

THE OKLAHOMA STATE SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION

By

Albert M. Harris

Bachelor of Science  
and  
Bachelor of Arts  
Southwestern State College  
Weatherford, Oklahoma  
1931 and 1933

Master of Arts  
George Peabody College for Teachers  
Nashville, Tennessee  
1938

Submitted to the faculty of the Graduate School of  
the Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of  
DOCTOR OF EDUCATION  
May, 1955

OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY  
LIBRARY  
MAY 25 1957

THE OKLAHOMA STATE SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION

Thesis Approved:

H. E. Sorenson  
Thesis Adviser

Merwin S. Wallace

Eli C. Foster

Robert Marvick  
Dean of the Graduate School

349761

### DEDICATION

This volume is dedicated to Herbert E. Wrinkle who served as executive director and executive secretary-treasurer of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association from July, 1946, until his untimely death on July 3, 1954.

A. M. H.

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The author wishes to express his gratitude and appreciation for the helpful suggestions and constructive criticisms made by the members of his thesis committee at the Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College--Dr. H. E. Sorenson, chairman; Dr. Morris S. Wallace, Professor Eli C. Foster, and Dr. Evert T. Little (on leave of absence). He is particularly indebted to Dr. Sorenson who realized the significance of the study and who served as its sponsor. The author wishes also to acknowledge the sound advice and suggestions given him by Dr. Guy Donnell in the preparation of the outline for this study.

The author is greatly indebted to the many secretary-treasurers of state school boards associations, college and university presidents, college of education deans, school administrators, school board members, members of the Clinton Board of Education, and others who contributed to the study. Without their cooperation the study would have been impossible.

The author acknowledges his indebtedness to the following persons for their assistance during the preparation of this study: Arthur Gaddis for his suggestions and review of the manuscript; Mrs. Jessa Lou Monigold for her untiring cooperation in typing the manuscript; and to my wife, Joe'de Bob, for her encouragement and understanding.

A. M. H.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
I. INTRODUCTION . . . . .	1
State School Board Associations Organized . . . . .	3
Basis for Establishing School Board Associations . . . . .	3
The Need for Well Qualified Board Members Recognized . . . . .	5
National Association Formed . . . . .	6
Statement of the Problem . . . . .	8
Purposes of the Study . . . . .	9
The Need for the Study . . . . .	9
Assumptions Underlying this Study . . . . .	10
Scope of the Study . . . . .	10
Organization . . . . .	11
Method of Procedure . . . . .	13
Sources of Data . . . . .	14
Definition of Terms . . . . .	14
II. BASES FOR ORGANIZING IN OKLAHOMA . . . . .	15
Need for More Adequate Financing . . . . .	15
Importance of School Board Members Recognized . . . . .	17
Educative Agency . . . . .	21
Other Reasons for Organizing . . . . .	23
III. EARLY BEGINNINGS . . . . .	26
IV. LATER DEVELOPMENT OF THE ORGANIZATION . . . . .	66
V. PUBLICATIONS . . . . .	104
VI. THE RELATION OF THE OKLAHOMA STATE SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION TO THE NATIONAL SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION AND TO ASSOCIATIONS IN OTHER STATES . . . . .	113
Areas of Special Effectiveness . . . . .	115
Relation of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association to the National School Boards Association . . . . .	118
Relationship Among State Associations . . . . .	126
VII. A LOOK AT THE OKLAHOMA STATE SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION TODAY. . . . .	129
Accomplishments of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association During the First Ten Years . . . . .	129
The Oklahoma State School Boards Association as viewed by Educational Leaders . . . . .	138

TABLE OF CONTENTS (Continued)

Chapter	Page
How Does the Oklahoma State School Boards Association Compare with Expected Attainments? . . . . .	150
Other Suggestions for Improvement . . . . .	162
VIII. SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS . . . . .	165
Implications of this Study . . . . .	168
BIBLIOGRAPHY . . . . .	173
APPENDIX	
A. Exhibit 1, Board of Directors' Meeting Agenda . . . . .	175
Exhibit 2, Board of Directors' Meeting Agenda . . . . .	176
B. What It Is And Does . . . . .	177
C. Eighteen Services for School Boards . . . . .	178
D. Exhibit 1, Questionnaire to School Board Members . . . . .	180
Exhibit 2, Letter to Educators . . . . .	181
E. Questionnaire to Educators . . . . .	182
F. Constitution and By-Laws . . . . .	184
G. Organizational Letter . . . . .	187
H. List of School Board Members Attending Organizational Meeting . . . . .	189
I. Ethics for School Board Members . . . . .	191
J. List of Officers with Dates . . . . .	193
K. Letter to individuals attending organizational meeting . . . . .	195
L. Exhibit 1, Letter asking permission to use the files of the O. S. S. B. A. secretary . . . . .	196
Exhibit 2, Letter giving permission to use the files of the O. S. S. B. A. . . . .	197
M. Primary Materials . . . . .	198

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
I. Distribution of Membership in the Oklahoma State School Boards Association During the Period 1947 to 1954 . . . . .	130
II. Percentage of Membership in the Oklahoma State School Boards Association in 1951-1952 in State Schools According to the Number of teachers employed . . . . .	131
III. Classification of Disbursements of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association Funds May 31, 1947, to October 1, 1952 . . . . .	135
IV. Responses of Seventy-One Board Members to Questionnaire A . . . . .	139
V. Rank of Effectiveness of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association Services as Indicated by Respondents to the Questionnaire A . . . . .	141

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

In every section of America the work of establishing, maintaining, and directing public education is the responsibility of school boards. School boards, whether elected or appointed, represent the people and are responsible for the education of the nation's children. With the increasing recognition of the importance of education as a determinant of national welfare, the attention of many people is being focused on the nation's school boards.

In colonial days all school matters under advisement were brought before the local town meeting. Here each item of business was presented, and every citizen was privileged to express his attitude and desires. Later the industrialization of cities and towns made it difficult and virtually impossible for each person to take a direct part in managing school affairs. As a result, selectmen were chosen to handle much of the town's business, including arrangement for school matters. School problems relating to curriculum, school finance, and administration were delegated to the appointed representatives, the selectmen. As individual villages continued to increase in population, the business of the school, the church, and the town became too voluminous for the selectmen to manage; thus it became necessary to divide the responsibility of administering the various civic needs. With the creation of a special school committee the school board of today came into existence.<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>Research Bulletin, "The School Board Member" (National Education Association, January, 1933), p. 5.

The early school committees merely provided a classroom, supplied a few crude desks, hired the teacher, and arranged for the very meager teaching salary. Part of the compensation of the teacher was in the form of board and room. "Boarding around" was common practice. Today, even in the smallest rural school districts, the board spends hundreds of dollars for teachers' salaries, instructional equipment, supplies, and buildings. The change in the structure of the educational system, from that of a simple organization to one of great complexity and widespread influence, is amazing. Morally, economically, and politically the school board has become one of the most powerful factors in the preservation of the American way of life.

The school board, good or bad, with its sensitivity to the attitudes and opinions of its constitution in the local community, and through the influence of its decisions and attitudes, is now recognized as one of the most important bulwarks of the democratic way of life. This conception of the influence and importance boards of education have attained is stated in School Boards in Action in the following manner.

. . . The local school districts of the United States are unique as governmental units in a civilized society. School boards carry tremendous responsibility and authority for the education of childhood and youth. When conditions are right, school boards and board members furnish and control situations in which is carried on the best kind of educational program known for a democratic social order . . . at its best it not only represents educational needs as locally recognized but provides highly trained leadership and direction for American public education. Even when all the problems of local tradition and stubbornness in the face of needed changes are recognized, the local school board, as compared with all other American boards and commissions, probably should have the credit for making the most important contribution to social progress.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup>School Boards in Action (Twenty-fourth Yearbook, American Association of School Administrators), p. 45.

How to reconcile a maximum of local control and local responsibility with the maintenance of desirable minimum standards requiring county, state, and federal assistance--this is a good example of the problems which have led school boards to organize into associations. Absence of school board representation at county, state, and federal levels leaves legislative and executive bodies open to the influence of other groups, often uninformed about and sometimes opposed to public education. However, in a united association, school board members are able to influence educational policies beyond their own local districts.

#### State School Board Associations Organized

The first state school boards association was organized in Pennsylvania in 1895.<sup>3</sup> Eighteen years later state organizations were formed in Illinois and New Jersey. In 1939, twenty-five state associations were in existence, and by 1950, the number had increased to forty. By the year 1954, state organizations, or their equivalent<sup>4</sup>, were operating in nearly every state in the Union. The Oklahoma State School Boards Association was organized in 1944.

#### Basis for Establishing School Board Associations

Although the increased appreciation of the significance of school board work was an underlying factor in the development of the school boards association movement, specific problems peculiar to the various states

---

<sup>3</sup>Calvin Grieder and Stephen A. Romine, "A Half-Century of State School Board Associations," Part I, The American School Board Journal, CX (March, 1945), 29.

<sup>4</sup>The State of Ohio has sectional associations.

operated to focus attention on the need for organization and generated the interest required to actually launch the different state associations. In some states board members and educators felt that control of the schools was slipping from the hands of the elected representatives, and in order to combat this tendency, state school boards associations were organized. In other states the object of the state school boards organization was to maintain strong local control in the face of what appeared to be impending control by the federal government. The California association was organized because school boards felt the need to unite in an effort to overcome certain abuses which had arisen in connection with California's Tenure Laws. The Minnesota School Board Association, which was for a time a division of the Minnesota Education Association, established itself as an independent organization when a disagreement arose over the right of the school boards organization to "be its own spokesman in the business end of education."<sup>5</sup> Included in Minnesota's articles of incorporation was the following statement:

It [the school board association] shall deal with all questions affecting the business end of education in whatever manner may be deemed best by the Board of Directors.<sup>6</sup>

School boards associations in other states were promoted by the professional organization or by the State Department of Education. Educators who promoted the organization of state associations hoped to build better cooperation between administrators and boards of education. The Tennessee Commissioner of Education invited the school boards of that state to organize an association whose purpose was general advancement.

---

<sup>5</sup>"History of the Association," The Minnesota School Board Journal (January, 1951), p. 10.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

A similar objective motivated the organization of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association. The principal influence for organizing in Oklahoma seemed to be the need for a lay group to work for better school legislation. With the changes which have transpired in schools and in school board responsibility in the last one hundred years, certain conflicting viewpoints have developed between school boards and educators. These differences needed to be resolved in order that the work of education would not be retarded.

#### The Need for Well Qualified Board Members Recognized

The importance of school board work, as well as the nature of the duties involved, has focused attention upon the need for special training for board members. Although school board associations have helped members to solve their problems and to maintain and strengthen local control, some professional educators have looked upon such organizations as workshops where problems concerning policies and procedures can be improved by sharing information. Edward M. Tuttle, executive secretary of the National School Boards Association, explained this viewpoint when he said:

. . . The primary objective of a school boards association is . . . to assist its local board members to increase their own understanding and effectiveness in the job they have to do for their respective communities.<sup>7</sup>

In his doctoral dissertation Sheriff L. Knight stated that the rise of school boards associations has not been without opposition. This has come to some extent from the slowness of board members in realizing their

---

<sup>7</sup>Edward M. Tuttle, "Ins and Outs of School Boards Associations," American School Board Journal, CXXIX (October, 1954), p. 80.

responsibility to all the children of the state rather than to just the children of a particular district and from their failure to realize that a state association could help in solving their problems. Knight also said opposition came from professional educators who doubted the motives of the association or were jealous of lay association power. In some instances, progress had been slow because of poor leadership, inability to finance a substantial program, or insignificant contributions.<sup>8</sup>

Opposition to a school boards association in Oklahoma came largely from rural boards who felt they had not become a part of the structure as planned, from board members who looked upon the organization as a tool in the hands of the administrators, and from those who questioned plans for redistricting.

#### National Association Formed

By 1940, twenty-six state associations were in various stages of development, and an agency was deemed advisable through which each could pool resources. Five state associations formed a council to organize a national school boards association. Membership in the council was limited to state associations of school boards on payment of annual dues. The name chosen for this first national organization effort was National Council of State School Boards Associations. The name was changed to National School Boards Association in 1948. The stated purposes as adopted by the national council were more comprehensive than the state objectives in that the council was interested in an equalization of

---

<sup>8</sup>Sheriff L. Knight, An Evaluation of State School Board Associations in the Midwest Area (unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, University of Indiana, Bloomington, Indiana, 1952), pp. 5-8.

educational opportunity in all of the states.<sup>9</sup> The council held its first convention in 1941 at Atlantic City in conjunction with the annual convention of the American Association of School Administrators. A second convention was held in 1942 at San Francisco. The organization became dormant because of travel restrictions imposed by the government under war conditions.

The need for school boards to be represented in the formation of national policy increased with the passing of the war years. The growing pressure for school board organization at the national, as well as the state, level was defined by Grieder and Romine as follows:

With the close of the war the schools may face demands for retrenchment, and the need for more understanding, cooperation, and support will be even greater and the task of achieving them even more difficult. In the battle for the tax dollar, the problems of state and federal aid and control, and the clamor for this or that type of educational program, professional educators will need wise counsel and more stability and support than they can muster within their own ranks. School boards and their associations should be in a position to render a valuable service to the school and to democracy.<sup>10</sup>

In 1946, a one-day conference was held in Chicago to reactivate the national association. Although nine states were represented at this conference, Oklahoma was not one of them.<sup>11</sup> The Executive Committee was authorized to schedule the next convention at Atlantic City in March, 1947. The Oklahoma State School Boards Association, which had been in operation for three years, sent H. E. Wrinkle, executive secretary, as

---

<sup>9</sup>Mrs. I. E. Porter, President, W. A. Clifford, Secretary-Treasurer, National Council of State School Boards Associations (pamphlet; Mount Vernon, N. Y.: m. d.), p. 2.

<sup>10</sup>Grieder and Romine, op. cit., Part 2 (April, 1945), 28.

<sup>11</sup>From personal interview with J. G. Stratton at Clinton, Oklahoma, August 21, 1954.

their delegate to this convention. The officers of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association and some individuals have worked in close cooperation with the national association since that time. Thirty-one states were affiliated with the national group in 1947. In 1953 and 1954, a new membership record of forty-two states was reached.<sup>12</sup> Edward M. Tuttle summarizes the growth of the movement in the following words:

Thus, step-by-step, in states, in regions, and nationwide, this school board association movement gathers headway, anticipating the day when every state will have a strong, active one hundred per cent association of local boards devoted to their self-improvement, and when the leaders of the state associations will get together in regions and nationwide at frequent intervals to confer on mutual problems, plan for helpful studies, and pledge themselves to increased effort for the advancement of America's public schools.<sup>13</sup>

The Oklahoma State School Boards Association has been in existence for ten years. A history of its objectives, its efforts, and its achievements is herewith presented to those who would ask why the association was organized, what was its purpose, and what has it accomplished.

#### Statement of the Problem

This is a study of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association and its contribution to public education in Oklahoma. Answers to the following questions were sought:

1. Does the state association have a legal basis for its existence?
2. How is the organization supported?
3. What are its most important functions?

---

<sup>12</sup>Edward M. Tuttle, "News from the Association Front," The American School Board Journal, CXXIX (September, 1954), 76.

<sup>13</sup>Tuttle, "Southwestern State Association Leaders Hold Successful Regional Conference," The American School Board Journal, CXXIX (August, 1954), 6.

4. What important problems does it face?
5. What are some possible solutions to these problems?

#### Purposes of the Study

The purposes of this study are: (1) to investigate the origin and development of the association; (2) to study its structure, objectives, and programs; (3) to explore the extent to which it has cooperated with other state school board associations and with the National School Boards Association; (4) to ascertain the services it renders to local school boards and to the program of public education in the state; and (5) to evolve possible suggestions for its improvement and operation.

#### The Need for the Study

The minutes of the Board of Directors, the charter, and the by-laws of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association reveal that the association has attempted to serve the cause of education in the areas of legislation, education, and cooperation. Board members felt that teachers and superintendents alone were supporting improved school legislation and that the state association could work for these laws more effectively than professional organizations. There is, therefore, a need for a study of the accomplishments of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association in the area of school legislation.

The association has endeavored to develop a better understanding of board members' work. It has been generally recognized that the democratic processes by which board members are chosen has brought many people to serve on boards of education without being properly informed as to the duties of a school board member and without training in school finance, school operation, and school public relations. There is a need to tabulate

the training and information given so that an appraisal may be made as to the content and methods by which it is disseminated.

There is a need to study the effectiveness of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association in the area of cooperation with the National School Boards Association, the Association of School Administrators, the Parent-Teacher Association, and other organizations working for the improvement of public education. There is also a need for this study in order that both school board members and administrators throughout the state may become better acquainted with the association's methods, purposes, and accomplishments. By the utilization of such information board members will be able to use more effectively the services offered by the Oklahoma State School Boards Association.

#### Assumptions Underlying this Study

It is assumed that the effectiveness of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association may be improved as purposes, practices, and accomplishments are studied and evaluated. It is also assumed that the usefulness of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association will be increased as a clearer understanding of its function, its operation, and its potentialities are brought to the attention of state school board members and educators.

#### Scope of the Study

This study is concerned with the beginnings, the structure, the objectives, the operations, the problems, and the accomplishments of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association and its relation to the National School Boards Association.

## Organization

Chapter I briefly reviews the development of the school boards association movement and offers a survey of its present status as an introduction to the specific problem of this study. This chapter also includes an outline of the problem, needs, limitations, and other relevant data. This places the Oklahoma State School Boards Association in its proper setting as part of a nationwide movement of school boards to answer the challenge of increased responsibilities and increased opportunities through affiliation and cooperation.

Chapter II deals with the bases for organizing the school board association in Oklahoma. In this chapter the reasons laid down by the organizers for creating the association are presented. These reasons were specific as well as general and reflected the influence of other state associations.

The growth and development of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association divides itself naturally into two parts. Chapter III presents a description of the organizational meeting in 1944, relates the incidents concerning the launching of the new organization, and tells of the first attempts to influence legislation. The early conventions and the subjects of interest to the first Board of Directors are found in this chapter. This period is referred to as the "Early Beginnings" and includes the administrations of Presidents Roy Spears and E. E. Sowers. The second period, discussed in Chapter IV, covers "Later Development of the Organization." The drives to increase membership and services offered, the production of a suitable publication, cooperation with the national association, and the culmination of plans for regional workshops are reported in this chapter. Ira Williams, W. O. Goodman, and J. G. Stratton were

presidents during this period.

In Chapter V the contents of the first pamphlet and bulletin are described and the development of the monthly News-Letter is traced chronologically.

The relation of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association to the National School Boards Association and to associations in other states is described in Chapter VI.

Data analyzed in Chapter VII shows statistically the distribution of membership and establishes the basis for rates of growth in membership and income. A summary and survey of disbursements recorded in the ten financial statements reveal the main pattern in the expenditure of funds. Included in this chapter is a report of the results of two questionnaires and statements of opinions gained through a form letter. Responses to the first questionnaire give an estimate of the degree of accomplishments by the state association. The letters reveal opinions on such subjects as: faculty-board relations, school legislation, and school building programs. The second questionnaire assists in determining reasonable standards of achievement over a ten year period. Comparisons of accomplishments with reasonable expectations are followed by suggestions and recommendations.

Chapter VIII contains a summary and brief review of the study. Attention is directed to certain implications of the study as revealed in their relation to the future of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association. The history of the association, its achievements, its strengths and weaknesses, and its needs are briefly reviewed. This study offers suggestions as to solutions to the problems confronting the association and as to ways of developing a more vital program.

### Method of Procedure

Permission was secured from the executive secretary to use the complete association files. Minutes and reports of officers dating from the year 1944, when the organization was established, through the month of June, 1954, were carefully read and notations made of significant items. Many of the data used in this study were obtained from the original minutes of board of directors meetings and membership meetings of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association. Additional information about the Oklahoma State School Boards Association was secured from the personal files of E. L. Dawson, Joe D. Hurt, and J. G. Stratton. Notes were made regarding items of interest and were arranged in chronological order for use in this study.

Informal interviews with charter members of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association resulted in a wealth of background material which lent its influence to the opinions given and conclusions formed throughout the study. Contacts were made with G. T. Stubbs, who issued the call for the organizational meeting; Joe D. Hurt, the first secretary; E. L. Dawson; E. E. Sowers; D. Ross Pugmire; H. E. Wrinkle; and J. G. Stratton. H. E. Wrinkle served as executive secretary for most of the association's existence. J. G. Stratton has been connected with the association in an official capacity since April 12, 1947, and at present is the president of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association and the National School Boards Association.

A questionnaire was submitted to college presidents, college teachers, executive secretaries of school boards associations, and other educators throughout the nation. Many of the replies were in the form of letters. The answers to this questionnaire were granted the same consideration

ordinarily given to opinions received in interviews. A second questionnaire was submitted to Oklahoma school board members, and a letter of inquiry was sent to certain Oklahoma educators. These data were tabulated and were used to form the basis for conclusions presented in Chapter VII.

#### Sources of Data

The data for this study came from the following sources:

1. Official files and published materials of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association; e.g., minutes, reports of finance and membership, correspondence, proceedings and programs of conventions.
2. The constitution and by-laws of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association.
3. The constitution and by-laws of the National School Boards Association.
4. Publications of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association; e.g., bulletins, pamphlets, the News-Letter, all volumes.
5. Magazine and newspaper accounts of the association.
6. Official correspondence of Presidents Spears, Sowers, Williams, Goodman, Stratton; official correspondence of other officers Joe D. Hurt, R. E. Holland, H. E. Wrinkle.
7. Correspondence with executive secretaries of other state school boards associations; e.g., Calvin Grieder, Colorado; E. W. Stanley, Washington; P. O. VanNess, Pennsylvania. Correspondence with the National School Boards Association.
8. Personal files of E. L. Dawson, Joe D. Hurt, J. G. Stratton.
9. Informal interviews with G. T. Stubbs, J. G. Stratton, H. E. Wrinkle, George Ham, Chester Swanson.
10. Personal observations of the writer; e.g., state conventions of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association, Board of Directors meetings, workshops, discussion groups, county school board association meetings, regional school board meetings.
11. Publications and other pertinent information from state school boards associations, particularly those of California, Texas, Illinois, Pennsylvania.

12. Doctoral dissertations on closely related subjects.
13. Articles relating to school boards associations that are published in educational journals covering the period of this study.
14. The Oklahoma School Laws.

#### Definition of Terms

The terms school board, board of education, and boards are used in this study to designate bodies legally authorized to provide free public education within the school districts designated by the state.

Board of directors, as used in this study, refers to the policy-making body of a state school boards association and of the national school boards association.

Executive secretary and executive director are used to designate the chief executive officers of school boards associations. Their duties may include any or all of the following: keeping minutes, keeping a membership roster, preserving all records of the organization, collecting dues, disbursing monies as directed by the executive board, and performing such other duties as are delegated to them by proper authority.

The terms state association of school boards, state school directors association, and school boards association as used in this study, refer to governing boards of individual board members as a body united to promote free public education at local, county, state, and national levels.

## CHAPTER II

### BASES FOR ORGANIZING IN OKLAHOMA

The recognition of the need for a state association for school board members in Oklahoma spread gradually. School men of Oklahoma who were keeping abreast of progressive movements in the educational field watched the development of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association with interest. Once an accomplished fact, this association was to have considerable influence in educational circles. Many of the reasons which had been advanced for organizing a state school boards association in other states appear to have been recognized by Oklahoma educational leaders.

Early in the history of Oklahoma, school boards operated under constitutional and legislative provisions. Standards of administration, curriculum, and other policies were decreed largely by the conditions peculiar to the district. Even though the constitution made public education in Oklahoma a state responsibility, the nature of the school program was moulded by the demands and even by the whims of the local district. Under such an arrangement little concern was felt for an organization of school boards on a statewide basis. However, when the state began to share in the financial responsibilities of the local districts, a few educational leaders recognized the need for a statewide organization of school boards.

#### Need for More Adequate Financing

Comparing the per capita expenditures in Oklahoma with the average per capita expenditures throughout the nation, educational leaders found that Oklahoma was below the national average. While the schools of the

nation were spending annually an average of \$84.18 per child in 1944, Oklahoma was spending only \$62.00. Although some felt that Oklahoma was doing all that could be expected, leading school board members pointed to the figures which showed that it cost between \$300.00 and \$400.00 a year to keep a criminal. "Why not pay out this money to give our boys and girls a better education?" school board members asked.<sup>1</sup> More adequate finances for schools, it was argued, would reduce the crime bill. It was also noted the large amounts of money spent for tobacco and liquor. It was urged that an education for the boys and girls which would help them develop into intelligent and useful citizens should receive better financial support in Oklahoma. To bring this about was one of the reasons for organizing school boards on a statewide basis.

An ever-growing demand for more financial assistance from the state brought into existence various organizations representing groups pressing for state funds. Since business and finance were considered the chief problems of school boards, it appeared to certain leading school men that a state association of school boards would provide the organization which might most effectively work to secure proper school finance legislation. Roy Spears, the first president of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association, states:

There is a growing belief among many of us that in the past few years school board members have allowed too much of the burden of procuring adequate financial assistance for the operation of our schools to rest on the shoulders of our teachers and administrators.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>Roy Spears, "Speech at Pittsburg County Meeting of Teachers and School Board Members," The Oklahoma Teacher, XXVI (December, 1944,) 5.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

It was also noted that whatever laws might be passed by the state legislature would affect every district in the state; consequently the school board of each district should accept the responsibility of giving voice to the opinions of the people of each respective district in regard to school legislation. Since by 1944, a considerable portion of the funds for operating schools was then coming from the state, it became increasingly evident that a school boards association organized on a state level was needed.

It was the hope of the early Oklahoma State School Boards Association leaders that a permanent school finance program might be established. Such a program, it was felt, would free school administrators from many hours of work and would provide them with time which could be spent on the actual problems of education.<sup>3</sup> Roy Spears restated an opinion prevalent among Oklahoma educators when he said:

If the 18,400 members of the 4,600 local school districts could unite and secure a permanent financial program for our schools, then our school superintendents could devote their time to the improvement of instruction. Their county, district, and state meetings could then be devoted to problems of education--to problems confronting the boys and girls of today who will be the men and women of tomorrow.<sup>4</sup>

That the state should have a permanent system of school finance is a concept not shared by all people, but the organizers of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association have pressed for such an objective from the beginning of its existence.

#### Importance of School Board Members Recognized

---

<sup>3</sup>E. L. Dawson, personal letter to Al Harris, November 25, 1953.

<sup>4</sup>Spears, op. cit., p. 5.

The necessity for better informed school board members was considered a primary reason for organizing the Oklahoma State School Boards Association.<sup>5</sup> Through such an association information regarding the many aspects of the work of school boards could be received and passed on. This information would include practices of various school boards throughout the state and nation. Methods of holding school board meetings, whether the informal group meeting in the village store or the efficient modern meeting in the board of education office, could be analyzed and evaluated. The duty of a school board should be to secure the best education possible for every child in the district, to choose a qualified administrator in an unbiased manner, to cooperate wisely with the administrator thus chosen, to maintain standards of health and decency in school plants, and to seek in every way the best for the children of the district. These and other duties and responsibilities would be discussed in the light of the wide experience of school boards from various districts in the state. Valuable information would be gained relative to successful and unsuccessful methods of working.

National leaders in education became increasingly aware of the importance of the school board's work. The influence of the work of school boards on the future citizens of the nation in establishing attitudes toward democracy, toward progress, toward all things vital to our national existence, began to be seen in the light of total effects on the nation's well being. The opinion of the California State Department of Education was stated in these words:

The school board has the future of the nation and the progress of all of our people as its responsibility. The maintenance of all democratic aspects of public education is as much dependent upon the type, the intelligence, the ability of school board

---

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

members or school trustees as it is upon the quality of instruction offered to children in the classroom.<sup>6</sup>

The efficient school board member was said to render "The highest type of public service."<sup>7</sup> It was apparent that the board member's influence reached far beyond his own district. Of the school board member the National Education Association says:

His influence reaches out beyond the limits of the immediate district and touches the very heart of the nation. Likewise an inefficient board member, by hindering educational progress in his own district, thereby impairs the whole program of national education. The responsibilities of the office are large; the opportunities for service to childhood and to the nation are unlimited.<sup>8</sup>

As the far-reaching results of the work of school board members began to be noted, the qualities necessary to make an individual an efficient board member also drew attention. It was now recognized that the work of a school board member required a deep interest in the welfare of all the children of the district and an earnest devotion to the cause of education. Spears quoted Ward G. Reeder, University of Ohio, as saying:

It can be truthfully said that there is no more important work than serving as a school board member, and there is no work which requires greater wisdom, more patience, more common sense, and greater devotion to a cause.<sup>9</sup>

It became increasingly apparent that the truly efficient school board member should be a man of outstanding integrity and vision. One of the services it was hoped a state school boards association might render was to inspire

---

<sup>6</sup>California State Department of Education, California Schools, II (October, 1931), 377.

<sup>7</sup>National Education Association, Research Bulletin, The School Board Member, XI (January, 1933), National Educational Association, Washington, D. C., 4.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid.

<sup>9</sup>Spears, op. cit., p. 5.

men to develop the qualities necessary in their work as school board members.

The magnitude of the schools in America became obvious to educational leaders of the early 1930's. Information sent out by the National Education Association pointed to education as one of the largest national projects.<sup>10</sup> Only five industries represented capital investments larger than public school property.<sup>11</sup> These five industries were agriculture, railroads, oil, electricity, and lumber. Only the four industries of agriculture, railroads, construction, and textiles employed more people than did the public school system. The educational program was responsible for the employment of a million teachers and tens of thousands of other employees. More than 25,000,000 children were enrolled in the schools of the nation. Not only nationally, but locally, the business of carrying on public schools was often rated as one of the largest, if not the largest, business enterprises of the community. Capital investments in the local public school system were frequently larger than in any other business in the community. These facts regarding the magnitude of education as a business enterprise were cited by organizers of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association as reasons why the association should be organized.<sup>12</sup> They saw that the number of people involved, the amount of equipment on hand, and the investment of thousands of dollars required to carry on the program created a popular interest which was so great that few other public interests could be compared with it. School boards needed to be trained for such vast business undertakings if the investment were to yield

---

<sup>10</sup>National Education Association, op. cit., p. 3.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid.

<sup>12</sup>Spears, op. cit., p. 5.

commensurate dividends.

#### Educative Agency

It was proposed that the association would also function as an educational agency for school board members. During the war one of the greatest problems of school boards was to secure proper personnel. People to handle the business of schools were difficult to find, and few qualified teachers were available. Military service reduced the number of qualified male educators, as authenticated by a recent report. Oklahoma experienced a percentage decrease in men teachers in the secondary schools from 1937 to 1952.<sup>13</sup> Teachers, both men and women, were leaving the profession for the higher wages they were able to command in industry. With overcrowded school rooms and the high cost of living to be met with a relatively low income, many teachers felt that industry offered better working conditions and better pay. These circumstances brought about a critical shortage of educational personnel. As an emergency measure it became necessary to fill many positions with poorly qualified teachers. The vision of hundreds of pupils spending the years of their school life under "uninspired and inefficient"<sup>14</sup> teachers impressed school board members with the necessity of giving attention to upholding teacher qualifications, to lightening the teacher load, and to searching for means of bringing about desired increases in salaries. It was feared that poorly qualified teachers and employees brought into the schools during the period of adjustment might remain in

---

<sup>13</sup>Ratio of Men to Women Teachers in Secondary Schools, United States Office of Education Bulletin, Circular No. 413 (November, 1954), 6.

<sup>14</sup>Spears, op. cit., p. 5.

the school systems indefinitely. Leaders in the movement to organize a state school boards association felt that the combined thinking of school boards throughout the state was needed in order to solve these problems.

Problems peculiar to the post-war era were demanding increased effectiveness on the part of school board members.<sup>15</sup> A state association would give them help in meeting the new situations which were arising. One of these problems was that of increased enrollment. On all grade levels, from the first grade through high school, students began to come in larger numbers. Rooms which before had been large enough now became crowded. With overfilled rooms and heavy schedules, teachers were unable to do good work, and the quality of educational effort of the schools began to suffer.

The question of vocational education was being discussed by school board members. Were administrators to increase their equipment and vocational teaching personnel, or were they, as some thought, detracting from the original purpose of the schools by giving too much time and attention to such subjects as agriculture, shop, and home economics? Health and physical education were also requiring consideration. School board members were asking, "What about transportation in the post-war world?"<sup>16</sup> Although teachers and administrators would be expected to take the lead in finding and proposing practical solutions to all these problems, school board members would share in the responsibility. The following statement by the first president of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association presents the attitude of school board members toward these and other post-war problems: "We back up the line, but we are obligated to be in the game in no less

---

<sup>15</sup>Ibid.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid.

important sense, but our position is a supporting one."<sup>17</sup>

#### Other Reasons for Organizing

That a state wide organization would draw together many different board members from many different districts seemed of consequence to the organizers of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association.<sup>18</sup> Several board members felt that by comparing ideas they would profit. Through better support board members would be able to provide a better educational program. It was also felt by these board members that as they became better acquainted with each other, an awareness of the trials and efforts experienced in the attempt of school people to develop good schools would bring increased courage and understanding with which to meet present and future problems.

Another reason advanced by Oklahoma educators for the organization of a state association was the need for school board members to be able to pool their efforts with those of parents, teachers, and administrators in promoting the good of the schools. It was proposed that the Oklahoma State School Boards Association would join hands with the Oklahoma Education Association, with the Parent-Teachers Association, and with other organizations having similar aims and give them increased strength in their undertakings.

