THE ROLE OF OKLAHOMA SUPERINTENDENTS

IN FOUR SMALL SCHOOL DISTRICTS

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Submitted to the Faculty of the
Graduate College of the
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in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for
the Degree of
DOCTOR OF EDUCATION
July, 2009

THE ROLE OF OKLAHOMA SUPERINTENDENTS

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank Dr. Ken Stern for his assistance in the selection of my dissertation topic. The subject matter has proven to be interesting and has produced an unexpected research conclusion.

I would also like to thank my family, Melissa, Skylar, and Dylan Goodsell. Their constant patience, love, and dedication have given me the ability to balance both family and school.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The role of the school district superintendent has evolved from focusing primarily

on instruction (1838-1910), when many school superintendents were also the instructors

in the one-room school houses they served (Hord, 1990), to managing larger and more

complex organizations. At the turn of the twentieth century, public education

organizations began to change. As the number of students receiving a free public

education increased, schools expanded beyond the one-room school house into larger

school buildings and eventually larger school districts, resulting in an expanded role of

the superintendent. Managing large schools and school districts required that

administrators develop additional skills and assume responsibility for effective and

efficient operations. Superintendents moved from teaching in the classroom to managing

the school district. Recently, patrons of school districts have compared the role of a

school superintendent to that of a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of a company or

corporation (Fredrickson, 2002).

Possible Factors Affecting the Role of

School District Superintendents

The reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act in 2002,

known as No Child Left Behind (NCLB), brought about an unprecedented involvement

of the federal government in public education, with an accompanying demand for accountability. Current assessments for measuring progress under NCLB have shifted from determining the level of student achievement or tracking student progress to defining the parameters of what is considered "knowledge" in the public school setting (Carnoy, Elmore, & Siskin, 2003). NCLB has increased the level of student achievement accountability.

The purposes of NCLB are to ensure student learning and to alleviate the confusion surrounding the quantification of academic achievement by instituting assessments of the educational process (Carnoy, Elmore, & Siskin, 2003). Student scores are based upon clear academic standards for student outcomes (PL 107-110, 2002). Learner expectations are established and outlined according to grade level for all students, exempting only students with an Individual Education Plan (IEP). With achievement reduced to a number, both parents and patrons of the school district are able to cross-reference the scores of the site or district to an established standard or objective. Scores may be compared across school sites and communities, and the evaluation or success of a district superintendent is tied to test scores (Barton, 2003). With the accountability movement, the superintendent's instructional leadership responsibilities are again at the forefront and the pressure on superintendents to focus on this responsibility has increased. Ultimately, it is the superintendent who is held accountable for the measurable academic performance of the district's student population (Lashway, 2002a).

The superintendent of any school district must maintain a delicate balance between simultaneously satisfying the interests of the local community and effectively managing

the district (Berg, 1998). Factors such as school security (Butler, 2007), legal issues

(Bushweller, 2003), special education (Snell, 2007), and financial/budgetary needs

(National School Boards Association, 1992; Lister, 2007) may affect the role of small

and large school district superintendents. Politics and special interest groups such as

parent, teacher, or community groups may change or influence the direction, focus, and

resource allocation of school districts (Pan, Rudo, Schneider, & Smith-Hansen 2003;

Center for Mental Health in Schools, 2002; Andero, 2000). Each of these groups expects

resources to be allocated in a way that benefits its particular interests.

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Differences Between Large and Small School

District Superintendencies

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Increased governmental regulation affects all school districts, but small districts

have fewer resources to implement the changes (Franz, 2003). While the superintendent

of any school district may be considered its CEO, the day-to-day activities of

superintendents in large and small districts differ. For example, when responsibilities

from revised governmental regulations are added to the superintendent's role, the budget

of a large school district may enable the superintendent to hire additional staff members

(assistant superintendents) to meet the need (Houck, 2002; Marx, 2001). Superintendents

in small school districts, with smaller budgets and limited resources, do not have this

option. They must assume the responsibility for accomplishing all required

administrative functions and may find the additional responsibilities difficult to manage

(Franz, 2003; Behrens, 1992).

Problem Statement

NCLB, one of the most sweeping pieces of educational reform in the history of education in the United States, is an external force mandating improved academic instruction. As noted in Chapter II, superintendents are responsible for the implementation of federal policy at the district level. Change theory (Fullan, 2001) is consistent with such responsibilities for a district's leader. The bureaucratic structure of the organization gives superintendents the authority to determine the level of compliance with federal law. They do this by controlling the flow of information, defining the duties for positions at each level of the organization, implementing policy and procedures, and establishing the academic vision for their school district (Fullan, 2001).

While the superintendent's responsibilities as a CEO are necessary successful implementation of NCLB requires an instructional leader. Fulfillment of the responsibilities is contingent upon the activities of the superintendent. If student academic performance is going to increase, the role of the superintendent needs to expand from CEO only to include that of instructional leader.

Therefore, the role of the small school district superintendents may be shifting as additional pressure is expended to achieve increased test results. External pressures may be influencing the role of these superintendents. This study explored the role of small Oklahoma school district superintendents looking for possible trend lines over the past seven years (i.e., since NCLB was enacted).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine whether the role of small school district superintendents in Oklahoma has changed in the seven years since the passage of NCLB and to identify factors that may have caused the change. The findings of this study may assist these superintendents in understanding and more clearly defining their intended role.

Research Questions

The following are the overarching questions for this research:

1. What is the current role of a small Oklahoma school district superintendent?

2. How has that role changed over the past seven years? (This time frame reflects the required implementation of NCLB in 2001).

3. What factors have led to these changes?

Research Method

This qualitative exploratory research project examined, from interviewees' perspectives, any changes in the superintendent's role over the past seven years (2001-2008), and the reason(s) for change. According to Creswell (2003), the purpose of qualitative research is to "identify the essence of human experiences concerning a phenomenon, as described by participants in a study" (p. 15). Data were gathered through interviews using open-ended questions and through analysis of documents such as board agendas (Creswell, 2003). Questions that addressed the issues of "how" and

"what" (Creswell, 2003) provided an opportunity for the researcher to highlight any changes in the role of Oklahoma's small school district superintendents.

Definition/Explanation of Terms for

the Purpose of this Study

Principal – A principal is anyone other than the superintendent having supervision or administrative authority over a school site (Oklahoma, School Laws of, 2008).

Role – All of the responsibilities associated with the position.

Small School District – An Oklahoma school district with grades PK-12, an enrollment of 400-1500 students, and no assistant superintendent.

Superintendent - A superintendent of schools is the executive officer of the board of education and the administrative head of a district maintaining an accredited school (Oklahoma, School Laws of, 2008).

Significance of the Study

More than one-half of the 420 PK-12 school districts in Oklahoma qualified as small school districts under the parameters established for the research project. The additional information from this study could assist most superintendents in Oklahoma in understanding their role as the leader of the school district. The findings from this research project should help inform superintendent preparatory programs. If outside pressures are causing change for school superintendents, preparatory programs (colleges, universities, Oklahoma State Department of Education) must provide the training and skills for change implementation.

Theoretical Framework

By design, school districts are firmly established and defined by their bureaucratic structure (Hoy, 2005; Fullan 2001). Because the goal of the bureaucracy is to maintain the status quo, implementation of change is a difficult process (Fullan, 2001). Fullan's (1993) change theory provided the framework for critical evaluation of the superintendent's responsibilities and duties for implementing change. According to the guidelines of change theory, leaders are needed to define the direction of the organization and determine the depth of change implementation; they "are needed for problems that do not have easy answers (Fullan, 2001 p. 2). Superintendents are responsible for managing the school district effectively and their responsibilities will not disappear; they are also the most influential component in the implementation of change because of their positional power to develop policy and practice and to determine the vision of the school district. The requirement to implement NCLB-mandated policy has disturbed the status quo of the educational system; therefore, the role of small Oklahoma school district superintendents may be shifting from the responsibilities of a manager (CEO) only to a more expansive one emphasizing those of a leader.

According to Fullan (2001), to implement change, superintendents must be guided by a sense of moral purpose; their goal must be to make a positive difference in the organization. They must understand the complexities of the change process, actively engage in the development of relationships, and foster knowledge building and collaboration within the organization. These activities will produce the cohesion necessary for the organization to implement the desired change.

Organization of the Study

This remainder of this dissertation is divided into chapters as follows. Chapter II reviews the literature related to the role of school superintendents and the specific role of small school district superintendents. Chapter III describes the methodology. Chapter IV describes the participants and location in the interview process and presents the data and its analysis for possible trends. Chapter V presents the conclusions and recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

In 1933, the Oklahoma State Superintendent of Public Instruction, John Vaughan, defined one of the many components of the role of superintendents as being the master teachers in the school districts or counties for which they were employed (Oklahoma State Department of Education, 1933). Yet, today's superintendents are responsible for much more. State law provides that the superintendent be the executive officer of the board of education and the administrative head of the school district (Oklahoma, School Laws of, 2008). This simple statutory regulation encompasses a wide array of tasks and responsibilities. Superintendents must oversee the effective management of the finances, personnel, and facilities of the entire district and are increasingly expected to be instructional leaders of their school districts (Anthes, 2002). Franz (2003) outlined that due to limited resources, additional responsibilities are assumed by small school district superintendents that go far beyond that of a CEO or instructional leader. As both Houston (2004) and Starratt (2004) pointed out, the role of superintendent is more than a position or title.

Literature regarding the role of superintendents, potential changes to the role, and factors influencing those changes is highlighted in this chapter. In addition to the duties

as CEO, superintendents are responsible for the safety and security of the districts' students, for ensuring the legal integrity of the district, and for serving as the district's instructional leader. If superintendents are to implement the federal requirements of NCLB then they must also assume the responsibilities of a change agent.

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Superintendent's Responsibilities as a Chief

Executive Officer (CEO)

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Several studies have examined the role of a school superintendent as a CEO. A CEO is an individual who manages and establishes a vision for the organization (Hoyle, 2005). The term CEO is used primarily to describe the top-ranking official in a business or corporation. While this analogy to a business official does not directly correlate with the role of a school superintendent, similarities exist in both the managerial and financial responsibilities of the two positions. Consequently, the public views superintendents as CEOs who balance budgets and manage districts. Superintendents are expected to effectively manage all aspects of the direct operation of the school district, primarily the district's finances, personnel and facilities (Cuban, 1988; Fredrickson, 2002; Lashway, 2002a). However, factors outside the school district often affect the superintendent's decisions:

> The work of superintendents has increasingly become defined by political
> pressures, high public visibility, unstable school finances, and greater
> external controls exerted through court rulings, legislation, and state
> department of education mandates. (Bredeson, 1995, p. 1)

Bredeson and Johansson (1997) helped to illustrate the role of a school district superintendent when they surveyed 397 superintendents in Wisconsin, representing 82.1% of the district administrators in that state. According to the researchers, the major functional responsibilities of the superintendency were the management of district budgets, school finances, public relations, and personnel and the overall maintenance of running an efficient district. The data revealed that the superintendents also intended to assume the responsibility of instructional leader. However, the study concluded that the actions of the superintendents did not agree with their intentions:

Wisconsin superintendents ranked budget/finance, planning/goals formulation, and public relations/communications as their top three administrative tasks. When asked how they spent their time, budget/finance and public relations were ranked first and third, while personnel administration replaced planning/goal formulation.

