Education. During the past 25 years, there have been five state directors.

The Director's scope of authority is to approve funds, personnel, budgets, programs, and in-state travel. The Director assists in drafting legislation, coordinating efforts with the Commissioner and Secretary of Education to ensure that all persons are informed of pending action. The Director also attends legislative committee meetings and hearings to present testimonies relating to vocational education.

State funds have increased approximately five percent yearly with the federal funds remaining level, but the current federal vocation education funds are less restrictive, and this fact allows greater use of the funds available.

The primary role of the Vocational Education Division is to provide leadership and technical assistance to schools while allowing equal access to vocational education for all students. The role also

is to provide vocational education programs to prepare persons for a career in the job market and to allow them to continue in higher education.

#### Administration Characteristics

Seventy-eight employees are in the Vocational Technical Education Division. This is a reduction from 96 since the current Director began in 1990. The reduction is due to the downsizing of state government. The program staff is organized by function of duty rather than by program areas. All staff members serve both secondary and post-secondary levels. Three units exist within the Vocational Education Division: (1) Federal programs, (2) Curriculum, instruction, and youth organizations, and (3) Research development and program evaluations. The fiscal unit reports directly to the Director.

The primary purpose of the evaluation process is to provide technical assistance to schools to assist them in program improvement. Compliance is a secondary activity of the evaluation process. Approximately 20 percent of the schools are evaluated each year on a five-year cycle. Federal vocational education funded programs are reviewed yearly, based upon a locally designed evaluation instrument, approved by the vocational education division. This instrument is used to determine the effectiveness of the funded programs.

The current evaluation instrument is based on time and process standards. As a result of the new federal vocational education

legislation, the evaluation process is moving toward competency/outcome-based standards. The new system is currently being piloted in 170 schools.

The Vocational Education Division has a well defined list of goal statements published and disseminated to various groups and educational institutions. In summary, the role of vocational education is to develop competency-based vocational education programs serving special populations, integrate academics into vocational education, and serve more adults in vocational education programs. Seven part-time staff persons are located within the division dedicated to the specific vocational student organization operation. The program staff works at the policy level with the part-time staff to provide the required vocational student organization activities. Vocational student organization activities are given a high priority within the division and are considered to be strong components of any vocational education program.

#### Delivery System

The relationship between vocational education and comprehensive education within the State Department is that there are two equal divisions, one for vocational education and one for curriculum and instruction. Each division is headed by a Division Director who coordinates his or her division efforts to provide unified leadership to educational institutions. Secondary academics and vocational education efforts have been strengthened by efforts to integrate basic skills into the vocational education programs through

implementing applied classes in the academic curriculum, and by the development of Tech Prep within community colleges and high schools.

Full-time vocational programs are offered in comprehensive high schools and area vocational schools on a multi-hour schedule. Eighty-four area vocational technical schools exist in the state and most have been formed with multiple common school district arrangements.

Five single area vocational school districts, each serving one school district, exist in the larger cities. Area vocational schools have a joint operating committee which governs the schools. The operating committee is comprised of one member from each of the participating school districts.

Post-secondary vocational education programs are offered in 96 institutions consisting of area vocational schools, community colleges and private schools. Training is available on a full-time and part-time schedule that allows persons to acquire the education needed for their specific occupational objectives. Apprenticeship training is available and funded by the division for apprenticeship occupations.

Short-term adult classes of various lengths are conducted during day and evening in area vocational schools to retrain employees. Classes are conducted on a clock-hour structure with a certificate given upon completion. Classes are transferable from the area vocational school to the community colleges for credit. State vocational funds are available for short-term adult classes. Enrollment has been increasing in the short-term adult program area.

Industry-specific, customized training has a high priority and

has been in place for 12 years with an allocation between 10 and 15 million dollars annually. The funds are set aside to attract new industries or to assist existing industries in the state. All industry-specific funds are allocated to the Department of Education--Vocational Education Division. The decision on the funding is made jointly by the Department of Commerce, Department of Labor, Governor's Office, and the Department of Education - Vocational Education Division.