There were many problems relating to the public schools which were demanding research. It was believed that a state association of school boards could do something in the way of developing a program of research

---

<sup>17</sup>Ibid.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid.

and thereby render valuable assistance in the solution of some of the most urgent of these problems. For instance the ever-present and ever-growing problem of juvenile delinquency was requiring an increasing amount of attention. Could not the combined experiences of the school boards in a statewide association produce some helpful ideas? The problems of federal aid to schools and of federal control of schools were also being discussed. School boards were afraid that federal control would accompany federal aid and were saying:

To what extent do we want to turn over the operation of our schools to the Federal Government? . . . The present trend is toward centralization. . . . Federal Aid for schools is all right, provided we as school board members see to it that the control is left in the hands of the local school boards. We certainly do not want the Federal Government to get control of our schools and be in a position to tell us what teachers we shall hire or what subjects we shall teach.<sup>19</sup>

The high incidence of illiteracy presented another problem. It was noted that, although illiteracy had been decreased by one third since 1900, a more drastic cut in these figures was imperative. Unbelievably, many of our young men had been rejected from military service because of illiteracy. In 1944, Spears said: "Statistics show that 4 out of 100 have had no schooling at all and that 25 out of 100 have had only the first few grades."<sup>20</sup> These three--juvenile delinquency, federal aid and control, and illiteracy--are examples of areas in which research was made.

Cooperation among school boards and administrators throughout the state also needed to be strengthened. With each district functioning as a unit in itself with little or no regard to the problems or attitudes

---

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., p. 6.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid.

in adjoining districts, it was a difficult matter to reach a statewide consensus on any subject, legislative or otherwise. A state school boards association might present issues to local boards throughout the state and, through cooperation, exert a powerful influence. In some districts the administrators usurped a considerable portion of the authority of the school board. A state school boards association could do much to define the proper relationship between the school board and the school district's chief administrative officer. It was felt that the strength which would come as a result of the cooperation of the different school boards with each other and of each school board with its own superintendent would in the end help to produce better schools. Many leaders thought that a state school boards association could do much to foster such cooperation.

There seem to have been several reasons which formed the basis for organizing the Oklahoma State School Boards Association. The support of a lay organization was needed to secure proper school finance legislation. The organizers of the state association also had in mind a permanent financial program for education in Oklahoma. People began to recognize, too, the importance of the work of school boards and how this work affects the vitality and well-being of our nation, in which public education is an enterprise of increasing magnitude and significance. The need for board members to secure information concerning their duties and responsibilities, as well as the betterment of the schools through the strength that comes from cooperation, were designated as reasons for organizing a state association.

## CHAPTER III

### EARLY BEGINNINGS

Several years before the organization of the present Oklahoma State School Boards Association, an attempt was made to organize and advance a state association in Oklahoma. On September 4, 1936, an organization which was known as "The Oklahoma School Board Association," adopted its Constitution and By-Laws (See Appendix F). The main office of this early state organization was in Oklahoma City, a fact which later seemed to prove disadvantageous to its development. Its stated purpose was

to promote the best interests of the schools of the State of Oklahoma, consistent with the rights of the taxpayers and public policy, through publication or legitimate influence of legislation.<sup>1</sup>

School finances were a matter of concern, and the organizers of this early movement wrote into their constitution that the "association shall announce through the press its intention to seek to have school laws amended, particularly those relating to school finance."<sup>2</sup>

Cooperation was pledged to the Oklahoma Education Association, to the Classroom Teachers Association, to the Parent-Teacher Association, and to any other associations organized in the "interest of the schools of the state"<sup>3</sup> in producing better school laws and better school financing.

The first Oklahoma school board association was of short duration.

---

<sup>1</sup>Constitution and By-Laws of the Oklahoma School Board Association (adopted September 4, 1936.)

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

One of the reasons given by contemporary educators for its failure was the false idea that, since Oklahoma City educators were prominent in its work, the association itself pertained mainly to Oklahoma City and its districts. Members of smaller community school boards did not realize that the organization belonged to them as well as to Oklahoma City, and they withheld their membership and their cooperation.<sup>4</sup>

Although the first effort ended in failure, school men began increasingly to realize the need for such an organization. They saw that, if the school boards of the state were organized, they could exert power to determine policies and to help the cause of education in many ways. At educational meetings the desirability of a state school boards association began to be a matter of frequent discussion. Leading Oklahoma educators talked with each other about the advisability of promoting a state association. Letters of investigation and promotion were written.<sup>5</sup>

G. T. Stubbs, president of the Oklahoma Education Association, believed that a state school boards association could be successful in Oklahoma, but because of the failure of the first organization there were those who felt that it would be impossible to develop such an association. Stubbs did not concur in this opinion. After he had discussed the proposal with various people, school board members and administrators decided that another attempt would be made to organize an Oklahoma State School Boards Association. The experiences of the past were to serve as a pattern.

Precautions were taken by Stubbs from the beginning to lay a foundation for success. He sent a letter (See Appendix G) requesting an organizational meeting to be held on September 16, 1944. The call was

---

<sup>4</sup>G. T. Stubbs, personal letter to Al Harris, February 12, 1954.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

statewide and was sent through the superintendents of schools, asking them to bring their school board members to the meeting.<sup>6</sup>

About fifty school board members and a number of administrators responded to the invitation. The meeting, held at the Huckins Hotel in Oklahoma City, was presided over by G. T. Stubbs. The first business to be transacted was the forming of the organization and the election of officers. A president, vice-president, and secretary-treasurer were elected.

Roy Spears, president of the McAlester Board of Education, became the first president.<sup>7</sup> Earl E. Sowers, president of the school board at Drumright, was elected vice-president, and Joe D. Hurt of the Edmond School Board was elected secretary-treasurer. Some of the originators feared that because many of the school board members were unknown to each other, it would be difficult to choose suitable men for the offices. This fear proved to be groundless, however, and the expressions of satisfaction were numerous following the election. It was conceded that the men chosen were well able to direct the new organization.

Spears, the president, was the owner and manager of a wholesale and retail Cities Service Oil Company in McAlester. He had been president of the Lion's Club, president of the McAlester Country Club, and chairman of the Pittsburg County Draft Board, which position he resigned to become president of the McAlester Board of Education. Thus, in Roy Spears, was combined trained intelligence and classroom experience with leadership ability.<sup>8</sup>

---

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

<sup>7</sup>Minutes, Oklahoma State School Boards Association (first meeting, Oklahoma City, September 16, 1944).

<sup>8</sup>Biographical sketch of Roy Spears, File, O. S. S. B. A.

The vice-president elected at this meeting was Earl E. Sowers. Sowers, who was chief clerk of the Drumright refinery of the Tidewater Oil Company, was also a university graduate, having attended the University of Michigan. For seventeen years he had been a member of the Drumright Board of Education. For sixteen of those years he served as president of the board. Sowers was active in community affairs. He was a past president of the Lion's Club and secretary of the local Red Cross chapter. Like Roy Spears, Sowers brought valuable qualities of leadership to the new Oklahoma State School Boards Association.<sup>9</sup>

The secretary-treasurer of the new organization was Joe E. Hurt, Edmond. Hurt, who was a member of the Edmond Board of Education was, according to G. T. Stubbs, the "spirit and power behind the organization."<sup>10</sup>

Since Hurt was employed by a publishing company, he hesitated to take the position to which he was elected in the school boards association. Only because of the insistent appeal of Stubbs did he accept the office of secretary-treasurer. Stubbs wrote of Hurt as "one who cooperated very closely with me in bringing the organization into being."<sup>11</sup> Of persuading Hurt to work with the organization, Stubbs wrote:

In the first place, in connection with your activity with the organization may I say this. There is much to be done until the organization is well on its way. . . . I do feel that you should accept this office to which you were elected the other day until the organization is perfected. . . . I believe you could be the spark plug of the early development and that is most important.<sup>12</sup>

---

<sup>9</sup>Biographical sketch of Earl E. Sowers, File, O. S. S. B. A.

<sup>10</sup>Stubbs, op. cit., p. 2.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid.

<sup>12</sup>G. T. Stubbs, personal letter to Joe D. Hurt, September 28, 1944.

Hurt's interest in better school boards is revealed in his early files. From the <sup>November</sup> ~~December~~, 1943, issue of the Nation's Schools, he had clipped an article, "So You're on the School Board Now!" The article listed twenty questions dealing with race problems, problems of administration, teachers' salaries, tenure, problems of religious discrimination, and others. The knowledge Hurt had gained from his study of these and similar questions, his intense drive to complete an undertaking, and his outstanding leadership ability enabled him to make a particular contribution.

So it was that with these three men at the head of the new organization, Stubbs could write a sincere congratulatory note to the new president:

I want to congratulate you upon your selection to direct the activities of the newly formed organization of school board members in this state. I was much concerned about the leadership of this organization because I realized that if the proper individuals were selected to lead it, the organization would be most effective and helpful to the schools of this state. Otherwise, it would be just another organization. I am sure the selection was a wise one and that time will prove that.<sup>13</sup>

At the organizational meeting Stubbs outlined certain procedures which he felt would insure a successful future for the association. He emphasized that this new assemblage must render specific services to the schools of the state and that its identity must be established through its own purposes. He promoted the idea that, although in its early stages the association would of necessity be steered by superintendents of schools and other professional people, it should become independent as soon as possible. Stubbs suggested that these professional people should support the organization in its infancy but that they should withdraw as soon as the organization could do without them. He wanted independence and freedom from control by any group. He felt that it must be wholly under the

---

<sup>13</sup>G. T. Stubbs, personal letter to Roy Spears, September 28, 1944.

control of lay people if the organization was to be effective. Concerning his ideas and his hopes for the state school boards association, Stubbs wrote:

It was my studied opinion that the organization could never be effective if it were controlled, or if it were generally accepted that it was controlled and directed by professional people. In other words, it must be a lay movement, under the direct control of lay people. The organization must not be dependent upon support or domination of any state organization, be it governmental or otherwise. It must be perfectly free to differ with any other group, and free to act upon that conviction.<sup>14</sup>

School board members who attended this first meeting came from districts varying in size. Altus, Ardmore, Anadarko, Bartlesville, Clinton, Durant, Guthrie, Norman, Okmulgee, Seminole, Shawnee, and Woodward sent representatives. The majority of school board members, however, came from smaller districts such as Boswell, Bethany, Calera, Cashion, Checotah, Cloud Chief, Dewey, Foster, Heavener, Jenks, Manitou, Piedmont, Ringling, Shidler, Wilburton, and Wirt. Dill City and Prague each sent three members. Union graded schools were also represented.

Some of the board members present (See Appendix H for complete list) at the organizational meeting became well known as the later history of the association is traced. The names of W. O. Goodman, E. L. Dawson, and J. G. Stratton are among those first found in the minutes of this meeting.<sup>15</sup>

The Oklahoma Education Association sent its photographers, and a picture of the new officers was taken for use in The Oklahoma Teacher.<sup>16</sup>

---

<sup>14</sup>G. T. Stubbs, personal letter to Al Harris, February 12, 1954.

<sup>15</sup>Minutes, op. cit.

<sup>16</sup>"State School Boards Organization Holds Directors' Meeting," The Oklahoma Teacher, XXVII (December, 1945), 17.

So with the leadership of three outstanding men--Roy Spears, Earl E. Sowers, Joe D. Hurt--and with the guidance and support of G. T. Stubbs and the Oklahoma Education Association, the new Oklahoma State School Boards Association was ready to launch its program.

G. T. Stubbs' interest in the organization continued. A few days after the election he wrote to Roy Spears and offered certain suggestions. First, he felt that a board of directors which would represent different sections of the state might be needed. These sections could be districts recognized by the Oklahoma Education Association, or they could be the congressional districts. Second, county school board associations also would need to be formed in order that the entire state could be truly represented. Some counties had already organized their associations. It was felt that, with the help of the school administrators in such counties as were organized and with the help of the Oklahoma Education Association, it would not prove too difficult to develop county organizations throughout the state. Third, a legislative committee was suggested. This group would be chosen from the membership and would formulate certain regulations to be presented to the legislature. Fourth, a constitution and by-laws would be needed to give purpose and meaning to the organization. Stubbs assured Spears that he had no intention of dictating but that he was much concerned about the organization and wanted to be of help. As president of the Oklahoma Education Association, Stubbs offered the services of its state office to assist with the correspondence and distribution of bulletins. He also suggested that since there were many school board members who had not been able to attend the organizational meeting, the next step might be to contact them and urge their aid in the inaugurating of a constructive program.<sup>17</sup>

---

<sup>17</sup>G. T. Stubbs, personal letter to Roy Spears, September 28, 1944.

Joe D. Hurt supported the organization of school boards by county units and suggested that the county superintendents be enlisted to promote these groups. He advanced the theory that it would be a better plan to organize by districts similar to those of the Oklahoma Education Association, that is, have eight or more large districts. Hurt believed this plan to be better than that of using congressional districts as units. He felt that educational rather than political divisions should be followed.<sup>18</sup>

While plans were being made for organizing these smaller units in the state, the National Education Association began to send materials and information concerning the larger and more far-reaching organization called the National Council of State School Boards Associations. Since its membership included officers of regularly established state school board associations, the officers of the new Oklahoma State School Boards Association automatically became members upon their election. In addition to this information, Willard E. Givens, at that time executive secretary of the National Education Association, sent Hurt the names and addresses of several executive secretaries in states where strong state associations had been built. Between twenty and twenty-five states were organized then; and strong associations existed in California, Connecticut, Illinois, Kentucky, Michigan, New York, Pennsylvania, Texas, Colorado, Louisiana, Minnesota, Nebraska, Tennessee, Utah, and Wisconsin. The names of Robert M. Cole, executive director in Illinois, and of W. A. Clifford, executive director in New York, were given as sources of valuable information. Calvin Grieder, executive secretary of the Colorado association, was cited as having done exceptionally fine work with the Colorado organization.<sup>19</sup>

---

<sup>18</sup>Joe D. Hurt, personal letter to Roy Spears, October 5, 1944.

<sup>19</sup>Willard E. Givens, personal letter to Joe D. Hurt, October 13, 1944.

President Spears began at once to formulate a plan of action. A meeting of school board members and teachers was held in his home county of Pittsburg. This gave him an opportunity to present the cause of the state school boards organization to his associates. He began his address by quoting from a leading national educator, Ward G. Reeder, University of Ohio, to the effect that the schools would largely determine what the citizens of the next generation would be. He also quoted Reeder's characterization of the work of school board members as being of the utmost importance and as being work which required the maximum of wisdom, patience, common sense, and devotion to a cause. Spears cited the 18,400 school board members in Oklahoma, whose chief concern was rightly directed toward the business and financial matters connected with the schools, as growing in the belief that in the years immediately past, school boards in general had allowed too much of the "burden of procuring adequate financial assistance for the operation of our schools to rest on the shoulders of our teachers and administrators."<sup>20</sup> Spears continued his line of thought by suggesting that if the 18,400 school board members of 4,600 districts could work together and secure a permanent financial program for the public schools of Oklahoma, then the administrators could spend their time in improving education in the schools.

Spears gave as the most important reason for organizing a state association the need for better informed school board members. He reasoned that only well-informed workmen could do efficient work and that only well-informed board members would be able to handle the work of the schools in an efficient way. Spears felt, too, that the discussion of common problems

---

<sup>20</sup>Roy Spears, "Speech at Pittsburg County Meeting of Teachers and School Board Members," The Oklahoma Teacher, XXVI (December, 1944), 5.

in association meetings would be profitable. Regarding these aspects of the need for a state organization, Spears said:

In order that we may be better informed, [sic] becomes our first reason for organizing into a state association. The people of our district look upon us as being better informed on school policies than any other group of people in the district other than the employed school administrators. In organizing into this association, it brings together many board members from many different districts. We can compare ideas and profit from the best ones in supporting our school administrators and teachers for a better educational program. In organization we have a greater opportunity to become more aware of the trials and efforts that the school people have already experienced and are experiencing.<sup>21</sup>

Spears also pointed to the many post war problems to be met by the schools, to the developing teacher shortage, and to the broadened scope of the activities of school boards. It was his stated conviction that it would be necessary to fight for better schools. To carry on this fight with strength, to keep education in its role as the guardian of democracy, to make better citizens for the future world, were reasons brought forward by the new president for organizing the Oklahoma State School Boards Association.<sup>22</sup>

Copies of this dynamic speech were mailed to all the school board members who had attended the organizational meeting on September 16 and to the county superintendents of all seventy-seven counties. Accompanying the speech was a letter announcing the plan to set up seventy-seven county organizations.<sup>23</sup> County superintendents were asked to initiate the movement.<sup>24</sup> Tentative by-laws for the school boards association and a circular

---

<sup>21</sup>Ibid.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid.

<sup>23</sup>Roy Spears, letter to school board members present at the organizational meeting, October 20, 1944.

<sup>24</sup>Roy Spears, letter to county superintendents, October 20, 1944.

which the Oklahoma Education Association was distributing were enclosed in this letter.

The officers of the new organization enjoyed working together. Roy Spears was especially appreciative of the work of Joe Hurt, whose interest in the association Spears described as "infectious." He expressed his conviction that the organization was very fortunate in having such an enthusiastic man as Hurt for executive secretary.<sup>25</sup>

Hurt was careful to confine his efforts to those suitable for an executive secretary and to keep Spears, the president, in the foreground.

It was Hurt's idea that everything which emanated from the office should bear the signature of the president. To facilitate this, rubber stamps were made, some of which were sent to Spears and others which were retained in the office. Hurt emphasized his determination that nothing should be sent from the office bearing the stamped signature of the president unless an approved facsimile with a bona fide signature attached in the proper setting were in his possession. "This is my idea of how any organization should function," he wrote. "Only one man on the field calls signals while the game is in progress."<sup>26</sup> In this same letter which he wrote to D. D. Kirkland, McAlester, he mentioned the "barrage" of literature which he planned to mail to the county superintendents very soon.

Additional officers were appointed by Spears. E. M. Warren, Shawnee, was named second vice-president; and R. E. Holland, Miami, was appointed treasurer. Each appointee received a letter similar to the one sent to Holland. The letter to Holland stated:

---

<sup>25</sup>Roy Spears, personal letter to Joe D. Hurt, October 24, 1944.

<sup>26</sup>Joe D. Hurt, personal letter to D. D. Kirkland, October 26, 1944.

Dear Mr. Holland:

With the consent of the Board of Directors of the newly organized Oklahoma State School Boards Association, I am this day appointing you treasurer of the organization.<sup>27</sup>

A list of all the officers followed this statement, and the information was given that through this appointment the appointee automatically became a member of the Board of Directors. At that time this board was composed entirely of the six officers.

The work of drafting the by-laws required attention, and Spears asked E. L. Dawson of the Board of Education of Wirt to accept the responsibility of being chairman of the by-laws committee.<sup>28</sup> Dawson, a lawyer, had taken a deep interest in the educational problems of Oklahoma, particularly in their legal aspect, and had given generously of his time and thought to advance the cause of education. He and Stubbs had carried on a voluminous correspondence regarding various phases of education, and the state school boards organization had been one of the subjects discussed. Tentative by-laws for the association had been hurriedly prepared, and these were sent to Dawson to furnish a basis for his work. He was asked to select another individual to work with him as a committee.

Hurt suggested that the Spears' speech be prepared for publication in The Oklahoma Teacher. Spears agreed to do this and immediately began perfecting the manuscript. Spears' McAlester speech continued to be popular for publicity purposes. O. W. Davison, chairman of the state legislative drive, and others working with him used the address as the basis of a letter which they sent to every school board member in Davison's home

---

<sup>27</sup>Roy Spears, personal letter to R. E. Holland, October 20, 1944.

<sup>28</sup>Roy Spears, personal letter to E. L. Dawson, November 7, 1944.

county. Davison also used part of the speech in an address given at Norman. He looked upon the Spears' speech as of "inestimable value" in the Oklahoma Education Association legislative drive, which was being supported by the Oklahoma State School Boards Association.<sup>29</sup>

Plans were formulated by the officers of the association for publishing a monthly column in The Oklahoma Teacher. Hurt wrote to Clyde Howell, Secretary of the Oklahoma Education Association, making some suggestions for publicity concerning the state school boards association. His idea was to have the president prepare a column every month devoted to the activities of this association. Spears, however, urged Hurt to edit this column.<sup>30</sup>

Although letters asking for help in organizing county units had been sent to all county superintendents and to those members who had been present at the organizational meeting, the movement was slow in starting. Pressing the matter further, Spears sent letters to one hundred superintendents of schools in the larger towns asking their assistance. In explaining the purpose and the relation of the county units to the state association, Spears wrote:

It is our tentative plan to attempt to have each county in the state form an association which will serve as the important unit in our operation. The state association will be composed of individual boards of education. . . . The state association will serve as a clearing house for information which will be sent to and received from county presidents.<sup>31</sup>

Copies of the Pittsburg County speech were also enclosed in these letters. Spears completed his message by assuring the superintendents that it was not the purpose of the state association "to control in any way the

---

<sup>29</sup>O. W. Davison, personal letter to Roy Spears, November 7, 1944.

<sup>30</sup>Roy Spears, personal letter to Joe D. Hurt, November 21, 1944.

<sup>31</sup>Roy Spears, letter to superintendents of schools, November 24, 1944.

affairs of the county organizations."<sup>32</sup> In order to hasten the forming of these county organizations, the suggestion was made that county superintendents appoint temporary officers in areas where elections had not been held. These temporary officers would, in many instances, be made permanent officers and thus become the focal point for these new organizations. To facilitate this procedure, the following questionnaire was prepared by Hurt and sent by Spears to the county superintendents.

---

<sup>32</sup>Ibid.

McAlester, Oklahoma  
December 6, 1944

To County Superintendents of Oklahoma:

In order that we may have a statewide organization of school board members completed by the first of the year 1945, I am asking you, as county superintendent in your county, to assist me in the following manner.

If you have been unable to set up a county association of board members prior to this date, will you appoint a set of temporary officers and obtain their consent to serve?

Will you please write the names and positions of your appointees or officers on the form below?

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ POSITION \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ POSITION \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
(SIGNATURE OF COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(NAME OF COUNTY)

If your county now has a permanent organization, will you fill out the form and cross out the word "appointees" in the line above? You may need more or less than the five spaces above. Each county is to determine the number of officers needed.

In either event, will you mail the completed form to Mr. C. M. Howell, 320 Perrine Building, Oklahoma City? He will keep the forms for us and give them to our association's secretary.

Thanking you for your assistance and, trusting we may be of use in furthering the best interests of education in our State, I am

Sincerely yours,

s/

\_\_\_\_\_  
Roy Spears, President  
State School Boards Association

This questionnaire disclosed a plan to have the statewide organization of school board members completed by the beginning of 1945. Places for five names and addresses appeared on the questionnaire with spaces for designating the position to which the person was appointed. County superintendents in counties where organizations had been formed were asked to fill out the form with the names of the elected officials. If officials were appointed, it was suggested that they be a president, vice-president, secretary-treasurer, and any other officer as the need arose.

Although the response to the questionnaire was not as great as the officials had expected, a beginning in organizing county units was made. Seventeen counties listed names of officers, appointed or elected. There was considerable variety in the number of persons appointed in each county. Haskell County reported only a president and secretary. Alfalfa, Lincoln, Oklahoma, Woods, Bryan, and Jackson counties listed three appointees: a president, vice-president, and secretary-treasurer. In addition to these three officers, Okmulgee and Cleveland counties had appointed two members. Some counties had first, second, and third vice-presidents. The officials in Washita County added three advisory board members.

The Oklahoma Education Association and the National Education Association offered assistance in various ways. Through the courtesy of these two organizations, 1200 copies of the book, Education, A Mighty Force, were made available for the use of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association. This book contained information relating to the changes that would have to be faced in adjusting to a post war educational program. Spears mailed these copies with a letter introducing the book to board members throughout the state. The names and addresses of the six officers of the state association were also sent in this letter.<sup>33</sup>

---

<sup>33</sup>Roy Spears, letter to fellow school board members, December 9, 1944.

The December issue of The Oklahoma Teacher appeared with the speech Spears had made at the Pittsburg County meeting as its main feature. Copies of this issue were widely distributed among school board members. Spears, who disliked personal notice, agreed to this publicity, hoping that it would advance the cause of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association.

As the year 1944 closed, the vigorous three month old organization merited the praise of its founder. G. T. Stubbs in a letter to Joe Hurt declared, "I believe I can see better days ahead because of the activity of school board members."<sup>34</sup>

Under the direction of E. L. Dawson, work on a constitution and by-laws continued. Dawson requested Spears, Sowers, and Hurt to work with him. Material under consideration was sent to them for their suggestions and subsequently revamped by Dawson. In the constitution the official name of the organization was listed as the Oklahoma State School Boards Association.<sup>35</sup>

Its purpose was "to promote the best interests of public education in Oklahoma."<sup>36</sup> Officers were to include a president, secretary, treasurer, a first vice-president, a second vice-president, and a third vice-president. Membership in the organization would include any "duly qualified and actively serving member of the Board of Education in a school district in Oklahoma . . . upon payment of dues."<sup>37</sup> Dues of \$1.00 per year must be paid in advance. Payment of the \$1.00 dues would make all the school board members of any district active members of the state association.

---

<sup>34</sup>G. T. Stubbs, personal letter to Joe D. Hurt, November 30, 1944.

<sup>35</sup>Constitution and By-Laws of O. S. S. B. A.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid.

<sup>37</sup>Ibid.

Former members of a school board might be included in the group membership for the district school board "upon payment of fifty cents additional for each such member."<sup>38</sup>

The second meeting of the Board of Directors was called for February 19, 1945. Consideration was given at this meeting to proposing a constitutional amendment setting up a constitutional state board of education which would appoint a State Commissioner of Education. It was hoped that this system would supersede the custom of electing a State Superintendent of Public Instruction and that certain abuses which had developed might in some measure be corrected. There was also a movement to have school board members accepted as associate members of the Oklahoma Education Association with refunds from the \$2.50 annual dues to be made as follows: \$1.00 for a subscription to The Oklahoma Teacher, \$1.00 to be sent to any designated county association, and fifty cents to the state school boards association.<sup>39</sup>

The proposal regarding the associate membership was favorably received by the school board members of Jackson County with the exception of the apportionment of the fee. At a joint meeting of the Jackson County School Men's Association and the Jackson County School Boards Association, the suggestion that members of the school boards association affiliate themselves with the Oklahoma Education Association was given unanimous approval by school board members. A question was brought to the state officials as to the legality of including these dues in the school budget.<sup>40</sup>

---

<sup>38</sup>Ibid.

<sup>39</sup>Minutes, O. S. S. B. A. (Oklahoma City, February 19, 1945).

<sup>40</sup>Clyde G. Russell, personal letter to Joe D. Hurt, February 20, 1945.

The Oklahoma State School Boards Association entered the legislative field by introducing House Bill 464 into the Twentieth Legislature. This bill was to legalize an expenditure of three dollars per school board member for association dues if any local board of education wished to include such an item in its budget. When the bill was brought up for final passage in the House, it was attacked on the grounds that \$100,000 of the taxpayers' money would be appropriated by such a measure. The calculations used by the opponents of the bill listed the number of school board members in the state as between 16,000 and 17,000. At \$3.00 each, about \$50,000 would be needed; and, for the biennium, twice that amount, or approximately \$100,000. The bill was returned to the committee.<sup>41</sup>

Membership dues in the state school boards association remained \$1.00 per school board. Hurt believed that the association could operate if enough school boards would become members. He believed that support would come as people realized the improvement the association would bring. In a letter to Spears, Hurt wrote:

When the people, and more especially the school board members, realize that we stand for something which tends toward improvement . . . it is my conviction that we will get support from school men as well as laymen. As to dues, if a sufficient number of the 4,600 boards will send us a dollar, we can operate effectively.<sup>42</sup>

"Oklahoma Schools Move Forward" was the theme of the Regional Curriculum Conference at Southeastern State College at Durant, on April 24, 1945. The main speaker for the morning session was Roy Spears, listed on the program as president, Oklahoma School Board Officers' Association.

---

<sup>41</sup>Joe D. Hurt, personal letter to Roy Spears, April 28, 1945.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid.

The school board association was gaining recognition in Oklahoma educational circles.<sup>43</sup>

By mid-April it was reported that county organizations were gaining more favorable attention. Under an article in The Oklahoma Teacher entitled "School Boards Organize in Many Counties," the statement was made that the organization of school boards was meeting with ready acceptance throughout the state.<sup>44</sup>

A new impetus in the movement was evident in September when Spears again sent letters to all county superintendents in which he announced: "In the coming year, we hope to make great progress in organizing county school board associations, and we realize that . . . county superintendents occupy an important position in this regard."<sup>45</sup>

In October, 1945, another meeting of the Board of Directors was called. The main subjects which were discussed at this meeting were the possibility of making the offices of state superintendent and of county superintendent appointive. A proposal was made by E. L. Dawson that small school districts be consolidated in order to have more efficient school administration. The major aims of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association were announced as being to work for educational progress, to support local officials and local school programs, and to become better informed about school matters, especially finance. In the minutes of this board meeting Hurt wrote:

---

<sup>43</sup>Program, Regional Curriculum Conference (Southeastern State College, Durant, Oklahoma, April 24, 1945).

<sup>44</sup>"School Boards Organize in Many Counties," The Oklahoma Teacher, XXVII (April, 1945), 38.

<sup>45</sup>Roy Spears, letter to County Superintendents, September 19, 1945.

It was noted that the major aims of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association should be to work toward continuous progress of Public Education in Oklahoma and to support the School program and officials locally by becoming better informed on school problems, especially school finance.<sup>46</sup>

The school boards association continued to attract attention. In the December, 1945, issue of The Oklahoma Teacher, John F. Bender published an article on "The Need for School Board Associations." Bender declared that "a positive stand by school board members on behalf of good schools is imperative in Oklahoma."<sup>47</sup> Pointing out that in the past this burden had been borne almost entirely by school administrators and teachers, Bender said:

This practice should not continue. Support for good schools should come from the people, and especially from their elected representatives, the school board members. They should be in the very forefront of every undertaking to build up a satisfactory school program and to maintain it and sustain it adequately. Only by such thoughtful and determined action can school members justify the assertion that they are filling one of the most important offices in our democratic society.<sup>48</sup>

In January of 1946, plans were completed for holding the second state meeting of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association. Calvin Grieder, secretary-treasurer of the Colorado Association of School Boards, was announced as the main speaker.<sup>49</sup> Since it was going to be necessary for Grieder to stay in Oklahoma City for two days following the meeting, he suggested that if Hurt would care to do so, he and Hurt might then confer about the management and other important matters concerning the state

---

<sup>46</sup>Minutes, Board of Directors meeting, O. S. S. B. A. (Oklahoma City, October 20, 1945).

<sup>47</sup>John F. Bender, "The Need for School Board Associations," The Oklahoma Teacher, XXVII (December, 1945), 17.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid.

<sup>49</sup>Roy Spears, letter to superintendents of schools, January 28, 1946.

school boards association. Grieder mailed samples of letters which had been sent out in the interest of promoting Colorado's association. These letters included notices of county meetings, encouragement to rural boards to join, publicity to increase membership, summaries of educational bills under consideration by the legislature, and questionnaires as to the most urgent problems facing school boards. The state meeting was held on February 14, following a luncheon meeting with the State Association of School Administrators. After Grieder's address a report of the constitution committee was made by its chairman, E. L. Dawson. One change was made which placed any immediate past president on the Board of Directors. It was voted that dues should be one dollar per year for each board member.<sup>50</sup>

The Oklahoma State School Boards Association now began to work in a more definite way with the Parent-Teacher Association and with the Oklahoma Education Association. On March 19, 1946, a joint committee representing these three organizations met at the Huckins Hotel in Oklahoma City. Reports were given from each organization. Roy Spears presented the plans of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association for organizing local school boards. The three presidents were asked to outline areas in which each of the organizations were to operate and to show where their work would coincide.<sup>51</sup>

A few weeks later the board of directors met with the six state college field representatives, who were Elmer Petree, Central State

---

<sup>50</sup>Minutes, O. S. S. B. A. (State meeting, Oklahoma City, February 14, 1946).

<sup>51</sup>Minutes, Joint Committee of P. T. A., O. E. A., and O. S. S. B. A. (Oklahoma City, March 19, 1946).

College, Edmond; Ben Morrison, East Central, Ada; W. R. Fulton, Southwestern State, Weatherford; M. K. Fort, Southeastern State, Durant; J. B. Steed, Northeastern State, Tahlequah; President Sabin C. Percefull, Northwestern State, Alva. The purpose and plans of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association were explained to these men, and a copy of the constitution and by-laws was given to each one. Other materials concerning the work of the association, including bulletins from other states, were distributed to these representatives. They were asked to assist in the organization of county units, and plans were outlined whereby this could be done.<sup>52</sup>

Appreciation for the work of the county organizations was steadily growing, and both school board members and administrators were expressing their satisfaction. In a letter to George D. Hann, A. G. Steele, Superintendent of Altus Public Schools, says:

I think that the organization should be very worthwhile. Our County School Boards Association has been one of the most helpful organizations we have had for our schools.<sup>53</sup>

In June, 1946, the Oklahoma State School Boards Association took part in another cooperative conference. The School Building Clinic, under the auspices of the Oklahoma Association of School Administrators, the Department of Public School Service, the Oklahoma State School Boards Association, and Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College, was held at Stillwater, June 18, 19, and 20. Discussions included preliminary procedures in a building program, the contribution of the superintendent and his staff, the way to finance a building program in Oklahoma, and the special needs

---

<sup>52</sup>Minutes, Joint Meeting of Directors of O. S. S. B. A. and Field Representatives of six State Colleges (Oklahoma City, April 6, 1946).