Instructional leadership ranked as their fourth most important task. (p. 10)

The study concluded that while the Wisconsin superintendents reported one of their major concerns to be the instruction of students, their administrative actions did not support their concerns. The superintendents who participated in the study ranked budget/finance as the most important issue and the function in which they spent the majority of their time.

The same conclusions were reached in a recent study by Reeves (2004), who surveyed 500 administrators in 21 states. The goal of the research was to identify and discuss the traits needed to be a school leader. Reeves reported that while 71% of the administrators surveyed stated that being an instructional leader was important, only 45%

percent of these administrators engaged in such activities. Chan, Pool, and Strickland

(2001) also outlined the percentages of time spent by superintendents in their daily

activities. Surveying 50 school superintendents through a self-designed instrument, they

found that 40% of a superintendent's time is devoted to the general management of the

school district (Table 1). The researchers also concluded that most superintendents work

more than a 40-hour work week.

Table 1

How Superintendents Spend Their Time

Area of Activity	% of Time Devoted
General District Management	40
Personnel Matters	10
Curriculum/Instruction	20
Student/Extra-Curricular Activities	5
Community-related Activities	10
Other Activities	15

Source: (Chan, Pool & Strickland, 2001)

Superintendent's Responsibilities for School Security

The safety and security of students is of utmost importance to school

administrators (Butler, 2007; Roberson, 2004; DeMitchell & Cobb 2003). Incidents such

as school shootings, school violence, and acts of terrorism have caused many school

district officials to evaluate and revamp the security needs of their respective school

districts (Butler, 2007). Roberson (2004) the impact school violence can have upon a school setting.

> The tragic string of senseless shootings shattered whatever sense of
> normalcy and recovery we had begun to feel just one year after the
> calculated actions of terrorists inflicted massive death and destruction at
> the Pentagon in the northern Virginia suburbs on Sept. 11, 2001. The
> sniper shootings ratcheted our collective anxiety level to a new height.
> We were never sure who might be lurking in the shadows of locations we
> all take for granted. Frighteningly, this included our schools. (p. 26)

Events such as those in Columbine, Virginia Tech, and Ft. Gibson forced administrators to rethink and prioritize school security (Butler, 2007). To assist in the security needs of students, many superintendents are trying to coordinate efforts directly with local police and sheriff departments. This partnership developed into the School Resource Officer program, whose goal is violence prevention and a visible display of security and enforcement in the school district (Butler, 2007).

Superintendent's Responsibilities for Legal Issues

Litigation can be costly for any school district. Special education, students' rights, and teacher due process/termination are at the forefront of topics for school litigation (Shorr, 2007). "As state and federal legislation continues to place greater academic expectations and unfunded mandates on public schools, we cannot afford to waste a single minute or another dollar to fight unwarranted litigation" (Wasser, 2007. p. 10).

Avoiding litigation is not easy. The reality is that any person or parent can file a lawsuit against the school district. Shorr (2007) recommended that a superintendent constantly monitor changes in the law and adjust district policies to reflect current legal issues. Most school district litigation results from a lack of policy implementation (Shorr, 2007; Wasser 2007). The most common motivators for the origination of a lawsuit are failure of communication between the individual and the district, a lack of understanding or knowledge concerning a legal issue, passion and the emotion related to the issue, pride, and the greed of the individual filing the lawsuit (Wasser, 2007). To avoid litigation, many school districts hire school board attorneys or law firms on retainer. These firms assist school districts in policy development, implementation, and evaluation.

A superintendent is expected to uphold the moral standards of the community and the ethical standards of the district (Kidder, 2008). Not choosing to take a stand against a perceived illegal activity could result in litigation, while taking the appropriate stand could result in termination of employment. Threats of legal action are becoming more constant (Wasser, 2007). The culture of the current society is adding to the moral and legal complexities of the position (Kinder, 2008). These are the legal and moral complexities that come with the position of superintendent.

Superintendent's Responsibilities as an Instructional Leader

Superintendents are facing more accountability for the academic achievement of their districts (Lashway, 1999, 2000, 2002a), and the duties of academic leadership are moving to the forefront of their responsibilities:

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The newly reauthorized Elementary and Secondary Education Act

(ESEA) both reflects and reinforces a major shift in thinking about the

roles and responsibilities of school board members, district

superintendents and principals. More and more school and district leaders

are being held responsible for bringing about change and improvement.

Today, expectations for principals and superintendents run well

beyond managing budgets and making sure the busses run on time. They

are counted on to be the instructional leaders of their school districts: to

understand effective instructional strategies, regularly observe and coach

classroom teachers, and be able to analyze student achievement data to

make more effective instructional decisions. (Anthes, 2002, p. 3)

Berg and Barnett (1998) pointed out that the instructional leader typically was the site

principal. However, this responsibility shifted to include the superintendent. King

(2002) highlighted this changing role of the superintendent:

Today's instructional leaders function in a constantly changing

environment and serve students with greater and more diverse needs than

ever before. Yet they are expected to lead their schools to show marked

improvement more quickly and with fewer resources at their disposal.

They are expected to improve the quality of teachers; maintain safe

schools; and turn staffs, parent groups, and business partners into

communities of learners. Under the watchful eyes of their parents and

business communities, these leaders are challenged to lead and to learn

simultaneously. (p. 63)

Superintendents must be at the forefront, leading the charge to implement a viable

curriculum and effective strategies that will enhance both teaching and learning

(Oklahoma State Department of Education, 2006). Ultimately, the academic

achievement of students is the sole responsibility of the superintendent (Petersen, 1998).

Quality instructional leadership is a key component for school improvement

(Bjork, 1993; Bredson & Johannson, 1997; Lashway, 2002a; Oklahoma State Department

of Education 2006). More than twenty-five years ago, Cuban (1984) emphasized the

importance of the active involvement of a superintendent in the area of curriculum and

instruction. Later, Petersen's (1998) study showed a movement toward regarding the

superintendent as an instructional leader. A case study of five California superintendents

looked at their efforts and activities in instructional leadership with the purpose of

understanding how superintendents perceived their responsibility in curriculum and

instruction. The superintendents stated that instructional leaders must have an

instructional vision, an organizational structure to support the vision, quality assessment,

and monitoring of personnel, and an organization that is able to adopt a viable

curriculum. The researchers, trying to establish a link between the perceptions of these

superintendents and their work-related actions, found that the actions of the

superintendents modeled their perceptions of the instructional leadership role. The

superintendents reported stressing the importance of being an instructional leader and

engaging in the activities of an instructional leader.

The role of instructional leader has been addressed by numerous educators.

Bredeson and Johansson (1997) defined the components of the superintendent's

instructional leadership responsibilities: to establish an instructional vision, engage in

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instructional collaboration, provide instructional support, and practice instructional delegation. Fullan (2001) pointed out that it is one task to develop a focus for a school district, and it is another and more difficult task to implement the focus, though these actions are not mutually exclusive. According to Gewertz (2005), other responsibilities of an instructional leader include setting measurable goals, establishing accountability at all levels of the system, breaking down data, using data to improve instruction, and establishing a centrally managed curriculum aligned to state standards. Improvement usually requires some type of change to the status quo and, as Madsen (1994) pointed out, a superintendent is an important factor in the implementation of change. Therefore, superintendents should have a clear understanding of the change process (Fullan, 2001).

While it is the responsibility of the superintendent to develop a district-wide vision regarding the educational needs of students (Cudeiro, 2005; Oklahoma State Department of Education, 2006; Spence, 2002; Starratt, 2004) because such a vision helps clarify everyone's role and responsibilities (Spence, 2002), it is a mistake for superintendents to assume that the vision is known to each member of the organization and that everyone is actively involved in implementation it (Cooper, Fasarelli, and Randall, 2004). Successful implementation of the vision requires that superintendents clearly and frequently communicate the direction and focus of the district (Herbert et al., 2006). Superintendents must hold both formal and informal conversations with site principals to gain information regarding the implementation of the instructional vision and must establish procedural systems for monitoring the educational vision (Herbert et al., 2006).

In addition, the superintendent must communicate that vision to the board of education and the community (Behrens, 1992; Bryant, 2002; Kelleher, 2002). By nature, school boards, who have power and influence over the direction of a district, can sometimes be difficult political entities. The task of the superintendent is not only to communicate an educational vision, but to also ensure the security of that vision (Kelleher, 2002).

According to McEwan (2003), another responsibility of an instructional leader is to establish a professional culture that provides an opportunity for instructional process collaboration. Teachers should be encouraged to engage in discussions regarding the implementation of research-based teaching strategies and learner outcomes related to state standards. In addition to the activities associated with the role of an instructional leader, Kelleher (2002) pointed out that, above all else, an instructional leader must be an active learner and must model learning for others.

As previously noted, the role of instructional leader has been dominated by site principals (Petersen, 1998). Therefore, superintendents must work closely with site principals (Cudeiro, 2005; Spence, 2002; Starratt, 2004; Oklahoma State Department of Education, 2006; Behrens, 1992) and district instructional leadership teams (King, 2002) to manage and/or maintain the instructional vision of the district, engaging in activities such as staff development and the monitoring of the instructional process (Spence, 2002; Starratt, 2004; Cudeiro, 2005; Oklahoma State Department of Education, 2006; Behrens, 1992). Successful school districts have instructional leaders who establish, implement, and monitor the academic vision of the district (Fullan, 2001; McEwan, 2003; Oklahoma State Department of Education, 2006). To implement change effectively superintendents

must critically evaluate the current climate of their districts and select appropriate

practices to achieve their desired goals (Fullan, 2001).

Difference Between Leader and Manager

An understanding of change theory begins with an analysis of the difference

between a district manager and a district leader. A manager maintains the effective and

efficient operation of the district (McEwan, 2003). Superintendents find comfort and

consistency functioning in this responsibility.