The vocational education division staff works very closely with teacher education institutions to prepare teachers. Eighteen schools are involved in some form of vocational teacher education. Three regional professional development centers located at three universities exist to assist with professional development activities. The three regional centers are funded with approximately three million dollars to provide pre- and in-service training for teachers and administrators. All vocational teacher education activities in other higher education centers are coordinated through the three regional professional development centers. The vocational education staff coordinates with the regional professional development centers to design industrial based in-service to upgrade teachers to new technology.

#### Quality Factors

Quality factors which are considered to be factors in achieving a high quality vocational education system were stated as consistent state leadership, a delivery system to prepare youth and adults not only for a career into the job market, but also for higher education.

Another factor cited was that industry standards applied to vocational programs will enhance the achievement of vocational education.

### Leadership Style

The present leadership style of the vocational education administrative team can best be characterized as a team of career professionals with 20 plus years of experience in vocational education. The team is goal-oriented, it uses a participatory management style, it is facilitatory. Members of the team are managers of programs, not supervisors. They are stimulators and encouragers. The current style can be contrasted to previous styles by describing it as open and team oriented as opposed to closed and autocratic.

### State C: Case Study

#### General Description

The total secondary vocational enrollment (9-12) in State C was 48,204 students in the 1991-1992 school year. During the same period there were 22,849 full-time adult vocational education students enrolled. IN FY 1992 the total state and federal funds available for all levels of vocational education were \$80,211,866 with an allocation of \$18,016,979 for secondary vocational programs there are 31 community colleges and 249 high schools offering 1088 vocational education programs.

## Governance

The legislative statutory authority for vocational education is placed within the Board of Community Colleges and Occupational Education. The State Director reports to the President of the Board, but the President is the legally designated State Director of Vocational Education. The President of the Board has, in turn, delegated the duties to the Vice President for Educational Services. The board has nine members who are appointed by the Governor. The Board serves as the State Board of Vocational Education in the same meeting as the one in which community college items are considered.

The State Board of Education is a separate board which elects a member from each of the nine congressional districts and two at large. It has no direct relationship to the Board of Community Colleges and Occupational Education and has no governance over vocational education.

The State Director designee has complete authority concerning all vocational education matters. The scope of his authority is to approve the funding of programs at all levels by formula. He approves programs to receive funds, allocates federal vocational education funds for special projects, approves travel and purchasing, and allocates personnel.

The role of the State Director is relatively minor, since the President handles all matters for the Board with the legislators and Governor.

The governance structure has not changed in the past 25 years, except that now the President is responsible to present materials to

the Board, whereas, in years prior to 1985, there were two people responsible to the Board, one person to represent community college items and one person to represent vocational education items.

The state has received an increase in program funds during the past five years, but program funding has not kept pace with funding for other educational purposes. For example, the percentage of vocational education to overall educational funding has decreased. Also, there has been a decrease in the number of state staff positions during the past years due to the downsized and changing priorities of state government.

The role of the vocational education division is to provide leadership throughout the state, thus assisting educational institutions in a constructive manner to improve the quality of vocational education. The division also establishes initiatives for use of discretionary funds.

During the past 25 years, there have been seven state directors with varied backgrounds, because directors were appointed by the Board or (as at present) the President. Moreover, greater tenure has existed at the occupational program supervisor level thus providing more stability to the vocational education division.

#### Administration Characteristics

Program managers are organized by occupational areas such as Agriculture, Home Economics, and Trade and Industrial Education. The program managers also serve as regional coordinators with a defined region in the state. Program managers serve both secondary and



post-secondary programs. Nine and one-half staff members are assigned to provide vocational education program assistance from the total of 25 vocational education staff members.

The division evaluation system is considered as a program improvement tool to assist programs to become more effective in training persons for an occupational area, but it is also a compliance process in relation to policy and law for program approval. Regular vocational education programs are evaluated every five years, and special projects are evaluated yearly. The community college evaluations are conducted concurrently with the higher education evaluation on a five-year cycle.

The bases for the conduct of program evaluations are defined, general, and specific program standards with revision in the standards made each five years, or as required by specific state or federal legislation. Current evaluation standards are being revised as required by the Perkins Act.