<sup>53</sup>A. G. Steele, personal letter to George D. Hann, May 9, 1946.

to be met in particular types of buildings and rooms. Heating, ventilation, and lighting were investigated.<sup>54</sup> This informative program offered much practical advice to school board members.

On July 21, 1946, a special meeting of the Board of Directors was called at Norman. At this meeting E. L. Dawson was asked to prepare a bulletin on "What the Oklahoma State School Boards Association Is and What It Does." Plans were made to print 5000 copies of this bulletin and distribute them to school board members and superintendents. Joe Hurt was asked to prepare an amendment to the constitution which would provide for a nine member Board of Directors. The main speaker was George Cross, University of Oklahoma president. After his address Cross introduced the new Dean of the School of Education, Arnold Joyal. Joyal offered the assistance of H. E. Wrinkle to serve temporarily with the Oklahoma State School Boards Association, and this offer was accepted. Wrinkle's title and duties were to be outlined by Joyal and Spears.<sup>55</sup>

For the first time a meeting of the Board of Directors was accompanied by a social event. The directors and their wives were guests of Dean and Mrs. Joyal at a Sunday morning breakfast. The entire group attended church service together and were guests of Dr. and Mrs. Cross at dinner. Mr. and Mrs. Roy Spears, Mr. and Mrs. Earl E. Sowers, Mr. and Mrs. E. L. Dawson, Mr. and Mrs. W. O. Goodman, and Mr. and Mrs. Joe D. Hurt were present.

The title chosen for Wrinkle was "executive secretary." There was some discussion in favor of retaining the association's Oklahoma City

---

<sup>54</sup>Program, School Building Clinic (Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College, Stillwater, Oklahoma, June 18, 19, 20, 1946).

<sup>55</sup>Minutes, Board of Directors meeting, O. S. S. B. A. (Norman, Oklahoma, July 21, 1946).

address and having mail forwarded to Norman. In the printed bulletin, "What the Oklahoma State School Boards Association Is and Does," two addresses were given: 308 Key Building, Oklahoma City, and H. E. Wrinkle, Norman. Dean Joyal argued that it was not feasible to maintain the Oklahoma City address, since it would soon be recognized that the clerical work was being done at Norman. He felt that a transfer of the office from Oklahoma City to the university campus was imminent and that having to forward the mail would only cause unnecessary delay.<sup>56</sup>

New attempts were made to bring about county organizations. Among the first letters mailed by Wrinkle were messages to the county and city superintendents urging that they send the names of the presidents of the county associations and asking that if there had been no election the name of a "good substantial board member" be sent as a temporary appointee.<sup>57</sup> To those who were recommended President Roy Spears mailed letters in which he stated:

You have been recommended by school men of your county to serve as acting president of the school boards of your county until a county organization can be organized.

The Oklahoma State School Boards Association recognizes the importance of the Council of County Presidents which is made up of county presidents of the 77 counties. As temporary president, you will be a member of the council.

It is our plan to publish a complete list of board members serving as county presidents in an early issue of The Oklahoma Teacher. Your name will be included in this list unless we hear from you to the contrary in the next few days.

The constitution gives the President of the State Association the authority to appoint temporary officers of a county. Accordingly you are hereby appointed to this important office, and it is hoped that you will accept this opportunity to serve

---

<sup>56</sup>A. E. Joyal, personal letter to Joe D. Hurt, July 30, 1946.

<sup>57</sup>H. E. Wrinkle, letter to county and city superintendents, August 20, 1946.

public education in your county and state.<sup>58</sup>

Wrinkle followed this with a letter to the county presidents announcing a conference of the Council of County Presidents at the University of Oklahoma on October 19. He again urged that representatives be sent from all seventy-seven counties. Thirty-three school board members from twenty-eight school districts responded to this call. One question discussed at this meeting was the eligibility of Negro school boards for membership.

It was also in October, 1946, that the Oklahoma State School Boards Association became incorporated. The purposes for which this corporation was formed, according to the Articles of Incorporation, were to hold conventions, conferences, and other meetings for its members, to print needed promotional literature (such as pamphlets and circular letters), to conduct research work, to deal with real and personal property as might become necessary, and to collect membership dues. No financial gain was to accrue to any member of the corporation, and the place where the principal business of the corporation was to be transacted was listed as Oklahoma City. There were to be six directors or trustees. Those named as trustees were Roy Spears, Earl E. Sowers, E. L. Dawson, W. O. Goodman, Joe D. Hurt, and R. E. Holland.<sup>59</sup>

The first district meeting was held at Southwestern Institute of Technology at Weatherford on November 8, 1946. Wrinkle, whose title had now become executive director, presided at the first general session. The main speaker was W. O. Goodman, who discussed "The Place of the State School Boards Association in the Program of Public Education." Goodman pointed out the opportunities offered by the state association for the exchange of ideas.

---

<sup>58</sup>Roy Spears, letter to W. B. Harris, Hugo, Oklahoma, September 19, 1946.

<sup>59</sup>Articles of Incorporation, Oklahoma State School Boards Association.

He brought the subject of public relations to the attention of the school board members, showing their responsibility in keeping the local people accurately informed regarding their schools. An address by R. H. Burton, president of the college, disclosed a serious teacher shortage. J. G. Stratton presided over the afternoon session, which featured a review of the book, School Boards in Action, by G. T. Stubbs. This book was the yearbook of the American Association of School Administrators, and Stubbs recommended that school boards devote a part of two or three meetings each year to its study. Plans formulated at this district meeting for the consideration of the state association included the following suggestions:

- (1) Prepare and mail to school boards suggested policies of boards of education as defined in the Yearbook of the American Association of School Administrators;
- (2) work for legislation permitting the expense of board members to be paid out of school funds when incurred directly for the welfare of the schools;
- (3) sponsor district and county schools for bus drivers;
- (4) assist the state in developing a functional plan for equalizing property assessments; and
- (5) assist in the development of plans for re-districting the state of Oklahoma.<sup>60</sup>

At this meeting it was decided to perfect a permanent district organization. J. G. Stratton was elected president.

Early in the year of 1947, work was begun on another bill to legalize expenditures for membership fees. Wrinkle drafted a bill allowing an appropriation by the governing board of any school district of an amount of money necessary to pay membership fees in such organizations as the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools, the state and national school boards associations, or other educational organizations approved by the board. Travel and other necessary expenses for attending

---

<sup>60</sup>Report of First District Meeting, Oklahoma State School Boards Association (Southwestern Institute of Technology, Weatherford, Oklahoma, November 8, 1946.

out-of-state educational meetings were also included. Spears had previously submitted the question to the law firm of Brace, Lawson, and Hurt to determine whether it would be legal to pay membership dues from school district funds. The law firm based its answer on the definition of the general powers of a board of education as listed in the statutes that "the Board shall have power . . . to incur all expenses, within the limitations provided by law, necessary to carry out and fulfill all powers herein granted."<sup>61</sup> Consideration had been given to the rulings of the Attorney General and the Supreme Court that appropriations could be made for the purchase of band uniforms. The opinion of the law firm as stated was: "In view of the sweeping language of the statute and the practical constructions that have been given to it by the Attorney General and by the Supreme Court, we conclude that fees for membership in your association would be legitimate charges to be included within the respective school budgets."<sup>62</sup>

On April 12, 1947, the Oklahoma State School Boards Association met at Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College, Stillwater. Wrinkle, who had attended the National Council of State School Boards Associations in Atlantic City, gave a report of that meeting. Thirty-one states had affiliated with the national council, one of which was Oklahoma. Wrinkle's report was followed by an address by Raymond D. Thomas, a member of the Stillwater Board of Education. Thomas stressed the need for school boards to take the leadership in securing an adequate finance program for public education. He pointed out that true economy may not always mean the curtailing of expenses, but at times might require an increase in expend-

---

<sup>61</sup>Tit. 700 s. 189, Opinion, Brace, Lawson, and Hurt, Oklahoma City 2, Oklahoma, April 9, 1946.

<sup>62</sup>Ibid.

tures. Some suggestions for surmounting the teacher shortage were given in a talk by Lockwood Jones.

At the business meeting it was decided that all officers should be elevated to the position ahead. This decision resulted in the following arrangement of officers: president, E. E. Sowers, first vice-president, E. L. Dawson; second vice-president, W. O. Goodman; third vice-president, R. E. Holland.

The constitution of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association had been amended to provide for a fifteen member Board of Directors. Spears, past president, automatically became a member of this board. The following ten members were also elected: Ira Williams, Oklahoma City; George R. Cathey, Tulsa; J. G. Stratton, Clinton; Lockwood Jones, Cordell; Dr. R. D. Thomas, Stillwater; J. G. Proffitt, Jenks; M. L. Dague, Fairview; John Mugler, Perry; A. N. Boatman, Okmulgee; Joe D. Hurt, Edmond. These men, with Roy Spears, E. E. Sowers, E. L. Dawson, W. O. Goodman, and R. E. Holland, comprised the new Board of Directors.<sup>63</sup>

A meeting of the Board of Directors was called for June 5 at the State Capitol. Listed as visitors were Governor Roy J. Turner, G. T. Stubbs, and Ferman Phillips. President Sowers commented upon the possibility that the association could be more effective than the professional education associations in dealing with legislation and in securing permanent support for the public schools. Stubbs discussed ways of increasing membership and of providing information for school board members through the association. Certain objectives were set up for the organization, and committee chairmen were appointed to have charge of the promotional work.

---

<sup>63</sup>Minutes, Oklahoma State School Boards Association, Inc. (Annual meeting, Stillwater, Oklahoma, April 12, 1947).

Chairmen for these committees were:

1. Membership, George R. Cathey, Tulsa
2. County Coordinator, John Magler, Perry
3. Publications and Publicity, Joe D. Hurt, Edmond
4. Legislation, Ira Williams, Oklahoma City
5. Personnel Policies and Practices, J. G. Proffitt, Jenks
6. School Building Construction and Maintenance, J. G. Stratton, Clinton
7. Teacher Retirement and Tenure, W. O. Goodman, Altus
8. Taxation and Research, Raymond D. Thomas, Stillwater
9. Insurance, M. D. Dague, Fairview
10. School Board Ethics and Policies, A. N. Boatman, Okmulgee
11. Education Council Representative, Roy Spears, McAlester
12. Constitution and By-Laws, E. L. Dawson, Wirt
13. District Reorganization and Transportation, Lockwood Jones, Cordell
14. Curriculum, R. E. Holland, Miami

Although the interest of these committees represented various school board projects, the main consideration of the association seemed to be the formulating of an adequate and permanent financial program. To place the Oklahoma State School Boards Association in a position of influence in regard to school finances, a request was sent to Governor Turner asking him to include representation from the association on the Special School Finance Committee.<sup>64</sup>

The Board of Directors met again on November 1 in the office of Dean Joyal at the University of Oklahoma at Norman. Three of the new chairmen

---

<sup>64</sup>Minutes, Board of Directors meeting, Oklahoma State School Boards Association, Inc. (Oklahoma City, June 5, 1947).

presented reports from their group. Dean Thomas told of the progress of the Interim Committee on School Finance. He offered the opinion that the financial situation of the schools of the state should be laid before the legislature. He declared that the quality of the schools should be improved and that emphasis should be placed on "quality rather than on cost." He felt that public sentiment should be aroused to support the public schools and that school systems should get an equitable proportion of the state revenue. Ira Williams discussed needed school legislation and suggested that the school board association cooperate with the Oklahoma Education Association and other educational agencies. He advanced the idea that the program of the association be made so attractive that all the school boards in the state would be wanting to join the organization. Spears, representing the council on education, stated that the purpose of this group was to discuss school problems, to form plans for improvement, and to make recommendations. At this particular meeting teacher retirement, teacher shortages, and ways to make the teaching profession more attractive had been analyzed. Boatman presented a code of ethics (See Appendix I) for school board members. Pertaining to the relation of the school board and administrators, this code of ethics ruled it improper for a board of education to perform administrative duties properly belonging to the superintendent, to elect a candidate to any school position except upon recommendation of the superintendent, to consider a complaint against any teacher unless it were first submitted to the superintendent, or to withhold any information as to the incompetency of any employee from the superintendent. The school board must not employ any candidate except on merit or dismiss any employee except for just cause. Notice of failure to reappoint must not be withheld until the teacher would be handicapped in finding another position.

A wage sufficient to cover living expenses for twelve months must be offered. Individually, school board members might not seek special privileges or private gain through the schools, criticize school employees publicly, or assume a **dictatorial** attitude toward the public, the school board employees, and other school board members. These were part of the restrictions the association voted to impose upon themselves in the belief that by so doing they would help school boards become a power for building education in Oklahoma.

At 1:30 p.m. on the afternoon of November 1, following the morning program which included these talks and reports just mentioned, Joe Hurt led a round table discussion concerning school board problems in a broadcast from Station WNAD. At this meeting on November 1, 1947, Wrinkle, who was now called the executive secretary-treasurer, announced that ninety-two districts had joined the state association.<sup>65</sup>

Hurt was working to advance the Oklahoma State School Boards Association through magazine articles, pictures, and newspapers. Material from other state associations was scanned for new publicity ideas. Ferman Phillips was complimented on an article in The Oklahoma Teacher entitled, "As We View It." An inspirational article by Sowers was proposed, and a suggestion was made that his picture and an explanatory letter be published in the coming issue of The Oklahoma Teacher. Minutes of the November 1 meeting of the Board of Directors and a copy of their program were sent to the American School Board Journal. Wrinkle was requested to send any communication of merit to this journal. Newspapers were clipped when the names of association officers were mentioned, and these clippings were used

---

<sup>65</sup>Minutes, Board of Directors meeting, Oklahoma State School Boards Association, Inc. (Norman, Oklahoma, November 1, 1947).

for further publicity. Thus, through various uses of the press, Hurt brought vigor and courage to the association.

Early in the year of 1948, plans were instigated for sending a representative to the meeting of the National Council of State School Boards Associations, which was to meet in Atlantic City on February 21-25. The state dues of \$25.00 were sent, and a poll of the Board of Directors was taken to determine who should be sent as a delegate to Atlantic City. Sowers was selected to attend this conference, and the directors agreed that the association should pay \$150.00 toward his expenses.

At the Atlantic City conference Sowers was placed on the Auditing and Finance Committee for the National Council. He soon made the influence of Oklahoma felt in the national organization by proposing that the name be changed to National School Boards Association, which was accepted. Sowers also secured the services of David J. Rose, president of the national organization, as speaker for the coming state convention.

Meetings of the Board of Directors were being planned to incorporate social events. On April 18, 1948, the members of the board met with their wives and several others who were especially interested in the work of the association, as guests of the Oklahoma City Chamber of Commerce and the Oklahoma City Board of Education. Dinner was served in the Biltmore Hotel, and following dinner a business session was held. A new schedule for membership dues was presented by Spears. All schools having one hundred or more teachers were to pay \$15.00; those with fifty to ninety-nine teachers were to pay \$10.00; twenty-five to forty-nine teacher schools would pay \$5.00; and all other schools, \$3.00. This schedule was accepted by the Board of Directors. Arrangements were made at this meeting

for staggering the length of terms of the members of this board and for filling vacancies.

The preparation of a handbook for school board members was one of the subjects under discussion. Mrs. Neva Wilson, County Superintendent of Alfalfa County, had prepared a handbook for school board members of that county. It was suggested that this be made the basis for a handbook suitable for statewide distribution. In her "Handbook for Alfalfa County School Board Members," Mrs. Wilson voiced the opinion that "perhaps the most difficult problem facing the individual board member is that of understanding his task."<sup>66</sup>

She stated further that the

success of boards of education, and to a great extent of public education, reflects the care with which the public selects board members. Where the public is alert, it chooses wise and able citizens for the board of education. Such persons bring to the board's deliberation a wholesome, unselfish community point of view. The ultimate result is good schools.

A board that lacks vision and courage endangers a community with the harmful effects of indecision, indifference, and inconsistency. . . .<sup>67</sup>

Three distinct principles of school control and management were recognized by Mrs. Wilson. She wrote:

The growth of school administration and the work of boards of education have developed three distinct principles of school control and management. . . . The first of these . . . is that the board of education should formulate policies for the general management of schools in the district. . . . The second general principle . . . is concerned with executive and administrative duties. . . . This is performed by a professional employee. The third . . . pertains to the work of the board in its

---

<sup>66</sup>Neva Wilson, A Handbook for Alfalfa County School Board Members (mimeographed, Cherokee, Oklahoma), p. 2.

<sup>67</sup>Ibid., p. 3.

appraisal or judgment function.<sup>68</sup>

Mrs. Wilson believed that school board members must look to the future "more steadfastly and more clearly"<sup>69</sup> than most citizens. Many of the results of school board members' decisions could not be seen for many years; and consequently they must give careful attention to available facts in order that future trends might become apparent. School board members must be able to follow reflection and discussion with courageous action. Mrs. Wilson's handbook contributed much to the Oklahoma State School Boards Association in that it directed the thinking of the officials toward true progress in regard to the responsibilities, possibilities, and attitudes of school board members.

Sowers, who had been re-elected president, was interested not only in a handbook but also in other publications. It was proposed that a quarterly bulletin be published as soon as funds were available.

Calvin Grieder, secretary-treasurer of the Colorado Association of School Boards, carried on a continuous correspondence with Wrinkle regarding the work of school board associations. He was interested in the progress of the Oklahoma association, and Wrinkle wrote to him after the first annual convention on April 18, giving him an enthusiastic picture of the growth of the state association and of the convention. Wrinkle wrote:

The first annual convention of Oklahoma school board members was outstandingly successful. There were approximately 175 present at each of the sessions. . . . Considerable enthusiasm was generated in this new organization.<sup>70</sup>

---

<sup>68</sup>Ibid., p. 4.

<sup>69</sup>Ibid.

<sup>70</sup>H. E. Wrinkle, personal letter to Calvin Grieder, April 21, 1948.

The executive secretary-treasurer also explained the new schedule for membership dues and noted that, with over 3,000 districts in the state, a large budget and a great organization could be possible. Grieder's attention was called to the recent publication, "School Board Ethics and Policies," which had been prepared by Boatman and his committee for distribution by the association.<sup>71</sup>

Joe C. Scott, president of the State Board of Agriculture, had noticed the work of the state school boards association. Realizing that many of the interests of the State Board of Agriculture coincided with those of the school boards association, Scott wrote to Sowers, offering his support to the movement. One of the items in which both associations were interested was that of "feeder" roads. The maintenance of these roads depended upon the high or low cost of school transportation, and they were also a factor in the scientific approach to consolidation.<sup>72</sup>

A suitable letterhead for the association was planned by Hurt. In the center of the space allotted to the heading was a cut of the state of Oklahoma with a picture of a school house bearing the inscription, "Public School," superimposed. To the left of the cut appeared the words, "Oklahoma State School Boards Association, Inc." and to the right, "Affiliated with the National School Boards Association."

Hurt also had charge of the preparation of a special certificate of membership for Governor Roy Turner. The Board of Directors had voted to confer upon Governor Turner, a former member of the Oklahoma City Board of Education, the degree of Honorary Life Member. The certificate

---

<sup>71</sup>Ibid.

<sup>72</sup>Joe C. Scott, personal letter to E. E. Sowers, April 21, 1948.

was printed by Nelson McGowan, Edmond newspaper editor, and was signed by President Sowers and Wrinkle.<sup>73</sup>

President Sowers continued to be alert regarding legislative matters in which the association was interested. State Question 328, which was to appear on the ballot at the July 6 election, proposed to change the board of regents to a constitutional board. Since such a board would not be subject to change with each new four year administration, it was felt that such a change would give stability to the six state teacher's colleges. All school board members were asked to give their positive support to this measure.<sup>74</sup>

A state Leadership in Education Workshop was scheduled for July 14-16 at Norman, at which time recognition was given to the school boards association by designating July 16 as the date for a workshop on school board problems. The time for the annual convention had been changed from spring to fall.

On November 5, 1948, the Board of Directors and their wives met for dinner at the University of Oklahoma. At the business session following the dinner a membership report was read, showing that 140 districts had joined in the year 1948-1949. President Sowers urged the members to attend meetings of the Parent-Teacher Association and other community organizations, to tell them about the work and needs of the public schools, and to arouse their interest in the work of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association. Another opportunity to broaden the field of the association was found in an invitation to send a representative to a meeting of the Legislative-Federal Relations Division of the National Education Association, which

---

<sup>73</sup>Joe D. Hurt, personal letter to H. E. Wrinkle, May 21, 1948.

<sup>74</sup>E. E. Sowers, letter to School Board Members, June 24, 1948.

was to meet in Kansas City on November 8. Sowers recommended that Wrinkle be sent and that his expenses be paid.

By this time county organizations were receiving renewed attention. Largely through the efforts of the superintendent of schools at Altus the Jackson County group had achieved 100 per cent membership. Tulsa County sent membership dues for its group. Some confusion existed as to the relation of county organizations and the state organization. The decision was made that only board of education members could be admitted as members of the state association; so the Tulsa check was returned.

At the meeting on November 6, 1948, considerable discussion was given to a list of objectives to be presented to the Legislative Council in the name of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association. The list, when compiled, included the following objectives:

- (1) Recommend legislation providing for a definite source of revenue for the financial support of the schools, i.e., a percentage of the gross income of the state.
- (2) Support legislation providing for the appointment of members of the State Board of Education, and authorizing them to appoint the State Superintendent of Public Instruction.
- (3) Emphasize a stronger public school relations program.
- (4) Encourage the development of plans for further reorganization of school districts for administrative purposes.
- (5) Advocate the certification of school administrators.<sup>75</sup>

It had been decided that a monthly bulletin should be published.

The letter heading previously prepared had been changed so that the word "Bulletin," in large letters, appeared at the top of the page. A few spaces below this and extending completely across the top of the page,

---

<sup>75</sup>Minutes, Board of Directors meeting, Oklahoma State School Boards Association, Inc. (Norman, Oklahoma, November 5-6, 1948).

distinguished looking in its Old English lettering, appeared the inscription, "Oklahoma State School Boards Association, Inc." Below this, in the center, was the cut, and on either side of it, in small letters, were "E. E. Sowers, President, Drumright, and H. E. Wrinkle, Executive Secretary-Treasurer, Norman." Then came the slogan which had been formed especially for the association, "What the best and wisest parent wants for his own child, this Association wants for every child in Oklahoma."

The printing of the first bulletin was done under the supervision of E. W. Eaton, Okmulgee. Hurt, always interested in printing and publishing, had arranged for the state school boards association to receive a limited amount of printing to be done at actual cost by students of printing, under the direction of Eaton, at the Okmulgee branch of the Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College. The first bulletin was dated December, 1948. Hurt was highly pleased with its appearance and assured Eaton that "it looks like it was done by professionals."<sup>76</sup>

The contents of the first bulletin was a brief history of certain taxes which had been first levied for the support of public schools. Of the sales tax levied in 1933, 97 per cent had been set aside for schools. In 1935, this was transferred to the general revenue fund of the state. In 1931, an income tax law was enacted, 72.75 per cent of which was to be allotted public schools. Later this allotment was also transferred to the general fund. Other examples of similar proceedings were also given.

The publication of the first official bulletin closed the year 1948. The Oklahoma State School Boards Association, Inc., had been in existence

---

<sup>76</sup>Joe Hurt, personal letter to E. W. Eaton, December 13, 1948.

two and one-half years. During this time, it had formed and adopted a Constitution and By-Laws, expanded its original six man Board of Directors to fifteen, joined the national association, and had put forth noteworthy efforts toward influencing school legislation in the state. Its membership had reached one hundred and forty districts. By the time of the annual convention of 1949, the Oklahoma State School Boards Association had become a vigorous, growing organization.

## CHAPTER IV

### LATER DEVELOPMENT OF THE ORGANIZATION

The dominant theme of the annual convention of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association meeting in March, 1949, was the welfare of Oklahoma's school children.<sup>1</sup> In the first of a series of resolutions presented to the convention, the association revealed its purpose would be to make the promotion of this welfare the basis of future activities. This resolution directed the attention of the Oklahoma Legislature to the motto of the school boards association, "What the best and wisest parent wants for his own child, this association wants for every child in Oklahoma." Legislators were requested to keep the welfare of the school children uppermost in their minds. They were reminded that the school boards association expected them to provide a good school program for all the children of the state.

The second resolution asked state association officers to plan for regional conferences to be held at the six state teachers colleges during the year. The aim of these meetings was to promote strong county school board organizations. Other resolutions endorsed laws which would strengthen the State Department of Education and would give more authority to the state superintendent of public instruction. The Legislature was also asked to provide a plan of progressive reorganization of school districts. The concern of the school boards association over the shortage of qualified

---

<sup>1</sup>Minutes, Annual Convention, Oklahoma State School Boards Association, Inc. (March 21, 1949).

teachers was shown by a resolution urging high school students to prepare for the teaching profession.<sup>2</sup>

Ira Williams, a member of the Oklahoma City Board of Education, became the third president of the association. Williams concurred in the idea that the association, in its plans and in its work, should serve the children of the state. He urged that in its deliberations the association should consider the state as a whole and that the welfare of all the children of the state should be studied. Believing that something of worth to Oklahoma children would result from the work of the state school boards association, Williams began at once to plan for extending the influence and for building the prestige of the organization.

At a special Board of Director's meeting on May 29, 1949, suggestions were discussed for a membership campaign. The directors hoped that there would be a considerable membership increase before the state convention meeting in October. The membership drive was to begin in August with the mailing of claims for membership dues to all school boards. By doing this, school boards could vote upon their membership at their September meeting. The State Superintendent of Public Instruction and the president of the Oklahoma Association of School Administrators were invited to write letters to the school superintendents urging them to encourage their school boards to become members of the state association. In each county were to be appointed membership chairmen who, with members of the Board of Directors, were to attend meetings of the county School Master's clubs to gain support and new members for the association.

---

<sup>2</sup>Proceedings of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association, Inc.  
(Resolutions, March 21, 1949).

In addition to planning an extensive membership drive, consideration was given to ways of keeping state association members informed about pending educational legislation and of increasing the influence of the association in matters pertaining to school legislation. President Williams was asked to arrange for association members to serve on the Interim Committee and on other state committees which concerned themselves with public education.<sup>3</sup>

By the last of August, 3,000 letters from the presidents of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association, the administrator's group, and the state superintendent of public instruction were mailed to board members throughout the state. The response, at first, seemed disappointing. The membership report in October showed only one hundred and sixty-two districts for the year 1949-1950, whereas, in the preceding year the number was one hundred and eighty-seven.<sup>4</sup> These figures do not convey a true picture of the growth of the organization. The number reported for 1948-1949 included districts which had joined late in the year, while the 1949-1950 list showed only the membership which was recorded previous to the October meeting. Later reports gave a different picture of the results of the campaign and before the close of the year showed a decided increase.

In addition to the usual advance publicity given the annual convention, a discussion by Clyde Howell and H. E. Wrinkle, "Why Attend the State Conventions of Oklahoma State School Boards Association?" was broadcast from

---

<sup>3</sup>Minutes, Special Meeting of Board of Directors, Oklahoma State School Boards Association, Inc. (Oklahoma City, May 29, 1949).

<sup>4</sup>Proceedings of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association, Inc. (Membership and Financial Report, October 11, 1949).

Radio Station WNAD, Norman. This discussion explained that the state association is a cooperative movement of school board members whose purpose is to improve schools and school affairs in Oklahoma. The speakers reasoned that the school board member of today can not fully discharge his duties by confining them to his own district. Also, since a considerable portion of the funds for operating schools comes from the state treasurer and since each session of the legislature passes laws affecting the welfare of every district in the state, it was becoming increasingly necessary for school board members to maintain a state organization and to act collectively for the welfare of public education. Although according to the association's constitution all school board members were considered part of the statewide organization, a school board became a participating member only when the annual dues had been paid.<sup>5</sup>

Regular Board of Directors meetings were held in conjunction with the annual convention of the school boards association. At the convention held in Oklahoma City, October 11-12, 1949, two directors' meetings were scheduled. An idea of the type of program usually planned for these occasions may be gained by consulting the printed program for these meetings (See Appendix A, Exhibit 1). At the close of the formal program of the state convention on October 12, the regular business session was held. Immediately following this, the Board of Directors attended a second meeting (See Appendix A, Exhibit 2).

In spite of the earnest efforts of the leaders, the association did not show the improvement that had been expected. Instead there were some indications that interest in the organization was waning. The slowness of

---

<sup>5</sup>Radio Broadcast, Station WNAD, October 7, 1949.

school boards in becoming members mirrored a lethargic attitude toward the work of the association. Directors were not very enthusiastic about attending directors' meetings. The secretary's frequent report of the "serving of a delicious meal" to the directors and their wives, or the scheduling of a directors' meeting just before an interesting football game, indicated that these were means used to stimulate interest in the work of the association. Programs began to reflect a lack of the purposes heretofore manifested, and there were lengthy discussions concerning the meeting date and place and the securing a new members. This apparent retrogression was, however, little more than a normal slowing down of the original initiative required to initiate the organization. It was soon discovered that the association was adjusting to a slow, steady growth, and the leaders were not discouraged.

In addressing the 1949 State Convention, Edward M. Tuttle, executive secretary of the National School Boards Association, urged that "all of the people" be given "all of the facts about the public schools, all of the time." He advised that more attention be given to public relations, and he urged a study of the Oklahoma birth rate similar to studies made in Illinois as a means to determine the magnitude of the educational program and the number of teachers that would be needed in succeeding years. There was, at the 1949 convention, an address which Joe D. Hurt felt to be of sufficient importance to warrant special recognition. He issued a bulletin in which the entire speech was published.

George D. Hamm, superintendent of the Ardmore Public Schools, had made some definite proposals concerning school finance in Oklahoma at the 1949 convention. In his speech Hamm reminded his audience that, although there had been a time when a school administrator was supposed to be

responsible only for setting up an educational program, the problems of financing education had made it necessary for the superintendents of schools to know how to secure the money needed for operating the schools. Hann presented a plan which included charging the State Tax Commission with the actual assessment of all property, the establishment of the percentage of this actual value appraised to be carried on the tax rolls by the Excise Board of each county, the right of appeal by any citizen believing his appraisal to be excessive, and measures to restrain future legislatures from actions which would amount to the rewarding of non-payment of taxes. This program, Hann assured the state school boards association, would make an excellent project for the organization.<sup>6</sup>

From the meeting of the National School Boards Association at Atlantic City, New Jersey, February 24-27, 1950, came stimulating ideas designed to arouse the flagging interest in the state association. H. E. Wrinkle, the executive secretary-treasurer, accompanied by J. G. Stratton, official delegate, represented the Oklahoma organization. Wrinkle served as a member of the Registration Committee and in this way became acquainted with delegates and board members from the other forty-seven states. Stratton was elected a member of the National Board of Directors and, with the other national officers, was officially presented at the convention banquet. The national association now boasted a membership of forty states.

The plans and programs of the National School Boards Association were forward-looking and virile. The resolutions adopted at the 1950 national convention were prefaced by a "Call to Action" section. Problems of

---

<sup>6</sup>Bulletin, Oklahoma State School Boards Association, Inc. (No. 1, November, 1949).

education were vigorously attacked from a national standpoint. Congress was urged to "make the United States Office of Education an adequately financed independent agency headed by a National Board of Education." Social Security was discussed in relation to school employees. The proposal to establish a National Coordinating Council on Education was endorsed. The organization of Advisory Councils on Education at state and local levels was encouraged. A wider use of public school property was advocated, and local boards were urged to exercise vigilance in improving the professional status of teachers and in recruiting new teachers into the profession. In-service education was suggested, and all school boards were asked to study and develop more effective plans for teaching democracy in the public schools. A new plan for financing the national organization was prepared. It included a schedule of dues for each state based on \$7.00 per million dollars of total expenditures for public education in each particular state. Under this plan the goal for Oklahoma would be \$406.00. Provisions were made, however, so that full-goal membership privileges might be enjoyed by any state paying as much as \$100.00.<sup>7</sup>

At a special meeting of the Board of Directors of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association on April 2, 1950, the suggestions of the National School Boards Association were given consideration. In addition to the inspiring reports of the Atlantic City meeting presented by Wrinkle and Stratton, the guest speaker, Edward M. Tuttle, suggested that state associations take appropriate action on several national issues. In view of the national emergency, public education should be strongly supported on local, state, and national levels. State associations were asked to

---

<sup>7</sup>Report of National School Boards Association Meeting (Atlantic City, N. J., February 24-27, 1950), H. E. Wrinkle.

approve the creation of the voluntary National Conference for Mobilization of Education and to advocate the granting of priorities and allocations of critical materials to schools as being of great importance--second only to military defense. Tuttle requested the state organizations to express the position of school boards regarding deferment of teachers and the general problem of manpower as it would affect the public schools. Consideration was also to be given to the adoption of resolutions supporting the work of the United Nations and UNESCO and the expressing of an opinion on the question of universal military training.

The response of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association to these challenges was unenthusiastic and disappointing. The minutes reveal that most of the business at the directors' meeting was routine, such as authorization of the payment of all outstanding expenses, including the "cost of the luncheon on this date," a decision to pay \$50.00 to the National School Boards Association as dues for the balance of the year ending June 30, 1950, and a lengthy discussion of the date for the next annual state convention. There were, however, some sparks of life. Ira Williams, president, presented information to the members on the status of the Trust Fund Activity. His plans for future activities were centered around three objectives. First, the publication of a school board news letter was considered. Second, plans were made to send a letter to all members indicating the services which the association was hoping to render and also asking for suggestions. Third, Joe D. Hurt was appointed to serve with Wrinkle in "planning district conferences of school board members and in preparing the news letter and other publications."<sup>8</sup>

---

<sup>8</sup>Minutes, Special Meeting of the Board of Directors, Oklahoma State School Boards Association, Inc. (Oklahoma City, April 2, 1950).