> Yet through all these upheavals [Sputnik, civil rights, IDEA, labor unions,
>
> special interest groups, Title IX, NCLB], the basic job description
>
> remained remarkably unchanged. The superintendent made sure the buses
>
> ran, the lunchroom served warm meals, the books were delivered, the
>
> teachers were hired, and the buildings were built and maintained. It was
>
> the classic role of manager. (Houston, 2007, p. 30)

Bennis (1989) describes a manager as an individual who administers the bureaucracy and

maintains the status quo.

In contrast, a leader does the opposite. A leader challenges the status quo

(McEwan, 2003). Leaders innovate by asking "what" and "why" and have the power to

influence others, causing them to act (McEwan, 2003). Fullan (2001) believes leaders are

needed to solve complex problems, one of which is implementing change in a

bureaucracy.

According to McEwan (2003), there are two components to becoming an effective

educational administrator. The position requires the skills of both a manager and a

leader, with the former being responsible for the day-to-day operation of the district, and the latter being responsible for the implementation of the vision of the district. Manager requirements outline the responsibilities highlighted in Reeves (2004) and Bredeson and Johansson (1997). To be effective, educational administrators must actively engage in both activities, but the movement of superintendents to a balancing the roles of both manager and instructional leader may be difficult.

Additionally, McEwan (2003) describes an effective instructional leader as an individual who establishes an academic culture that facilitates the communication of an academic vision as who sets high expectations for staff regarding the implementation of academic standards. These objectives are achieved through the establishment of positive relationships. The responsibilities described are difficult and time consuming, but necessary if students are achieve academic success.

Effective Educational Practices

Superintendents must engage in effective educational practices to successfully implement a change. Once the vision of the districts has been established, superintendents must chart a course of action to best meet the needs of the districts (Fullan, 2001). This process can be difficult. The amount of educational research regarding the best teaching and organizational practices is vast. Selecting the wrong strategy or implementing the wrong policy could produce disastrous results, and implementing the right strategy using poor methods will have the same effect. Outside assistance from experts in the field of research is vital in the process of selecting change strategies (Fullan, 2001).

It is the responsibility of an instructional leader to implement "best practices" in education. Protheroe (2004) outlined the nine best practices to increase student achievement: graded homework, aligned time on task, direct instruction, advance organizers, knowledge of teaching strategies, tutoring, application of mastery learning, cooperative learning, and adaptive education principles. Brophy (1992) added to the conversation about effective educational practices that will increase student academic achievement by identifying characteristics of schools that elicit good achievement:

(1) strong academic leadership that produces consensus on goal priorities and commitment to instructional excellence;

(2) a safe, orderly school climate;

(3) positive teacher attitudes toward students and expectations regarding their abilities to master the curriculum;

(4) an emphasis on instruction in the curriculum (not just on filling time or on nonacademic activities);

(5) careful monitoring of progress toward goals through student testing and staff evaluation programs;

(6) strong parent involvement programs; and

(7) consistent emphasis on the importance of academic achievement, including praise and public recognition for students' accomplishments. (p. 4)

Constant monitoring of the educational process is a key element to successful implementation of change. This is not easy, but it is a necessary responsibility of an instructional leader (Fullan, 2001; McEwan, 2003).

Requirements of NCLB Implementation

To fully implement NCLB, superintendents must understand the expectations and requirements of NCLB for the state of Oklahoma. The title, No Child Left Behind, is interpreted literally, because no child is to be left behind or denied the opportunity for a free and appropriate education (PL 107-110, 2002).NCLB (2001) established that every school district must make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) regarding the education of its student population (Cohn, 2002). It is the responsibility of each state to determine the AYP of its respective school districts (PL 107-110, 2002). Oklahoma has developed an Academic Performance Index (API) (see Figures 1-2) that determines whether a local school district has met the federal requirements of AYP (Oklahoma State Department of Education, 2007). The primary factor determining the API for each school district is state-mandated testing.

As shown in Figure 1, the API for the state of Oklahoma is heavily weighted on the scores of state standardized end-of-year exams taken by students in grades 3, 5, and 8 and the End of Instruction (EOI) exams for high school students. Other factors contributing to the calculation of an API score are the categories labeled "School Completion" and "Academic Excellence". The criteria for each of these categories are outlined below. Oklahoma uses the API formula as shown in Figure 1 to determine whether a school district has met the NCLB requirements of AYP.

Academic Performance Index (API) Formula Variations SCHOOL TYPES AND WEIGHTS				
SCHOOL TYPE	GRADE SPAN	TEST SCORES Grades 3, 5, 8 & EOI	SCHOOL COMPLETION Attendance, Graduation & Dropout Rates	ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE ACT, AP & College Remediation Rate
K-12 District	K-12	80%	10%	10%
K-8 District/Site	K-8	90%	10%	N/A
K-6 District	K-6	90%	10%	N/A
High School Site	9-12	80%	10%	10%
Middle/Junior High Site	7-8	90%	10%	N/A
Elementary School Site	K-6	90%	10%	N/A

Academic Performance Index required by Title 70 O.S. § 3-150

EOI: End-of-Instruction tests in English II and Algebra I
ACT: ACT college-entrance exam averages
AP: Advanced Placement participation and performance
College remediation rate: As determined by the State Regents for Higher Education

SOURCE: API, School Improvement, State Department of Education, December 2003

Figure 1: Academic Performance Index (API)

Table 2 lists the minimum overall API score each school district needs in order to successfully meet the requirements of AYP. The minimum benchmarks or scores increase over time. It is the goal of all school districts to reach the API benchmark of 1,500 by the year 2014. School districts not meeting the API minimum benchmarks in any of the categories for two consecutive years are considered to be in a period of school improvement. Continued failure to meet API benchmarks could result in federal sanctions and penalties being imposed upon the school district.

Table 2

API Minimum Benchmarks for Reading and Mathematics

Year	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Math API	648	648	790	790	790	932	932	932	1074	1074
Reading API	622	622	768	768	768	914	914	914	1060	1060

Year	2012	2013	2014
Math API	1216	1358	1500
Reading API	1206	1352	1500

(Oklahoma State Department of Education, 2007)

Figure 2 shows the AYP determinations provided by the Oklahoma State Department of Education. It is important to note that each sub-group (e.g., White, Black, Native American, high mobility, and special education) must meet all of the pre-determined targets if the school district is to classify as making AYP. The failure of any group to meet even one of the targets results in the school's not making AYP.
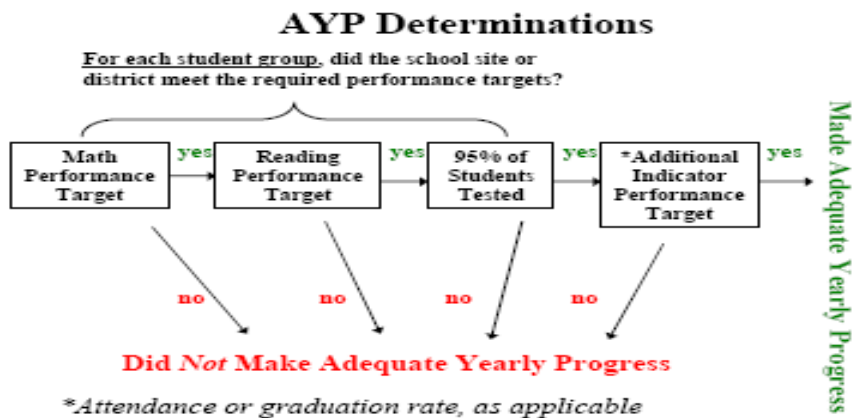
Figure 2: AYP Determinations

School districts with low test scores are subject to well-defined consequences that are attached to failed NCLB objectives (Barton, 2003; Lashway, 2002a; PL 107-110, 2002). The expectation for school districts is high, and funding is limited (Wittmer, 2004). Some school districts may receive additional federal funds based upon location (isolation) or district size (small), and the dependency upon federal monies ensures at least attempted compliance because without federal funds, many districts could not meet payroll or pay the bills. However, such funds are rarely sufficient for these districts to meet federal guidelines (Barton, 2003; Wittmer, 2004) even though school districts are required to comply. "Struggling schools can be shut down and reconstituted with new staffs. Schools that fail to comply with NCLB risk losing their federal funding" (Barton, 2003, p. 4).

Superintendent's Responsibilities as a Change Agent

Implementing new policies or strategies may be a difficult and complex long-term task for superintendents (Fullan, 2001). Gross, Giacquinta, and Bernstein (1971) outlined four major barriers to effective policy implementation. The first barrier is a lack of understanding regarding the innovation or strategy. At many levels of the organization, members may not be clear regarding how the innovation is to be implemented. This barrier further reinforces previously cited research regarding the importance of continual communication between the superintendent and the school district. The second barrier to strategy implementation centers on staff development. Both administrators and staff members must have the skills and resources to implement the change. Poor training can result in failure (Cooper et al., 2004). The third barrier is a lack of resources. Limited

resources or lack of funding may prevent the superintendent from effectively implementing the required change. The fourth barrier is the organizational structure of the school district itself. For a new policy or strategy to be implemented effectively, the district must be retooled to provide an opportunity for change to be established as status quo. This restructuring may involve new organizational hierarchical structures and lines of communication (Gross, Giacquinta, & Bernstein, 1971).

A major factor impeding the implementation of policy and strategies is a level of non-coherence between educational policies as mandated on the national and state level and as implemented at the local level. According to Cooper et al. (2004), who built on the research by Gross, Giaquinta and Bernstein (1971). According to Cooper et al. (2004), the inherent flaw with strategy implementation within the educational system is decentralization. Power, authority, and accountability are scattered at best, goals and objectives are too numerous, and any attempts to achieve them move the school district in different and conflicting directions. When success in one objective is detrimental to the achievement of another major goal, the organization is left in a state of confusion.

Changing demographics and growing diversity, fragmented culture, and politics are all additional formidable factors hindering the ability of a superintendent to lead a district. Each set of circumstances develops its own political baggage or special interest and has the potential to cause chaos in the district (Lashway, 2002b).

Weatherley and Lipsky (1977) studied implementation of the 1972 Comprehensive Special Education Law of Massachusetts. This law began as a sweeping, top-down legislative reform movement aimed at increasing educational opportunities and providing the best educational practices and services available for special needs students.

Their research concluded that superintendents must learn the unwritten power structures of the system, and they must identify key players, defined in the study as "street level bureaucrats," in the organization to ensure proper and effective policy implementation. The "street-level bureaucrats" are those in any organization who are responsible for implementing a top-down administrative directive and therefore, have the power to determine the extent of its implementation. They are very powerful employees, who are not affected by the power or structure of organizational authority and who have the ability to act autonomously, despite the direction or guidelines established by the organization. Like company clerk Corporal Walter "Radar" O'Riley of the M.A.S.H. 4077th, they have the ability to supersede, circumvent, navigate, and manipulate the organizational system or bureaucracy to get things done.