Priorities for the vocational education division during the past ten years have been the development of quality vocational education programs at the secondary and post-secondary levels, response to state economic development needs, response to customized needs of business and industry, service to special populations and response to student needs.

#### Delivery System

The relationship between vocational education and comprehensive education is the role of becoming more involved in secondary school

and vocational education as a part of the overall education thrust. Vocational education is becoming more visible in secondary education. The vocational education division works increasingly closer with the State Department of Education and secondary programs.

Secondary vocational education programs are offered in school districts, area vocational schools, and community colleges on a block-hour schedule. Six area schools exist in the state. All but one are a part of individual school districts. One is a multi-district area vocational school. Schools that send students to an area vocational school and are not members of the area vocational school pay tuition to the receiving area vocational school for those students attending from their home high school. Most vocational education programs on the secondary level exist with the comprehensive high schools.

The division has an excellent relationship with the community college vocational-based programs because of their representation within the Board of Community Colleges and Occupational Education. The State Director has responsibilities as Vice President for Educational Services within the Board, a fact which accents the vocational education efforts. Post-secondary programs are offered at area vocational schools, community colleges, and correctional centers.

Vocational schools were organized as separate institutions, and some have merged with community colleges but they are still classified as area vocational schools and receive state and federal funds. Area vocational schools also work with the Board of

Cooperative Education Services and are independent from any other governing Boards. Some area vocational schools are connected to public school boards. One area vocational school offers credit for courses through an arrangement with a community college. The trend is to merge the area vocational schools and community colleges and offer both certificate and Applied Associate Science (AAS) degree programs.

Short-term adult programs are offered in the community colleges in large quantities. Clock-hour and credit-hour classes are offered and are market driven. Classes are designed for people to take one or more courses/classes as needed to upgrade their skills.

Industry-specific training is heavily emphasized in community colleges to provide customized training. The Board administers funds for both industry-specific and existing industry training programs. Approximately 2.3 million dollars are appropriated for these two special programs.

The Vocational Education Division emphasized the need for teacher in-service and works closely in the designated vocational teacher education institution. The vocational teacher education institution provides assistance to new teachers through an itinerant teacher educator, by assigning methods to new teachers, and by conducting the annual vocational conference. Vocational education staff persons coordinate the teacher education needs with the designated teacher education institution to provide the required pre- and in-service education opportunities. Federal funds are provided to the teacher education institution in a contractual arrangement for the support of teacher education.

A tremendous amount of emphasis is placed upon the vocational student organization effort. State staff members assist in vocational student organization activities along with contract people to provide major support to the vocational student organization group. Leadership activities are required as an integral part to each vocational education area curriculum. Vocational student organizations are strongly encouraged as well as professional organizations related to each program area.

#### Quality Factors

Quality factors in achieving a high level state vocational education delivery system are leadership and commitment at the top in the agency, knowledge of who has the responsibility and who influences the nature of vocational education programs within the state, qualified leadership at the state level, and adequate funding for programs.

#### Leadership Style

The leadership style of the current and immediately preceding administration is best characterized by the nature of the staff. The staff has good Board-relationship skills; experience in working with the legislature and state agencies; it consists of collaborate people who are quick learners about vocational education, who work well together and utilize strengths of other members of the staff. In short, the leadership can be said to be "brilliant," participatory by both the President and his administrative team, and conducive to team building among staff.

This leadership style has evolved over the years from a closed and autocratic style to an open, participatory style. Its effects permeate the Board of Community Colleges and Occupational Education staff.

## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY, FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Summary

##### The Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to conduct a case study of the dominant administrative factors among the three top ranked state vocational systems compared with three selected states, to validate those identified dominant factors, to compare those dominant factors with the ranked states, and to make recommendations to state education leaders to assist them in the design of a state-level administrative structure for the delivery of vocational education services.

#### Findings

Seven areas of dominant factors were identified as areas of study in the case studies conducted in each state. These areas are: (1) continuity of leadership, (2) administrative characteristics, (3) mission of the agency, (4) leadership style, (5) delivery system, (6) quality factors, and (7) reputation. Each area will be discussed as related to the case study data collected.