The services which the association planned to give had been broadened to include more cooperative work on the part of all the school boards in Oklahoma and other agencies of the state in promoting the welfare of public education. Provision was to be made for school board members to meet and discuss common problems, and a department of research and information which would serve as a clearing house for the dissemination of information regarding good school practices was to be established and maintained.<sup>9</sup>

Plans for the publication of the News-Letter were put into effect at once. The first issue of this official bulletin was published in May.

In this edition President Williams wrote:

The goal of our association is to improve and strengthen all the schools of Oklahoma, so that our children may better meet the challenge of leadership as the future brings them into positions of responsibility. We are forced to look to our schools more and more each day as the principal means of giving youth an understanding and appreciation of our democratic way of life as well as the education and preparation necessary for successful living.<sup>10</sup>

Williams further assured the members of the association that, "[their] association is using every means at its disposal to promote the welfare and the effectiveness of the Oklahoma schools."<sup>11</sup> He asked the board members to render service to the Oklahoma schools whenever an opportunity presented itself, and he solicited their support in promoting the welfare of the public schools in Oklahoma through the services of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association. Williams explained that the object of the publication of the association was to put before school board members constructive ideas for their use.

<sup>9</sup>"State Association Service," News-Letter, I (May, 1950).

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., "President's Message."

<sup>11</sup>Ibid.

The beginning of the publication of the News-Letter marked a new achievement for the association. The development of a handbook, stronger county organization, and effective district conferences by the Board of Directors were also envisaged. With the printing of the first copy of the News-Letter, the stage had been set for the publication of a regular bulletin. No other one force could have added so much to the program of services rendered by the Oklahoma State School Boards Association. No other idea could have resulted in an influence so powerful for the shaping of the future of the state association.

At another special meeting of the Board of Directors, September 29, 1950, President Williams again presented the matter of the Trust Fund Activity. He and certain other board members had discussed the subject with the Commissioner of the School Land Department and had come to the conclusion that the need for action was not so great as had been believed. A committee consisting of Earl Sowers, Leo Dixon, and Elbert Hinds was appointed to work with Williams in giving further study to this subject.

Since finances were of paramount interest, Dixon voiced the opinion that the most important goal for the association would be the "provision of an adequate permanent method of financing public education which would not be a biennial appropriation by the legislature."<sup>12</sup> The main difficulty seemed to be that appropriations for public schools came from the general fund. A suggested solution might be found by making appropriations from surpluses. This solution presented a problem in that surpluses might not always be forthcoming.

---

<sup>12</sup>Minutes, Special Meeting of the Board of Directors, Oklahoma State School Boards Association, Inc. (Extension Study Center, Norman, Oklahoma, September 29, 1950).

J. R. Rackley, Dean of the College of Education, University of Oklahoma, expressed faith in the potential value of the school boards organization in relation to the effective administration in the public schools. He suggested that since the Ford Foundation and the Kellogg Foundation were interested in assisting with studies and research in the field of educational leadership, there might be a possibility of securing some financial aid for a study of the problems of educational administration in Oklahoma.<sup>13</sup>

Plans were made to improve the News-Letter by using a "catch line" on the front page, which would list the objectives and accomplishments of the state association, and it was decided that the News-Letter should be sent to superintendents as well as board members. Williams did much to increase the effectiveness of the Board of Directors by appointing committees to handle certain details, some of which had previously consumed considerable time. Committees were appointed to arrange for the state convention and to survey the state for prospective members to fill vacancies on the board. An Insurance Committee and a Legislative Committee were also designated. Williams' decisive leadership was shown in his statement that in the school year 1950-1951, regional school board meetings "must become a reality."<sup>14</sup> Evidently plans for such meetings were completed very soon, for the November, 1950, issue of the News-Letter carried the announcement that conferences were to be held at each of the six state colleges.<sup>15</sup>

National recognition came to one of the Oklahoma school boards

---

<sup>13</sup>Ibid.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid.

<sup>15</sup>"Regional School Board Meetings," News-Letter, I (November, 1950).

affiliated with the state association. The Ardmore Board of Education was designated as one of America's outstanding school boards. Its president, Ralph Sullivan, was a member of the Board of Directors of the state association; and George D. Hann, who had been superintendent of the Ardmore schools for thirteen years, had taken an active part in the program of the state organization from its beginning.<sup>16</sup>

Public school finance in its various aspects continued to be a main subject of interest to members of the association. The Teacher Retirement System was receiving considerable attention at this time, and it was suggested that boards of education keep their legislators informed of their deep interest in the development of a successful system, as this might serve as a strong factor in attracting and retaining capable teachers.

In an editorial in the December, 1950, News-Letter the attention of school board members was called to another important duty, that of employing and keeping a competent superintendent of schools. Most of the time in Oklahoma retaining a good superintendent might be considered the most important work of the school board. When it became necessary to find a new executive, the actions of a school board should be governed by certain principles and procedures in judging any employee for the position. These include a specific set of qualifications and necessary personal characteristics and competencies. If no employee was qualified for the position, the board might invite candidates outside the system to make application. Careful screening of the applicants must precede election, and the successful candidate should be paid as much as possible and should be allowed

---

<sup>16</sup>"Ardmore Board Given National Recognition," News-Letter, I (December, 1950).

complete freedom as the executive officer in the school administration.

The introduction of a unique feature called "Boards in Action" in the December, 1950, News-Letter gave intimate glimpses of school boards at work in their own communities. The Braman school board reported the conversion of an old rural school building into a "modern, well-lighted, clean, skillfully decorated lunch room, serving about 150 children daily."<sup>17</sup> Drumright was proud of having redecorated and installed fluorescent lighting in the high school library. At Hobart the board purchased a new twenty acre football field, built one side of the stadium, and awarded the contract for a new junior high school building. Vian boasted of the addition of twelve new typewriters, one hundred new desks, and five hundred new books. Vocational study was being emphasized in Broken Arrow. The school board at Turpin purchased two hundred auditorium chairs, a piano, band instruments and suits. In Ponca City advancement was being made not only toward improving the school plant, but also toward improving the welfare of the teachers; the school board at Ponca City had arranged a five day-a-year sick leave, accumulative to thirty days.

The Fourth Annual School Board Convention met in Oklahoma City on January 26, 1951. Over two hundred school board members and superintendents registered, making this the largest convention attendance in the history of the association. The report of the executive secretary showed that both the membership and the finances were in the best condition since the beginning of the organization. There were now 225 school boards affiliated with the state association.

Proper and adequate insurance had been frequently discussed by the association, and at the fourth annual convention every member present was

---

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., "School Boards in Action."

given a copy of a book entitled "Insurance Program for Boards of Education." This book, a guide to school insurance, had been prepared at the request of Ira Williams when he was president of the Oklahoma City board. Prepared by a committee representing one hundred fifty-five members of the Oklahoma City Association of Insurance Agents, it contained much valuable information for school boards.

The entire program of the fourth annual convention was outstanding. Specialists and people successful in various fields of school work acted as moderators. "Superintendent and Board of Education Relationships" was discussed by Vernon Beals, Oklahoma City, and James R. Frazier, Okmulgee. Ira Williams led the discussion on insurance, and George D. Hann talked on "Public Relations for School Board Members." "Financing Oklahoma Public Schools" was brought to the convention by Raymond Gary, chairman of the Appropriations Committee of the state Senate; E. T. Dunlap, chairman of the Education Committee, House of Representatives; Roy Emans, director of the Finance Division, State Department of Education; and Earl Sowers, president of the Board of Education, Drumright. The main address was given by Edward M. Tuttle of the national association.

Tuttle suggested certain standards for evaluating a state association.

These standards were:

1. It should be independent.
2. It should have legal provision for use of public funds to pay association dues.
3. It should have one hundred per cent membership.
4. It should schedule dues sufficient to provide for an adequate budget.
5. It should have headquarters and a full-time executive secretary.
6. It should get out a regular publication.

7. It should provide a good annual meeting.
8. It should provide for regional and county meetings.
9. It should cooperate with other groups.
10. It should affiliate with the National School Boards Association.<sup>18</sup>

Although the Oklahoma State School Boards Association did not meet all of these standards, it was moving toward the suggested goal. Good annual meetings had become a regular achievement, and plans were being drafted for regional conventions. Affiliation with the national group had been brought about early in the history of the state association. Cooperation with other groups was being given earnest study. The monthly publication of the News-Letter elevated the Oklahoma association to a position demanding respect. The services of a full-time executive secretary and the goal of one hundred per cent membership were, however, dreams for the future.

School board members were alert to the possibilities involved in school legislation. In a report of the Legislative Committee, Sowers read the proposed constitutional amendments which had been suggested by the Oklahoma Education Association as a special project of the state school boards association. To these amendments and to any other proposed legislative enactments for the best interests of public schools the association gave its support.

W. O. Goodman, Altus, was elected the fourth president of the organization on January 26, 1951. J. G. Stratton became first vice-president; David W. Gish, Frederick, Second vice-president; and Leo Dixon, Ponca City, third vice-president. These elections followed in a general way

---

<sup>18</sup>"Tuttle Represents National Association," News-Letter, I (February, 1951).

a proposed plan to advance each vice-president one place toward the presidency at each election.

The new president's message pointed to the danger that existed in too many and too broad objectives for the association. In attempting to deal with the many problems of education in which the school boards were interested and in trying to support all the plans for a better school program, the power of the organization was being dissipated so that its influence was not being felt as it should. Goodman urged a concentration of effort on the more important and urgent problems in order that definite results might be obtained. Goodman felt one problem of major importance was that of obtaining qualified teachers. He asked every school board in the state to take every precaution against lowering teacher standards.<sup>19</sup>

The membership report given at the directors' meeting on April 13, 1951, revealed a steady growth in the number of school boards affiliated with the state association. The membership for 1950-1951 was 232, the largest in the history of the organization. The increase in membership was coming largely from the independent districts. Very few of the dependent districts were interested in the work of the state school boards association.

A report of the national convention held in Atlantic City was given at the April meeting. Stratton and Wrinkle had again acted as delegates from Oklahoma, and they came to the directors' meeting with high enthusiasm for the national association. A workshop conducted by the National Citizens Committee gave information concerning the work of school board associations in other states, and an exhibit of educational supplies and equipment was described as being especially of value. Advancement in cooperating with

---

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., "New President's Message."

other educational agencies and associations was apparent at the directors' meeting in April. The Oklahoma Congress of Parents and Teachers invited the school boards association to send representatives to the various district Parent-Teacher Association meetings. In response to this invitation four men were chosen to represent the state association. Rupert Fogg attended the Parent Teacher Association meeting at Chickasha, April 16. G. T. Stubbs was present at Atoka, April 19; Albert Hodges was the Woodward representative, April 23; and George Wash went to Bartlesville, April 26.

For some time the work of the Kellogg Foundation had been attracting the attention of Oklahoma school board members and educators. An explanation of this project for the improvement of educational leadership in America was given by D. Ross Pugmire, University of Oklahoma. Pugmire told of the three million dollar appropriation to be used over a five year period in five or six centers in America, one of which would be the University of Texas. The Texas center was to serve Oklahoma and was to study the in-service training of school administrators. G. T. Stubbs voiced the opinion that since school boards were in a good position to assist superintendents in developing an in-service program of training, this would be an excellent project for the Oklahoma State School Boards Association. The association immediately voted to cooperate in every way with the Kellogg Foundation.<sup>20</sup>

A concept of the state association as an agency for education of school board members was developing rapidly. The May, 1951, issue of

---

<sup>20</sup>Minutes, Board of Directors Meeting, Oklahoma State School Boards Association, Inc. (Oklahoma City, April 13, 1951).

News-Letter was devoted almost entirely to items concerning acceptable methods of performing the work of the school board members. In an article, "Suggestions for New School Board Members," new members were advised to arrange for a conference with the superintendent of schools immediately after the school board member's appointment, at which conference he should receive an overall picture of his work as seen by the superintendent. It was suggested that the new member read books and magazines dealing with school board work, attend board meetings as an observer, discuss his work with past and present school board members, and visit other school systems known to have excellent instructional programs and school facilities. New school board members were urged to review the superintendent's annual reports in order to understand the progress made in curriculum development, to be informed about what changes had been made in the course of study, and to be cognizant of what had been accomplished in improving personnel, building construction, and the development of board policies. New school board members were instructed never to make a promise to any individual or group; each member was also advised to avoid using his position for personal gain or political advancement for himself or anyone else; and every board member's duty was suggested as being to endeavor to represent the people of the entire district.<sup>21</sup>

Another article in the May, 1951, issue of News-Letter explained the responsibility of school board members in the appointment of teachers. The principle that the superintendent should recommend trained persons for teaching positions was advocated. School board members were assured

---

<sup>21</sup>"Suggestions for New School Board Members," News-Letter, I (May, 1951).

that

one of the best ways to reduce the efficiency of a school system would be for teaching appointments to be based upon personal relationships instead of professional qualifications.<sup>22</sup>

Further instruction clarified the idea by stating that the

relationships of the board to the teaching personnel really represents no problem. You have hired a trained professional man to be superintendent of your . . . school system. It therefore becomes his responsibility to secure trained personnel. As a board member it is your duty to demand of him that he perform his job in a manner insuring the best interests of the schools. The major function of his job is to secure a highly trained staff.<sup>23</sup>

A "Joint Code of Ethics" for teachers and school board members was published in the May, 1951, issue of News-Letter. Teachers and school board members were asked to transact all official business through proper channels and to hold inviolate all confidential matters. They were to refrain from using the school to promote personal views concerning religion, race, or partisan politics. They were to avoid disparagement of fellow workers and predecessors and were to maintain impartial relationships with all pupils. Neither teachers nor school board members should accept compensation from firms commercially interested in the school. The teacher should be proud of his profession, and the school board proud of its teachers.<sup>24</sup>

At the Board of Directors meeting in September it was pointed out that while any state might have full membership privileges in the National School Boards Association upon making the minimum payment of \$100.00, the quota for Oklahoma, figured according to the national quota system, would

---

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., "Responsibility of Board Members in Appointment of Teachers."

<sup>23</sup>Ibid.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., "Joint Code of Ethics."

be \$406. Since the budget of the Oklahoma state association was limited, it was voted that \$200 be sent to the national association.<sup>25</sup> This was an increase in the amount Oklahoma had been paying, and Wrinkle expressed the hope that more could be sent later. In acknowledging the receipt of the money, Tuttle mentioned the encouraging outlook for the state association in Oklahoma. He said:

I must say that I feel a new zest and enthusiasm in your reports from Oklahoma, and am glad that your association is growing steadily in strength and service.<sup>26</sup>

In January, 1952, Wrinkle supplemented this initial payment with a check for \$206, thus bringing Oklahoma into the ranks of those states supporting the national association on a full-goal basis. Tuttle became truly enthusiastic about the progress of the Oklahoma organization. He wrote, "It is splendid to feel the new vigor in your Oklahoma association."<sup>27</sup>

Through the months and years of the growth of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association a very close spirit of cooperation developed between the state and national association. The highest executives of the national association were frequent speakers at state conventions; and, in increasing numbers, men from the Oklahoma association began to assume responsibilities in the work of the national association.

F. H. Trotter, president of the National School Boards Association, was the main speaker at the Fifth Annual Convention of Boards of Education when it met in Oklahoma City, January 25, 1952. Trotter's subject was,

---

<sup>25</sup>Minutes, Board of Directors Meeting, Oklahoma State School Boards Association, Inc. (Oklahoma City, September 28, 1951).

<sup>26</sup>Edward M. Tuttle, personal letter to H. E. Wrinkle, October 3, 1951.

<sup>27</sup>Edward M. Tuttle, personal letter to H. E. Wrinkle, January 21, 1952.

"The School Board Member--His Responsibility and Opportunity." In stressing the responsibility of school board members in regard to the future of our country, he stated:

. . . Your relationships to the public schools of this great state, and to the people of this great state, will determine to a certain extent what will happen to our beloved America. . . . Our schools are agencies which can let our great country . . . deteriorate. . . . Those responsible hope that America . . . continues to increase in its glory by the efforts of honest people with strength to endure.<sup>28</sup>

He then asked the question, "How can our schools do these things for us?"<sup>29</sup> and answered it by saying,

It will be through pointing out to the children of today and tomorrow the things that have made America great, and the things that shall endure in the lives of people. . . . We must train, not only an economic efficient people, but . . . a courteous people who love each other, and are therefore able to work shoulder to shoulder to achieve what they want.<sup>30</sup>

These tremendous responsibilities were laid upon the school boards of America by Trotter. He asked that in view of possible results of such magnitude, great concern should be manifest in the selection of teachers. "Be careful whom you approve for teacher," Trotter cautioned.

The new officers elected at the meeting of the Board of Directors following the convention were: president, J. G. Stratton; first vice-president, David W. Gish; second vice-president, Leo Dixon; third vice-president, Ewing Canaday, and executive secretary-treasurer, H. E. Wrinkle.

One of the first items of business demanding the attention of the new officers was the announcement of the 1952 national convention to be held in St. Louis, February 22-23. The proximity of this meeting gave

---

<sup>28</sup>"The School Board Member--His Responsibility and Opportunity," News-Letter, II (February, 1952)

<sup>29</sup>Ibid.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid.

the officers of the association reason to hope that a large delegation from Oklahoma would be in attendance. Oklahoma school board members held conspicuous places of responsibility in the planning of this national convention. J. G. Stratton, Clinton, was general chairman for the convention. W. O. Goodman, Altus, was on the program committee, and H. E. Wrinkle was on the registration committee. About ten or twelve others from the state association were in attendance at this convention. Among this group were E. E. Sowers, Drumright; Joe D. Hurt, Edmond, and R. E. Holland, Miami.

At a meeting of the Board of Directors in March, 1952, consideration was given to a revised schedule of dues for school boards affiliating with the Oklahoma State School Boards Association. Schools having from one to three teachers would pay \$5.00 annual dues; four to nine teachers, \$10.00; ten to twenty-four, \$15.00; twenty-five to forty-nine, \$20.00; fifty to ninety-nine, \$30.00, and districts having one hundred or more teachers were asked to pay \$50.00 annually. This graduated schedule was adopted to become effective July 1, 1952. Another financial matter considered at this meeting was the contribution of \$100 monthly for the employment of secretarial help in the state association office after August 1.

Suggestions for the work of the organization during the coming year included the continuance of the News-Letter, publication of a handbook for school board members, plans for the 1953 state convention, a campaign for membership, and cooperative efforts with other educational agencies in the matter of school legislation and general school improvement. Again the question of regional conferences for school board members was discussed, and it was decided that such conferences would be held during the autumn.

When the Committee on Education of the State Legislative Council held a meeting at the University of Oklahoma, April 25-26, reports were requested from seven educational associations or units operating in Oklahoma—the State Department of Education, the Oklahoma Education Association, the County Superintendents Association, the Teacher Retirement Fund, the Rural School Organization, the Parent-Teacher Association, and the Oklahoma State School Boards Association. Proposals under discussion included raising the limit on sinking fund levies from 5 per cent to 10 per cent of the assessed valuation of the school district, a revision of the Homestead Amendment, some provision for continuing contracts, for adult education, and for district reorganization. The small high school constituted the critical problem, not the rural or one-teacher school. Comments were to the effect that the "exorbitant costs and the restricted educational effort of the small high schools need to be considered and a real reorganization program made effective."<sup>31</sup>

An interest in policy-making had developed among boards of education throughout the state; and, nourished through messages sent in the News-Letter as well as by encouragement from other sources, it was making itself noticeable in the actions of school boards. The concept that the primary function of a board of education is legislative or policy-making arose from the recognition that legally public education is a state function and that the responsibility for this "state-wide service" is delegated to district boards of education by the state. The district school boards are to act as governing bodies of the various school districts in somewhat the same way that the legislature acts. One commentator wrote:

---

<sup>31</sup>"Education Committee Meets," News-Letter, II (May, 1952).

Just as the state uses the legislature as the agency for carrying out its obligations in providing a state-wide system of education, the local school district uses the board of education as the agency for carrying out its responsibility for a program of public education.<sup>32</sup>

In earlier times the work of school boards had been considered administrative by both the school board members and the people of the district. The members of a school board chose not only a superintendent, but also teachers, janitors, and bus drivers as well, and often without the consent or knowledge of the superintendent. They often decided minor points of administration and were appealed to by patrons of the school whenever any difficulty arose. The superintendent had very little actual power either in or outside the school plant. Such a concept was detrimental to the growth of a solid educational structure. Superintendents realized that although they were trained in the intricacies of school administration, their training was of little value to the school system or to the people of the district so long as they had no freedom to use it. The idea that the superintendent should meet with the board to plan and discuss the needs of the school has gradually taken the place of the old system in which the school board met in secret before announcing its decisions to the superintendent and teachers. A great step forward came when school boards began to look upon superintendents as administrators in fact as well as in name. These new concepts apparently originated in the larger school systems and filtered to smaller schools. Through the Oklahoma State School Boards Association these ideas have been further disseminated. In fact, it is now stated in School Laws of Oklahoma that the superintendent shall be the executive officer of the board.<sup>33</sup>

---

<sup>32</sup>Ibid., "Policy-Making by Board of Education."

<sup>33</sup>School Laws of Oklahoma, Edition of 1949, Article 4, Section 43, p. 17.

Attempts were being made by educational leaders to clarify the distinction between the policy-forming functions which properly should be exercised by the school board and the executive functions which should be delegated to the superintendent. In regard to general functions, the school board should establish general policies, such as the scope of the curriculum, the length of the school year, the length of vacations, amounts of expenditures, the building program, and the employment of a trained school executive as administrator. In regard to employees, both professional and non-professional, the school board should decide upon salary schedules, sick leaves, leaves-of-absence, training requirements, and retirement. They should elect or reject employees only upon recommendation of the superintendent.

The school board should approve and adopt the annual budget, recommend adequate levies, decide upon the time and size of bond-levy proposals, and adopt regulations for the accounting of school funds. They should decide upon equipment to be purchased, the building alterations, and the selection and purchasing of new school sites. The school board should also seek to secure adequate state legislation for financial support, and they should uphold the administration of the schools before groups of local citizens who might desire changes.

Duties which school boards should delegate to superintendents include nominating all school employees, directing and supervising the work of all employees, proposing adequate salary schedules, presenting and administering an annual budget, making of financial reports, and directing a program of public relations.<sup>34</sup>

---

<sup>34</sup>American Association of School Administrators, School Boards in Action (1946 Yearbook, Washington, D. C.), 49-51.

At the School Administrators Conference held in Stillwater on June 11, "Written Policies for Boards" was the subject of the group discussion. J. G. Stratton, president of the state school boards association, was the chairman of this group, and H. E. Wrinkle was one of the consultants. The object of the discussion was to outline a harmonious relationship for school superintendents and school boards. Written policies of the Boards of Education of Seminole and Pauls Valley were distributed, as well as copies of "Summary and Recommendations on Written Policies for Boards of Education," a brochure developed at the annual meeting of the National School Boards Association. A survey disclosed that about one-third of the school board members present represented districts where written policies were then in use.<sup>35</sup>

Through their activities during the summer of 1952, President Stratton and Executive Secretary Wrinkle represented the association at several educational conferences. A month after the group discussion on written policies, Stratton participated in the Workshop in Educational Administration held at the University of Oklahoma, July 7-11. The opening address of this session was given by Stratton, who discussed "The Local Board of Education and Educational Leadership." On July 9, the state association was represented on a broadcast over WNAD explaining the work of the state and national school board associations. Those who participated in the broadcast were Stratton, Wrinkle, and Willard Lane. The president and executive secretary also attended the annual OEA-NEA Workshop at Stillwater, August 19-21.

Another subject in which members were vitally interested at this time

---

<sup>35</sup>"Written Policies for Boards," News-Letter, II (September, 1952)

was that of proper procedures to be used in holding school board meetings. The informal meetings held by chance in the village store or elsewhere were contrasted with modern business-like school board meetings held in the superintendent's office with the superintendent present. It was suggested that procedure follow the rules laid down in Roberts Rules of Order but that all discussions were to be kept informal and to the point. Many school boards were operating with one prolonged meeting each month, but a better procedure seemed to be to schedule two regular meetings. One of these meetings would be a business session confined to such matters as approving all claims, including employees' salaries and various bills, and discussing maintenance or alterations in the school plant or equipment. The second monthly meeting would be devoted to the consideration of certain general aspects of school administration, such as salary schedules, teacher contracts, and school board policies.

Another suggestion was advocated, proposing that, since all school board decisions should be made on the basis of what would be best for the school in an educational way, the superintendent should bring different teachers to the meetings as the occasion should demand, so that they might present their particular needs. Lay members from the community and representatives of the student body could also be invited to the board meetings at proper times. It was believed that participation of this kind would do much to create a better understanding of the school program throughout the community.<sup>36</sup>

An important step in the development of the state association was taken in 1952. The central office of the state association was moved to

---

<sup>36</sup>Ibid., "School Board Meeting Procedures."

the new Education Building at Norman. The University of Oklahoma and the state school boards association employed jointly a clerical secretary to assist Wrinkle, who had been relieved of some of his teaching duties so that he might spend more time with the work of the association. Through the Kellogg Foundation in its Cooperative Program in Educational Administration, arrangements were made for the services of a graduate assistant and one-half time secretary to help with studies in progress by the association.<sup>37</sup>

Oklahoma continued to serve in important positions in the national organization. J. G. Stratton, member of the National Board of Directors, was also chairman of the Policy and Resolutions Committee for the coming Atlantic City convention. W. O. Goodman was appointed a member of the committee to study federal aid to education, and H. E. Wrinkle was again appointed chairman of the Registration Committee.

The Oklahoma association was now able to give complete financial cooperation to the national group. Oklahoma's quota for the year 1952-1953 was \$492. The entire amount was paid early in the fall, giving Oklahoma full-goal membership in the national association for the second year.

A regular meeting of the Board of Directors was held on October 3, 1952. Financially, as well as in other ways, the state organization was prospering. The total receipts for the year amounted to \$3,123.52. After outstanding bills were paid, a balance of \$2,556.98 remained; consequently, a discussion concerning the advisability of board members paying for their lodging while in Norman ended in a motion that the Oklahoma State School

---

<sup>37</sup>Ibid., "Oklahoma Association Moves Forward."

Boards Association should pay for both rooms and meals, not to exceed five meetings each year. The motion carried.

A Legislative Committee report was given by Guy Givens, who called the attention of the directors to the "Sixteen-Point Legislative Program" of the Oklahoma Education Association. It was suggested that the school boards association choose four or five of these items and concentrate the efforts of its members on securing satisfactory legislation in regard to these selected points. The items discussed and given special support by the directors were as follows:

1. The retention of auto license tax and all other earmarked taxes now dedicated to public schools.
2. A program of ad valorem tax assessments designed to equalize valuations and to provide for the inclusion of all real and personal property for tax assessment purposes to the end that such properties may share more equitably in the financing of public elementary and secondary education.
3. A guaranteed minimum annual salary of \$2400 for beginning teachers with four years of professional training with annual increments for additional training and experience providing that such annual increments for experience in teaching shall be a minimum of fifteen years at \$100 per year.
4. Legislation to guarantee the actuarial solvency of the Teachers' Retirement System with a minimum payment of \$100 per month with teachers retiring at age sixty with thirty years teaching service in Oklahoma, financed by a dedicated revenue derived from specific sources.
5. The submission of a proposed constitutional amendment providing for the election of members of the State Board of Education by popular non-partisan ballot, the State Board of Education to appoint the State Superintendent of Public Instruction and have a complete jurisdiction over the state dealing with public schools.<sup>38</sup>

All of these items had been under consideration by the association for

---

<sup>38</sup>Minutes, Board of Directors Meeting, Oklahoma State School Boards Association, Inc. (Oklahoma City, October 3, 1952).

the past several years. Numerous discussions had been devoted to the tax structure in an attempt to secure a sufficient income to operate the public schools in a proper manner. There had been continued agitation regarding teachers' salaries and teacher retirement, and considerable attention had been given to the idea of making the position of state superintendent of public instruction an appointive office. In addition to supporting these proposals, the association asked its Legislative Committee to study and report to the Board of Directors on suggested legislation which would provide for continuing contracts and orderly dismissal of teachers and school administrators.

Stratton had determined previously that at least one regional meeting should be held before the close of 1952. A regional meeting would be an excellent place to give local school board members a better understanding of the work of the state association. Definite plans at last began to be developed for a regional conference to be held at Weatherford in November.

The days immediately preceding the regional conference were busy ones for President Stratton. In addition to arranging for the program, he found time to appear on a series of educational programs. On October 8, he spoke at the Alfalfa County Schoolmasters Club. On October 31, he appeared on several programs at the Oklahoma Education Association Convention. Stratton attended a meeting on Adult Education on November 10 at Norman and gave an address at the State Parent-Teachers Association Executive Committee dinner on November 11.

On November 20, the first regional conference was held at Weatherford. The plans had become a reality. More than two hundred school board members and superintendents attended the one-day Southwestern Area Workshop for school board members. President Stratton stated in opening the workshop

that its purposes were "to study the role of boards in educational leadership and to identify and discuss pertinent educational problems."

At the morning session there were two addresses. In the first, Superintendent O. D. Johns, president of the Oklahoma Association of School Administrators, discussed the history, purposes, and plans of the Oklahoma Cooperative Program in Educational Administration. The second address was by D. Ross Pugmire, coordinator of the Oklahoma Cooperative Program in Educational Administration, who had been a frequent counselor on problems under discussion by the Board of Directors of the school boards association. D. Ross Pugmire talked of democratic and autocratic processes in relation to their use by school boards. These two addresses were followed by group discussions. Each of four groups had a leader, a consultant, and two recorders. The main address at the afternoon session was given by Roy Emans, Director of Finance, State Department of Education. Emans stressed the necessity of knowing the sources of income for education and of spending that income wisely. He advised boards of education to develop a strong program of public relations in order to secure public understanding and support. Following his talk the recorders from the group meetings reported on the problems presented at the individual sessions. Some of the topics were school finance, school board policies, methods of handling complaints, school board-superintendent relations, school board ethics, out-of-state trips for high school seniors, school insurance, revision of the Homestead Exemption Law, use of the citizens' committee, public relations for public schools, duties and responsibilities of school board members, democracy in school administration, school board members' status out of board session, school board-faculty relationships, and needed school legislation. After these reports

were heard, a series of "Conclusions, Recommendations, and Helpful Ideas" was drawn up. The following seven items were listed:

1. Written policies are valuable but should be democratically developed and constantly revised.
2. The 5 mill special building fund should be raised to 10 mills and revised to permit its use for repairs and equipment.
3. The 16 point O. E. A. legislative program was recommended for support by one group.
4. Keep the public accurately and fully informed about the schools.
5. Board members should study the code of ethics approved and published by the state association.
6. Appoint citizens' committees to help with school problems.
7. Members were made more fully aware of the number of problems confronting them.<sup>39</sup>

Some evaluations of the results of the workshop were as follows:

"New ideas were received on transportation problems."

"Conference gave a better understanding of the problems of others."

"Gave me a better idea of how a school should be run."

"Gave me a deeper feeling of responsibility as a board member."<sup>40</sup>

Some of the conclusions were:

"The board should allow the superintendent enough authority to run a good school."

"Need a better order of business by the board."<sup>41</sup>

The preponderance of male school board members at the conference was so great that the presence of women members was a matter of note. The

---

<sup>39</sup>"Over 200 Attend S. W. Area Workshop," News-Letter, II (December, 1952).

<sup>40</sup>Ibid.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid.

regional conference was attended by Mrs. Messie Hill, Anadarko, and Mrs. Charles N. Goodwin, Clinton. Both women were enthusiastic about the workshop program.

Prizes were given at this conference to the school board member travelling the greatest distance and to the school board member with the longest record of service. The prizes of \$10.00 and \$5.00 respectively were provided by the American Body and Trailer Company, Oklahoma City. Lee Waller, Temple, who travelled one hundred and fifty miles, was awarded the prize for distance; and two men, H. B. Ayers, Weatherford, and Guy Aglesby, Eakly, tied for the service record. This little pleasantry was a custom borrowed from the Board of Directors meetings, where it had been practiced for some time.

A second workshop for school board members was scheduled for December 19 at Durant. The program followed the pattern of the Southwestern Area Workshop held at Weatherford in November. The meeting closed with a summarization of the problems of education by G. T. Stubbs. Stubbs declared that the selection of a superintendent and the shifting of all responsibility to him was not enough to insure good schools. The school board must mobilize the people of the community in support of education.<sup>42</sup>

The Sixth Annual Convention of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association was held Friday, January 23, 1953. The general theme for the program was "The Functions of Boards of Education in School Administration." The morning session followed the previously used plan of dividing the assemblage into discussion groups which convened after an address by Clint Pace, Dallas Regional Director of the National Citizens

---

<sup>42</sup>"Area Workshops Held at Durant," News-Letter, III (January, 1953).

Commission for Public Schools. At the luncheon meeting Senator Raymond Gary's topic was "The State's Responsibility for Providing Adequate Education." In the early days of education schools were largely the responsibility of the local community. The state had gradually become willing to assume larger portions of the cost of education, Gary explained. He gave support to the principle of equalization of educational opportunities and presented a view of the problems faced by the State Legislature in securing a sufficient amount of money to support the growing public school system. Representative James C. Nance also talked at the luncheon session. His subject was "The Local Districts' Responsibility in Education." At the afternoon business meeting, J. G. Stratton was re-elected president; Leo Dixon was elected first vice-president; Ewing Canaday, second vice-president; Leon White, third vice-president; and H. E. Wrinkle was again elected executive secretary-treasurer.