The primary objective of a street-level bureaucrat is to modify and twist new polices and practices successfully to maintain the status quo. Thus, street-level bureaucrats can disrupt the implementation process through reutilizing organizational procedures, controlling resources, and engaging in political activity to gain power and influence. Therefore, identification of the street-level bureaucrats prior to the implementation of the organizational strategy is vital to its success (Weatherley & Lipsky, 1977).

Understanding the motivation and practices of street-level bureaucrats can help superintendents understand the possible barriers in the implementation process, relevant information for an instructional leader (Weatherley & Lipsky, 1977). Superintendents must communicate the planned and perceived outcomes of the newly implemented strategy to the street-level bureaucrats (central office staff, building level administrators,

teachers, etc.) early. Although these efforts slow down the implementation process and require more work on behalf of the administrator, they also increase the probability of achieving policy and organizational objectives (Weatherly & Lipsky, 1977).

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The Difference Between the Role of Small and

Large School District Superintendents

</div>

The overabundance of responsibilities can make the role of the superintendent both exhausting and confusing. Priorities are defined by the daily circumstances and resources needed to keep the district operational (Wittmer, 2004; Chan, 2001). Superintendents engage in daily, non-routine multi-tasking responsibilities (e.g. finance, personnel, facilities, and public relations) that are required to maintain an effective and efficient school district (Franz, 2003; Hooper 1999; Behrens, 1992). Complicating this situation is a trend for rural or small-community members to resist a top-down initiative that imposes standards at any level (Arens, 2005).

Smaller school districts may not appear to be as complex as larger districts, but that does not necessarily make them easier to manage. Adding responsibilities to the existing role of a school superintendent can create conflict with the tasks required to operate a small school district effectively (Hunter, 2006; Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, 2003; Tyler, 2003; Behrens, 1992). Small school district superintendents have the same responsibilities and encounter all of the implementation barriers faced by large school district superintendents. However, superintendents in large school districts have more opportunities to delegate the added responsibilities. Small school districts have limited personnel, limited resources, and limited budgets. Typically, a small school

district superintendent does not have the opportunity to dictate the job; the job dictates the superintendent (Wittmer, 2004; Soares & Soares, 2000; Behrens, 1992; Cuban, 1988).

Managing limited or declining budgets often consumes the vast majority of the superintendent's time and focus (Cuban, 1988; Fredrickson, 2002; Lashway, 2002a). The role of small school district superintendents can include custodian, bus driver, substitute teacher, maintenance worker, counselor, and athletic coach (Franz, 2003). The work required to maintain and efficiently operate a school district does not go away during times of economic need (Behrens, 1992). Typically, the support staff and district administrators bear the burden of district financial shortfalls through an increase in responsibilities (Wittmer, 2004). The reality of the responsibilities of a superintendent in maintaining an efficient and effective school district may not match the perception of these responsibilities (Franz, 2003; Behrens, 1992).

Gaps in the Literature

A gap in the literature exists regarding the role of small school district superintendents in Oklahoma. The role of small school district superintendents is not prevalent in research. Nationally, studies target school districts larger in size than the parameters for those in his research project. Even less information exists regarding the role of these superintendents in Oklahoma. It is hoped that this project will highlight the role (both past and present) of small Oklahoma school district superintendents and indicate any possible changes in their role.

Change Theory

Literature indicates a potential change in the responsibilities of superintendents.

A shift from the role of manager (CEO) towards that of instructional leader may become

increasingly necessary. For many superintendents, this reality equates to change.   To be

successful, superintendents must understand the change process, that implementation of

change is slow, difficult, and messy (Fullan, 2001).

> There are two basic reasons why education reform is failing. One is that
>
> the problems are complex and intractable. Workable, powerful solutions
>
> are hard to conceive and even harder to put into practice. The other reason
>
> is that the strategies that are used do not focus on things that really make a
>
> difference. They fail to address fundamental instructional reform and
>
> associated development of new collaborative cultures among educators.
>
> (Fullan, 1993, p. 26)

According to Fullan (2001), the change process begins with a sense of moral

purpose, a belief that the proposed change will make a positive difference in the lives of

students (Fullan, 2001). "A strong commitment to the role of moral purpose in

educational reform is crucial" (Fullan, 1999, p. 1). Moral purpose originates from the

leader (Fullan, 2001). Leaders have the power to establish a collaborative culture which

allows for change implementation. External forces or top-down initiatives cannot

mandate what matters to individuals. Policies have the ability to dictate compliance, but

do not have the power to implement change. Without a leader the desired change will not

be implemented successfully. The bureaucracy simply will not implement a change if left alone, because its goal is to maintain the status quo.

Superintendents' belief that a proposed change will make a positive difference must be communicated throughout the district, to establish a collaborative culture willing to accept change. For some leaders, the activities of change implementation require confidence and courage. According to Fullan (2001), "Change cannot be managed. It can be understood and perhaps led, but it cannot be controlled" (p. 33). These concepts may be outside the comfort zone of a manager. Change theory requires leaders who are responsible for establishing relationships that foster knowledge creation and knowledge sharing. This process provides the organization with the opportunity to embrace and implement the desired change (Fullan, 2001).

The framework of change theory provides guidance in evaluating critically the current and historic role of small Oklahoma school district superintendents. Their functions can be classified as those of a manager or those of a leader. Additionally, change theory describes the activities needed to implement a desired change.

Summary

The current role of the superintendent is defined primarily by managerial functions such as managing school district finances, facilities and personnel needs. Superintendents in small school districts must often multi-task to manage a school district effectively (Franz, 2003). In addition, external factors may have an impact on the role of superintendents. Research presented in Chapter II indicated a possible shift in emphasis in the role of the superintendent towards instructional leadership from the current role of

a CEO. Chapter III describes the research methods used for this study including the research participants, the methods of data collection and analysis, the pre-ethnography, ethical considerations, the trustworthiness of the data, the limitations of the study, and the process for selecting school districts.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Research Method

An exploratory qualitative research method best met the needs of this study, in that it helped to determine whether the role of the superintendent has changed and, if so, what factors may have led to that change. The goal of this exploratory approach was to focus on the experiences of interviewees as a foundation for data collection. It was hoped that the researcher could gain a clearer understanding of the topic through the free flow of ideas, philosophies, and historical data that were shared through the interview process (Creswell, 2003).

Data were gathered through open-ended questions and an analysis of documents to answer the research questions:

1. What is the current role of a small Oklahoma school district superintendent?

2. How has that role changed over the past seven years?

3. What factors have led to these changes?

Research participants were asked to expand on the three primary questions. Specifically, they were asked to rank their perception of the role of the superintendent in order of significance and explain its significance. If the participants indicated that the role had changed, they were asked to describe the pressure or force causing the change.

Participants were asked clarifying questions and given an opportunity to expand on specific examples regarding the superintendent's role.

The information from the interviews was cross-referenced against related documentation for the purpose of triangulation for claims made by the interviewees (Patton, 2002). For example, if a superintendent stated financial management as a responsibility of his position, documentation to support this claim was sought in board minutes or agendas. Following the steps outlined by Creswell (2003), the researcher first organized and prepared the data, then gained a general sense of the data, coded the data, described the data, represented the data in a qualitative narrative, and finally interpreted the data. The data were compared to the trends of literature and analyzed though the lens of change theory as a relevant theoretical framework. It was anticipated that superintendents would describe their current and historical role from the perspective of a manager or leader. Research questions were designed to highlight possible changes in the superintendents' role. Data were analyzed for movement from one perspective to another indicating a change in responsibilities and functions as outlined by change theory. The researcher viewed the role of the superintendent from a historical perspective (2001-2008) before stating whether a change occurred (Creswell, 2003).

Research Participants

School districts in Oklahoma with an enrollment between 400 and 1,500 students were selected for the study. This criterion generated a pool of 200 school districts from which four superintendents were chosen to be interviewed. Participants had to have served in their current position for a minimum of seven years. The length of time served

in the school district was determined to be vital for gathering data regarding the factors

that may have affected the role of the superintendent. Along with each superintendent,

two principals within the district with a minimum of three years of experience each were

purposefully selected for interviews. The length of principal experience was determined

to be a factor for the purpose of triangulation. It was assumed that principals could verify

the accuracy of the superintendent's interview data through their direct observation of the

individuals functioning in that position.

The superintendent and the two purposefully selected principals from each of

these four school districts were invited to participate, resulting in 12 interviewees. The

superintendent's role was the primary focus of the interviews; therefore, the

superintendent was interviewed first, followed by interviews with the principals. This

procedure helped solidify the process of triangulation. Responses generated by the

superintendent as a result of interview protocol could be verified by the site principals.

Selection of School Districts

From the Oklahoma State Department of Education's Annual Statistical Report, a

list of 200 potential school districts meeting the above mentioned criteria was generated.

Potential participating school districts were selected. A pre-qualifying telephone

conversation was held with the superintendent of the selected district, during which

where the researcher asked the superintendent the number of years served as

superintendent. The responses were measured against the parameters established for the

study. This first question eliminated three school districts while the second question,

whether the school district employed an assistant superintendent, eliminated one district.

The third and last question asked was the number of years served in the district by the current principals. No districts were eliminated by this criterion. Personnel in a total of eight districts were questioned to achieve the number needed to participate in the study. Superintendents of the four districts meeting the criteria were asked whether they were interested in the research and all agreed to participate.

Upon conclusion of the selection process, letters outlining the research project and relevant Institutional Review Board information were mailed. Interviews were scheduled at a convenient time for the interviewer and the interviewees and were completed in Spring 2008.

Methods of Data Collection

All interviews were conducted in a face-to-face format and were recorded for subsequent transcription and coding. Each interview was approximately one hour and was held at a location of the interviewee's choice, in all cases on the school site.

Documents analyzed to add information and confirm data obtained during the interviews were district board of education meeting minutes and agendas and Oklahoma State Department of Education statistical data reports. Analysis of these documents helped increase the validity of the data and helped meet the theoretical requirements of triangulation (Patton, 2002). In essence, the interview data was verified and considered accurate.

Data Analysis

Upon completion of data gathering and interview transcription, the data were summarized and organized according to respondent, school district, and research question. The responses were analyzed for possible trends in the changes in the role of the superintendents. Data are presented in a grid matrix format with the first series of grids outlining the data by school district and related questions. The second series of grids outlines the data by job function and related questions. Conclusions were based on a synthesis of all related trends and research.