### Continuity of Leadership

The states that were reported by Peters (1987) concluded that the three states studied had continuity of leadership with long tenure by the State Director and an orderly transition between State Directors when a change was made. The appointment of a new State Director appeared to be free from political pressure. The long tenure of the State Director supported strong ties between educational and governmental leaders.

The current study indicated that States A, B, and C during the past 25 years had three, five, and seven state directors, respectively. In States B and C there appeared to be an orderly transition of state directors, but in State A a two-year period of time lapsed prior to the appointment of a permanent State Director by the State Superintendent. All Directors were appointed by the Superintendent and/or Commissioner of Education or President without formal criteria for hiring a State Director who had background in vocational education.

In State C, the fact that seven State Directors have served during the past 25 years (some for a limited period of time, and some with a limited background in vocational education) has had an impact on the establishment of continuity in the mission of the division. State C has a strong Board and legislative structure, however, to deliver vocational education, and that strength helped to maintain the quality of vocational education during the changes in the State Director position.

### Administrative Characteristics

The States of Oklahoma, Ohio, and Florida had an administrative structure which allowed strong support from the State Superintendent to implement change within the education system. The State Director was an independent authority to make policy, allocate funds, initiate change and evaluate programs (Peters, 1987).

States in this study, noted by the interviewees, stated that the State Director had authority to administer vocational education programs at all levels (within board policies, state and federal laws) such as program approval, allocation of funds, evaluating programs, and staffing. The State Director's position within the organizational structures in States A and B placed several administrative levels between the State Superintendent or Commissioner and the State Director. This placement limits the visibility and impact of the State Director on vocational education changes.

In all cases of the states studied, there has been a reduction of staff during the past several years due to the downsizing of state government. All the interviewees indicated that the priorities for technical assistance to programs and teachers were reassessed to maximize the responsibilities of staffs to schools. Through the realignment of staff, some services were contracted to outside contractors or universities or were eliminated.

### Mission Statement

The three State Directors who were interviewed in Peter's (1987)



study indicated that they had clearly written statements of their mission. The goals related to working with those within vocational education, general education, and business and industry. Working with state legislators, governors and agency heads were also important factors stated in their mission statements.

Of the states considered in this study, State B was the only state which had a concrete, well defined mission statement with goals to support the mission statement. States A and C are currently formalizing their mission statements due to the changes in state and federal legislation. Each of the State Directors interviewed had a definite verbal direction for the mission of their division, but State A State Director stated that the priorities of vocational education may not be within the top priorities of the State Department of Education. There appeared to be a lack of comprehensive inclusion of vocational education goals in each of the states' Board goals, especially in those of State A.

#### Leadership Style

In Peter's (1987) study, he indicated that the State Director must exhibit a leadership style that involves people and groups to build a consensus, but that also includes the ability to make hard decisions as required to enhance vocational education.

The leadership styles of the State Director in the states studied were of a participatory style involving staff, management team members, other agency heads and upper department management staff to develop top quality vocational programs. The organizational

structure of the vocational education division within the department and the climate of the management style of the State Superintendent, Commissioner, or President appears to influence the management style of the vocational education administrative staff.

All current State Directors and Occupational Supervisors interviewed indicated that over the past 25 years the management style has changed from an autocratic style to a participatory management style.

#### Delivery System

The states studied in Peters' (1987) study had a mixture of delivery systems to provide vocational education to persons in the state. High schools, community colleges, inmate training centers, area vocational schools, and higher education centers were the basic delivery areas for vocational education. Business and industry were also noted as vehicles to deliver vocational education services.

The states studied also utilized various educational entities to deliver vocational education programs. High schools appear to provide more vocational education program opportunities than any other institution for secondary students. There also appeared to be a trend of offering programs in high schools due to the lack of interest in students leaving their home high school. This situation was particularly true in State A.

All states studied conducted full-time and part-time adult programs in various levels of educational centers both for credit and noncredit on a multi-hour schedule. Articulation agreements among

educational centers allowed transfer from noncredit to credit-hour structure.