Several superintendents and school board members from Oklahoma attended the National School Boards Association annual convention in Atlantic City, February 12-14, 1953. J. G. Stratton, national director and chairman of the Resolutions Committee, was elected first vice-president of the national organization. It was pointed out in a speech by F. H. Trotter, president, that "although school boards across the nation have not solved all their problems, they are learning through national, state, and local school board organizations better ways of approaching and solving problems."<sup>43</sup>

The success of the school board workshops held at Weatherford and Durant resulted in plans for similar meetings to be held in five other areas. Workshops were planned for Alva on March 12, Goodwell on March 13,

---

<sup>43</sup>"Excerpts from Convention Address," News-Letter, III (March, 1953)

Tahlequah on April 2, Ada on April 3, and Edmond on April 9. The meetings were to be held in conjunction with Area Oklahoma Cooperative Program in Educational Administration conferences scheduled for these college centers. The presidents of each of the institutions offered to furnish adequate facilities and assured the officers of the school boards association that they would cooperate in every way to make the workshops a success. Nearly eight hundred people attended these workshops.

In addressing the area workshops, President Stratton called attention to the records of 2.2 per cent of the national income spent for education as contrasted with 3.7 per cent spent for intoxicating liquor and over 4 per cent for betting on horse races. Stratton advised the school board members of the need for school boards to shoulder more of the responsibility for securing adequate financial support for education. He also urged them to uphold and to encourage school administrators and teachers and to respect them as human beings.

At the spring meeting of the Board of Directors on May 19, plans were made for the future activities of the association. The Camp Redlands Conference was announced for June 9, 10, and 11 at Stillwater. A two day work conference of superintendents and boards of education was scheduled for July 24-25 at Norman. The area workshops had been so helpful that the directors planned to arrange for other workshops during the coming year. A statewide citizens' conference on education was discussed, and a committee was appointed to study and to make recommendations concerning such a meeting. Other decisions were that:

The News-Letter should be continued and improved for another year; . . . the state office would continue to assemble and make available to others written school board policies; furnish special information requested by boards of education; encourage the organization of county school boards associations and encourage board members to carry a larger part of the responsibility for

financing public education, both individually and through cooperative organized effort.<sup>44</sup>

Among the guests who attended the meeting are the names of some who had been closely associated with the organization from its inception. The list included Dean J. R. Rackley, H. E. Sorenson, D. Ross Ruggire, G. T. Stubbs, J. Win Payne, and Mrs. A. W. Swift.

The Seventh Annual Convention was held in Oklahoma City on January 22, 1954. Its theme was "Organized Effort in Solving Educational Problems." The main address of the morning was given by Governor Johnston Murray. It was noted that seven state divisions had now been organized into area associations. The area presidents were: East Central, Bobby Thompson, Ada; R. C. Lantrip, Comanche; Panhandle, Ray Hall, Goodwell; Northwestern, G. Omar Hill, Alva; Northeastern, Charley W. Elledge, Nowata; Southeastern, Charles A. Hess, Durant; and Southwestern, Leon White, Hollis. J. G. Stratton was re-elected president and began his third year as head of the state association. Concerning the business transacted it is recorded that the

school officials unanimously passed a resolution opposing the diverting of funds voted for the school program into other projects. This includes both state funds voted by the legislature and money raised locally through bond issues.<sup>45</sup>

Oklahoma was honored by having Stratton unanimously elected president of the national association at their spring meeting. In an inspiring address at the national convention Stratton said:

We need to teach American Democracy as we never taught it before. We need to impress upon the minds of our people the meaning of true democracy and what it has done, what it stands for, and

---

<sup>44</sup>"Directors Plan Work for Next Year," News-Letter, III (May, 1953).

<sup>45</sup>"State School Boards Group Re-elects Stratton President," The Daily Oklahoman, January 23, 1954, p. 5.

above all, the opportunities of every class of people to own their land, their home, and be captain of their own soul.<sup>46</sup>

He called upon school board members to help educators clarify in the minds of the American people the concept that the way of life in the United States is the "best way in the world."<sup>47</sup>

The April, 1954, News-Letter announced plans for area conferences of the Oklahoma Cooperative Program in Educational Administration. The Southeastern area meeting at Durant, April 27, and the Central meeting at Edmond, April 29, planned programs for school board members as well as administrators.

A list of the characteristics of a good school board member was published in this issue. Some of the main traits listed were the acceptance of the principle of school board unity and of self-subordination to general interests, the exercise of initiative, leadership, and insight, and the ability to establish and maintain successful personal and public relations.

The close of the 1953-1954 year completed nine years of work and service for the Oklahoma State School Boards Association. Its growth had been steady and decided. Success in certain areas was outstanding, particularly in the publishing of the News-Letter and in the holding of area workshops. From the Oklahoma association had come a man who was called to serve as president of the national association. The Oklahoma State School Boards Association had enjoyed a period of vigorous advancement. Three goals of the association had not been fully realized:

---

<sup>46</sup>"Democracy Versus Communism," News-Letter, IV (March, 1954).

<sup>47</sup>Ibid.

county organizations were not as numerous as had been expected, few rural school board members had joined the organization, and the proposed handbook had not materialized.

## CHAPTER V

### PUBLICATIONS

The distribution of relevant publications to school board members is one of the most important services common to all state school boards associations. Many associations publish bulletins, pamphlets, and regular journals or news-letters. Handbooks for board members are published by several state associations. These publications serve as a contact between the central office and the member boards and provide valuable information for school board members.

During the early years of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association publication was limited to space in the Oklahoma Teacher and included articles of interest to school board members, announcements of the association's activities, and a column entitled "School Boards in Action." Although the Oklahoma State School Boards Association appreciated the space so willingly donated by the magazine, it was eager for wider coverage and publications of its own, such as monthly bulletins, education pamphlets, and a handbook for school board members. The association's first step toward this goal was the publication of What It Is and Does, a small, informative pamphlet containing principally the Constitution and By-Laws of the organization. This pamphlet was an almost exact duplication of a Colorado bulletin sent to Wrinkle by Calvin Grieder of the Colorado association. The format of the cover page was approximately the same (See Appendix B), and the enrollment blank on the inside cover and the instructions on the opposite page were identical with the original.

Issued in December, 1948, the first Bulletin was more characteristic of the Oklahoma association. Written by Joe D. Hurt and based on Ferman Phillips' article in the November, 1948, Oklahoma Teacher, it consisted of a single 8 x 14 sheet of paper. The heading, designed solely for the Oklahoma group, showed a public school building superimposed on a map of Oklahoma. Below was the association's slogan—"What the best and wisest parent wants for his own child, this Association wants for every child in Oklahoma." This Bulletin contained a history of certain Oklahoma taxes (Sales, Income, and Car Freight Taxes) which had been set aside for the support of the public schools but which had been diverted into other avenues.

A month later, in January, 1949, the second Bulletin appeared. This issue listed certain recommendations and proposals made by the Legislative Council's Committee on Education to the Twenty-Second Oklahoma Legislature. In the January Bulletin discussions on the organization of state boards of education, on the status of the state superintendent, on the selection of county superintendents, on the reorganization of school districts, and on school finance were signed by Roy Spears.

Later, two Bulletins, using the same form as the first and dated February, 1949, and November, 1949, stressed adequate support for schools. These two issues were signed by Joe D. Hurt. The November issue concluded the series. These five Bulletins were one page issues and were devoted exclusively to reviews of current speeches and articles dealing with public school finance.

In May, 1950, a new series, the News-Letter, appeared. In announcing the first issue, H. E. Wrinkle, the executive secretary, wrote as follows:

This is the first issue of the News-Letter from the Oklahoma State School Boards Association. It is hoped that it may be

issued quarterly beginning this fall. The purpose of it is to bring to the school board members and others pertinent information about the problems confronting Boards of Education, and to serve as a medium through which the practices of one school district may be made available to others. . . .

Superintendents of schools are cordially invited to submit material for use in this News-Letter, and earnestly requested to cooperate with the state school boards association in its effort to help the schools of Oklahoma.<sup>1</sup>

News-Letter was a four-page brochure printed on slick paper in clear type. Smaller (8½ x 11 inches) than its predecessor, it was also more easily handled and read. The contents showed an even more radical change. Whereas the Bulletin had dealt with current legislation and school finance only, the News-Letter ranged more widely. The first issue allotted space to notes and announcements of concern to the Oklahoma association. It included the names and addresses of the officers and directors of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association, Inc.; a membership report; a report on the affiliation with the National School Boards Association; a message from the president, Ira Williams; and a statement of the services the association hoped to render to school board members. One article, "Brief History of the Association," discussed the group's early years and the association's growth in membership, influence, and prestige. One recommendation made was that since school board members serve without pay, association dues should be paid by school warrants or out of the school activity fund. News items regarding new school-buildings at Frederick, Ponca City, and Blackwell were slanted toward the interests of school board members. The two inside pages contained valuable information under titles such as "Facts about Oklahoma Schools" and "Length of Meetings." One article, "Legal Aspects of Board Membership" answered

---

<sup>1</sup>"Legal Aspects of Board Membership," News-Letter, I (May, 1950)

the following questions:

What kind of school districts are there in Oklahoma?

Who is the governing body of a school district?

What are the qualifications for board membership?

How many members on a board of education?

When are board members elected?

What are the powers and duties of the board of education?

May contracts be made with a business in which board members are interested?

Do boards of education have control of student activity funds?

Who is the executive officer of the board of education?

What is the official time for school board meetings?

Who may be clerk of the board of education?

Shall a board member take an oath of office?

As a board member, what is your responsibility in appointment of teachers?<sup>2</sup>

The second issue of News-Letter was published in November, 1950; the third, in December. The main features of the November issue, which was similar to that of May, 1950, contained information of special help to school board members. One article, "Are Your Schools Adequately Insured?" announced that a survey of Oklahoma public school insurance would be made if school board members expressed enough interest to merit it. A second feature was "The Development of School Board Associations," a reprint from the Illinois School Board Journal. News items included national school board news, recent activities of Oklahoma boards of education and of county school board organizations, and the report of

---

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

a state directors' meeting. In an editorial Wrinkle discussed the most recent developments in the association and stressed current needs. The December issue put legislative problems on the front page, publicized the state convention, and gave a prominent place to Ira Williams' message. The remaining space was filled with articles and news items.

The January, 1951, News-Letter, Number 4, Volume I, featured the annual convention. Large black capitals extending across the top of the page in a double row pleaded, "Let us Get Acquainted at the Annual School Board Convention." Beneath this headline was the convention program and an invitation to all school board members and superintendents in the state to attend. A distinctive feature of this issue was the "Honor Roll," boards of education whose dues had been paid before January 6, 1951. One hundred and eighty-eight districts had school boards who were members of the state association. For the third consecutive time, the "Boards in Action" column appeared. Each item began with the name of the school board reporting and closed with an item of interest to other school board members. The form and content of "Boards in Action" is shown as follows:

**EAKLY:** In addition to the purchase of some new furniture and educational supplies, the board has started a program of landscaping the school grounds. Eakly is reported to have the outstanding 4-H club in Caddo County for the last two years. The board president is Russell Suter.

**FARGO:** I. Q. Adams is president of the board and the two new members are Joe Lahann and Paul Smith. The floors and lighting have been improved in the lunch room and new pavement laid in front of the buildings. A band has been added to the school program this year.

**HEAVENER:** The board under the leadership of President J. C. Stringer has adopted a gradual school improvement program involving the expenditure of about \$6,000 annually for additional school facilities. The program this year includes over \$1,000 for library books, a new bus, extensive repairs

to the grade school buildings, new window shades, and sanding the floors.<sup>3</sup>

The February News-Letter was concerned almost entirely with a report of the 1951 convention. The May issue contained informative articles such as: "Suggestions for New School Board Members," "Joint Code of Ethics," "Responsibility of Board Members in Appointment of Teachers." In order that more convention news could be included, the popular "Boards of Education in Action" was omitted from these two issues.

Volume II appeared in November, 1951. Like Volume I, it consisted of six issues for the months of November and December, 1951; January, February, March, and May, 1952; and it included materials similar to its predecessor. Informative articles for school board members occupied about one-fourth of the space in all of the issues except the January number, which was devoted to news about the annual convention and to plans for the future activities of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association. Included in Volume II were announcements of state association activities, such as new county organizations, reminders of membership fees, discussion of suggested legislation supported by the association, reports from the Board of Directors' meetings, and the popular "Boards of Education in Action."

The original plan had been for the News-Letter to be published quarterly, but since six issues had appeared in each of the first two volumes, it was clear that the News-Letter would soon be a monthly publication. Volume III showed no change in the type of articles and announcements. This volume, however, contained nine numbers. For the first time

---

<sup>3</sup>"Boards of Education in Action," News-Letter, I (January, 1951).

the News-Letter was published every month from September through May. Appropriately, the September, 1952, issue carried as its lead story a review of the history of the association, "Oklahoma Association Moves Forward." Much of the advancement made in 1952 and 1953 can be traced in the numbers of this volume. That 1952 was a banner year for the association was evident in the increase in membership. The list as usual appeared in the September issue, significantly by the side of an article, "Growing Cooperation with Administrators." Interest in written policies for school board members was on the increase as was shown in the number of articles published in the September and October editions.

As criteria for measuring the activities of the association, the November, 1952, News-Letter listed eighteen services (See Appendix C) which should be performed by a state school boards association. Of these eighteen services the following twelve were either entirely or partially offered by the Oklahoma State School Boards Association:

1. Provide some token recognizing board membership, such as a membership card, a certificate or scroll, a lapel pin, or the like.
2. Develop a handbook for school board members.
3. . . . .
4. Act as a clearing house or channeling agency to keep board members informed on important developments in the educational field, state and national.
5. Issue some kind of regular and frequent publication--Journal, News-Letter, or Bulletin.
6. Encourage the development of written policies by boards of education and give as much guidance along this line as possible.
7. Help to improve educational conditions in the state, both by taking initiative and by cooperating with other agencies in regard to educational legislation and policy-making.
8. Organize workshops and regional conferences where local board

members can study their own problems.

- 9. . . . .
- 10. Act in all cases to establish desirable standards and to encourage working toward them rather than in any sense to "police" the membership.
- 11. An independent organization, not affiliated with any other group, but closely cooperating with all who are working for the improvement of the public schools.
- 12. . . . .
- 13. The legal right to the use of public funds by local boards for the dues and expenses of the state association.
- 14. . . . .
- 15. . . . .
- 16. . . . .
- 17. Regular meetings of the executive committee or board of directors of the association.
- 18. Affiliation and close working relations with the National School Boards Association.<sup>4</sup>

This appraisal of the activities of the association showed that the Oklahoma State School Boards Association was performing the functions prescribed for it.

Reports of the first area workshops appeared in the December, 1952, issue. For months the Board of Directors had urged regional meetings. Finally, the perseverance of the officers brought results when two area workshops were held in the fall of 1952 at Durant and Weatherford. So great was the enthusiasm at these meetings that when similar workshops were held in the spring, News-Letter devoted a greater part of the April and May issues to a discussion of the meetings.

---

<sup>4</sup>"State Association Activities, " News-Letter, III (November, 1952).

No noticeable changes were made in Volume IV. Each issue stressed news of district school board activities and of county, state, and national association affairs which were interspersed with informative articles, a report of the annual convention, and the ever-popular "Board of Education in Action."

Publication of the News-Letter appears to have been one of the most successful accomplishments of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association. School board members who read and digest articles pertaining to their particular phase of school work can not avoid being more progressive. Many aspects of school boards' duties and responsibilities have been thoroughly examined and carefully explained. A partial list of such articles found in the four volumes of News-Letter follows: "Legal Aspects of Board Membership," "Facts About Oklahoma Schools," "Length of Board Meeting," "Are Your Schools Adequately Insured," "Your Board's Public Relations," "Responsibility of Board Members in Appointment of Teachers," "Suggestions for New Board Members," "Superintendent-Board Relationships," "Importance of Board Membership," "Education and Democracy," and "Policy-Making by Boards of Education." Many articles also dealt with school board meeting procedures and pointed out the characteristics of a good school board member. After a review of the material published in the News-Letter, it appears to have been one of the most influential forces in bringing progress and growth to the Oklahoma State School Boards Association.

100 3/4 RAG U.S.A.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE RELATION OF THE OKLAHOMA STATE SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION TO THE NATIONAL SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION AND TO ASSOCIATIONS IN OTHER STATES

Although problems common to all school boards once could be solved independently at the local level, such problems were increasingly becoming subject to solution only at the state or higher level. Many of the same primary factors motivated the establishment of state school boards associations.

The main purpose of the National School Boards Association is to assist the state associations in reaching their objectives.<sup>1</sup> The Preamble to the Constitution of the National School Boards Association mentions definite objectives which it hopes to strengthen:

Recognizing that the nation's future is dependent on the complete education of its youth, that in unity there is strength, and that exchange of ideas is important at all times; that coordination of effort on the part of all educational forces interested in the betterment of education is necessary; and also recognizing that school boards are in a strategic position to bring about needed improvement of public education; we believe a National School Boards Association will aid in accomplishing these ends.<sup>2</sup>

Listed in the constitution under the title, "The Purpose of the Association," are the following six aims:

1. To work for the general advancement of education for the youth of the United States and its possessions.
2. To study the educational program of the different states

---

<sup>1</sup>Report of the First Nationwide Work Conference for State School Boards Association Leaders, N. S. B. A. (November 13-15), p. 6.

<sup>2</sup>Constitution of the National School Boards Association (revised and adopted, February 26, 1950), "Preamble."

and disseminate this information.

3. To work for the most efficient and effective organization of the public schools.
4. To work for the adequate financial support of the public schools.
5. To study educational legislation proposed in Congress to the end that the various state school boards association may be informed of such legislation.
6. To accomplish such other purposes as may be approved by the membership of this organization acting in an annual or called meeting, or by the Executive Committee.<sup>3</sup>

These statements regarding the aims, purpose, and ends to be accomplished by the national association reveal that its objectives coincide with those of the state association and differ only in their adaptation to the national level. The organization of the two associations is similar, except that the work of one is on a national basis and the work of the other on a state basis. Officers are elected annually at a National School Boards Association convention by delegates of the state associations. Each state is allowed two voting delegates, although as many non-voting delegates from each state may attend as desire to do so.

Elected officers include a president, first vice-president, second vice-president, and treasurer. These officers with six other members and the immediate past president constitute the Board of Directors which makes plans and transacts the important business of the national association. The executive secretary, an ex-officio member of the Board of Directors, devotes his time to the needs of the organization. He is a full-time salaried official.

The national association is financed by those state associations

---

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., Article II.

which are members of its organization. By the payment of the minimum membership fee of one hundred dollars any state association may receive all the benefits of full membership. This amount from each state would not provide enough revenue to finance an extensive national program. Regular full-goal membership dues are based upon the total amount of money spent in a state for education and are estimated according to the formula of six dollars dues per million dollars spent for education in the state. At one time state dues reached a maximum of seven dollars per million, but a change in the rate was made at the St. Louis convention in 1952. All member states are invited to become full-goal members as soon as their membership is large enough to provide an income which will allow them to pay the amount indicated by the scale.

#### Areas of Special Effectiveness

In certain fields the national association is especially effective. The extensiveness of its contact gives added value to attempted research. The national organization is the logical agency for presenting summaries or detailed accounts of successful procedures in regard to selection and orientation or other relevant experiences of board members. Because of its broad scope the national association is able to provide excellent consultive service to state associations in preparing manuals, in planning and promoting regional workshops, and in delivering materials for the use of local school boards. In many other fields suggestions or information from the National School Boards Association serves to point the way toward progress.

Through the national association the state organizations have access to national and international educational agencies. Where the state

association concerns itself with state legislation, the national association interests itself in proposals in Congress which will effect education throughout the nation. Examples of the work of the national association on the national and international levels are found in the minutes of the National School Boards Association annual convention at Atlantic City in 1950. In one of the resolutions passed at this meeting the national association urged Congress to make the United States Office of Education an "adequately financed, independent agency headed by a National Board of Education, appointed for long over-lapping terms by the President with the consent of the Senate."<sup>4</sup> It also recommended that a professionally qualified Commissioner of Education be selected by the board as its executive officer.

Not only does the national association propose legislation, as in the example just cited, but it also studies national questions involving education or educators and recommends appropriate action to school boards and state associations. Concerning Social Security for school employees, the national association took this stand:

Whereas, many states and communities have well established and sound retirement systems for teachers and other full-time school employees,

Therefore Be It Resolved: That the N. S. B. A. is opposed to any Federal legislation that would permit those persons already covered by state or local retirement systems to be included under the Federal Social Security Act.<sup>5</sup>

Attention was centered upon subversive groups in a resolution which recommended that no member of the Communist party be hired or retained as an employee of any public school, either as teacher, administrator,

---

<sup>4</sup>Report of National School Boards Association meeting (Resolution No. 1, annual convention, Atlantic City, February, 1950).

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., No. 2.

or employee in any other capacity. The national association was functioning also at its nationwide level when it expressed its gratification over the creation of the National Citizens Commission for the Public Schools. Through the executive secretary it proposed the establishment of a National Coordinating Council on Education and gave assurance of its readiness to cooperate with the National Citizens Commission for the Public Schools, the National Congress of Parents and Teachers, and the National Education Association in organizing and directing such a Council.

On the international level the National School Boards Association endorsed the principles and objectives of the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, urging the expansion of the "practice of exchanging both students and teachers among the various nations."<sup>6</sup> In order to be of assistance in working out programs designed to bring about better international understanding, the National School Boards Association urged that a representative of their organization be appointed to the United States Commission for UNESCO. At a later convention the National School Boards Association recommended that

at appropriate maturity and grade levels adequate instruction be given in the public schools about United Nations and UNESCO as a part of the instruction in civics, U. S. history, and related subjects.<sup>7</sup>

Through fraternization with kindred national education associations and through cooperation with the highest national and international forces for the improvement of public education, the National School Boards Association is able to make the influence of local school boards effective

---

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., No. 8.

<sup>7</sup>News-Letter, "N. S. B. A. Resolutions," IV (March, 1954)

over the nation because the opinions of these local boards are voiced through state delegates who control the national association. The wide field thus created for research makes it possible for the national association to provide services of extraordinary value to the state associations.

An outstanding feature of the program of the national association, and one which brings the state associations into close cooperation with the national organization, is the annual convention. Although in many ways this meeting is similar to annual state conventions, the choice of subjects is exceptionally broad, and national educational leaders are featured on the programs. Included in the list of subjects discussed at the 1950 convention were "The Relations of Local, State, and Federal Governments to the Public Schools," "The Board of Education and Educational Policies," "The Relation Between the Board and Superintendent," and "The Board and Public Relations." Mrs. Oveta Culp Hobby gave one of the outstanding addresses at the 1954 convention. In the president's speech J. G. Stratton discussed "Democracy versus Communism."

Relation of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association  
to the National School Boards Association

Work in national and international areas is largely the responsibility of the national association, while the program in the states is promoted by state organizations. The success of the two groups is accomplished by careful cooperation on the part of both organizations, and this objective of cooperation, or "working together", is stressed by the leaders. In January, 1952, J. G. Stratton, then first vice-president of the national group, reported to a meeting of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association that not only was there a desire and aim for

cooperation between the two associations but that there were also actual ways to arrive at this objective. In his report, which reflected the aim of working together, Stratton said:

I bring you greetings from the National Secretary, Edward M. Tuttle. Our state and national organization must work together. We have our national meeting this year on February 22-23, at St. Louis, Missouri. Several from our own association are going to help make the national convention a success. W. O. Goodman is on the Program Committee, George Wash, the Hospitality Committee, and H. E. Wrinkle is on the Registration Committee. The program is as follows: Mr. Tuttle will give his report and Mr. Trotter will give his address on the first day. There will be a discussion group Friday with the theme, "Partners in Education." The main business session will be Friday evening with the State Association Breakfast on Saturday morning for all presidents and secretaries, and also meetings on Saturday morning.<sup>8</sup>

Stratton referred to the number of states which had joined the national association and extended to all an invitation to work together. In concluding his report, Stratton said:

There are forty-two states who are members of the N. S. B. A. We extend an invitation to everyone present to attend the National Convention and participate in this opportunity of working together for public education.<sup>9</sup>

The Oklahoma State School Boards Association has been affiliated with the national organization since 1948. It is the aim of the state association to cooperate with the national association in every way possible. Educationally and financially Oklahoma has worked in harmony with its suggestions, disseminating information of value to board members and sending contributions regularly to the national association. The first check, dated January 13, 1948, was for \$25. Later checks were gradually increased as the growing membership made more funds available

---

<sup>8</sup>Minutes, Business Session, Oklahoma State School Boards Association, Inc. (Oklahoma City, January 25, 1952).

<sup>9</sup>Ibid.

for this purpose. Checks of \$100 or \$200 were sent once or twice a year. In 1952, full-goal dues for Oklahoma, estimated at \$7.00 per million dollars of total expenditures for public education, amounted to \$406. The Oklahoma association paid this entire amount and has continued since that time to support the National School Boards Association on a full-goal basis.

In its early struggles for financial adequacy the Oklahoma association was faced with the question of proper support of an executive secretary. As was pointed out by officials of the association, progress in some states had been stifled because the state association had decided not to expand its services until local boards agreed to give adequate financial support; frequently the local boards refused to pay higher dues until increased services were in evidence. A way of avoiding such an impasse had been found by certain other state associations which had sought help from established agencies such as state departments of education or universities. The theory advanced by state associations seeking help was that if a thoroughly good program were established, school board members would then rally to its support. At various times a number of state universities had provided office space, equipment, stenographers, and the part-time services of faculty members to act as executive secretaries.<sup>10</sup> Taking advantage of this information, the Oklahoma State School Boards Association affiliated with the University of Oklahoma, which provided the part-time services of H. E. Wrinkle as executive secretary-treasurer to the association. Through close cooperation with the national organization a dangerous pitfall was avoided.

---

<sup>10</sup>Report of the First Nationwide Work Conference for State School Boards Association Leaders, N. S. B. A. (November 13-15, 1953), p. 14.

Many of the national association's recommendations were adopted by the Oklahoma State School Boards Association. This was true in regard to state conventions, which had been held in Oklahoma almost from the beginning of the state school boards organization. During the ten years of its existence the state association has held seven annual conventions. There has been cooperation between the state and national associations on the programs for these conventions. Often some person connected with the national group in an important way has addressed the state convention. Edward M. Tuttle, executive secretary of the National School Boards Association, spoke to the conventions in 1949 and 1951; and F. H. Trotter, president, was featured in 1952. When J. G. Stratton, president of the Oklahoma association, became president also of the national group, state conventions became almost a joint project of the two organizations.

The Oklahoma association also conformed to standards upheld by the national association in conducting regional and district meetings and area workshops. The workshops became a reality only after several months of preparation. As early as April, 1951, "Workshops for School Board Members" appeared as a project under consideration at a Board of Directors meeting. At this directors' meeting on October 3, 1952, "Plans for Regional Conference" was listed on the "Suggested Agenda" for discussion. After this discussion plans matured rapidly, and the first area workshop became a reality on November 20, 1952. Success was immediate, and area workshops soon became a vital part of the program through which the state association sought to carry national association suggestions to local board members.

Work of a cooperative nature is evident in the publication of the News-Letter, which devotes some space in each edition to National School

Board Association news. Announcements concerning the state association's work in relation to the national convention brought important information to member boards throughout the state. An example of this cooperation is found in the December, 1950, issue, when reference was made to the coming national convention at Atlantic City in February, 1951. The article explains that

. . . plans have been made for an interesting, helpful National Convention at Atlantic City, February 16-17, 1951. The convention theme is "Public Education--Bulwark of American Democracy."

Every state association is entitled to two voting delegates. Mr. Tuttle urges that every state send at least this many representatives, and urges that their names be sent to him as soon as possible. The delegation from each state is to prepare and take its own exhibit to the National meeting.<sup>11</sup>

The close relationship between the Oklahoma State School Boards Association and the national organization was evident in various issues of the News-Letter, when articles featured the growth of the national association among the states, the development of an effective service program which would benefit the state associations, news regarding changes in national officers and in rates of state membership dues, and announcements of conventions. In harmony with the general objectives of the national society, the Oklahoma state association supported needed school legislation. Early in the development of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association considerable attention was focused upon the study of tax legislation in Oklahoma in relation to public school finances. Sincere attempts were made to influence legislators to make the welfare of Oklahoma's school children first in the distribution of the state's monies.

---

<sup>11</sup>"National School Board News," News-Letter, I (December, 1950)

Other proposed legislation which was sanctioned by the state school boards association concerned the changing of certain elective educational positions to appointive positions. Re-districting of Oklahoma schools with the thought of creating fewer districts was given serious consideration.

By becoming a member of the Educational Council and by working closely with the Parent-Teachers Association and the State Administrator's Association, Oklahoma has followed the suggestion of the National School Boards Association that state associations cooperate with other agencies which are interested in improving education. Delegates whose expenses were paid by the Oklahoma state association were sent each year to the national convention. H. E. Wrinkle and Earl Sowers attended the 1949 St. Louis convention at a cost to the association of \$23.09, but in 1951 the expense of sending delegates to the Atlantic City meeting amounted to \$415.20. Expenses amount to about \$400 per year, but the unity which has resulted from Oklahoma's participation in the national conventions has been of decided value to the Oklahoma State School Boards Association.

Although the national association recommendation for the employment of a full-time executive secretary has not been met by the Oklahoma State School Boards Association, certain office expenses, including a part of the executive secretary's salary, have been paid from state funds. One of the goals of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association is the employment of a full-time executive secretary.

In summary, one might refer to the report of the First Nationwide Work Conference for School Boards Association Leaders held in Evansville, Indiana, in 1953. Five topics were discussed in relation to the activities and services to be provided by the national and state associations. The five topics considered were as follows:

1. Selecting, orienting, and providing in-service education opportunities for individual board members.
2. Improving the opportunities of local boards.
3. Defining and solving educational problems which cannot be solved at the local level.
4. Perfecting the organization and financing the activities of state school board associations.
5. Developing the prestige of school board associations.<sup>12</sup>

Regarding the first topic, it was agreed that in "selecting, orienting, and providing in-service education for individual board members," the responsibility for developing a program of research and investigation for improving the selection of board members and ways of assisting them to understand their responsibilities is the duty of the national association. Detailed accounts of successful orientation and in-service experiences gained by the National School Boards Association through research are communicated to the states. Another of the national association's responsibilities is to provide consultive services to state associations. It becomes the responsibility of state associations to work to improve the process by which board members are elected. They should, first of all, find ways to give the voters information as to what constitutes desirable characteristics in a board member. State associations assist new board members in various ways. Some associations have printed orientation manuals which explain the relationship to be established with other board members, with the faculty, and with the patrons of the district. These manuals are often called "Handbooks" and are sent directly to new board members from the office of the state association with an invitation

---

<sup>12</sup>Report of the Nationwide Study Conference for School Board Association Leaders (Evansville, Indiana, November 13-15, 1953).

to become a member of the organization.

In attacking the second problem, "Improving the operation of local boards," it was agreed that the National School Boards Association again must assume a large share of the responsibility for research. State associations must direct much of their effort toward correcting wrong ideas in regard to the functioning of school boards. Some school boards expect their superintendents to create the policies and administer the schools, while other boards attempt to function in both the capacity of board member and administrator. Some boards of education believe that the schools belong to them personally; and therefore they make little or no effort to enlist the support of the community. Misconceptions such as these can be avoided or corrected by the state associations.

In "defining and solving educational problems which cannot be solved at the local level," the conferees agreed that the national association should develop procedures for studying problems on the national level. State associations study problems, such as seeking adequate financial support for the public schools, deciding upon the desirability of proposed school legislation, and coordinating the activities of all organizations interested in improving the public schools within the state.

The conferees accepted the principle that development of a strong national association with adequate financial support must await the development of strong state associations; for upon the strength of the state associations rests the financial security and prestige of the national association. The pattern which seems to have been most successful in developing strong state associations is that of providing worthwhile services for local school boards. When school boards realize the value of these services, they will support the state association with an adequate

schedule of dues.

How successful the projects of school board associations become is dependent, to a large extent, upon the amount of prestige developed. To gain such influence, the quality of these projects should be irreproachable, and the majority of the board members should participate in the work of the association. All legitimate means of publicity should be used. In the development of prestige the national and state organizations operate in a similar manner.

#### Relationship Among State Associations

State associations not only receive guidance and valuable information from the national association; but through periodicals, pamphlets, and personal correspondence the executive secretaries of the various state associations maintain a continual exchange of ideas. The influence of the Colorado Association of School Boards is especially noticeable in the development of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association. Calvin Grieder, secretary-treasurer of the Colorado organization, had a deep interest in the growth of the Oklahoma association, and he often sent helpful suggestions to H. E. Wrinkle. Early in the history of the Oklahoma association, Grieder supplied the office with samples of promotional letters which had been used by the Colorado association. These letters included announcements concerning the publication of a Bulletin, a Calendar of Activities for Colorado School Boards, and a leaflet, What It Is and What It Does. Some letters gave reports on legislative projects, such as School District Reorganization and the changing of the office of state superintendent of public instruction from an elective to an appointive office. In several instances the subjects of these letters were later

used by members of the Oklahoma association.

The executive secretary of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association received material from many other states. Handbooks, bulletins, and various communications flowed into his office, supplying a constant source of valuable information to the Oklahoma association. A trend toward acceptance of the concept of the superintendent as an educational administrator was noticeable in these publications. Numerous publications dealing with such topics as "Policy Making" for the board of education, "Ethics" for school board members, and consolidating the efforts of school boards in supporting improved school legislation were ideas received from many state associations.