Pre-Ethnography

The purpose of the pre-ethnography was to test interview questions and protocol looking for strengths and weaknesses in the interview process. Changes were made to the interview process based upon the interviewees' responses. The researcher interviewed two subjects (one superintendent and one principal) who met the criteria for research participants. These two subjects were purposefully selected and their responses were not included in the data. Upon completion of the pre-ethnography process, the researcher determined that the interview questions addressed the role of the superintendent as described in the Chapter II review of literature and elicited data for analysis.

When the interviewees were asked to describe the role of the superintendent, many roles and responsibilities emerged. Because of the volume of data generated, the researcher changed the interview protocol by asking the respondent to rank or prioritize

this information in order of significance. This process helped both the researcher and the interviewee to organize the data. No changes were made regarding the interviewee selection process or the primary questions asked.

Ethical Considerations

The ethical considerations of the study derived from the possible bias of the researcher and possible reluctance of interviewees to respond candidly. Each factor had the potential to skew answers and taint data, possibly leading to misrepresenting trends in the role of the superintendent. Bias can be generated from the researcher's previous position as the superintendent of a small school district which had earlier been placed on the Oklahoma State Department of Education's School Improvement List. The school district has since been removed from this list. The researcher had previous experience leading a school district through radical changes in curriculum alignment, implementation of research-based teaching strategies, and the firm establishment of instructional leadership. The researcher provided professional development at every level to offer ample opportunity for the transformation of the district. Even school district policies and procedures were changed, altering the role and responsibilities of the superintendent and reflecting the district's new direction. Because the researcher had first-hand experience in the change process, bias could occur from looking too strenuously for similar administrative role changes in school districts in similar situations. A tendency towards assuming the same conclusions is possible.

It is important to note the bias of the researcher. To obtain accurate results, the researcher must separate himself and his personal opinions/bias from the situation

(Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995). Separation is imperative to avoid asking leading

questions that could taint the interview data. The more accurate the data, the more

accurate the statement of possible trends regarding the research questions (Emerson,

Fretz & Shaw 1995).

It is also essential that interviewees trust the researcher (Emerson, Fretz & Shaw

1995) and that the researcher maintain confidentiality (Rubin & Rubin, 1995). Questions

regarding a possible change in the role of the superintendent strike at the foundation of a

superintendent's job description and perceived duties. The interviewees may be sensitive

to the topic; they may not have wanted or liked NCLB or may have disagreed

philosophically with the direction and purpose of the legislation. If they perceived that

the line of questioning was leading and that judgment was being passed on what they

ought to be doing (Rubin & Rubin, 1995), their perceptions may have led to tainted

responses to directed questions. Complicating this situation were the researcher's efforts

to provide quality triangulation as a method for verifying results.

Confidentiality was secured by changing the names of all research participants

and the school districts where they were employed. The purpose and intended use of the

research was communicated in the introductory letter sent to potential research

participants (Rubin & Rubin, 1995). (See Appendix A)

Quality data from a qualitative study is generated by the responsible actions of the

researcher. Understanding the possible pitfalls, dangers, and emotions attached to the

interview process is vital in the collection of accurate data (Rubin & Rubin, 1995).

Understanding the factors of researcher bias and interviewee reluctance helped to

facilitate the qualitative process (Patton, 2002).

Triangulation of Data

Trustworthiness was achieved through the process of triangulation, which strengthens a study by combining the methods of data collection and by gathering data from a variety of sources (Patton, 2002; Owens, 1989; Mathison, 1988). For each of the four school districts, the researcher interviewed the superintendent and two site principals. Respondents were asked similar, but not identical questions. The superintendent was interviewed first, followed by the site principals. The questions asked of site principals were based on the questions to the district superintendent. Triangulation was achieved through statements provided by site principals which supported interview data from the superintendent. Triangulation of data was achieved through common answers to the related questions (Patton, 2002; Owens, 1989; Mathison, 1988).

The practice of member checking also strengthened the triangulation of data (Patton, 2002). Upon conclusion of the interview and transcription process, the researcher contacted interviewees. They were asked to clarify statements and better define terminology resulting from the interview process. Their responses helped to expand the information and enhance the researcher's understanding of their responses to interview questions.

Triangulation was also achieved through the collection and analysis of district documents. This form of data was used to cross-reference the information provided by the respondents. These documents, board minutes or board agendas, were selected for triangulation verification through the respondents' answers to the interview questions.

Limitations of the Study

This research was limited in scope, and the results cannot be generalized across school districts. The researcher sought only to capture, record, and analyze the possible trends among superintendents in the districts studied. It is important to note that the circumstances within each district varied. Each district yielded its own set of individuals and corresponding set of politics (Fullan, 2001). In addition, one cannot generalize using this type of research method. Commonality may exist only in the size of the student enrollment and not in situational experience. However, the trends detected in the research add to the current body of research.

Chapter IV summarizes and analyzes all data gathered through the interview process.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine whether the role of small school district superintendents in Oklahoma changed between 2001 and 2008, and to identify what factors may have affected or caused a change. The findings of this study may assist these superintendents in understanding and better defining their role.

School districts with an enrollment between 400 and 1500 students and superintendents who had been in their positions for a minimum of seven years were selected for the research pool. The student population was considered to be small as defined by study parameters. From this pool, superintendents of four districts were selected to be interviewed along with two of their principals who had a minimum of three years of experience. The assumption was that a principal with three years of experience would be able to verify the role of the district's superintendent. The superintendent and the two principals from each of these four districts were invited to participate, for a total of 12 interviewees. The superintendent was interviewed first followed by the two principals. All were asked the following three overarching questions and any related follow-up questions.

1. What is the current role of a small Oklahoma school district superintendent?

2. How has that role changed over the past seven years?

3. What factors have led to these changes?

The answers to these interviews are presented and discussed below and summarized in Tables 4-8.

Chapter IV begins with a description of each district's bureaucratic structure. Secondly, the data are organized by school district. A description of the interviewees, the locations of the interviews, a description of the interviews, and a summary of the findings for each district is provided. Finally, the data are organized and summarized by the position of the interviewees.

District Bureaucratic Structure

Each of the four districts in the study has a different bureaucratic structure. An understanding of each district's bureaucratic hierarchy is relevant to the interview data. Both the hierarchy and the supervisors within the organization define the division of labor and related responsibilities for employees. The bureaucratic structure of the organization also affects the implementation of change (Fullan, 2001), because individuals within the bureaucracy control the flow of information leading to the implementation or non-implementation of a desired changed (Fullan, 2001). Table 3 outlines the bureaucratic structure of each district.

Table 3

School District Bureaucratic Structure

School District	Student Enrollment	Certified Staff	Central Office Staff	Site Administrators
A	1,264	97	Curriculum Director	Elementary Principal Assistant Elementary Principal Middle School Principal Middle School Assistant Principal (.5) High School Principal High School Assistant Principal (.5)
B	1,048	80	Business Manager Child Nutrition Manager Athletic Director Admin. Services Director Technology Director Student Assessment Coordinator Professional Development Coordinator	Elementary Principal Arts Academy Principal Arts Academy Assistant Principal High School Principal High School Assistant Principal
C	683	57	None	Elementary Principal Middle School Principal High School Principal
D	825	53	None	Elementary Principal Middle School Principal Middle School Assistant Principal (.5) High School Principal High School Assistant Principal (.5)

Findings by School District

Description of Interview Subjects and Locations for School District A

School district A (SD-A) is classified as a rural district with a student enrollment of 1,264. Thirty-eight percent of the student population qualifies for the free and reduced lunch program (Oklahoma State Department of Education, 2008). The district has a

bonding capacity of $1.7 million and employs 97 certified staff members. Thirty-two of those staff members have Master's degrees.

Superintendent (SD-AS). SD-AS, a Caucasian male in his late 50s who wears glasses, has been the superintendent for eight years. Balding and sporting a comb over, he is approximately six feet tall and weighs 195 pounds. A warm smile and a firm handshake greet me as I enter the administration office. He has somewhat of a nerdy/scientific demeanor about him, but the hands of a laborer. He is wearing khaki pants with matching tan shoes and a starched, blue, button-down, long-sleeved shirt with the district logo proudly stitched where the shirt pocket would be. Numerous family pictures are on a bookshelf on the right wall across from his desk. He is very proud of his family. The pictures are arranged in no particular order, and the frames appear not to follow any theme or pattern. Adjacent to the bookshelves loaded with family pictures is another tall bookshelf filled with three ring binders full of documents, manuals, and financial guides.

The office is large, with a work table by the door and a very large desk at the back of the room. The table, with only two accompanying chairs (padded), is covered with site maps of the district. The desk is large and neatly organized, with each item uniquely placed for accessibility. In front of each of the four windows in the office is a tall plant sitting on a stand, stretching for sunlight. Covering the walls of the office are a myriad of cheaply framed Native American prints, some large and some small. The logo of the school district is the reason for the art work. Also randomly placed throughout the office are aerospace artifacts. During the interview, the subject stated that he also has a background in aerospace science.

The chair in which the interviewer is sitting is a 1980s design with big arm rails, but it is padded and comfortable. To the left of the desk is a small but sturdy folding table, haphazardly placed and not matching the office. It appears to be something that was just lying around the school not being used; here, however it serves the purpose of providing a place for an expensive computer and flat screen monitor. The heating and air conditioning unit for the room, not based on a central heat and air system, is old and very noisy when the blower is engaged. The phone and phone system on the left side of the main desk are very modern and appear to have all of the functions of an advanced phone system. Plugged into the back wall and resting beside the computer is a policeman's scanner radio. The radio seems to be placed for easy access. The superintendent's warm smile and friendly conversation make for a pleasant interview.

Principal 1(SD-A1). SD-A1 is a Caucasian male in his mid 50s with a very friendly disposition. He has six years of experience. SD-A1 is a portly man of average height wearing a sweater, black pants, and black shoes. He has a firm handshake and a warming smile. He appears to be always in deep thought, attempting to figure out what is coming next. He values control and prefers events to be predictable and planned, pausing to gather his thoughts before answering each interview question. His office is small and unorganized, exactly the opposite of a man who thinks and plans the answer to every question. It appears that his office size and working situation frustrate him, a sign of a man who is very busy taking care of students and does not have enough time to process the paperwork assigned to him. In the hallway, several students who see him call his name, smile, and wave. He cheerfully waves back, telling the students to have a good day and reminding them to get their homework done. He seems to enjoy his students and

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prefers to spend his day interacting with them rather than pushing paper for the district or his office.

The principal's visitors' chairs are identical to the chairs in the superintendent's office. They were probably purchased at the same time, but SD-A1's office chairs are a bit more tattered and frayed on the edges and are sporting a few more stains. Possibly the wear and tear is from the large number of students who have sat in them.