Industry-specific training is provided through the Vocational Director in States B and C with funds appropriated by the legislature to support this effort. In State A the funds were transferred to another state agency, and vocational education was removed from the training process.

State and federal funds were utilized in all of the states studied to supplement local funds to support vocational education programs.

#### Quality Factors

The states surveyed by Peters (1987) listed factors relating to a quality level vocational education system as (1) adequate training time for students to learn an occupation, (2) in-service training support for teachers and administrators, (3) significant amount of time for program supervision and evaluation by staff members, (4) defined program standards for program operation, and (5) control over institutions where program standards were not met, so that funds could be withheld.

All of the states studied, as indicated by those interviewed, stated vocational programs were offered on a multi-block hour arrangement in high schools, area vocational schools, or community colleges. Program evaluations were first considered as a program improvement tool and secondly as a compliance tool, but if programs were not conducted in accordance with a defined set of

program standards and, upon being evaluated and provided technical assistance by staff, were not improved, funds could be withheld.

Staff development was a priority in each state surveyed, but the systems utilized to provide staff development varied from coordinating with one teacher education institution in State C to coordinating with several institutions in States A and B. All states supported teacher education activities with federal funds, although there has been a reduction of funds available for these activities.

Each State Director and Occupational Supervisor surveyed indicated that the states were undergoing a change in their program-evaluation systems, moving from a time/process criteria evaluation instrument to an outcome/competency-based system as prescribed by federal vocational education legislation.

A reduction in numbers of state staff members was indicated in each state studied. Staff members have had to realign their priorities in relation to the overall division and department goals. Some functions such as individual teacher assistance in a specific program have been redirected to group-staff development activities within a program area. The demand upon the staff has been increased as a result of its reduction, increased funding, and additional requirements imposed by state and federal legislation.

#### Reputation

Factors which Peters (1987) found were related to the reputation of the States of Ohio, Florida, and Oklahoma were listed as an emphasis on vocational student organizations, high visibility

schools, ability of state personnel to travel to secure new ideas, activity in professional organizations by state staff, large staff size in relation to programs offered, and varied programs for business and industry.

Although States A, B, and C were not rated as one of the top three as listed in Peters' (1987) study, there were many commonalities, such as emphases on vocational student organizations and varied programs for business and industry. In contrast, all states had small staffs in relation to the States of Ohio, Florida and Oklahoma. Out-of-state travel was more controlled in the states studied. The State Director could approve in-state travel, but out-of-state travel had to be approved by a higher authority, due to the limited state administration funds. In State B, approval for out-of-state travel had to be approved by the Governor. Each State Director encouraged staff members to be active in their specific professional organizations. Out-of-state travel became a problem for those who were active in out-of-state professional activities.

#### Conclusions

The specific conclusions were formed from the case studies of the three selected states in relation to the states studied in Peters' (1987) case studies.

The conclusions are as follows:

1. The seven dominant factors identified in Peters' (1987) study existed partially in each state studied. It appears to this

author that the lesser existence of the dominant factors is accounted for by the fact that the states studied were not included in the top three states ranked by the State Directors. The difference in degree of the existence of dominant factors within the states studied does not preclude the states from serving the vocational needs of the state.

2. There appeared to be no different dominant factors in the states studied from those in the States of Oklahoma, Ohio, and Florida which related to a high quality state vocational system.

3. The principal differences between the two groups of states studied lay in the factors of administrative characteristics, continuity of leadership, reputation, and mission of the state agency.

#### Recommendations

Based upon the results of the case studies and the researchers' experiences conducting the study, the following recommendations are made.

1. Encourage state leaders in decision-making roles which affect vocational education to consider the relationship between the two case studies when impacting changes in state-level vocational education organizations. Such factors to be considered are:

A. The state director of vocational education must be directly responsible to a separate state board or to the chief educational officer with full responsibility for vocational education at all levels; this post should be staffed by a person who has various levels of appropriate experience and education in vocational education.