Through information received from other state associations comparisons can be made. The amount of money various state associations set up in their annual budgets suggested that the strength of an association was largely in proportion to the amount of funds available for its use. In 1950, the budget for the state of New York was \$52,000, while that of Illinois was \$50,500. Other states with budgets amounting to more than \$10,000 were: Pennsylvania, \$18,000; Washington, \$15,000; Tennessee, \$12,500; California, \$12,500. Oklahoma's budget for 1950 was \$2,500. Some states operated on budgets as low as \$1,000. Most of the state associations depend upon dues for their revenue. A few associations receive a certain amount of assistance from state appropriations. Some receive help from their state university; the Oklahoma State School Boards Association receives, in addition to membership dues, assistance from the University of Oklahoma.

The Oklahoma State School Boards Association has been unable to finance the services of an executive secretary on a regular basis. Since no other

state with an income under \$10,000 per year has been able to do so, it is apparent that this is not an unusual situation. Several state organizations with larger budgets than that of the Oklahoma association do not employ an executive secretary for the entire year.

The numerous activities of executive secretaries, as revealed in inter-state communication, emphasize the need for the continuous yearly services of these officers. Organizing activities, conducting research, editing publications, maintaining an office for discharging such responsibilities as filing, typing, and keeping records, revising and preparing a current mailing list, mimeographing materials, and answering correspondence are some of the duties performed by the executive secretary. He plans annual conventions and regional meetings, mails publications, advises school boards concerning legal matters, records the minutes of official meetings, sends notices of dues, and acts as treasurer. The executive secretary contacts local boards concerning all educational questions, conducts regional and state meetings, does legislative work, and promotes membership campaigns.

## CHAPTER VII

### A LOOK AT THE OKLAHOMA STATE SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION TODAY

The ability of the association to attract members, the measure of its success in procuring finances, and the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of the program it presents are indices of the levels of efficiency attained. A look at the Oklahoma State School Boards Association today suggests both strengths and weaknesses. In certain areas growth is evident, whereas in certain other areas stagnation, and perhaps a degree of retrogression, is found. The total picture, however, reveals a steady, although slow, growth in membership, in finances, in influence, and in services offered. A survey of each area of operation is herewith presented.

#### Accomplishments of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association During the First Ten Years

Although the association was organized in 1944, no membership records are available before April, 1948, when one hundred and thirty-eight districts had joined the association. The complete records for the year 1947-1948 list the membership as one hundred and forty-one with five hundred and twenty-eight board members in the affiliated districts. In 1948-1949, one hundred and eighty-seven school districts having six hundred and ninety-eight board members affiliated with the state association. Membership of school boards increased to two hundred and twenty-nine during the 1949-1950 fiscal year but dropped slightly in the two years following. In 1953-1954, two hundred and fifty-seven school

boards became members of the association, with twelve hundred and seventy-three individual board members being in the affiliated districts. During the seven year period from 1948 to 1954, the membership of school boards increased from one hundred and forty-one to two hundred and fifty-seven, and the number of board members in the affiliated districts increased from five hundred and twenty-eight to twelve hundred and seventy-three. Table I shows the growth in membership for each year for which records are available.

TABLE I

DISTRIBUTION OF MEMBERSHIP IN THE OKLAHOMA STATE SCHOOL  
BOARDS ASSOCIATION DURING THE PERIOD 1947 TO 1954\*

Fiscal Period	Number of Districts	Number of Board Members
1947-1948	141	528
1948-1949	187	698
1949-1950	229	1125
1950-1951	219	1042
1951-1952	221	1057
1952-1953	240	1155
1953-1954	257	1273

A study of the distribution of membership among the various types of schools, classified according to the number of teachers employed (see Table II), reveals information which is of value to the Oklahoma State School Boards Association. Out of a total of twenty-one hundred districts, the membership in 1951-1952 was two hundred and twenty-one, or 10.5 per cent. Only three of the fourteen hundred and twenty rural school boards

\*From the official files of the secretary of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association.

were members. In the five hundred and seventy-nine schools having twenty-four or less teachers, one hundred and forty-seven were members. Over half of the schools in the twenty-five to forty-nine teacher classification joined the association, and all of the school systems having fifty or more teachers joined.

TABLE II

PERCENTAGE OF MEMBERSHIP IN THE OKLAHOMA STATE SCHOOL  
BOARDS ASSOCIATION IN 1951-1952 IN STATE SCHOOLS  
ACCORDING TO THE NUMBER OF TEACHERS EMPLOYED

Number of Teachers	Number of Schools	Membership	Per Cent of Membership
50 or over	34	34	100
25 to 49	67	37	55
24 or less	579	147	25
1 to 3	<u>1429</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>.2</u>
Total	2100	221	10.5

There is a marked decrease in the percentage membership of school boards operating smaller schools and almost no participation by rural school boards. The 89.5 per cent of the school boards in the state which do not belong to the state association is composed largely of rural or small school systems. Although the records show growth in membership, it is easily recognized that this growth lies within a relatively small per cent of the potential membership of the state.

Finances. One of the first plans for financing the association was made at a Board of Directors' meeting six months after the organizational meeting. A proposal was made that school board members join the

Oklahoma Education Association by payment of the two dollars and fifty cents annual dues. Of this amount, one dollar was to be allocated to the Oklahoma Teacher, one dollar to the county school boards association, and fifty cents to the state school boards association. There are no records to show whether this plan was ever put into action or whether any income was received from this source. One year later the Board of Directors voted annual dues of one dollar per board member,<sup>1</sup> which was the amount provided for in the constitution.

At a Board of Directors' meeting April 18, 1948, a new method of financing was developed. A scale for district membership dues, rising in proportion to the number of teachers employed, was developed. Roy Spears presented the motion which proposed dues as follows:

Number of Teachers School Employs	Annual Dues For Entire Board
100 or more . . . . .	\$15.00
50 to 99 . . . . .	10.00
25 to 49 . . . . .	5.00
Fewer than 25 teachers . . . . .	3.00

The schedule was adopted but was changed before application to apply to the number of teachers as follows:

Number of Teachers School Employs	Annual Dues For Entire Board
50 or more . . . . .	\$15.00
25 to 49 . . . . .	10.00
up to 25 . . . . .	5.00
Non-high school . . . . .	3.00

This schedule of dues was used until 1952.

A new schedule of membership dues was adopted at a Board of Directors' meeting on March 24, 1952. This new plan provided for dues as listed below:

---

<sup>1</sup>Minutes, state meeting, Oklahoma State School Boards Association, February 14, 1946.

Number of Teachers School Employs	Annual Dues for Entire Board
100 or over . . . . .	\$50.00
50 to 99 . . . . .	30.00
25 to 49 . . . . .	20.00
10 to 24 . . . . .	15.00
4 to 9 . . . . .	10.00
1 to 3 . . . . .	5.00

No change has been made in dues since the adoption of this schedule.

Financial growth is recorded in reports which show the following increase in income:

June 1, 1947 to April 17, 1948 . . . . .	\$ 553.00*
April 17, 1948 to March 31, 1949 . . . . .	1299.00
March 31, 1949 to April 2, 1950 . . . . .	1739.00
April 2, 1950 to January 26, 1951 . . . . .	1687.00
January 26, 1951 to January 26, 1952 . . . . .	1723.00
January 26, 1952 to January 20, 1953 . . . . .	4148.00
January 20, 1953 to May 30, 1954 . . . . .	5005.00

The enrollment of new members and the increase in the amount of dues were responsible for the added revenue.

Disbursements. Minutes from the November 1, 1947, Board of Directors' meeting show a balance of \$478.29 after the payment of all outstanding bills. There is no record as to the nature of these bills, but the minutes state that the board voted unanimously to pay for a luncheon for all board members and their wives from the association treasury.

The first financial report filed in the minutes book was dated April 19, 1948. This report shows an income of \$816.03 from May 31, 1947, to April 17, 1948. Disbursements amounted to \$537.99 and accounts payable, \$16.61, leaving a balance of \$261.43. The following list of disbursements shows the expenses of the association during the period

---

\*The dates and figures are taken from the secretary's reports as they were made to the Board of Directors. No other data are available.

from June 5, 1947, to April 17, 1948:\*

June	5, 1947	Beverly's luncheon . . . . .	\$ 11.71
June	28, 1947	Expense of Oklahoma Educational Council .	9.00
July	1, 1947	Bank charges . . . . .	.35
July	31, 1947	Central State College, letterheads . . .	2.00
August	1, 1947	Bank charges . . . . .	.23
August	11, 1947	Joe Hurt, engraving . . . . .	4.87
September	8, 1947	Central State College, engraving . . . .	7.80
September	18, 1947	University Press, mimeographing . . . .	8.05
September	17, 1947	Battenburgs, printing envelopes . . . . .	10.15
September	27, 1947	Bank charges . . . . .	.29
November	1, 1947	Chambers, overpayment . . . . .	1.00
November	1, 1947	Bank charges . . . . .	.88
November	3, 1947	H. E. Wrinkle, petty cash . . . . .	46.37
November	3, 1947	University Press, mimeographing . . . . .	5.25
November	3, 1947	Univ. of Okla., comptroller, postage . .	16.77
November	6, 1947	Faculty Club luncheon . . . . .	31.25
November	8, 1947	Faculty exchange, stamps . . . . .	3.00
November	8, 1947	Transcript, envelopes . . . . .	8.16
December	3, 1947	Oklahoma Council on Education . . . . .	5.00
December	3, 1947	Bank charges . . . . .	2.04
January	6, 1948	Bank charges . . . . .	.87
January	6, 1948	Faculty Exchange, stamps . . . . .	3.00
January	31, 1948	Nat. Council School Boards Association .	25.00
January	21, 1948	Varsity Book Store, paper . . . . .	3.40
January	21, 1948	Battenburgs, membership cards . . . . .	7.00
February	10, 1948	Meals (Sowers, Wrinkle) . . . . .	1.70
February	14, 1948	E. E. Sowers, Atlantic City (\$35 refunded)	200.00
March	11, 1948	Faculty Exchange, stamps . . . . .	5.00
March	23, 1948	Allmon, postal cards . . . . .	16.00
April	1, 1948	Bank charges . . . . .	.17
April	15, 1948	Transcript Co., envelopes and printing. .	90.98
April	15, 1948	University Press, mimeographing . . . .	9.80
April	17, 1948	Faculty Exchange, stamps . . . . .	3.00

An inspection of this list of disbursements shows that the principal expenses of the association were the purchase of materials used in contacting members, such as stamps, cards, and printing, and the payment of representative's expenses to the national convention. Total disbursements for means of communication amounted to \$202.13, and the dues for the national association plus the expenses of a delegate to the national convention amounted to \$190. Luncheons for board members cost \$42.96.

---

\*From Financial Report.

These three types of expenditures account for four-fifths of the disbursements during the year. Minor items, such as bank charges and petty cash, account for the remainder. When state conventions were organized, they became items of expense to the association.

An analysis of ten financial reports from May 31, 1947, to October 1, 1952, reveals that total receipts, amounting to approximately \$6,600, were spent in the five areas designated in the following table. Communication includes printing, mimeographing, postage, postal cards, stationery, and envelopes. National Association expense includes state dues and delegates' expense. Board of Directors meeting expense includes meals and rooms.

TABLE III

CLASSIFICATION OF DISBURSEMENTS OF THE OKLAHOMA  
STATE SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION FUNDS  
MAY 31, 1947 TO OCTOBER 1, 1952

Classification	Total	Per Cent
National association expense	\$3,099.99	47
Communications	2,394.47	36
State conventions	791.40	12
Miscellaneous	217.05	3.5
Board of Directors' meetings	92.34	1.5

During the period May 31, 1947, to October 1, 1952, the amount of money devoted to the National School Boards Association was approximately \$3,100, and the money spent for all classes of communications was approximately \$2,400.

The principal source of revenue of the Oklahoma State School Boards

Association is membership dues and other grants for specific purposes. The enrollment of new members and the increase in the amount of dues collected for each school board were responsible for the increase in revenue.

Administrative Personnel. Elective officers of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association consist of fifteen directors chosen at the annual association meeting. At all times, there must be representation from each congressional district on the Board of Directors. Five new members are chosen each year for three terms to replace the five directors whose terms expire. The Board of Directors elects a president; first, second, and third vice-presidents, and an executive secretary-treasurer. During the last few years, the University of Oklahoma has released one of its staff members to serve as a part-time executive secretary. His salary has been paid by the University. The association has been contributing \$100 per month to help pay the salary of an office secretary.

Publications. The Bulletin and the News-Letter have been a useful service to the membership. Each of these publications has met an expressed need. The Bulletin has been devoted almost exclusively to reprinting articles and speeches dealing with financial support for public education. The News-Letter, the principal method of contact between the state association and its members, has become a regular monthly publication and has been effective in keeping school board members informed and in recording national and state association activities.

State Convention. A regular service provided by the Oklahoma State School Boards Association since 1945 is its annual one-day state conventions. At these conventions men of outstanding experience in school-board work give valuable assistance; subjects for discussion are chosen on the

basis of immediate interest to school board members. Utilization of small group discussions at the state conventions has made the association less dependent upon school administrators and other educators.

Regional Workshops. The regional workshops have offered a quick look into educational problems at the "grass-root" level and have offered valuable information to individual board members concerning specific problems in their community. As an in-service educational program for school boards, these workshops have outstanding promise.

Other Services. The policy with respect to promoting legislation has never been well developed or defined. In 1949, the Oklahoma State School Boards Association was instrumental in securing the introduction of House Bill 464 into the Twentieth Legislature. For the most part, effort spent since then in the field of legislation has been on a cooperative basis with other organizations interested in promoting public schools in Oklahoma.

Consultative service has not been a major concern of the state association. This responsibility, obviously, would be one requiring much more professional and clerical help than the Oklahoma association is able to provide. Occasional letters containing requests for information appear in the files. Often these were answered by referral to an authoritative source.

No research studies have been conducted exclusively by the Oklahoma State School Boards Association, although its officers and members have cooperated and urged individuals and committees to do a few research studies that have benefited to a degree education in Oklahoma. The Oklahoma State School Boards Association has encouraged a few research studies on the graduate level which have helped promote a better understanding in the area of school administration.

Personal services to association members has been limited to representation at various meetings. The president and the executive secretary of the Oklahoma association have frequently been asked to speak before county school board groups, school administrators, and other organizations.

The Oklahoma State School Boards Association As  
Viewed by Educational Leaders

Although an increase in membership and a gain in income show vitality in the association, these achievements do not measure accurately its true effectiveness. The real achievements of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association lie in results in better education brought about through the efforts of the association. The Oklahoma association has sought to encourage improvement in various educational areas. An attempt has been made to aid in the passage of good school legislation, to promote understanding between school boards and administrators, to stimulate sound building and insurance programs, and to develop leadership among school boards. An estimate of the accomplishments of the state association in eight selected areas of endeavor was made from a study of answers received to a questionnaire (which shall hereafter be designated throughout this study as Questionnaire A) submitted to a representative group of Oklahoma school board members and of replies to a letter sent to a selected number of Oklahoma educators familiar with the work of the association.

Two hundred and fifty-three copies of Questionnaire A were mailed, and seventy-one replies were received and tabulated. Questionnaire A was sent to the chairman of every third board of education listed in the

Oklahoma Educational Directory,<sup>2</sup> published by the Oklahoma Department of Education. Most of the questionnaires were answered without comment. Several school board members, however, wrote their opinions freely. Some comments were highly critical of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association.

TABLE IV

## RESPONSES OF SEVENTY-ONE BOARD MEMBERS TO QUESTIONNAIRE A

Question	Yes	No	No Answer to this Question
1. Has the association improved the quality of personnel on the board of education?	42	24	5
2. Has the association made for better relationships between the superintendent and the board of education?	54	11	6
3. Has your board's membership in the association promoted harmony between the board and the faculty?	51	15	5
4. Do you feel that the association is dominated by the superintendent rather than lay board members?	19	51	1
5. Has membership in the association changed your viewpoint any as to your responsibilities as a member of the board?	43	22	6
6. Do you think that the association has aided in the matter of good school legislation?	62	3	6
7. Has membership in the association helped the building program of your district?	34	29	8
8. Has membership in the association helped in choosing a better personnel for the faculty?	43	20	7

<sup>2</sup>State Department of Education, Oklahoma Educational Directory (Oklahoma City, Bulletin 1953-54, No. 109-c), 81-95.

In Table IV is found a tabulation of responses of board members to each of the questions included in Questionnaire A. A majority of the school board members agreed that the outstanding service rendered by the Oklahoma State School Boards Association has been the promoting of school legislation. The service of least significance designated by respondents to Questionnaire A has been in the area of building programs.

Reassembling the questions and listing the ratings according to the area of school board improvement referred to in Questionnaire A gives an interesting picture of the association's effectiveness. As is shown in Table V, the writer has classified the responses of board members in terms of type (area) of service. Domination of school superintendents (Question 4, Table IV) has been changed from negative to positive in Table V. On the basis of the data presented in Table V one might be inclined to answer in the affirmative the question, "Do you believe that the Oklahoma State School Boards Association has accomplished improvement worthy of notice in the following areas?"

TABLE V

RANK OF EFFECTIVENESS OF THE OKLAHOMA STATE SCHOOL BOARDS  
ASSOCIATION SERVICES AS INDICATED BY RESPONDENTS TO  
THE QUESTIONNAIRE A  
(From Most Effective to Least Effective)

Services Referred to in the Questionnaire	Yes	No	No Per Cent	
			Answer	Yes
6. School Legislation*	62	3	6	95
2. Superintendent--Board Relations	54	11	6	83
3. Faculty--Board Relations	51	15	5	77
4. Leadership from board members	51	19	1	73
8. Faculty personnel	44	20	7	69
5. Viewpoint of board members	43	22	6	66
1. School board personnel	42	24	5	64
7. Building program	34	29	8	54

In each classification more than half of the respondents indicated that they thought the association's accomplishments were noteworthy. The favorable responses ranged from 54 to 95 per cent.

Of the twenty letters mailed to educators, twelve replies were received. Most of the respondents indicated that the association had made justifiable growth and had accomplished desirable goals. Answers to the letter were received from the following: John Shoemaker, superintendent of the Lawton public schools; John F. Bender, State Department of Education; Oliver Hodge, State Superintendent of Public Instruction; Paul B. Allen, superintendent of the Pauls Valley public schools; J. Chester Swanson, superintendent of the Oklahoma City public schools;

\*Services referred to in the questionnaire have been paraphrased.

R. H. Burton, president of Southwestern State College; Ferman Phillips, executive secretary, Oklahoma Education Association; George D. Hann, superintendent of the Ardmore public schools; D. Ross Pugmire, professor of education, University of Oklahoma; Glenn R. Snider, associate professor of education, University of Oklahoma; R. R. Russell, superintendent of the Stillwater public schools; and T. M. Cornelius, superintendent of the Comanche public schools.

A comparison of the responses to Questionnaire A with the statements received in response to a letter of inquiry sent to selected Oklahoma educators suggests the respondents are in general agreement. The school board members responding to the questionnaire apparently believe that the greatest accomplishment of the state school boards association has been the influence exerted on school legislation. In the letter received from Ferman Phillips, this opinion is especially well supported. Phillips asserted that the leaders of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association have made a distinct contribution to public education by assisting in the development of and bringing about the enactment of desirable school legislation. He also points to the contribution made in helping to prevent the enactment of undesirable school legislation.<sup>3</sup> John F. Bender's opinion agrees with the results of the tabulation. Bender states that "the most helpful accomplishment of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association has been its championship of useful legislation for the public schools of the state."<sup>4</sup>

Eighty-two per cent of the respondents to Questionnaire A rated

---

<sup>3</sup>Ferman Phillips, letter to Al Harris, September 18, 1954.

<sup>4</sup>John F. Bender, letter to Al Harris, September 6, 1954.

the improvement in the relations between superintendents and school board members as a significant accomplishment of the association. President R. H. Burton of <sup>S</sup>Southwestern State College described the change in this area as "revolutionary." Burton wrote that

In the past eight years the relations between the superintendents and the board of education have been revolutionary. Of course, I think this has been the weakest point of our education organization for the past forty years, but in recent years, I see everywhere a close cooperation and understanding between superintendents and their boards. This was almost unheard of before the school board organization.<sup>5</sup>

J. Chester Swanson, superintendent of the Oklahoma City public schools, wrote that there has been a definite accomplishment in developing better relationship between the superintendent and the school board.<sup>6</sup> R. R. Russell, superintendent of the Stillwater public schools, listed this improvement as one of the greatest achievements of the association. He felt that many board members are unethical in their relationship to the superintendent because they do not know what a relationship should be. Russell wrote the following:

Board members who have affiliated and attended meetings have been instructed by the very nature of the programs and discussions, in the proper spheres of authority affecting the board and their chief administrative officer.<sup>7</sup>

A majority of the school board members replying to Questionnaire A believed that membership in the state association promoted harmony between the school board and the faculty. They felt that faculty and school board relations had been clarified, that the school board had learned the proper approach to the faculty, and that the school board

---

<sup>5</sup>R. H. Burton, letter to Al Harris, September 9, 1954.

<sup>6</sup>J. Chester Swanson, letter to Al Harris, September 9, 1954.

<sup>7</sup>R. R. Russell, letter to Al Harris, September 13, 1954.

had found itself to be a vital factor in faculty morale.

The development of leadership among school board members was one of the aims of those who organized the Oklahoma State School Boards Association. There has been and continues to be a division of thought among members as to how well this aim has been kept in mind. Seventy-three per cent of the respondents who answered this question believe that board members have dominated the development of the policies and plans of the association, and only twenty-seven per cent of those who replied to Questionnaire A believe that the Oklahoma State School Boards Association is dominated by superintendents. The opinions of the board members who replied to this question, undoubtedly are influenced by the superintendent-board relations found in their school community. The influence of local school affairs, as well as the influence of the school boards association's plans, may be read into the answers. Evidence of this viewpoint was found in certain answers received from board members who were critical of the association's work.

In answering the question as to whether the association had improved the relationship between the superintendent and the board of education, one respondent answered "yes." He explained his answer, however, by saying this improvement consisted in making the boards more amenable to the will of the superintendents and their organizations. This respondent felt that the association was definitely dominated by superintendents and that the association should recognize the danger of such domination. This opinion will be of interest to the reader who desires a balanced picture of the state association. The board member wrote as follows:

I think the association is threatened with a danger. We

are collected together, told to listen, while some superintendent or apostle of teacher's college so completely brain washes us that we are desensitized to the ends in mind. We are told (1) to select a superintendent, (2) to keep our mouths out of what goes on at school, (3) to have nothing to do with what is taught, or how, since we do not have the competence even to make suggestions as to what content of education must be.

This association is allowing itself to become a hand-maiden . . . of school superintendents and teachers.<sup>8</sup>

This viewpoint included public school affairs on the state level and on the local level as is shown by these further remarks:

The people are in the process of losing their schools. . . . Very soon there will be two functions of patrons, (1) to breed and feed children, and (2) to pay the costs of operating the schools. School board members . . . cannot call a local meeting . . . without having . . . some superintendent slip in and tell what we are supposed to think and say.<sup>9</sup>

Yet he clarifies his position toward the responsibilities involved in acting as a member of a board of education when he said:

As a school board member, I refuse to consider my job done when I vote to hire a superintendent, agree to pay the warrants and bamboozle the people into voting more bonds for buildings. I have a larger obligation than that. I am responsible for what goes on in every phase of the school system. Why am I not allowed to visit and do anything but accept it passively? I do not accept that solution of it.<sup>10</sup>

Two other respondents wrote on Questionnaire A that they felt the association was superintendent-dominated, that superintendents do not like to take suggestions from the board, and that the name of the state school boards association should be changed to "Superintendents and Principals Pay Raise Association."

---

<sup>8</sup>O. D. Duncan, letter to Al Harris, September 7, 1954.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid.

Sixty-seven per cent of the respondents answering question eight believe that an improvement in the quality of teaching personnel has resulted through the work of the association. Sixty-five per cent of respondents answering question one believe that school board personnel has been improved because of the association. Sixty-six per cent of the board members answering question five felt that they have gained an improved viewpoint because of their work with the Oklahoma State School Boards Association. Only fifty-four per cent felt that the association has helped in the building program for schools. The building program in relation to the association was discussed from the administrator's point of view by John Shoemaker, superintendent of the Lawton public schools, when he said:

Better buildings, I feel sure, will come as the boards of education understand needs advocated by school administrators, parent-teacher organizations, and citizens committees.<sup>11</sup>

However, R. H. Burton stated in his letter that school boards in Oklahoma, especially those who have taken part in the work of the association, know more about school buildings and their usefulness than boards of education have ever known before.<sup>12</sup>

In addition to these accomplishments questions were asked regarding attainments in the fields of insurance, policy-making, and redistricting. Very little has been done by the association in regard to insurance except to bring the matter to the attention of board members by making available good procedures to be used in solving insurance problems. D. Ross Pugmire, professor of education at the University of Oklahoma

---

<sup>11</sup>John Shoemaker, letter to Al Harris, September 3, 1954.

<sup>12</sup>Burton, *op. cit.*

and an educator frequently used as a consultant by the Oklahoma State School Boards Association, expressed the opinion that there has been no general improvement of any significance because nothing has been done about the problem of volume, risk, and rates.<sup>13</sup>

Yet the movement toward written policies, rules, and regulations has been given impetus. School boards have learned that written policies protect them and make their tasks easier. The author has chosen representative opinions expressed by two respondents concerning the influence on policy-making by the Oklahoma State School Boards Association.

Pugmire stated:

The association activities have begun to bear fruit in this matter. Increasing numbers of boards are developing written policies.<sup>14</sup>

Burton wrote:

I think your program of policy-making for individual schools has been outstanding. Of course, you know that one of our greatest weaknesses is the absence of good clear-cut policies. Many schools of this state have come a long way in writing and interpreting policies.<sup>15</sup>

The Oklahoma State School Boards Association has accomplished very little in promoting redistricting. In spite of discussions devoted to this problem, Oklahoma remains a state of multitudinous districts. R. R. Russell expressed the opinion that the county associations have brought about a better understanding of redistricting problems and that this may result in increased redistricting on a basis of less antagonism and bitterness.<sup>16</sup> George D. Hann replied that redistricting is one of

---

<sup>13</sup>D. Ross Pugmire, letter to Al Harris, September 3, 1954.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid.

<sup>15</sup>Burton, op. cit.

<sup>16</sup>Russell, op. cit.

the most difficult problems faced by the state association because of the personality factor involved. Hamm stated, however, that if the problem is ever solved, it will be solved by the Oklahoma State School Boards Association. He stated unequivocally "Professional teacher's organizations and political organizations cannot solve this problem."<sup>17</sup> Pugmire was more cautious. He wrote, "A slight improvement of understanding the problem is beginning to show in a very few places."<sup>18</sup>

Answers vary, however, to the question, "Why does the program fail to appeal to the rural school boards?" Some of the reasons given were (1) Rural people have less tendency to organize. (2) There is fear on the part of small schools that policy will be determined by the larger systems. (3) Since rural resentment against the tendency toward redistricting is rather common, rural boards are skeptical of alliances with larger schools that might engulf them.<sup>19</sup> (4) The program has failed to appeal to the rural school boards largely because the extremely small school districts are unable to profit by having high-quality, competent persons to serve as members of the school board. This is a problem which only can be overcome with better redistricting.<sup>20</sup>

The comments of Oliver Hodge, state superintendent of public instruction, point out that the program may fail to appeal to rural school boards because they do not see the necessity of meeting with other board members to discuss their problems. Hodge observed that in meetings

---

<sup>17</sup>Hamm, op. cit.

<sup>18</sup>Pugmire, op. cit.

<sup>19</sup>Russell, op. cit.

<sup>20</sup>Snider, op. cit.

he has attended members from rural schools are very reluctant to take part in the discussions.<sup>21</sup> Paul B. Allen, superintendent of the Pauls Valley public schools, wrote that the rural school board members feel that boards of education and administrators from the larger school systems are not interested in their problems and that the time of the spring and fall meetings are disadvantageous to the attendance of rural board members.<sup>22</sup> Comments made by Frank McCoy in a letter enclosed with his response to Questionnaire A offer a partial answer to the question as to why the association fails to attract the membership of rural boards. McCoy, who is chairman of the Medicine Park board of education, gave the following explanation: "Frankly, we have never felt that membership in the organization is worth the additional time, effort, and expense involved."<sup>23</sup>

Pugmire suggested that the reason boards think they cannot afford to belong or attend meetings is a lack of leadership to guide and encourage them to belong. He felt that the county superintendents could help with this problem.<sup>24</sup>

Answers to the question as to what can be done to make the association effective with all types of school boards included the following suggestions: (1) get professional basic administrative units, (2) get professional superintendents, (3) get public-spirited, teachable, responsible, and sincere persons elected to school boards, (4) make the

---

<sup>21</sup>Oliver Hodge, letter to Al Harris, September 7, 1954.

<sup>22</sup>Paul B. Allen, letter to Al Harris, September 6, 1954.

<sup>23</sup>Frank McCoy, letter to Al Harris, September 25, 1954.

<sup>24</sup>Pugmire, op. cit.

statewide activities rewarding to all,<sup>25</sup> (5) sell county superintendents and small-school superintendents on the desirability of memberships for their boards, and (6) frame programs with increasing emphasis on the problems of small and rural schools.<sup>26</sup>

As a conclusion to these opinions, the one offered by Oliver Hodge seems most appropriate. His advice is simply to continue the drive for greater membership by building a program of services suitable for all schools.<sup>27</sup>

#### How Does the Oklahoma State School Boards Association Compare with Expected Attainments

The Oklahoma State School Boards Association completed a ten year period of operation in 1954. In order to evaluate its efficiency, a questionnaire was used to ascertain what accomplishments might reasonably be expected in a ten year period. Information regarding the growth of other state associations was sought as a comparative basis for this assessment. This questionnaire was prepared by J. G. Stratton and was mailed to executive secretaries of school board associations in forty-eight states and to certain state superintendents of public instruction and college professors who had a knowledge of school board association work. So that this questionnaire may be distinguished from the one previously discussed, it will be designated as Questionnaire B throughout this study.

A resume of the opinions of the fifty-seven respondents to Question-

---

<sup>25</sup>Ibid.

<sup>26</sup>Russell, op. cit.

<sup>27</sup>Hodge, op. cit.

naire B indicates that the summary of important accomplishments which should have been attained by the Oklahoma State School Boards Association during the ten years of its existence should include the following:

- I. Administration
  - A. High percentage of membership
  - B. An adequate financial budget
  - C. A full-time executive secretary
- II. Services
  - A. Regular publication of a periodical
  - B. A regular annual convention
  - C. Discussion groups where school board members participate freely
  - D. Area workshops
  - E. Orientation materials for new members
  - F. Consultative service
  - G. Handbook
- III. Effectiveness in certain areas
  - A. An effective legislative program
  - B. Improved relations between school boards and superintendents
  - C. The development of a high level of leadership among school board members

A comparison will be made of the accomplishments by the Oklahoma State School Boards Association, as revealed in reports and in answers to Questionnaire A, with the accomplishment which could reasonably be expected, according to the opinions received in answer to Questionnaire B. Each point will be given consideration in the order in which it is listed and will be followed by recommendations or suggestions for improvement which the author hopes will be found both appropriate and helpful. The

following order of discussion will be observed: (1) expectations, (2) comparative accomplishments, (3) recommendations and suggestions.

Membership. Frank B. Stover, executive assistant to the New Jersey commissioner of education, expressed an opinion regarding membership which represents the majority of opinions given by respondents to Questionnaire B. He stated, "The state school boards association should have nearly 100 per cent dues paying membership from boards of the state. . . ."28 Edward M. Tuttle replied to this question that the state association should have "a high percentage of memberships among the local boards of the state."29

The Oklahoma association is far from the one hundred per cent membership. It does not now have, nor has it ever had, a high percentage of membership. Some causes for this condition have been discussed in the first part of this chapter and in other places throughout this study. Membership reports show that the highest peak of membership in the history of the organization was in 1953-1954, when 13.5 per cent of Oklahoma's school boards joined the organization.

Since contributions of the association to public education are channeled largely through the membership and, as has been pointed out, since the leading available source of revenue for the support of the association is membership dues, the importance of securing membership becomes readily apparent.

From the membership reports it is evident that special attention should be given to the rural schools. Plans should be made to interest rural school boards in the work of the association. County units should

---

28 Frank B. Stover to J. G. Stratton, May 25, 1954.

29 Edward M. Tuttle to J. G. Stratton, May 17, 1954.

be organized and should join the association as units, paying the fee designated in the schedule. That is, if forty teachers are represented by the schools in the county joining the association, annual dues paid by that county unit would be the same as those paid by schools having from twenty-five to forty-nine teachers. Membership could be increased by making appeals to the superintendent of schools as well as to the school board. If the superintendent can be led to see the value of membership in the association, the school boards may in all probability follow his recommendations to join.

In the past the Oklahoma State School Boards Association has not offered services which were attractive to all districts, and the result has been that some districts have not joined the association. The state association should develop a program in which all local school board members can participate. All conventions should have topics on the agenda of primary concern to all boards. Through convention programs and other means the Oklahoma State School Boards Association should encourage more scientific school administration and progressive educational methods in all districts, even in those in which board members outnumber the teachers.

Annually a bill for dues should be sent to all school districts in the state. Information as to all of the advantages of being a member of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association should be sent simultaneously with the bills. Well worked out follow-up letters based on sound sales principles should be sent to new, prospective, and delinquent members.