Adorning his walls are various Christian symbols, and a couple of crosses and fish with a cross in the eye area are randomly placed in the office. Below one medium-sized cross is a book shelf filled with pictures of his family and former students. Pictures of his students are placed beside, and in one instance in front of, a picture of his family. He is an administrator who cares about students and believes that they are part of his family. It seems that he perceives his mission to be a shepherd guarding his flock. On the wall left of his desk is a poster of the overview map of Six Flags theme park. Each year he hosts a fundraiser and takes students to Six Flags. He smiles and laughs as he talks about the different rides in the park and how much fun both he and the students have each year. He truly enjoys working with children. Interestingly enough, beside the poster he has an autographed, but almost hidden, picture of Ms. Oklahoma/Ms. America.

Above the Six Flags map is a giant self-made master schedule for the site. On it, teachers' schedules are organized in a grid matrix highlighting the hour, the room number, the subject matter taught, and the number of students in each class. He refers to the schedule if he needs to find a student fast. On the opposite wall is a medium-size cork board with a wide variety of papers attached to it with stick pins. The papers are cluttered about the board making it difficult to locate any one document. On the back

wall behind his desk, proudly displayed, are his diplomas from The University of Central

Oklahoma and The University of Oklahoma. A small tassel hangs beside each diploma

in an attractive frame of the type that can be pre-ordered through the university prior to

graduation. The diplomas are neatly hung on either side of a cheaply framed Oklahoma

Teaching License. The office also contains a small coat tree crammed in the corner

behind some stacked boxes of free textbook samples. His coat, however, is not on the

coat tree, but rather thrown on top of one of his visitors' chairs that is piled high with

papers. It appears that he has run out of room on his desk and is using the chair for

storage. The office computer to his left is sitting on a folding table similar to the one in

the superintendent's office. The computer appears to be state of the art and has a flat

panel screen. A cluster of plants adds color to the off-white walls, but being spaced

randomly, also contributes to the clutter.

  Principal 2(SD-A2). SD-A2 is an African-American female in her mid-fifties.

She has 18 years of experience. She is a very confident lady in a tan and brown plaid

skirt and a tan cowl-neck sweater accented with a matching brown, beaded necklace. Her

long, dangling, gold earrings lose themselves in the folds of the sweater. Her desk is very

organized; everything is there for a reason and serves a purpose, including a box of

tissues on the corner of her desk conveniently placed for any upset student who may need

one. I sit on a comfortable, padded park bench, a quaint accent piece that gives her office

the feel of relaxation and comfort. The office walls are painted a cheery light blue with

yellow accents, matching the blue pad on the bench seat. On the wall behind her are

proudly displayed her academic shingles and teaching license. To the left of her desk

against the wall is a small refrigerator. Before I sit down, she politely asks if I would like

anything to drink and motions towards the refrigerator with her hand. I politely decline and take my seat on the bench.

Although her office is average in size, beside the office refrigerator is a very large, tan, double-door, locking metal cabinet. To the right of her desk is a book shelf filled with neatly-arranged family pictures. Several small picture frames, all facing her, are on her desk. Also on her desk is a small crystal clock with an engraving, perhaps a teaching award or a gift from staff members. A healthy plant sits on the window sill. A medium-sized, inexpensive, framed print depicting an Italian villa scene hangs on the wall. The print matches the office furniture. In the far back corner is a coat tree sporting a black leather coat with leopard-print fur collar, cuffs, and inside lining. The coat seems to fit both the room and her personality. Beside the plant is a tall book shelf filled with educational and leadership reference books. In front of the books placed randomly on shelves are plastic apples, proudly symbolizing teacher and learning.

Description of Interviews for School District A

Superintendent (SD-AS). SD-AS was both congenial and cooperative during the interview process that began with questions regarding his years of experience. The superintendent stated that he had been employed in the school district for 18 years and had been the district's superintendent the past eight of those years. When he was asked to describe his current role as the district's superintendent, he responded, "I'm the Chief Executive Officer of this district, responsible for the entire oversight." The interviewee when asked to explain his notion of Chief Executive Officer, said it was his responsibility to continually evaluate and update board policies and procedures and to oversee the

budget. He was ultimately responsible for personnel, and yet he delegated the majority of this responsibility to site principals. The superintendent also maintained control over all activity accounts. Communicating with constituents was also a function of the superintendent. The objectives of this duty were achieved through attending district athletic events or through telephone conversations.

In response to being asked which of the responsibilities he had mentioned took the most of his time, he said,

I would have to rank communications with our constituents number one.

Then the overall management of the district is number two. I guess really

board policy should be also involved with the communications of the

board itself, and then the employment and hiring would be number four.

He was asked to clarify his definition of district management. "No, my oversight is that I employ people and I make it very clear to them that they are responsible for their area. I'm not gonna micro-manage." According to the superintendent, he did not manage the daily activities of the school district. The individuals hired to perform a designated function managed that department or program. The responsibility of this superintendent was to manage employees doing their jobs, not to do the job. It was the responsibility of the employee to manage problems or implement policy.

At no time during this segment of the interview did SD-AS describe his role to include instructional leadership. The superintendent did not engage in establishing an academic vision for the school district. Very few of his activities were attributed to leadership. He and SD-A2 indicated that administrative meetings or interactions were infrequent. She stated that interactions with the superintendent occurred when he

conducted surprise inspections regarding classroom doors on the site being locked (a safety policy developed by the superintendent). When faced with the requirement of NCLB implementation, the superintendent hired a curriculum director and managed the person, not policy requirements.

When asked to describe his past role as the superintendent of schools, he stated that he had inherited a district in turmoil. The conflict had resulted from a poor relationship between community/school board and the previous superintendent. According to SD-AS, the previous superintendent antagonized the community. He had the local police department remove patrons from campus for trespassing and did a poor job of supporting site principals regarding policy enforcement. After two and one half years, he was forced to resign. According to SD-AS, his first task was to communicate with the community to facilitate healing and to re-establish relationships. This responsibility was situational and immediate. He established trust by allowing the community to know him personally. This objective was achieved through attendance at local athletic events and civic functions. His perceived employment was to "heal the wounds, correct some of the problems that existed in the district, and rebuild the moral of the staff." It was his goal to make himself available and accessible. Once community harmony and trust in the superintendent was reestablished, this responsibility no longer became a primary focus for SD-AS. The role had to be maintained, but was not strongly emphasized. This tactic also increased parent involvement in the school district, a requirement for all federal programs. Additionally, as the director of personnel and district finances, SD-AS consolidated several certified and non-certified positions in an attempt to save the school district additional funds.

SD-AS tried to achieve credibility for his position by establishing and enforcing policies and procedures. According to SD-AS, animosity had developed between administrators, stemming from a lack of support in policy enforcement. It was the goal of SD-AS to establish a better code of student conduct.

The interviewee was asked about the factors that may have affected or influenced his role as the superintendent of schools. He believed that the community and the board of education were the motivating forces. He stated, "The school district is the community; we're rural, agricultural basically. The school district is the focal point for everybody here."

When asked if he would like to add any more comments to the possibilities of a role change regarding his position, he stated that the external force affecting his job was the mandates of NCLB. NCLB had caused him to worry about his school district's having a high API score, and it was difficult to find highly qualified teachers. As a follow-up question, I asked how NCLB may have changed his role as the superintendent of schools. He stated that he transferred the responsibilities of these requirements to his site principals and a curriculum director. The district's attempt to meet the requirements of NCLB had not changed his role.

Principal 1(SD-A1). SD-A1 was asked about his perceptions of the current role of the superintendent of schools. His first response was immediate: "I perceive that he's in charge of finances and district personnel." He briefly discussed the division of labor and responsibilities in the school district. SD-A1 indicated that the superintendent managed the individuals responsible for their described tasks: "he basically oversees them." These statements are consistent with SD-AS's philosophy of being responsible

for district oversight. SD-A1 also described the position of the superintendent as a "catch-all" position.

> He's got the peripheral things. He jumps in and helps in areas that really
> aren't in his job description. So, he'll drive a bus occasionally; he'll come
> to ball games.

SD-A1 also perceived that SD-AS was a liaison for the school board.

The principal believed that the primary responsibility of the superintendent was the management of district finances, followed by directing personnel, improving community/school board relations, and implementing school board policy. These statements are congruent with the interview statements provided by SD-AS.

When asked about his perceptions regarding the role of the superintendent in previous years. SD-A1 stated that a goal of the superintendent was to change the climate of the school district. The superintendent attempted to achieve this objective through the establishment of rules and policies. According to SD-A1, new rules needed to be established regarding student discipline. The principal also believed that managing district finances and salaries were a function of the superintendent's role and that the superintendent was attempting to manage the budget effectively to increase the salaries of staff members. All are responsibilities outlined by SD-AS.

SD-A1 mentioned that the superintendent also tried to change policies to achieve compliance with the requirements of NCLB in an attempt to avoid the State Department of Education's school improvement list. SD-AS did not mention this aspect of his role. However, SD-A1 did state that these responsibilities had been delegated to the curriculum director. She was the instructional leader for the school district. According to

SD-A1 it was her responsibility to implement staff development and host faculty meetings. The function of the curriculum director as described by SD-A1 is consistent with statements by SD-AS. According to the principal, another responsibility of the superintendent was the maintenance of facilities and school buses.

SD-A1believes that both internal and external pressure may have affected the role of the superintendent. The internal pressure derived from the desire of the superintendent to have the school district excel, and external pressure derived from federal and state government mandates. SD-AS did not mention an internal motivation to improve the district. However, he did indicate that external pressure, in the form of mandates, were affecting the role of the superintendent.

SD-A1 was asked if he had anything else to add regarding possible changes in the superintendent's role. He responded with more information regarding the financial responsibilities of the superintendent, highlighting again the responsibility of the superintendent to manage district finances. He also elaborated on the abysmal shape of district facilities and school buses and how the superintendent had improved both aspects of the district to benefit the students.

Principal 2 (SD-A2). SD-A2 was asked to share her thoughts regarding the current role of the superintendent.

> Okay, my perception is that he is the financial planner for the district. He
> makes decisions about our funding, federally as well as locally. He is also
> the connection between the board (and the district), and makes sure
> they're kept up to date with what's going on in our district. I perceive him
> as the instructional leader of the district, because he is made aware of

district curriculum. He's made aware of changes that are done here, and informed of test score data.