B. All vocational education must be the responsibility of the state director of vocational education which would include, but not be limited to, public schools, two- and four-year institutions, specialized industry training, and adult vocational education coordinated with other agencies as defined by law.

C. The agency responsible for vocational education must be staffed with experienced vocational educators who can provide leadership and technical assistance to local delivery systems and who advocate high program standards set in cooperation with industry.

D. The vocational education agency must have a clear mission statement with well defined goals and objectives for each unit and persons within the agency supported with qualified staff and funds to carry out the mission which is updated and approved by the state board and legislature at regular intervals.

E. The state director and staff must have the flexibility to become involved in national projects which may include travel out of state to dialog with other state and national educators and business leaders to provide leadership and expertise to local personnel.

F. The state director and staff must also provide innovative support services to administration and teachers, such as: teacher education, curriculum development, industry exchange update training, and other assessed needs to deliver high quality state vocational programs.

2. Further study should be conducted on the original three states to determine if the seven dominant factors continue to exist, and whether they are modified as external environments change.

3. Conduct a survey of state directors to again request they list the three best vocational education systems, other than their own, and compare the dominant factors of the updated survey with the original states in Peters' (1987) study.

4. Survey the implementation of current federal legislation regarding its impact upon state-level vocational education systems.

5. Study the impact of the downsizing of state staff on the effect of the dominant factors affecting the design of a state-level administrative structure for the delivery of vocational education services.

In conclusion, states, upon considering the task of restructuring the state vocational education agency, may consider the implementation of the dominant factors in whole or in part to provide a state-level administrative structure to deliver quality vocational education programs to all levels of education to provide training to the people and industries within their state.



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**APPENDIXES**

APPENDIX A

LETTERS TO STATE DIRECTORS

Dear State Director:

Early in 1988, Dr. Roy Peters, State Director of Vocational Education in Oklahoma, completed a dissertation relating to dominant factors influencing quality State Vocational delivery systems, I have begun conducting follow-up research on his study and am requesting your support in my research. As in Dr. Peters' study, I would like to interview you, the person responsible for vocational programs supervision and the past State Director of your state.

Attached are the questions which will be used during the interview via telephone lasting approximately one hour. Also other materials regarding organizational charts, enrollments and state enabling legislation will need to be available for my research.

With your permission to interview the person outlined, a written report will be submitted to you for your review prior to its inclusion into the study.

Your cooperation regarding my request will be appreciated.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Bill Jackson

Dear State Director:

Thank you for participating in our interview concerning state vocational operations. As mentioned, I am enclosing a copy of your interview comments for your review. Please return to me additions or corrections which may need to be inserted into the interview comments. I appreciate your honesty and interest in this study. I am very pleased with the information gathered during our interview.

If you have any questions about this study, please give me a call.

Thank you again for your assistance.

Respectfully,

Bill Jackson

BJ/sj



**APPENDIX B**

**LETTER TO PARTICIPANTS**

Dear :

Thank you for participating in our interview concerning state vocational operations. As mentioned, I am enclosing a copy of your interview comments for your review. Please return to me additions or corrections which may need to be inserted into the interview comments. I appreciate your honesty and interest in this study. I am very pleased with the information gathered during our interview.

Also enclosed is a form which I need to have completed for information which will be included in the case study description of your state. Please return the form with any interview comments which need to be included in the final report.

If you have any questions about this study, please give me a call.

Sincerely,

Bill Jackson

Enclosure

APPENDIX C

DIRECTOR EMERITUS QUESTIONNAIRE

Research questions to be answered are:

1. Are the seven dominant factors identified in Peters' study of the top three state vocational education systems dominant factors in the three other selected states?
2. Were there other dominant factors identified in the three selected states of this study that were not identified in Peters' study?
3. What are the principal differences between the dominant factors of the two groups of states?