Finances. Edward M. Tuttle felt that the state association should have succeeded in maintaining an adequate budget. He wrote, "After ten years of operation your Oklahoma State School Boards Association ought

to be well established with an adequate budget. . . ."30 Frank B. Stover stated that it should have a "regularly adopted budget."<sup>31</sup> The assistant director of the Cooperative Program in Educational Administration, University of Chicago, commented that there should have been ". . . general acceptance of a dues schedule, with a growing acceptance that the local contributions should be substantial."<sup>32</sup>

Financial reports of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association cited in the first part of this chapter reveal that the association does have a regularly adopted budget and that there is general acceptance of a dues schedule. The idea of substantial local contribution has not been accepted by local school boards. The budget has been inadequate to sustain a completely independent organization and insufficient to pay for the services of a full-time executive secretary. Provision for adequate financial support reflects the maturity of an organization. An effective way to increase the income of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association is to increase its membership. Consideration should be given to a reasonable increase in dues. Placing the News-Letter on a paying basis would aid materially in releasing funds for other projects, since publications absorb a considerable portion of the association's money. Provision for exhibits at the annual state conventions is a source of revenue which at the same time offers a valuable service to the membership. Sale of publications offers another source of revenue. It is believed that small pamphlets, such as "What Every School Board Member Should Know," would find a ready market. It is suggested, too, that

---

<sup>30</sup>Ibid.

<sup>31</sup>Stover, op. cit.

<sup>32</sup>Harlan Beem to J. G. Stratton, August 3, 1954.

the Oklahoma State School Boards Association should perhaps attempt to secure legislation making it mandatory for all school boards to become members of the association.

Administrative Personnel. Tangible accomplishments of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association over a ten-year period should include adequate administrative personnel to promote the organization with vigor and success. The following opinion came from the state of Washington: "Your association should . . . employ a full-time executive secretary with sufficient stenographers and clerical help. . . ."33

The executive secretary of the Oklahoma association gives from one-fourth to one-half of his time to its administration. One secretary assists the executive secretary.

The low percentage of potential membership, the inadequate budget, and weak program in the state association indicate the need for a greater allotment of time to the work of the association. If the state association is to progress, it must have the services of an executive secretary who can devote a sufficient amount of time to its operation. The work of the executive secretary is basic to the solution of problems in all areas and to the stimulation of progress in any direction. This problem may be solved by persuading some promising young superintendent in the state, one who has not yet reached the higher income bracket, to accept the position at a salary higher than he had been receiving. Such a man would be qualified to handle the position both in the office and in the field. In the office such administrative traits as initiative, courage, and foresight are needed. A man is needed in the field who

---

33E. W. Stanley, executive secretary-treasurer, Washington State School Directors' Association to J. G. Stratton, May 20, 1954.

has an understanding of school boards' problems. This arrangement has been successful in other states, and it is suggested that the Oklahoma State School Boards Association give careful consideration to this plan.

Services. Services pointed out by respondents as those which the Oklahoma State School Boards Association should be rendering include the following: (1) issue a publication regularly; (2) hold an annual convention; (3) have discussion groups where members are encouraged to participate freely; (4) hold area workshops; (5) provide orientation materials; (6) provide consultative service; and (7) publish a handbook.

Most of these services are performed by the Oklahoma association. The News-Letter is published regularly; an annual convention is held; area workshops are supplied; some orientation material is published in the News-Letter; very little is done in consultative service; small discussion groups are part of the annual convention; no handbook is published.

Publications. A regular communication between the association headquarters and the membership is provided by publications. In order that this important service may reach maximum effectiveness, the following changes in the monthly News-Letter are presented for consideration:

1. The News-Letter should be changed to a monthly school board journal.
2. Restricted advertising should be solicited so that the News-Letter or journal would become self-supporting. This could be made to serve both a financial and educational purpose.
3. Each volume of the journal should contain articles of interest from the National School Boards Association and from other state associations, up-to-date reports on pending school legislation, digests of legal opinions concerning school business, informative articles concerning subjects being discussed, such as school district reorganization and reports from the state association.

Special mimeographed bulletins sent intermittently would reduce the total cost of publications by conveying information in a less expensive form than does the monthly journal. Since in the Oklahoma State School Boards Association dues are paid from school funds, the publication of the association is tax supported. Consequently, it is recommended that the News-Letter or journal be sent to all board members whether or not they belong to the association, to legislators, to members of the Parent-Teachers Association, to all superintendents of schools, and to directors of the Oklahoma Education Association. If the budget for publications is insufficient, consideration may be given to a general mailing of special issues, such as the ones announcing the regional and annual conventions. When this publication is mailed to all boards of education within the state, it will enable the association to command a higher advertising rate. Because publications often constitute the only contacts with members who do not attend meetings of the association, it would be wise for the association to re-evaluate this service frequently.

Conventions. Annual state conventions are considered one of the outstanding services offered by the association. Improvement in conventions would result if board members were permitted to help plan the agenda. Sessions with topics of special interest to rural-school and small-school boards should be arranged. Extension of the length of the convention from one day to two might be helpful. Provision should be made for at least one joint session of school board members and administrators. A special meeting at the convention for newly elected board members would contribute greatly to a broader understanding of school problems.

Small Discussion Groups. The encouragement of free discussion in county, regional, and state meetings should result in improvement. School

board members from rural districts should be drawn into such groups and should be made to feel that rural problems interest the association and rural members are an integral part of the association. Small discussion groups, planned to function as training schools for developing leadership in board members, should supply the association with awakened thinking leaders. To be of the greatest benefit, these groups should be planned and operated by experienced, professional men.

Workshops. Regional workshops are one of the most effective services offered by the state association. Professional help should be used in planning and in managing these workshops in order that they may provide information and inspiration of maximum value. It would be advantageous to hold all workshops within a definite period of time, perhaps two months. Universities and colleges should be prevailed upon to sponsor workshops dealing with subjects of interest to school boards. These workshops could be enriched if the following topics, which are of most concern and are frequently under study by some county associations, were placed on the agenda:

1. Building program discussions
2. Organization of county associations
3. Planning institutes for new board members
4. Acquainting boards of education with their legal responsibilities
5. Raising standards of conducting school board meetings
6. School insurance
7. Guidance in organizing community adult education programs
8. Purchasing of supplies and equipment for schools
9. Bus transportation
10. Advantages of closer relationships with the Oklahoma State School Boards Association

Orientation. Materials for orientation should be provided for all new board members, regardless of whether or not they are members of the association. These materials should include a manual of good practices, a digest of school laws, and summaries of the activities, purposes, and accomplishments of the state association.

Consultative Service. A consultative service which would secure answers to questions involving legal responsibilities and privileges of board members, school housing, and sites should be of benefit. The possibility of establishing such a service should be thoroughly investigated.

Handbook. For several years, plans for publishing a handbook have been promoted. Some \$6,000 secured in grants from the Kellogg Foundation has been spent on this project.<sup>34</sup> The handbook should be produced. The difficulty of keeping a handbook up to date should, of course, be recognized; but difficulty should not be allowed to overshadow importance in this respect. A handbook which contains erroneous or outdated information can do great harm, particularly if such information relates to the legal responsibilities of governing school boards.

The author suggests that the practice of issuing short booklets on special subjects in place of one handbook should be explored by the state association if it wishes to improve performances of local board members by explaining duties and responsibilities. The state association should beware of running into the danger of spreading its resources too thinly and at the same time duplicating materials available from other sources.

Legislation. Effectiveness in influencing and securing the passage

---

<sup>34</sup>From personal interview with J. G. Stratton at Clinton, Oklahoma, January 8, 1954.

of good school legislation seemed important to many of the respondents answering Questionnaire B. The Pennsylvania State School Directors' Association included the following statement in its list of expected accomplishments:

Sponsored legislation, have legislation drawn in bill form, secure introducers, oppose legislation, confer with legislators and committee members on legislation, prepare analysis of all bills referred to House and Senate Education Committees at the request of each of these committees.<sup>35</sup>

From the viewpoint of D. B. Doner, secretary-treasurer of the Associated School Boards of South Dakota, the main accomplishments of a state school boards association should be in regard to school legislation.

In answer to the questionnaire, he wrote:

I think the most tangible accomplishments that any school boards association can accomplish is reflected in favorable legislation to education. . . . The net result that you are after is legislation that will make better schools for more boys and girls.<sup>36</sup>

According to the tabulations of answers received to Questionnaire A, the greatest accomplishment of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association has been in its influence in bringing about the enactment of desirable school legislation and in preventing the enactment of undesirable school legislation.<sup>37</sup> This opinion, stated by Ferman Phillips, represented the thinking of 95 per cent of the respondents.

Special study should be given to the following subjects in view of the possibility and the advisability of introducing needed legislation:

1. Continuing contracts

---

<sup>35</sup>P. O. VanNess, executive-secretary, Pennsylvania State School Directors' Association, to J. G. Stratton, May 17, 1954.

<sup>36</sup>Doner to Stratton, June 4, 1954.

<sup>37</sup>Phillips, *op. cit.*

2. Homestead Exemption Law
3. Redistricting
4. Appointment rather than election of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction
5. Membership fees

At the present time membership fees are paid from public funds upon legal advice to the effect that such fees may be included in the budget as necessary expenses. Provision for using public funds for membership fees in the association should be given in special legislation for that purpose.

Superintendent-Board Relations. The effectiveness of the association's program to improve relations between school boards and administrators is one measure of its successful operation. Respondents to Questionnaire B pointed to the importance of such improvement.

Answers to Questionnaire A reveal that the Oklahoma association has been highly successful in bringing about improvement in this area.

Although much has been accomplished in Oklahoma school systems to bring about better superintendent-board relations, the fullest confidence and cooperation between school boards and administrators is necessary if the state association is to function at its most effective level. Since school board members serve without remuneration, they should join with administrators in an unselfish effort to promote education as a whole. Both school board members and administrators would have much to gain by building an attitude of closer cooperation. This attitude should be manifested in maintaining close contact and rapport with the state department of education, the Oklahoma Education Association and the Oklahoma Association of School Administrators. The author feels that such a development of cooperative thinking and action would promote a program of

decided progress in the Oklahoma State School Boards Association and that services would thereby be developed which would convince the taxpayer that his tax dollars are being spent in an economical and efficient way. This attitude of closer cooperation with other organizations interested in promoting public education should in no way cause the Oklahoma State School Boards Association to lose its identity. The association should reserve its prerogative of being for or against educational issues on their merits.

Leadership of Board Members. The development of a high level of leadership among school board members was specified as an accomplishment which should be expected in the Oklahoma association.

A tabulation of responses to Questionnaire A showed a difference of opinion on this subject. Of the respondents 73 per cent indicated that the state association was not superintendent dominated. It may be assumed, therefore, that at least a moderate degree of leadership on the part of board members has been developed. The opinion of those who have observed the meetings of the association is, however, that this development has not reached the proper measure of efficiency.

Closer association and cooperation with professional leaders would be of great assistance in solving this problem.

#### Other Suggestions for Improvement

Location of Central Office. As soon as funds are sufficient for the association to operate independently, headquarters should be moved to a more central location in or near the state capitol. Here a number of services could be provided for board members which cannot be provided in its present location. Proximity to the offices of the Oklahoma

Education Association, to the state department of Education, and to the meeting place of the state legislature would offer opportunities for better cooperation with the professional organization and with the administrative and legislative bodies.

Research. Many educational problems of particular concern to school board members remain unsolved. As soon as the executive secretary-treasurer becomes a full-time employee, he should be able to facilitate a program of research with other organizations and groups interested in education. There is some possibility of initiating valuable research financed through the agency of some private foundation, such as the Kellogg Foundation. Many of these foundations are looking for opportunities to aid in the advancement of public education.

Insurance. A commission should be appointed to investigate school insurance. Rates in relation to losses should be given careful study. A good beginning has been made in this field in that it has been made the subject of considerable discussion. More definite progress is needed.

Building Program. School plant design trends in Oklahoma indicate more careful planning for the utilization of all space so that economy in construction will prevail. The elimination of basements, corridors, elaborate gymnasiums, and other parts which do not contribute directly to the educational program is being proposed. The writer recommends a special study by school boards of long range building programs, taking into consideration the effect of possible reorganization, the need of early purchases of school sites, and the multi-purpose use of the school plant for various community activities.

Constitution and By-Laws. The Constitution and By-Laws should be revised in the light of experiences of the association with the possibility

of suggesting modifications. Revision of Article IV, dealing with the duties of the executive secretary, Article V, dealing with the duties of the treasurer, Article VI, dealing with officers and their duties, and Article VII, dealing with qualifications for membership, is suggested.

Activities for Board Members. Unscheduled activities for board members should be arranged. These should include trips to inspect new school plants and attendance at school building dedicatory services. It is also suggested that service awards be offered to board members throughout the state who make outstanding contributions in the way of service.

Public Relations. The state school boards association should bring citizens outside the organization into a working relation with the organization whenever possible. This can be done by inviting their attendance and suggestions on committee meetings, Board of Directors' meetings, and convention programs. Steps should be taken immediately to define more clearly the purposes of the state school boards association and to encourage members of the boards to become well informed about the needs of public education. Ways and means of informing boards of the best methods of securing the support of the various groups should have careful planning and much study. Should specific information be needed to enlist the support of various organizations, this could be disseminated to school board members from the office of the executive-secretary director.

## CHAPTER VIII

### SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS

The history of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association indicates that it has been and will continue to be a worthwhile organization. The individuals who pioneered the movement in Oklahoma possessed educational experience, foresight, and good judgment. School board organizations in some states have been antagonistic to the state professional associations, but in Oklahoma this has not been true. From its inception the Oklahoma State School Boards Association has been fostered by professional educators who believed that improvement in the quality of public education would result from the services contributed by a school boards association.

The organizers envisaged the establishment of a permanent and adequate financial program for public schools in Oklahoma. Educational legislation provided one of the major incentives for instituting the Oklahoma State School Boards Association. Educators recognized that the burden of securing adequate school finance had been carried too long by administrators and teachers and that the support of lay organizations was necessary to supplement their influence. Better educational programs, as related to the improvement of school board personnel, was another factor of significance to the founders. Members would have an opportunity to become better acquainted, to exchange ideas and experiences, to discuss their duties and responsibilities, and to study current school problems. As a result of this contact, boards of education would be better qualified to exert their influence and to formulate improved policies for the education of Oklahoma's children. A new concept of the

work of school boards emphasized their opportunities to determine the quality of future citizenship, the high degree of wisdom, patience, and common sense necessary to fill successfully a position on a board of education and to realize the magnitude of public schools as a business.

The school boards of Oklahoma organized into a state association that they might combine their efforts with those of other educational agencies. Problems peculiar to the postwar era were requiring special study which could be carried on more successfully through a state organization. An increase in public school enrollment was expected; vocational education was calling for attention; health and physical education were needing consideration; teacher qualifications, the teaching load, and salaries were demanding thought. In addition to these problems, the most pressing one of teacher shortage was requiring immediate attention. All of these problems could be solved in part through such an organization as the Oklahoma State School Boards Association.

The plans for the development of the state association were democratic. The organization itself was based on democratic principles. Although the organizers were professional educators, it was their objective that the association should be operated and controlled by the school board members and that the professional men should retire to the background as soon as it was feasible. The original plan called for the development of leadership among board members.

The first meeting was called by G. T. Stubbs, president of the Oklahoma Education Association. Stubbs envisaged an organization of school boards uncontrolled and unhampered by any other organization or institution. Because of his deep interest and activity in bringing into being the association, G. T. Stubbs is known as the "Father of the Oklahoma State School

Boards Association." E. L. Dawson, a lawyer and school board member who was interested in the legal aspects of public school affairs in Oklahoma, aided materially in establishing the Oklahoma State School Boards Association. Joe D. Hurt was one of the first board members to take an active interest in the new organization. With energy and foresight he helped design a program to develop a stable organization. The first president, Roy Spears, worked quietly but with vigor to cement the foundation of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association. During most of the organization's first ten years, H. E. Wrinkle was a faithful and untiring executive secretary.

The first efforts of the Oklahoma organization were directed toward improving educational legislation. Emphasis was placed upon enlarging the membership during the administrations of E. E. Sowers, Ira Williams, and W. O. Goodman. The alliance with the National School Boards Association brought renewed vigor and enthusiasm to the state organization. School board members became cognizant of the importance of an intelligent approach to the problem of public education, and interest developed in landscaping, building improvement, new school services, adequate insurance, policy-making, and acceptable standards for the state school boards association. A new conception of the relation between school board members and administrators brought about noticeable improvement in this area. Good annual conventions became a regular part of the program of the state association. Under the administration of J. G. Stratton, area workshops and regional meetings were developed.

The first publications of the state association were legislative bulletins. In 1950, the first issue of the News-Letter was published. Subjects of special interest to board members--including news from

individual school boards, from the state association, and from the National School Boards Association--composed the main part of the News-Letter's content.

The opinion of a selected group of Oklahoma school board members and educators as to the achievement of the association was solicited. The respondents designated the promotion of desirable school legislation as the area of maximum effectiveness. Next in order came the improvement of superintendent-board relations, the improvement of faculty-board relations, the development of leadership from among board member, the improvement in faculty personnel, the understanding of the importance of education by board members, and finally a better understanding of school building programs.

The aims, purposes, and ends to be accomplished by the National School Boards Association coincided with those of the state association, except that the National School Boards Association is concerned with education throughout the United States. The national association is especially effective in the field of national and international educational development.

A questionnaire sent to a number of leading educators throughout the United States suggested a standard of achievement which the Oklahoma association could reasonably be expected to reach in the ten years of its existence. Comparisons of membership, financial, other authoritative reports, and accomplishments were made with this expected standard of achievement. The highest peak of membership in the state was found to be far below the standard, but in services rendered by an association the record was encouraging.

#### Implications of this Study

From the facts presented in this study, certain implications and conclusions may be drawn which seem to be reasonable and appropriate.

Membership. The low percentage of membership has been shown to be

related to the lack of interest in the association by rural school boards and by other school boards having less than twenty-five teachers in their employ. This condition indicates (1) that the services which have been offered by the association have not dealt with problems of vital interest to school board members in this class, (2) that sufficient effort has not been exerted to bring the association into a meaningful relationship with school boards of small communities, and (3) that the feeling that the organization is operated by and for the larger school systems has been prevalent in the minds of these school boards representing the smaller schools. The problem of district reorganization can not be omitted from this analysis; for the division of thought on this question has separated the school boards of the state into two antagonistic groups, those in the larger schools, who see the need for reorganization, and those in the rural schools and smaller districts, who oppose reorganization as a threat to their existence. This presents one of the most difficult problems faced by the association. The presence of this difference in viewpoint may well have implications for the future success and growth of the organization. Steps should, therefore, be taken to resolve these differences. Services considered vital by rural and small district school boards must be rendered, and a meaningful relationship with them must be established. These school boards must be persuaded to realize that they are an integral part of the organization, and an understanding of the need for and benefits accruing from reorganization should be disseminated to the extent that a major part of the antagonism will be dispelled.

Since approximately 100 per cent of the larger school systems are already members of the association, very little expansion in membership can be made in that direction; therefore, if any recognizable increase in

membership is to be made, it will have to be made in the rural and small school systems. Increased membership in these districts depends upon the adequacy and promptness with which solutions are provided for the problems just presented. From these data, one might well conclude:

1. Any sizeable increase in membership in the Oklahoma State School Boards Association must come through the affiliation of a greater number of rural and small school boards.
2. Increase in membership among rural and small school boards depends upon an adequate solution to certain problems such as, reorganization, better financing, school legislation, and services. If these solutions are achieved, an increase in membership will result.
3. If new members are to be attracted to the association and those members already belonging are to renew their membership annually, the full-time executive secretary, when employed, must direct his activities with vigor toward increasing and improving the new services and those now furnished by the association.

The desire for increased membership and the acceptance of future responsibilities by the organization to include an aggressive leadership in the improvement of educational programs in Oklahoma at the risk of experiencing decreased membership may present a dichotomy. The administrative personnel must decide whether a smaller, more aggressive organization is better for the future than a large, weak, inefficient organization. If the former concept is accepted, the Oklahoma State School Boards Association accepts the challenge of bringing about the formation of more county school board associations rather than having their membership increased through the efforts of the Oklahoma Cooperative Program in Educational Administration.

Finances. Since a major portion of the income of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association comes from membership fees, it may be implied that the primary concern of those interested in increasing the income of the association should be increasing the membership. Another means of

increasing the income would be to raise the amount of dues so that those who are already members of the association will assume a larger portion of the financial burden. This policy has been adopted and practiced previously by the Oklahoma association; consequently dues have been changed several times during its existence. From this policy of increasing the dues at intervals, it must be assumed that additional services to members will be forthcoming. If such services are not made available, both members and prospective members may well question the value of membership. The implications of this circumstance appear to be (1) that additional services will follow an increase in fees, (2) that increased fees without increased services may result in decreased membership and ultimate weakening of the organization, and (3) that, inasmuch as the legality of payments to the association by boards of education has never been definitely adjudicated, an increase in fees might invite litigation questioning such expenditures.

If an organization is to succeed, it should be designed to meet the needs of the group it serves. The human element is a most important factor in determining success. School board members come from a wide range of educational and cultural backgrounds and are motivated by civic responsibility, not personal gain. They are busy people in their own communities, and their time is limited. The success of the organization should be evaluated in terms of service, not profits.

Administrative Personnel. Since much of the executive secretary's work lies in the field of consultation and cooperation with school administrators and school boards, it may be assumed that a professional background and preparation in public administration or school administration would comprise a valuable part of the qualifications to be sought in locating a capable person for this position.

Cooperation with other Agencies. This study has shown that the area for activity in the field of public school improvement is occupied by many agencies, outstanding among which are various organizations other than the school boards association, such as the Parent-Teachers Association, the Oklahoma Education Association, the Oklahoma Association of School Administrators, and the Oklahoma Secondary School Curriculum Improvement Commission. The University of Oklahoma and Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College also furnish valuable leadership. The need of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association for vital leadership may be met to a great extent by linking the efforts of the association with the efforts of these organizations with a kindred purpose. In this way the needed area of research and other areas of similar and equal value might be opened.

In conclusion, the writer believes that a closer liaison between the Oklahoma State School Boards Association and these various educational agencies would give the association strength, an increased ability to serve, and a greater degree of prestige which would make the Oklahoma State School Boards Association a more powerful force for better education in Oklahoma.

Through a united voice in Oklahoma the association could speak with authority. A respectful hearing could result when the needs of the schools are called to the attention of the various publics interested in education. A local board exercising its prerogative by refusing to affiliate with other boards of education in attaining a common goal of the best possible education for boys and girls offers a poor example of vision and judgment in discharging its duties and responsibilities. Cooperative effort is essential to the success of public education.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

### Periodical References

- Bowden, Robert D. "So You're on the Board Now!", Nations Schools, XXXII (November, 1943), 45-47.
- Grieder, Calvin, and Stephen A. Romine. "A Half Century of State School Board Associations, Part I," The American School Board Journal, CX (March, 1945), 29-31.
- . "A Half Century of State School Board Associations, Part II," The American School Board Journal, CX (April, 1945), 27-28.
- Norman, Harold W. "How Can a New School Board Member Get the 'Know-How'?" The School Executive, LXIV (May, 1945), 67-68.
- "Oklahoma State School Boards Association, Inc.," a page of school board news, The Oklahoma Teacher, XXVIII (February, 1947), 38-39.
- Spears, Roy. "Speech Delivered at Pittsburg County Meeting of Teachers and School Board Members," The Oklahoma Teacher, XXVI (December, 1944), 5-6.
- Tuttle, Edward M. "Southwestern State Association Leaders Hold Successful Regional Conference," The American School Board Journal, CXXIX (August, 1954), 5-6.
- . "News from the Association Front," The American School Board Journal, CXXIX (September, 1954), 72, 74, 76.
- . "The Ins and Outs of School Board Associations," The American School Board Journal, CXXIX (October, 1954), 78, 80, 82.
- . "School Board Associations Face New Responsibilities--Are We Ready?", The American School Board Journal, CXXIV (May, 1952), 5, 6, 8.
- . "Goals Defined for Rapidly Growing Associations of School Boards," The American School Board Journal, CXX (May, 1950), 60, 62.
- . "Increasing Responsibilities of School Boards and Their Associations," The American School Board Journal, CXXIV (March, 1952), 5, 7-8.

Newspapers

"State School Board Group Re-Elects Stratton President," The Daily Oklahoman (January 23, 1954), 5.

General References

American Association of School Administrators. School Boards in Action. Twenty-fourth Yearbook. Washington, D. C.: National Education Association, 1946.

Cubberley, Elwood P. Public School Administration. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1916.

Davies, Daniel R., and Fred W. Hosler. The Challenge of School Board Membership. New York: Chartwell House, Inc., 1949.

National Education Association, The School Board Member, Research Bulletin, Vol. XI, No. 1 (January, 1933), Washington, D. C., N. E. A., 1933.

----- . Status and Practices of Boards of Education, Research Bulletin, Vol. XXIV, No. 2 (April, 1946), Washington, D. C., N. E. A., 1946.

Pamphlets

American Association of School Administrators and National School Boards Association. The School Board Member in Action. Washington, D. C.: November, 1949.

Porter, Mrs. I. E., and W. A. Clifford. The National Council of State School Boards Associations. Mt. Vernon, New York: (no date)

United States Office of Education Bulletin. Ratio of Men to Women Teachers in Secondary Schools. Washington, D. C.: Circular No. 413: 1954.

Unpublished Materials

Hartsell, Horace Clay. Status Study of State School Boards Associations in the United States. Unpublished Ed. D. dissertation. University of Texas, 1952.

Knight, Sheriff L. An Evaluation of State School Board Associations in the Midwest Area. Unpublished Ed. D. dissertation. University of Indiana, 1952.

APPENDIXES

## Oklahoma State School Boards Association

## Board of Directors Meeting

October 11, 1949

Beacon Club -- Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

7:00 p.m.

## Agenda

- Dinner and Social Meeting . . . . . 7:00-8:00 p.m.
- Business Meeting . . . . . 8:30-10:00 p.m.
1. Call to order . . . . . Ira Williams, President
  2. Roll call and minutes of previous meeting . . . .  
H. E. Wrinkle, Secretary
  3. Report of Executive Secretary and Treasurer . . .  
H. E. Wrinkle
  4. Approval of bills
  5. Committee reports . . . . . Auditing, Convention,  
Nominating, Resolutions
  6. Discussion . . . Common School Trust Fund Activity
  7. Edward M. Tuttle . . Executive Secretary, National  
School Boards Association
  8. Plans for next year:
    - a. District Conferences
    - b. County Organizations
    - c. Special Service to Boards
    - d. Periodical Publications
    - e. Membership
    - f. Increased Dues
    - g. National School Boards Association Support
  9. Guests suggestions
  10. Adjournment

## Oklahoma State School Boards Association

## Board of Directors Meeting

October 12, 1949

Venetian Room - Skirvin Hotel

Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

4:00 p.m.

## Agenda

1. Call to order, Ira Williams, President
2. Roll call
3. Minutes, previous meeting - H. E. Wrinkle, Secretary
4. Election of officers for 1949-50
5. Report of committees
6. Selection of date and place of annual convention
7. Discussion - Delegates to National School Boards Association Convention, Atlantic City, February 24-26, 1950
8. Common School Trust Fund Activity - Action
9. Directors meetings during year
10. Finance report, O. S. S. B. A. - N. S. B. A.
11. Plans for next year - District - County - Special Services - Publications - Membership
12. Other business
13. Adjournment

Oklahoma State School Boards Association

WHAT IT IS

AND DOES

Officers

Roy Spears, President . . . . . McAlester  
 Earl E. Sowers, First Vice-President . . . . . Drumright  
 E. L. Dawson, Second Vice-President . . . . . Wirt  
 W. O. Goodman, Third Vice-President . . . . . Altus  
 Joe D. Hurt, Secretary . . . . . Edmond  
 R. E. Holland, Treasurer . . . . . Miami

(The above officers are the Board of Directors  
 of the Association)

Address communications to

OKLAHOMA STATE SCHOOL BOARDS  
 ASSOCIATION  
 308 Key Building  
 Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

OR

H. E. Wrinkle, Executive Secretary  
 University of Oklahoma  
 Norman

## EIGHTEEN SERVICES FOR SCHOOL BOARDS

1. Provide some token recognizing board membership, such as a membership, such as a membership card, a certificate or scroll, a lapel pin, or the like.
2. Develop a handbook for school board members.
3. Furnish a calendar of important dates during the year which school boards in a state must take some legal action.
4. Act as a clearing house or channeling agency to keep board members informed on important developments in the educational field, state and national.
5. Issue some kind of regular and frequent publication---Journal, News Letter, or Bulletin.
6. Encourage the development of written policies by boards of education and give as much guidance along this line as possible.
7. Help to improve educational conditions in the state, both by taking initiative and by cooperating with other agencies in regard to educational legislation and policy making.
8. Organize workshops and regional conferences where local board members can study their own problems.
9. Supply other help as local conditions indicate through correspondence and consultations, visitations and field service, research on particular problems, a loan library, annual records and reports, and the like.
10. Act in all cases to establish desirable standards and to encourage working toward them rather in any sense to "police" the membership.
11. An independent organization, not affiliated with any other group, but closely cooperating with all who are working for the improvement of the public schools.
12. An adequate budget with an equitable schedule of dues.
13. The legal right to the use of public funds by local boards for the dues and expenses of the state association.
14. As nearly as possible 100 per cent membership of local boards of every kind and size.
15. A headquarters office with a full-time executive secretary and the necessary office equipment and help.

16. Good regional organizations with the regional heads acting as directors of the state association.
17. Regular meetings of the executive committee or board of directors of the association.
18. Affiliation and close working relations with the National School Boards Association.

CLINTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
Clinton, Oklahoma

September 1, 1954

Dear School Board Member:

Your position as a member of your board of education equips you with certain information which I need concerning the OKLAHOMA STATE SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION. Will you check the following questions as you feel they should be answered:

1. Has the association improved the quality of personnel on the board of education? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
2. Has the association made for better relationships between the superintendent and the board of education? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
3. Has your board's membership in the association promoted harmony between the board and the faculty? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
4. Do you feel that the association is dominated by the superintendent rather than by board members? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
5. Has membership in the association changed your viewpoint any as to your responsibilities as a member of the board? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
6. Do you think that the association has aided in the matter of good school legislation? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
7. Has membership in the association helped the building program of your district? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
8. Has membership in the association helped in the matter of choosing a better personnel for the faculty? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
9. Please attach any comments or points which you feel have not been covered in the questions which you have just answered.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

s/

Al Harris, Superintendent

AH:jlm

September 1, 1954

Dear \_\_\_\_\_

You have had an opportunity to observe the workings of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association, and I am sure you know many of its contributions. I am in the process of writing the history of this organization, and I feel that your comments concerning certain contributions and facets of the OSSEA will be of help to me. Will you give me your opinion concerning the following points:

1. What do you consider to be the most helpful accomplishments of the OSSBA?
2. What has been accomplished in:
  - a. Public relations.
  - b. Relations between the superintendent and the board of education.
  - c. Relations between the faculty and the board of education.
  - d. Insurance.
  - e. Better buildings.
  - f. Policy-making.
  - g. Redistricting.
3. What type of schools have received the most benefit from the OSSBA?
4. Why does the program fail to appeal to the rural school boards?
5. What can be done to make the association effective with all types of school boards?

Thank you for your comments concerning these matters.

Sincerely,

s/

Al Harris

AH:jlr

QUESTIONNAIRE FROM J. G. STRATTON, PRESIDENT  
NATIONAL SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION  
OKLAHOMA STATE SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION  
Clinton, Oklahoma

1. What are some tangible accomplishments which should be ours in the ten years since the Oklahoma State School Boards Association has been in operation?
2. To what extent should professional educators be relied on for leadership in a state school boards association?
3. How extensive should our activities be in working for school legislation as proposed by the teachers' professional organizations:
  - (3a) Should school boards associations work jointly with the State Education Association in proposing legislation affecting education?
  - (3b) Should school boards associations lobby on legislation affecting public education?
4. What are the most effective procedures for training the school board members while he is in service?
5. What subordinate units enable a state school boards organization to function most effectively (county and district, or district)?
6. Should the state school boards association sponsor any publication designed for distribution to its membership or the general public?
  - (6a) What items or aspects of public education or school board functioning should be stressed in such a publication?
  - (6b) Should the state school boards association collaborate with the State Education Association in the publication of its magazine?
7. What should be the broad general objective of a state school boards association?
8. What effective methods or procedures would you suggest for promoting membership in such an organization?
9. Does a state school boards association need a full time executive secretary?
10. What is the logical place for the headquarters or central office of a state school boards association?
11. Should a means be available for members, county or district organizations to communicate with the organization on the state level?
12. What effective means may be developed for easy communication between subordinate units or individual members and the state office of a school boards association?

13. In your judgment, is your state school boards association functioning effectively at the state level?
14. What are the reasons for its effective or ineffective operation?

PARCHMENT

U.S.A.

STRATHMORE PARCHMENT

50% RAG U.S.A.

CONSTITUTION AND BY LAWS  
of  
OKLAHOMA STATE SCHOOL BOARD ASSOCIATION

ARTICLE I.

This organization shall be known as "Oklahoma State School Boards Association."

ARTICLE II.

The purpose of this organization shall be to promote the interests of public education in Oklahoma to the end that all children of school age in our State may have adequate educational opportunities.

ARTICLE III.