When asked to further elaborate regarding the involvement of the superintendent in curriculum and instruction, SD-A2 explained that all of the responsibility for that function was delegated to the curriculum director, providing triangulation for statements by SD-AS and SD-A1. According to SD-A2, instructional information such as test score data is provided to SD-AS, but he does not make decisions regarding the academic vision of the district or implementation of instructional programs. These decisions are reserved for the curriculum director and the site principals.

SD-A2 also explained that the superintendent was responsible for public relations with the community or parents. "He is the final connection with parents if there's difficulty." She perceived parents call SD-AS regarding student discipline decisions made by site principals. SD-A2 referred to this responsibility as public relations; because SD-AS expects the implementation of district policy regarding student discipline, it is his responsibility to "make sure parents are happy."

The principal perceived the primary responsibility of the superintendent to be management of the district's budget, followed by directing personnel, improving public relations, and instructional leadership. Additional responsibilities listed, but not highlighted, as significant included SD-AS's knowledge or understanding of school law.

The principal was asked about her perceptions regarding the historical role of the superintendent. She replied that school finances had always been a key component. SD-A2 outlined trust issues and the establishment of administrative relationships as difficult in the beginning. SD-AS was not a micro-manger she explained, and he gave her the

opportunity to manage her building. The management philosophy exhibited through his actions was that he needed to be very busy serving the district as a multi-tasker. SD-A2 defined this responsibility as attending tasks not outlined in the job description of superintendent. Although not mentioned by SD-AS, but was outlined by SD-A1 this responsibility was also outlined by SD-A1.

When SD-A2 was asked to describe the forces that may have affected the superintendent's role, she indicated that external pressure from the community had the most potential to shape the role of the superintendent. In another opportunity to discuss a possible change in the role of the superintendent, she mentioned the management of district personnel. Here, she believed that the superintendent had succeeded in increasing the level of trust among the administrators in the district. In yet a third opportunity to discuss any other changes, she replied, "It's just managing the budget."

Summary of Findings for School District A

In their responses to the first question, the current role of the superintendent, both the superintendent and the principals highlighted the responsibility of managing the district's finances. All three indicated that maintaining a relationship with the school board and district constituents, implementing school board policies and procedures, and directing personnel were responsibilities of the superintendent. SD-A2 (female) was the only one to mention the superintendent as having the responsibility for instructional leadership. However, this function was quickly delegated through the employment of a curriculum director. SD-AS made no decisions regarding the academic vision of the

district. All instructional decisions were made by site principals and the director of curriculum.

SD-AS ranked communication with the school board and constituents as the most important responsibility of the superintendent. The management of district finances was the most important responsibility indicated by the site principals. SD-AS ranked the management of district finances as his second most important responsibility. SD-A1 described a "catch-all" function, defined as other duties necessary but not contained within the normal duties of the superintendent. The responsibility managing the district finances received the highest combined ranking of all participants.

The current role of the superintendent for school district A (SD-AS) is defined by several responsibilities. SD-AS is responsible for managing district finances and communication with both the school board and district constituents, for managing all district personnel, for implementing school board policy, and for fulfilling additional responsibilities or duties not in his job description, when necessary. His management philosophy is not to micro-manage the employees of the district. Simply, he provides them with an opportunity to do their job and oversees their progress.

Question 2 highlights possible changes in the superintendent's role since 2001. All three administrators indicated that improving the climate of the school district and building relationships was a priority for the superintendent in 2001. Additionally, all three administrators described the historical role of the superintendent as including the management of district finances and personnel. SD-A1 indicated that improving facilities and student transportation was a priority for the superintendent, but again his ability to address these needs was contingent upon his ability to manage district finances. SD-A2

mentioned the role of multi-tasking defined by SD-A2 as added responsibilities outside the general job description of the superintendent. Both SD-AS and SD-A2 indicated that implementing school board policies and procedures was a responsibility of the superintendent. SD-AS remarked that the early-stage implementation of NCLB and increasing required parental involvement in federal programs were concerns for him. His effort was to make the district NCLB compliant.

According, to these respondents, the previous role of the superintendent was situational, that of best meeting the needs of the school district. Managing or improving community relations was an important role because of perceived community unrest. The calming of district patrons was an immediate responsibility and ranked by SD-AS as the most important current role of the superintendent.

The role of SD-AS has remained consistent over time. Highlighted in both the current and previous functions of SD-AS are the responsibilities of managing district finances and personnel. SD-AS is also responsible for managing public relations and implementing school board policies. The function of a multi-tasker was mentioned by both site principals, but not the superintendent.

Question 3 highlights the external and internal factors that influence the role of the district's superintendent. The most common external factor mentioned was state and federal mandates (NCLB) that have forced the district to change policies and practices. This factor was mentioned by all administrators. Only SD-A1 mentioned the vision of the superintendent as an internal factor affecting the role of the superintendent.

Table 4 highlights the information gathered from participants from SD-A.

Table 4: Summary of Data for School District A

School District – A	Question 1: Roles & Ranking	Question 2: Possible Changes	Question: Factors of Change

SD-AS Superintendent	Ranking of role/responsibilities
	  1. Communication with school board and constituents
	  2. Management of finances – Oversight
	  3. School board policies and procedures
	  4. Employment and hiring of staff members
		1. Previous Role of the Superintendent: Community relations
		  a. Most important role
		  b. NCLB – Getting parents involved
		2. Situational based upon immediate needs of district.
		3. Personnel Director
		4. Financial Director
		5. Implement school board polices and procedures.
			1 Internal: None
			2. External
			  a. State mandates/NCLB
			  b. School board/community

SD-A1	Ranking of role/responsibilities
	  1. Management of district finances
	  2. Personnel director/management of people
	  3. "Catch-All" position
	  4. Community/school board relations
	  5. Implementation of school broad policy and procedures
		Previous role of the superintendent
		  1. Climate of the school
		  a. Establishing rules and policies
		  b. Increased student discipline
		  2. Director of personnel
		  3. Management of finances
		  4. NCLB policy implementation - Responsibility shifted to Curriculum Director (staff development & faculty meetings)
		  5. Facilities and transportation
			1. Internal: Vision of superintendent
			2. External: State mandates/NCLB

SD-A2	Ranking of role/responsibilities
	  1. Manager of district finances
	  2. Director of personnel
	  3. Public relations with the community - Implementation of school board policy and procedures
	  4. Instructional leader
		Previous role of the superintendent
		  1. Manager of district finances
		  2. Public Relations
		  a. School climate
		  b. Staff/Administrative relationships
		  3. Multi-Tasking
		  4. Establish procedures for the school district
		  5. Personnel director
			1. Internal: None
			2. External
			  a. Pressure from staff and community To be different from previous superintendent
			  b. Had to prove himself for the community
			  c. Pressure from administrators to develop a relationship
			  d. Pressure to manage the budget (local)

School District B (SD-B) is an urban or inner city school district with an enrollment of 1,048 and a free and reduced lunch percentage of 79.10% (Oklahoma State Department of Education, 2008). The school district has a bonding capacity of $3.3 million and employs 84 certified staff members. Thirty-five of those staff members have Master's degrees.

Superintendent (SD-BS). SD-BS is an African-American female in her sixties who has been the superintendent for 14 years. Her hair is immaculately manicured; she has a bright smile and is wearing glasses. A thin woman, standing approximately 5'7", she is wearing a business dress with hose and black shoes. The dress is accented by a black belt with a gold buckle that matches her Italian leather, pointed-toe shoes. She offers a reassuring handshake, welcomes me to the administration building office, gives me the "nickel tour" and introduces me to the staff.

Her large office appears professionally decorated with plaques, certificates, awards of honor, and marks of distinction covering the walls. Lining the walls of her office are attractive hardwood bookshelves, each proudly displaying pictures of her family, students, and staff. Catching me looking at them, she explains who a few of the people are and how they are special to her. Behind her solid oak desk is another matching bookshelf and computer hutch. The bookshelf is filled with reference manuals and policy books. The materials appear to be used often and to be a true resource in her position as a school superintendent. She has a state-of-the-art computer with a flat screen monitor. Several papers are stacked by the computer screen and it appears that she was working with them before I arrived. On the far corner of her desk are a plaque and a

photograph of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. featuring a motivational quote about pride, honor, and responsibility. Two solid oak and high-quality-leather chairs, are perfectly angled in front of her desk, which is organized with stacks of paper. On the corner of her desk facing me is a crystal decorative clock telling me that her time is valuable and that she is a busy lady, so it is time to start the interview.

Principal 1 (SD-B1). SD-B1 is a petite African-American female who has 31 years of experience. Her gray hair, all one length and parted to her left, seems to be only haphazardly combed or styled. During the interview, her hair often covered her left eye and she kept pushing it to one side. Her office is small, cramped, and cluttered, with the many stacks of books, boxes, and papers on the floor leaving little room to walk or sit down. The only chair in her office is directly up against her desk so that during the interview, we are facing perpendicular to each other. Very large stacks of papers and personal artifacts cover her desk, and she begins apologetically, stating that she has been meaning to clean her office. On the wall across from her desk are book shelves and a small refrigerator. Every inch of wall space is lined with bookshelves filled with stacks of paper and three-ring binders. She is pleasant and polite and asks me to sit down for the interview.

Principal 2 (SD-B2). SD-B2 is a confident African-American female in her late fifties who appears younger than her age. She has been the principal for 28 years. She is wearing a fur-collared sweater with a leopard skin print accented by flashy, gold dangling earrings. Tan pants add to the business apparel look. She is also sporting trendy, black glasses that add to her overall well-manicured appearance. Her short hair, straight with bangs touching her glasses, appears professionally styled.

SD-B2's medium-sized office is immaculate, and the décor deliberately planned for maximum use of space. Immediately to the right of the door is a row of three very comfortable, padded chairs. On the other side of the chairs close to a window is a small refrigerator. A large professional, dark oak desk sits comfortably in front of the chairs. It is neat around the edges, with stacks of papers in the middle. On the right corner of her desk and close to the window is an ivy plant that is healthy and groomed, with the leaves/ivy carefully organized around the gold planter and neatly draped off the edge of the desk. Her big, leather, heavily padded chair matches the visitors' chairs.

The office walls are adorned professionally with book shelves filled with manuals, policy books, and family pictures. Offsetting the bookshelves are framed graduation shingles, teaching certificates, and honors. On the wall behind her desk is a meticulously organized computer credenza that matches the desk. A phone and fax machine is conveniently placed by the computer. The only item that appears out of place in the office is my recorder sitting in the middle of her desk. She smiles politely and the interview begins.

Description of Interviews for School District B

Superintendent (SD-BS). SD-BS was asked to discuss her role as the superintendent of schools.