#### GOVERNANCE

1. State directors in 50 states and four trust territories were asked to identify the three states (or territories) which he/she perceives to have the highest quality state vocational education delivery system. If you could identify one single factor in achieving a high quality state vocational education delivery system, what would that factor be?
2. What is the role of the state director with:
  - the legislature?
  - the governor?
  - the chief state school officer?
3. What is the governance structure in your state? How does this governance structure impact the relationship of the state director with:
  - the governor?
  - the state board of education?
  - the state board of vocational and technical education?
  - the chief state school officer?
4. Describe the state director's scope of authority (i.e., administrative process for approval of out-of-state travel, allocation of personnel, and purchasing.)
5. Has the governance structure been changed recently? If so, what was the previous structure(s)?
6. What are the advantages and disadvantages of the existing governance structure and/or previous governance structures?

7. How are the members of the state board of vocational and technical education and/or state board of education selected?
8. How is the state director appointed or elected? What process is used? Is the method used for employing a state director a stabilizing factor?
9. How many state directors have there been (state) during the past 25 years? Has this rate of state director turnover impacted the vocational education delivery system?
10. What is the primary role of the vocational education state agency?
11. What is the relationship between vocational education and comprehensive education?
12. What is the relationship between vocational education and higher education?
13. How many employees work for the vocational education state agency? Is this more or less employees than when you were state director?
14. What were the priorities for vocational education during the past ten years?
15. Do you perceive program evaluation as "a compliance activity" or "an assessment tool for program improvement" or both?
16. Are all programs evaluated? If not, which programs are evaluated and how are these programs identified?

APPENDIX D

STATE DIRECTOR QUESTIONNAIRE

Research questions to be answered are:

1. Are the dominant seven factors identified in Peters' study of the top three state vocational education systems dominant factors in three other selected states?
2. Were there other dominant factors identified in the three selected states of this study that were not identified in Peters' study?
3. What are the principal differences between the dominant factors of the two groups of states?

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE STATE DIRECTOR

1. State directors in 50 states and four trust territories were asked to identify the three states (or territories) which he/she perceives to have the highest quality state vocational education delivery system. Your state was "one of the three" selected. If you could identify one single reason for having achieved this status, what would that reason be?
2. What is the role of the state director in:
  - coordinating with the legislature?
  - coordinating with the governor?
  - coordinating with the chief state school officer?
3. Describe the state director's scope of authority, (i.e., administrative process for approving out-of-state travel, allocation of personnel, and purchasing.)
4. What is the governance structure in your state? How does this governance structure impact the relationship of the state director with:
  - the governor?
  - the state board of education?
  - the state board of vocational and technical education?
  - the chief state school officer?
5. Has the governance structure been changed recently? If so, what was the previous structure(s)?
6. What are the advantages and disadvantages of the existing governance structure and/or previous governance structures?

7. How are the members of the state board of vocational and technical education and/or state board of education selected?
8. Is the state director elected or appointed? What process is used? Is the method used for employing a state director a stabilizing factor?
9. How many state directors have there been in (state) during the past 25 years? How has this rate of state director turnover impacted the vocational education delivery system?
10. What is the primary role of the vocational education state agency?
11. What is the relationship between vocational education and comprehensive education?
12. What is the relationship between vocational education and higher education?
13. How many employees work for the vocational education state agency? Is this more or less employees than when you started as state director?
14. What were the priorities for vocational education during the past ten years?
15. Do you perceive program evaluation as "a compliance activity" or "an assessment tool for program improvement" or both?
16. Are all programs evaluated? If not, which programs are evaluated and how are these programs identified?
17. What is the relationship between the state vo-tech agency and teacher education institutions?
18. What percentage of the state vo-tech staff belongs to the American Vocational Association (AVA) and related vocational education associations?
19. Does the program supervisory staff actively encourage teachers to belong to AVA and participate in AVA activities? Does the program supervisory staff actively encourage teachers to belong to the state affiliate association of AVA and to participate in state association activities?
20. Does the state vo-tech agency have a public information staff? How many employees in the public information section? What is the role of public information?
21. When you receive a request for information from another state director or state staff in another state, how do you respond? What priority do you place on this type of request?



22. Are program supervisors organized by occupational area, by type of institution in which program/teacher is located, or a combination of both?
23. What is the approximate ratio of number of program supervisors to:  
  
    \_\_\_ number of instructional programs?  
  