The chief administrative officer of this Association shall be the President. He shall preside at all meetings of the Association, shall call special meetings, arrange for suitable programs, appoint committees to perform specific duties, assign work to other officers of the Association, appoint a temporary Secretary or Treasurer in case of vacancy in either of these offices, and shall appoint temporary officers in any County which does not have a County organization of this Association. In case of appointment of any county officers under this authority, such officers shall serve until the first county meeting and at that time shall be confirmed or replaced by majority vote of members present.

ARTICLE IV.

The Secretary of this Association shall keep an accurate record of all meetings, receive and answer all communications pertaining to the business of the Association, keep files up to date, keep a record of names and addresses of officers of the county units of the Association and of members of the State Association, and mail or supervise mailing of letters, bulletins and documents as directed by the President.

ARTICLE V.

The Treasurer of this Association shall collect and receive such dues and other monies as may be paid to the Association and shall pay bills and disburse such funds as authorized by the Board of Directors. He shall keep an accurate account of money received and disbursed and shall give and receive appropriate receipts for same. Any member of the Association may call for and shall be given a Treasurer's report at any time.

ARTICLE VI.

In addition to the President, Secretary and Treasurer, there shall be as officers of the Association a First Vice-President, a Second Vice-President and a Third Vice-President. These six officers shall be elected at the regular annual meeting of the Association for terms of approximately one year by majority vote of members present, and shall

constitute a Board of Directors for the Association. The Board of Directors shall be charged with the responsibility of carrying on the routine business of the Association and shall act as an advisory committee for the Association. The Vice-Presidents shall preside at any meeting in the absence of the President and shall succeed to the office of President in case of vacancy in the order of their titles, and shall assist with the work of the President and Secretary when and as requested to do so by the President. The retiring president shall be a member of the Board of Directors the year following his term of office.

#### ARTICLE VII.

Any duly qualified and actively serving Board of Education of a school district in Oklahoma shall be eligible to membership in the Association, upon payment of dues as provided by the Board of Directors.

A member of the Association who is no longer member of a Board of Education may continue as a member of the Association upon payment of dues as set by the Board of Directors.

#### ARTICLE VIII.

In order that purposes of this Association may be more actively and effectively promoted, County units of this Association shall be encouraged in all counties in the State.

#### ARTICLE IX.

Action affecting the entire membership of the Association, or matters of general policy, shall be authorized (a) by majority vote of those present at a regular or called meeting of members of the State Association, (b) by majority vote of members of the State Association taken in regular or called meetings of the county units and reported by officers thereof to the Board of Directors for tabulation, (c) by majority vote of members of the State Association as taken by ballots mailed by State or County officers, or (d) by majority vote of all school board members in the State, regardless of Association membership, as shown by returns from ballots sent out and returned by mail. Selection of the method to be used shall be made by the Board of Directors. Any County unit may vote upon any matter of policy upon its own initiative and may then, through the President of the State Association, request that other County units do likewise.

#### ARTICLE X.

Amendments to this Constitution may be initiated by majority vote of a County unit of the organization or by majority vote of members at the regular state meeting of the Association. Thereafter, such amendment shall within three months be submitted to all members of the Association by mail. If two-thirds of the members voting shall vote for such amendment, it shall then become effective.

## ARTICLE XI.

One annual meeting of this Association shall be held, at the time and place set by the Board of Directors, and such special meetings shall be held as may be called by the President. County units of the Association shall hold one annual meeting for election of officers and such special or regular meetings as shall be called by the County President or provided for by vote of the members.

## ARTICLE XII.

State and County meetings of this Association shall be conducted according to Robert's Rules of Order, Revised.

## BY-LAWS

The by-laws may be changed by a 2/3 vote of the membership at an annual meeting of the Association.

Dues in this State School Boards Association shall be \$1.00 per member per school year but membership is by Boards of Education and not individual members of same. In order to receive full benefit from membership dues should be sent to the Association's Treasurer prior to September 1.

Moved by E. E. Sowers. Seconded by B. M. McGinley, that this constitution be adopted. Carried.

Joe D. Hurt, Secretary

February 14, 1946

OKLAHOMA EDUCATION ASSOCIATION  
320 Key Building  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

August 25, 1944

Dear School Administrator:

In order for our schools to gain any victories or to make any progress each of us must assume a full share of the responsibility for whatever program is launched for the common welfare. I am calling on you to join with the rest of us in a most important undertaking that must succeed because it will be the means of adding great strength to our efforts to gain financial and other help for our schools. Please do not fail us.

Regardless of how well the school people of Oklahoma may be organized or how effectively we work toward achieving legislative relief for our schools, we can only go so far. We must recognize that we cannot do some things alone. Teachers are vulnerable to attack by those who will oppose any program for financial help. Campaigns and programs that are sponsored only by professional teachers cannot gain the attention or support they should. In short, I am telling you what experience has already taught us and what you already know. We must enlist the active support of our lay friends in the present and future efforts to bring legislative help for our schools. For too long, we have assumed the entire load of responsibility for presenting and urging the adoption of measures for the relief of our schools. It is time we made it possible for our lay friends to help us.

Among all our lay friends in Oklahoma there are none more interested in our public schools than members of our boards of education. The fact of their membership on these boards and the evidence of unselfish service throughout the years testify to their faith in the cause of education and to their desire to make school better. The opposition cannot attack them or their motives in asking for adequate financial support for our schools. The members of our boards constitute our most influential citizens and come from all walks of life. There are thousands of them in the state. What a power of influence these friends and coworkers can exert for schools when they agree upon a program and unite their efforts.

We need the help of every friend of our schools and it is up to us as administrators and leaders in education to aid in the formation of an organization that will enable our school boards to exert an influence for education in our state. When the organization has been formed we should withdraw ourselves and serve only as advisers on call. There is plenty of evidence that an organization of school board members can be formed now. You are the key to the plan here suggested. Do not fail to act as soon as you get this letter. The plan is briefly as follows.

A meeting is hereby called at the Huckins Hotel, Oklahoma City, at 1:30 p.m., Saturday, September 16, 1944, for the purpose of forming a state organization of school board members. Following the formation of a state organization it is hoped that similar organizations will be

formed in each county.

County superintendents and local school superintendents are hereby requested and urged to bring as many school board members as possible to this state meeting. It is important that each county be represented at the state meeting. These representatives will form the nucleus of the local county organizations.

In addition to the business of organization the state meeting will devote some time to consideration of general school problems and of the recommendations of the legislative committee of the Oklahoma Education Association. It is important that these recommendations be reviewed by as many school people and school board members as possible in order that all errors might be removed and that the final draft might be the result of the best thinking of all. In addition it is important that we have wide understanding and information concerning the program that will be presented to our people and to the legislature next January.

May I add this final word. It is hoped that the state meeting will be attended by a large number of school board members and school administrators and that the representation will be from all types of school districts and schools. Please plan to share transportation and bring at least one car load from each county. I hope you see how important this is and that you will not allow anything to keep you and at least one board member away. We must do more within the next few months for school relief than we ever have before or by our indifference allow our schools to be driven backward beyond hope. We are facing a severe test. Our friends will help us face it if we show courage.

Please return the enclosed statement indicating that you will be present with at least one board member and that we can count on you. Mail this statement to the Oklahoma Education Association, 320 Perrine Building, Oklahoma City, without delay.

Yours for our schools,

s/

G. T. STUBBS, President  
Oklahoma Education Association

LIST OF SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS ATTENDING ORGANIZATION  
MEETING SEPTEMBER 16, 1944, OKLAHOMA CITY

Officers

President--Roy Spears, 2nd and Wyandotte  
McAlester, Oklahoma

Vice-President . . . . . E. E. Sowers  
Drunright, Oklahoma

Secretary-Treasurer . . . . . Joe D. Hurt  
Edmond, Oklahoma

Members

W. O. Goodman Altus Schools	A. R. Adams Cloud Chief	M. Chomlee Heavener
T. E. Garrison Ardmore City Schools Ardmore	Oran Bowman City Schools Dewey	J. G. Proffitt Jenks
Troy Adams Anadarko Schools Anadarko	Bill Brite Dill City	R. E. Holland Miami
H. T. Sears 1629 Johnston Boswell	Roy C. Brown Dill City	John H. Bridges R. 1 Manitou
C. L. Hooker Bartlesville	G. C. Riggins Dill City	J. A. Staedelin Norman
John Stockton Bethany Schools Bethany	J. A. Small Durant	W. R. Barnett R. 3, Box 226 Oklahoma City
Ralph K. Johnson Calera Schools Calera	Olaf Chitwood Guthrie	Eldon Hutchinson Okmulgee
A. B. Dickerson Cashion	E. O. Harrel Burrows Hal 36 Foster R. 1	Bill Stout Piedmont
J. G. Stratton Clinton Schools Clinton	W. J. Game Burrows 36 Foster R. 1	E. E. Feope Prague
Robert North Checotah Schools Checotah	Harold Purdum Guthrie	Ray L. Polk Prague

Guy B. Northcutt  
Purcell

Pauline Frazier  
Ringling

J. R. Willert  
Sand Springs

I. B. Faris  
Bethel C. 3  
Shawnee

E. L. Dawson  
Dundee School

Ray Barnett  
Putnam City

A. F. Bennett  
Heavener

Ed Dubie  
Sand Springs #19  
Sand Springs

G. W. Dobbs  
Bowlegs School  
Seminole

A. J. Wildman  
Shidler-Webb City  
Shidler

C. W. Tedrowe  
Woodward

Ned Burleson  
Prague

Jim Marsh  
Centerview UG 1  
Pott. Cty, Prague

E. M. Warren  
Shawnee

George Giacono  
Wilburton High School  
Wilburton

R. E. Leighton  
Woodward

## ETHICS FOR SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS

(Approved by Board of Directors, November 1, 1947)

Believing that true democracy can best be achieved by a process of free public education made available to all the children of all the people; that the board members have a large and inescapable responsibility in following the ideals of children and youth; that such responsibility requires the services of men and women of high ideals, broad education, and profound human understanding; and, that board members should observe proper standards of conduct in their professional relations, the Oklahoma School Boards Association proposes this code of ethics for its members.

It is unethical for a board of education to:

1. Perform administrative duties properly belonging to the superintendent.
2. Elect to any school position a candidate not recommended by the superintendent.
3. Employ any candidate except on merit, or dismiss an employee except for good cause.
4. Consider a complaint against a teacher that is not first submitted to the superintendent.
5. Withhold notice of failure to reappoint until so late that the teacher is handicapped in finding another position.
6. Keep the public in ignorance on school matters.
7. Offer a wage insufficient to cover living expenses for twelve months in the community where the teaching is to be done, or to offer any other unjust or humiliating contract.
8. Offer a position to a teacher who is already under contract without first securing the consent of his present employer.
9. Seek special privileges or private gain from schools.
10. Assume authority not specifically delegated to him by vote of the board.
11. Criticize school employees publicly.
12. Disclose confidential information.
13. Place the interests of one group above the interests of the entire school district.
14. Withhold facts about the incompetency of any employee from the superintendent.

15. Give personal consideration to complaints.
16. Make no effort to inform himself on school matters.
17. Announce the probable future action of the board.
18. Try to influence the vote or other action of other board members, or of any employee through threat, promise of award, deception, exchange of vote, or by any other means than legitimate open discussion where the only appeals are to the merits of the proposition under consideration.
19. To assume a dictatorial attitude toward the public, the school board employees, or other board members.

## LIST OF OFFICERS

## WITH DATES

## Elected

September 16, 1944 . . . . . President, Roy Spears  
 Vice-President, E. E. Sowers  
 Secretary-Treasurer, Joe D. Hurt

February 19, 1945 . . . . . \*Treasurer, R. E. Holland  
 \*Second Vice-President, E. M. Warren

February 14, 1946 . . . . . President, Roy Spears  
 First Vice-President, E. E. Sowers  
 Second Vice-President, E. L. Dawson  
 Secretary, Joe D. Hurt  
 Treasurer, R. E. Holland

July 21, 1946 . . . . . Third Vice-President, W. O. Goodman  
 Executive Director, H. E. Wrinkle

April 12, 1947 . . . . . President, E. E. Sowers  
 First Vice-President, E. L. Dawson  
 Second Vice-President, W. O. Goodman

March 21, 1949 . . . . . President, Ira Williams  
 First Vice-President, W. O. Goodman  
 Second Vice-President, J. G. Stratton  
 Third Vice-President, David W. Gish  
 Executive Secretary-Treasurer, H. E. Wrinkle

January 26, 1951 . . . . . President, W. O. Goodman  
 First Vice-President, J. G. Stratton  
 Second Vice-President, David W. Gish  
 Third Vice-President, Leo Dixon  
 Executive Secretary-Treasurer, H. E. Wrinkle

January 25, 1952 . . . . . President, J. G. Stratton  
 First Vice-President, David W. Gish  
 Second Vice-President, Leo Dixon  
 Third Vice-President, Ewing Canaday  
 Executive Secretary-Treasurer, H. E. Wrinkle

January 23, 1953 . . . . . President, J. G. Stratton  
 First Vice-President, Leo Dixon  
 Second Vice-President, Ewing Canaday  
 Third Vice-President, Leon White  
 Executive Secretary-Treasurer, H. E. Wrinkle

\* Appointed

January 22, 1954 . . . . . President, J. G. Stratton  
First Vice-President, Leon White  
Second Vice-President, R. C. Lantrip  
Third Vice-President, A. W. Swift  
Executive Secretary-Treasurer, H. E. Wrinkle

November 19, 1953

Dear \_\_\_\_\_

I am interested in writing a history of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association. May I impose upon you to assist me in this project? H. E. Wrinkle is permitting me to use his files. A list of the individuals who attended the first meeting is available in his minute book, and you are among those listed.

An attempt is being made to write each of the individuals who attended the first meeting but of course their addresses in many instances will not be the same as they were in 1944. I feel sure that you are in an enviable position to answer "How did a state school boards association happen to be organized?" Since you are one of the individuals who initiated and organized this association, I am sure you had certain ideas as to why it should be organized and the contributions that an association like this could make. Would you write me as many of the particulars as you can recall?

This is certainly an imposition upon you, but I want to give the credit for this organization to the individuals deserving the honor. Perhaps I will be able eventually to make some recommendations which will make this organization more effective in offering the services that you and others envisioned in the beginning.

I will be deeply indebted to you for having helped me. A self-addressed stamped envelope is enclosed for your convenience.

Yours sincerely,

s/

Al Harris, Superintendent

AH:jlm

ENC:

Clinton, Oklahoma  
April 22, 1953

Mr. H. E. Wrinkle, Executive Secretary  
Oklahoma State School Boards Association  
Faculty Exchange  
University of Oklahoma  
Norman, Oklahoma

Dear Mr. Wrinkle:

My graduate committee at the Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College, Stillwater, Oklahoma, may approve for me a thesis study which will be a history showing the evolution of the activities of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association. May I prevail upon your kindness and friendship to ask permission to use your files and any other material which you might have concerning the association.

I would like to see copies of all the publications, the official minutes, and financial and membership reports. Could these items be made available to me? If so, may I bring them to Clinton where I can peruse them at such times as my duties in Clinton will permit?

Yours sincerely,

s/

Al Harris

AH:jlm

April 29, 1953

Mr. Al Harris  
Superintendent of Schools  
Clinton, Oklahoma

Dear Al:

First of all, I want to extend my hearty congratulations upon your selection as President of the Oklahoma Association of School Administrators. This is an honor which you richly deserve, and I am sure that the Association will continue to make important contributions in the field of school administration under your leadership. Please remember that the University is anxious and willing to cooperate with the Association in any way.

Enclosed herewith you will find a directory of the presidents and secretaries of the State School Boards. The secretaries' list has been corrected to date.

I am glad to lend you my files of the O. S. S. B. A., and I believe it will be possible for you to take the information I have to Clinton. We have the minutes of the Association since its beginning in 1944. These give the official action of the Association. We have, of course, detailed information about some of the activities sponsored by the Association. You are entirely welcome to visit the State Headquarters and take a look at our record system.

Very cordially yours,

s/

H. E. Wrinkle  
Executive Secretary

HEW:js  
Encl.

APPENDIX L

## PRIMARY MATERIALS

## A. Personal Interviews

Dawson, E. L.

E. L. Dawson was second vice-president of the state association in 1946 and first vice-president in 1947. He was chairman of the committee to draft a constitution and by-laws for the Oklahoma State School Boards Association in 1944 and was present at the organizational meeting. Dawson supplied the writer with a wealth of information concerning the purposes of the organization. The association is indebted to Dawson for his persistent efforts in helping organize the Oklahoma State School Boards Association. His personal files were made available to the author for this study.

Interview: Wirt, Oklahoma, October 20, 1953

Hann, George D.

George D. Hann is superintendent of the Ardmore public schools. He was one of the administrators who assisted in forming the state association. Hann supplied valuable information concerning the early years of the organization.

Interview: Ardmore, Oklahoma, August 27, 1954

Hurt, Joe D.

Joe D. Hurt was secretary-treasurer of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association in 1944 and secretary in 1946. He was present at the organizational meeting in 1944. Hurt contributed information concerning reasons for founding the organization and described its activities during its early years. His personal files were made available to the author.

Interview: Clinton, Oklahoma, October 27, 1953  
(Many informal conversations)

Stratton, Jesse G.

Jesse G. Stratton has been president of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association for the past three years—1952, 1953, 1954. He is the present president of the National School Boards Association. Since 1947, he has held an official position in the state association. Stratton's assistance in connection with this study has been invaluable. His knowledge of both the state and national organizations from their beginning has been a primary source of reference. This study could not have been made without his help,

cooperation, and encouragement.

Interview: Clinton, Oklahoma, January 8, 1954;  
August 21, 1954  
(Many informal conversations)

Stubbs, G. T.

G. T. Stubbs was the organizing chairman of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association. In 1944, he issued the call for the first state-wide meeting of school board members at Oklahoma City. Stubbs supplied valuable information concerning the factors which led to the association's founding.

Interview: Stillwater, Oklahoma, March 17, 1954  
(Informal conversation)

Swanson, J. Chester

Chester Swanson is superintendent of the Oklahoma City public schools. Swanson gave helpful information as to the effectiveness of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association from the administrator's point of view. At the present time he is president of the Oklahoma Association of School Administrators.

Interview: Camp Redlands, Stillwater, Oklahoma  
June 11, 1954

Wrinkle, Herbert E.

H. E. Wrinkle was executive director of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association from 1946 until his death in 1954. Wrinkle made available all of his files for the author's use. He supplied invaluable information concerning the proceedings and formation of policies in the association's formative years.

Interview: Norman, Oklahoma, August 7, 1953;  
September 26, 1953; November 14, 1953;  
January 11, 1954

## B. Letters

### Replies Received in Answer to Letter Asking Reasons for Organizing the Oklahoma State School Boards Association

Dawson, E. L.

Letter received from Wirt, Oklahoma, December 4, 1953

Hurt, Joe D.

Letter received from Edmond, Oklahoma, February 1, 1954

Sowers, E. E.

Letter received from Drumright, Oklahoma, December 7, 1953

Stubbs, G. T.

Letter received from Stillwater, Oklahoma, February 12, 1954

Replies Received From Administrators to Letter of Inquiry Concerning  
the Accomplishments of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association

Allen, Paul B.

Superintendent of Schools

Letter received from Pauls Valley, Oklahoma, September 5, 1954

Bender, John F.

State Department of Education

Letter received from 716 Chantanqua, Norman, Oklahoma,  
September 6, 1954

Burton, R. H.

President of Southwestern State College

Letter received from Weatherford, Oklahoma, September 9, 1954

Cornelius, T. M.

Superintendent of Schools

Letter received from Comanche, Oklahoma, September 9, 1954

Hann, George D.

Superintendent of Schools

Letter received from Ardmore, Oklahoma, September 10, 1954

Hodge, Oliver

State Superintendent of Public Instruction

Letter received from Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, September 7, 1954

Phillips, Ferman

Executive Secretary, Oklahoma Education Association

Letter received from 323 East Madison, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma,  
September 18, 1954

Pugnire, D. Ross

Professor of Education, University of Oklahoma

Letter received from Norman, Oklahoma, September 13, 1954

Russell, R. R.

Superintendent of Schools

Letter received from Stillwater, Oklahoma, September 13, 1954

Shoemaker, John

Superintendent of Schools

Letter received from Lawton, Oklahoma, September 3, 1954

Snider, Glenn R.

Associate Professor of Education, University of Oklahoma  
Letter received from Norman, Oklahoma, September 14, 1954

Swanson, J. Chester

Superintendent of Schools  
Letter received from Norman, Oklahoma, September 14, 1954

Replies to Questionnaire from Stratton Concerning What a State Association Should Have Accomplished in Ten Years

Adler, Sigmund

President, Connecticut Association of Boards of Education  
Reply received from 10 Ashwell Avenue, Rocky Hill, Connecticut,  
April 26, 1954

Allen, D. B.

Secretary, North Dakota School Officers Association  
Reply received from Walcott, North Dakota, April 29, 1954

Andrews, W. J.

Executive Secretary, Georgia School Board Association  
Reply received from Toccoa, Georgia, May 18, 1954

Anspach, Charles L.

President, Central Michigan College of Education  
Reply received from Mount Pleasant, Michigan, June 4, 1954

Beem, Harlan

Assistant Director, Midwest Administration Center, University  
of Chicago  
Reply received from 5835 Kimbark Avenue, Chicago 37, Illinois,  
August 3, 1954

Beck, Roland L.

Reply received from 3222 West Camelback, Phoenix, Arizona,  
May 27, 1954

Bennett, Frank B.

President, Eastern Oregon College of Education  
Reply received from LeGrande, Oregon, May 19, 1954

Bond, G. W.

Dean, School of Education, Louisiana Polytechnic Institute  
Reply received from Ruston, Louisiana, May 26, 1954

Burch, R. W.

President, Idaho School Trustees Association  
Reply received from Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, May 25, 1954

Cole, Robert M.

Executive Director, Illinois Association of School Boards  
Reply received from 223½-225½ East Washington, Springfield,  
Illinois, June 26, 1954

- Collins, M. D.  
State Superintendent of Schools  
Reply received from State Office Building, Atlanta, Georgia,  
April 19, 1954
- Condon, Mary M.  
State Superintendent of Schools  
Reply received from Helena, Montana, April 28, 1954
- Cope, Quill E.  
Commissioner, Department of Education  
Reply received from Nashville 3, Tennessee, May 11, 1954
- Dafoe, Don M.  
Commissioner of Education, Territory of Alaska  
Reply received from Box 1841, Juneau, Alaska, April 22, 1954
- Davis, Homer  
Executive Secretary, Arizona School Board Association  
Reply received from Route 1, Box 233, Tucson, Arizona, May 18, 1954
- Desmond, John J., Jr.  
Commissioner of Education  
Reply received from 200 Newbury Street, Boston 16, Massachusetts,  
May 3, 1954
- Domian, Otto E.  
Director, Bureau of Field Studies and Surveys, University of  
Minnesota  
Reply received from Minneapolis 14, Minnesota, May 28, 1954
- Doner, D. B.  
Secretary-Treasurer, Associated School Boards of South Dakota  
Reply received from Brookings, South Dakota, June 4, 1954
- Dove, Claude C.  
Head of Department of Education and Psychology, New Mexico  
College of A. A. M. A.  
Reply received from State College, New Mexico, May 28, 1954
- Dyer, Everett R.  
Executive Secretary, New York State School Boards Association  
Reply received from 170 State Street, Albany 10, New York,  
June 3, 1954
- Eddy, J. C.  
Secretary-Treasurer, Idaho School Trustees Association  
Reply received from Second and Garden, Boise, Idaho, May 12, 1954
- Edgar, J. W.  
Commissioner of Education, Texas Education Agency  
Reply received from Austin, Texas, June 7, 1954

- Fawley, Paul C.  
Head, Department of Education and Administration, University  
of Utah  
Reply received from Salt Lake City, Utah, June 23, 1954
- Foster, I. Owen  
Director of Curriculum, Indiana Department of Public Instruction  
Reply received from 227 State House, Indianapolis 4, Indiana,  
April 28, 1954
- Grizzell, E. D.  
Dean, School of Education, University of Pennsylvania  
Reply received from Philadelphia 4, Pennsylvania, May 26, 1954
- Haitema, John S.  
Director of Education, Guam  
Reply received from Agana, Guam, April 23, 1954
- Hulden, A. John, Jr.  
Commissioner of Education  
Reply received from Montpelier, Vermont, May 3, 1954
- Jacobson, P. B.  
Executive Secretary, Oregon School Boards Association  
Reply received from Eugene, Oregon, May 24, 1954
- Lee, R. E.  
Specialist, Research and Statistics, Department of Education  
Reply received from Tallahassee, Florida, April 29, 1954
- McGhehey, Marion A.  
Assistant Professor of Education, University of Arizona  
Reply received from Tucson, Arizona, June 10, 1954
- Meese, L. E.  
Executive Secretary, Kentucky School Boards Association  
Reply received from 171 Cherokee Park, Lexington, Kentucky,  
May 26, 1954
- Milligan, Jack  
Assistant Superintendent, Michigan Department of Public Instruction  
Reply received from Lansing, Michigan, May 12, 1954
- Murick, Carl B.  
Director, National School Boards Association  
Reply received from 1419 Broadway, Oakland 12, California,  
July 1, 1954
- Murphy, Forest W.  
Dean, School of Education, University of Mississippi  
Reply received from Oxford, Mississippi, June 8, 1954

- Parsons, Richard T.  
President, State Teachers College  
Reply received from Lock Haven, Pennsylvania, May 26, 1954
- Pfau, Edward  
Assistant Professor of Education, Michigan State College  
Reply received from East Lansing, Michigan, June 11, 1954
- Placky, Fred J.  
President, Adams State College  
Reply received from Alamosa, Colorado, May 26, 1954
- Plenzke, O. H.  
Executive Secretary, Wisconsin Education Association  
Reply received from 404 Insurance Building, Madison 3, Wisconsin,  
April 27, 1954
- Putnam, Rex  
Superintendent of Public Instruction  
Reply received from 106 State Library Building, Salem, Oregon,  
April 28, 1954
- Quackenbush, E. A.  
Director of School Administration  
Reply received from Box 911, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, May 5, 1954
- Rich, R. Milton  
Director of Special Services, General Beadle State Teachers  
College  
Reply received from Madison, South Dakota, June 12, 1954
- Robert, E. B.  
Dean, College of Education, Louisiana State University and  
Agricultural and Mechanical College  
Reply received from Baton Rouge 3, Louisiana, May 27, 1954
- Schweickhard, Dean M.  
State Commissioner of Education  
Reply received from St. Paul 1, Minnesota, May 3, 1954
- Scott, Edna  
Director, Associated School Boards of South Dakota  
Reply received from Hecla, South Dakota, July 1, 1954
- Seaborn, C. B.  
Director, Division of School Administration and Finance,  
South Carolina Department of Education  
Reply received from Columbia, South Carolina, April 23, 1954
- Soloday, Roy S.  
President, New Mexico School Boards Association  
Reply received from Carlsbad, New Mexico, May 28, 1954

- Stanley, E. W.  
Executive Secretary-Treasurer, Washington School Directors'  
Association  
Reply received from Old Capitol Building, Olympia, Washington,  
May 29, 1954
- Stevenson, Elmo N.  
President, Southern Oregon College of Education  
Reply received from Ashland, Oregon, May 29, 1954
- Stover, Frank B.  
Executive Assistant to the Commissioner, Department of Education  
Reply received from 175 West State Street, Trenton 8, New  
Jersey, May 31, 1954
- Swenson, John H.  
Executive Director, Colorado Association of School Boards  
Reply received from 326-C Norlin Library, Boulder, Colorado,  
May 26, 1954
- Sykes, Earl F.  
Director, Student Teaching and Placement, State Teachers College  
Reply received from West Chester, Pennsylvania, June 7, 1954
- Tape, H. A.  
President, Northern Michigan College of Education  
Reply received from Marquette, Michigan, June 2, 1954
- Thatcher, Fred G.  
Executive Secretary, Louisiana School Boards Association  
Reply received from 219-B George Peabody Hall, Louisiana State  
University, Baton Rouge 3, Louisiana, May 18, 1954
- Throckmorton, Adel F.  
State Superintendent of Public Instruction  
Reply received from Topeka, Kansas, April 20, 1954
- Tubb, J. M.  
State Superintendent of Education  
Reply received from Jackson, Mississippi, May 27, 1954
- Tuttle, Edward M.  
Executive Secretary, National School Boards Association  
Reply received from 450 East Ohio Street, Chicago 11,  
Illinois, May 11, 1954
- Tryon, Sager  
President, Delaware Association of School Boards  
Reply received from 2605 Lincoln Avenue, Claymont, Delaware,  
June 1, 1954
- Van Houten, L. H.  
President, State Teachers College  
Reply received from Edinboro, Pennsylvania, June 3, 1954

Van Ness, P. O.  
 Executive Secretary, Pennsylvania State School Directors Association  
 Reply received from 222 Locust Street, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania,  
 May 17, 1954

Wanamaker, Pearl A.  
 State Superintendent of Public Instruction  
 Reply received from Olympia, Washington, June 22, 1954

Washington, W. H.  
 Dean, Clemson Agricultural College  
 Reply received from Clemson, South Carolina, May 31, 1954

Wettergren, W. A.  
 Executive Secretary, Minnesota School Boards Association  
 Reply received from 319 West Swift Street, St. Peter, Minnesota,  
 May 17, 1954

White, Lawrence B.  
 Administrative Director, California School Boards Association  
 Reply received from Box 340, Berkeley, California, May 18, 1954

Woodall, J. H., Sr.  
 President, Georgia School Boards Association  
 Reply received from Toccoa, Georgia, May 22, 1954

#### G. File Records

Oklahoma State School Boards Association  
 Faculty Exchange  
 Norman, Oklahoma

Minutes, General Sessions (September, 1944, to June, 1954)

Minutes, Board of Directors (July, 1946, to June, 1954)

Minutes, District Conference (October, 1946, to May, 1954)

Membership and Financial Reports (June, 1947, to May, 1954)

Correspondence Files (August, 1944, to June, 1954)

#### Publications:

Code of Ethics

Constitution and By-Laws

Objectives

Bulletin (December, 1948, to November, 1949)

What It Is And Does (n.d.)

Proceedings, Annual Conventions (March, 1947, to December, 1953)

News-Letter, Volume I to IV (May, 1950, to May, 1954)

School Laws of Oklahoma (1953)

Wilson, Neva, Handbook (n.d.)

Colorado Association of School Boards  
 326-C Norlin Library  
 Boulder, Colorado

Directory of Affairs of State School Board Associations, 1945  
Form Letters  
What It Is And What It Does (n.d.)

Minnesota School Board Association  
 319 West Swift Street  
 St. Peters, Minnesota

Constitution and By-Laws  
Articles of Incorporation  
The Minnesota School Board Journal (January, 1951)

National School Boards Association  
 450 East Ohio Street  
 Chicago 11, Illinois

Constitution and By-Laws (1945)  
Report of the First Nationwide Work Conference for State  
School Board Association Leaders (1953)  
Convention Programs (1947-1954)

New York State College for Teachers  
 Albany, New York

Griffiths, Daniel E. and William T. Wiley, A Handbook for  
the New School Board Member (1953)

New York State School Boards Association, Inc.  
 170 State Street  
 Albany 10, New York

Programs and Schedule (1954)  
Spring Conferences (1954)  
New York State School Boards Association

Michigan Association of School Boards  
 Room 3, Kellogg Center, Michigan State College  
 East Lansing, Michigan

Constitution (n.d.)  
Program of Upper Area Conference For School Board Member and  
Superintendents (Marquette, Michigan, May, 1954)

Pennsylvania State School Directors' Association  
 222 Locust Street  
 Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

Advantages of Belonging (n. d.)  
Revised By-Laws (1953)  
Schedule of Membership Dues (1954)

State Federation of District Boards of Education of New Jersey  
306 East State Street  
Trenton, New Jersey

School Insurance Facts for School Board Members (Part I)  
School Insurance Facts for School Board Members (Part II)  
What Every School Board Member Should Know

Tennessee School Boards Association  
225 Memorial Building  
Nashville 3, Tennessee

A Tentative Handbook for Tennessee School Board Members (1952,  
Revised, 1953)

Texas Association of School Boards  
102 V-Hall, University of Texas  
Austin, Texas

Proposed Program (1953)

Washington State School Director's Association  
Old Capitol Building  
Olympia, Washington

Policies (1953)

Virginia Association of School Trustees  
116 South Third  
Richmond 19, Virginia

Virginia School Boards, A Manual for the Guidance and Help of  
Members (1945)

VITA

Albert M. Harris  
candidate for the degree of  
Doctor of Education

Thesis: THE OKLAHOMA STATE SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION

Major: Educational Administration

Biographical and Other Items:

Born: December 15, 1908, near Altus, Oklahoma

Undergraduate Study: Southwestern State College, Weatherford, Oklahoma, 1927-1933; completed the Bachelor of Science degree in 1931 and the Bachelor of Arts degree in 1933.

Graduate Study: George Peabody College for Teachers, Nashville, Tennessee, Summer 1934, 1935, 1936, and 1938; completed the Master of Arts degree in 1938; University of Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma, Summer 1946, 1947, and 1948; The Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College, Stillwater, Oklahoma, Summer 1952, 1953, Second Semester 1953-1954, Summer 1954, and Second Semester 1954-1955.

Experience: Taught in the public schools of Oklahoma from 1931 through 1933; Superintendent of Schools in Oklahoma from 1933 through June, 1955.

Member: Oklahoma Education Association, Oklahoma Association of School Administrators, National Education Association, American Association of School Administrators.

Date of Final Examination: May, 1955.