    \_\_\_ number of teachers?
24. Has state funding for vocational education increased or decreased during the past five years?
25. Where are the full-time secondary programs offered?
26. Where are the full-time adult programs offered?
27. What characteristics describe the top-level management team of the state vo-tech staff?
28. Compare or contrast the management styles of the last two (past and present) state directors?
29. What type of program standards have you implemented? How are programs monitored and standards enforced?
30. What program approval responsibility does the state vo-tech agency have for programs in the comprehensive schools? In the collegiate institutions?
31. Do you have area vo-tech schools? How many and how are they organized?
32. Do you have comprehensive school vocational programs? How many and how are they organized?
33. How much emphasis has been placed on short-term adult programs?
34. How much emphasis has been placed on industry-specific training? Does the state agency provide industry-specific training or assist the schools in providing training?
35. Has the state vo-tech staff emphasized in-service training for teachers?
36. How much emphasis has been placed on vocational student organizations? Are state vo-tech staffs assigned vocational student organization coordination responsibilities?

APPENDIX E

OCCUPATIONAL PROGRAM SUPERVISOR

QUESTIONNAIRE

Research questions to be answered are:

1. Are the dominant seven factors identified in Peters' study of the top three state vocational education systems dominant factors in three other selected states?
2. Were there other dominant factors identified in the three selected states of this study that were not identified in Peters' study?
3. What are the principal differences between the dominant factors of the two groups of states?

#### QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE PROGRAM SUPERVISOR

1. State directors in 50 states and four trust territories were asked to identify the three states (or territories) which he/she perceives to have the highest quality state vocational education delivery system. Your state was "one of the three" selected. If you could identify one single reason for having achieved this status, what would that reason be?
2. What is the primary role of the vocational education state agency?
3. What is the relationship between vocational education and comprehensive education?
4. What is the relationship between vocational education and higher education?
5. What were the priorities for vocational education during the past ten years?
6. Do you perceive program evaluation as "a compliance activity" or "an assessment tool for program improvement" or both?
7. Are all programs evaluated? If not, which programs are evaluated and how are these programs identified?
8. What is the relationship between the state vo-tech agency and teacher education institutions?
9. What percentage of the state vo-tech staff belongs to the American Vocational Association (AVA) and related vocational education associations?

10. Does the program supervisory staff actively encourage teachers to belong to AVA and participate in AVA activities? Does the program supervisory staff actively encourage teachers to belong to the state affiliate association of AVA and to participate in state association activities?
11. Does the state vo-tech agency have a public information staff? How many employees in the public information section? What is the role of public information?
12. When you receive a request for information from state staff in another state, how do you respond? What priority do you place on this type of request?
13. Are program supervisors organized by occupational area, by type of institution in which program/teacher is located, or a combination of both?
14. What is the approximate ratio of number of program supervisors to:  
  
    \_\_\_ number of instructional programs?  
  
    \_\_\_ number of teachers?
15. Has state funding for vocational education increased or decreased during the past five years?
16. Where are the full-time secondary programs offered?
17. Where are the full-time adult programs offered?
18. What characteristics describe the top-level management team of the state vo-tech staff?
19. Compare or contrast the management styles of the last two (past and present) state directors.
20. What type of program standards have you implemented? How are programs monitored and standards enforced?
21. What program approval responsibility does the state vo-tech agency have for programs in the comprehensive schools? In the collegiate institutions?
22. Do you have area vo-tech schools? How many and how are they organized?
23. Do you have comprehensive school vocational programs? How many are there and how are they organized?
24. How much emphasis has been placed on short-term adult programs?

25. How much emphasis has been placed on industry-specific training? Does the state agency provide industry-specific training or assist the schools in providing training?
26. Has the state vo-tech staff emphasized in-service training for teachers?
27. How much emphasis has been placed on vocational student organizations? Are state vo-tech staff assigned vocational student organization coordination responsibilities?

VITA 2

Billy Don Jackson

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

**Thesis:** A CASE STUDY OF DOMINANT FACTORS WHICH APPEAR TO IMPROVE  
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