Well, of course, in working with the board, I carry out those duties for the total operation of the district. We have our tasks divided by operations. By being a small district, of course, the superintendent has to take on so many of those responsibilities herself. So, first and foremost, my

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responsibility is to manage all district operations. I really deal with the

coordination, collaboration, and providing the leadership necessary to

successfully complete our mission. It's so broad, as you know, it's very

hard to say, but I manage the total operation of the district.

SD-BS was asked to clarify her statements and be more specific regarding her

role as the superintendent. She explained that the responsibilities and functions of her

position are numerous, and she often delegates those responsibilities to site principals or

the district's business manager. Additionally, SD-BS delegates her responsibility as an

instructional leader, but she does assist with establishing the overall academic vision of

the district.

We have administrators. I certainly see them as the immediate

instructional leaders in their buildings. We meet to plan and evaluate what

is being done. I monitor that process and provide support and direction

through their evaluation. I am responsible for the district's academic

performance, but there has to be ownership throughout the district.

SD-BS stated that there exist some aspects of her position cannot be delegated. The

proper filing of federal paperwork is vital to SD-B. Federal funding is a necessary

revenue source, due to the district's high free-and-reduced lunch percentages. SD-BS

manages all federal documentation and the proper filing of all related program

applications to ensure funding.

Again, she described her position as ad hoc. She stated that she is very hands-on

and active throughout the district, and she perceived one of her main responsibilities to be

the resolution of conflicts. These conflicts involve staff members, parents, or vendors.

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SD-BS also described additional responsibilities to be managing the financial budget and directing personnel.

When asked to further explain her definition of ad hoc responsibilities, she mentioned that her background as an administrator was in a large school district. SD-BS explained that in her previous position she sat in meeting rooms and heard discussions about construction projects. In her current position, she is responsible for the construction of facilities. She sends out the bids, approves the bids, and oversees the construction of buildings. She explained that this is not a responsibility for which she was prepared or trained.

SD-BS was then asked to compare her current role to her role seven years prior. She replied, "I don't know that there is anything that I am doing now that I didn't do then, but I have taken on other tasks, other responsibilities as a result of those external factors." Responding to my request to explain her implied factors, she described NCLB as an external factor affecting how she managed the district's financial budget and the allocation of resources. The community and school board also had high expectation for a quality school district.

> Due to NCLB we have to take a different approach in working with our
> foundation and administrators to make sure that our students are
> successful when it comes to testing. We have to use funds in a different
> way so that we can get the additional technical assistance in the classroom.

SD-BS described her current focus as being more on academics than in previous years. However, this focus may not be attributed entirely to NCLB. When she assumed her position, she said, the financial status of the district was abysmal. Her immediate

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concern was making the district financially stable. This concern took precedence over other duties.

> When I first came to the district, we were focusing on finances because we were trying to survive. Just getting this district back to being financially stable took a large amount of my time. We changed the structure of the district, and we started doing more outsourcing.

The district has outsourced custodial services, child nutrition functions, substitute teacher services, and staff development. SD-BS explained that these financial decisions that in the best interests of the district.

When she was asked again about her responsibilities as the instructional leader for the district, SD-BS reminded me that she has outsourced the district's staff development program. It was the responsibility of an outside organization to assist teachers with pre and post tests, provide staff development programs, and analyze test score data. She explained her responsibilities as "administrative oversight." SD-BS has always included herself in the academic process, but her ability to be involved in classroom activities has decreased over time.

> I do meet with teachers. I do make presentations, but not to the degree that I go in classrooms to evaluate teachers. I do go into the classroom and should I see a problem, I make the principal aware of what I see. If needed, the principal, teacher, and I will meet. However, I give that responsibility to the site principal.

SD-BS stated that seven years ago she was spending more time viewing classroom activities, but the recent procedural management of NCLB and funding aspects of the

district has prohibited this activity. Her time is consumed with completing and filing

required federal documentation and paper work. "And again, it's not every day, but it's a

block of time that I don't have a chance to go into the classroom," she explained.

Additionally, due to depleted funds, SD-BS is spending more time establishing

partnerships with outside organizations to ensure the continuation of student services and

programs in the district.

> She asserted that most of the responsibilities she had listed were routine and

consistent over the course of time.

> In my role, there have always been expectations for administrators to
>
> focus on academics. That's a given. You can probably look at our
>
> agendas and see what has and hasn't changed. But, there are some things
>
> that are pretty standard.

An evaluation of district agendas revealed that very little has changed in the role

of the superintendent over the past seven years. However, according to SD-BS,

her time doing the business of a superintendent had been constrained due to

increased paperwork resulting from NCLB. This situation has resulted in more

delegation of superintendent responsibilities to site principals and financial

directors.

> According to SD-BS, the dominant force pushing her toward the creation of an

outstanding school district is her internal drive to succeed. She indicated that the external

force of community expectations, school board expectations, and NCLB were also factors

placing pressure on her position.

Principal 1(SD-B1). SD-B1 defined the role of the superintendent as "everything." She perceived SD-BS to be a leader who established the vision for the district. This responsibility was achieved through the collaborative participation of staff members. She indicated that the responsibilities of staff members had increased. This is evidence of the delegation management style described by SD-BS.

The management of the district's finances was an apparent responsibility and priority for the superintendent. SD-B1 mentioned the poor conditions of district finances upon SD-BS assuming the position of superintendent. For example, district payroll checks were issued as non-payable warrants. Stabilizing the financial budget for the district consumed the superintendent's time. The superintendent had also formed partnerships with external financial benefactors for the district. The number of partnerships increased as the need for student services increased and the opportunity for state funding decreased. This information mimics the interview responses provided by SD-BS. According to SD-B1, the funds generated through these partnerships were used to acquire much-needed technology and teaching resources.

SD-B1 perceived the superintendent to be responsible for the implementation and development of policies and procedures. Additionally, she was responsible for personnel, for defining the job descriptions for each position and monitoring the district's personnel. She also perceived that external and internal pressures may have had an impact upon the role of the superintendent. External pressures were attributed to the community. As evidence of this pressure, SD-A1 indicated that SD-BS began having community meetings. Internal pressure has generated from the desire of the superintendent to have the school district succeed.

Principal 2 (SD-B2). SD-B2, when asked to describe the role of her

superintendent, stated, "She is heavily involved in the total operation of the school." She

was quick to point out that this broad job description included monitoring student

academic performance. She described SD-BS not as a micro-manager, but rather as an

administrator who delegates responsibility to subordinates and then holds them

accountable for the assigned tasks, a management philosophy expressed by SD-BS.

Consequently, SD-B2 perceived the superintendent to be ultimately responsible for

personnel. Additionally, SD-B2 outlined her perceived responsibilities of the

superintendent as an instructional leader. She stated that SD-BS visits classrooms just to

see what is going on in the district. This activity is not done to evaluate staff members,

but simply to monitor the academic progress of the district. According to SD-B2, she is

alerted if classroom problems are detected, a process described by SD-BS.

SD-B2 defined the role of the superintendent as multi-faceted. She perceived a

primary function of the superintendent to be the development and implementation of

policy.

> I think what is taking up some of her time now is policy writing, getting
>
> standards in place, and implementing requirements from the federal level.
>
> You know, it doesn't mean that she always agrees with the policy, but she
>
> has a very heavy hand in writing policy.

According to SD-B2, the superintendent is adamant about having district

administrators follow policy. She believes the implementation of well written

policy protects the district. SD-B2 also believes that this responsibility has been

necessary due to federal mandates such as NCLB. The superintendent has also

been responsible for facilities management and facilities construction. SD-B2 remembers that when it rained, one of her responsibilities was to put buckets into the hallway to catch the rain. She described the school as having mis-matched furniture, poor parking facilities, and poor classroom facilities. However, the superintendent had changed both the facilities and climate of the district. SD-B2 is proud of her up-dated facilities, advanced student programs, and instructional materials. She attributed this success to the financial planning and personal dedication of the superintendent. As a facilities planner, SD-BS has been making plans to break ground on a new high school and has been involved in every aspect of project development.

SD-B2 believes the superintendent improved the district in the areas of academic accountability and communicating with the community. According to the SD-B2, the superintendent served on several community and foundation boards. These efforts enabled the continuation of several student programs and provided the district an opportunity to add additional programs. She perceived that SD-BS's community involvement had generated additional revenue for the district.

SD-B2 believes the external force of NCLB had added both responsibility and accountability to the role of the superintendent. Yet, she stated that the main force affecting the role of the superintendent was the superintendent herself: "It's who she is".

In response to question 1, the superintendent and both principals listed the most current responsibilities of the district's superintendent as managing school finances, directing district personnel, and community involvement. SD-BS and SD-B2 highlighted the function of instructional leadership. However, this responsibility was described as administrative oversight and mainly delegated to site principals. Additionally, these two administrators mentioned facility management and facility construction. Both principals described the function of policy development and policy implementation as a necessary and important responsibility of the superintendent. They perceived this responsibility as not only necessary for the implementation of federal mandates, but also stemming from the desire of the superintendent to effectively manage the district. Only the superintendent mentioned resolution of conflicts arising from interactions with staff, community members, and district vendors. She was also the only administrator to discuss the responsibilities of federal program management. She explained that large volumes of documentation and paperwork were required for the successful implementation of all federal programs. SD-BS described the role of the superintendent as situational. It was the responsibility of the superintendent to manage or fix the immediate problem facing the district. Additionally, she explained that many of her administrative responsibilities were delegated to subordinates. It was her responsibility to hold them accountable for the performance of their assigned tasks.

Question 2 highlighted possible changes between previous and current roles of the district's superintendent. All three administrators described the superintendent's position as the financial director for the district. This responsibility had remained consistent over

time. Additional duties remaining constant were the responsibilities of facility

management and directing district personnel. Again, both principals described the

previous responsibilities of the superintendent to be policy development, policy

implementation, and community involvement. These responsibilities also remained

consistent over time. SD-BS highlighted the responsibility for instructional leadership,

but admits this is a responsibility is delegated to site principals. As the district's federal

program manger, SB-BS explained, NCLB implementation had a reverse affect upon her

ability to be an instructional leader. Paperwork requirements had increased and were

consuming time she had allotted to engage in classroom observations. NCLB placed the

educational responsibility of the superintendent into an oversight role. The focus on

academics and student learning had not diminished, but the attention to test scores and

documentation had increased.

Question 3 highlights the external and internal factors leading to changes in the

role of the school district's superintendent. Both internal and external factors have a

bearing in defining the role. All administrators mentioned a strong self-imposed desire

driving the responsibilities of the superintendent. This factor was proclaimed to be

dominant by all interviewees. The external factors listed as having an impact upon the

superintendent's position were federal mandates (NCLB), the community, and the school

board. Neither the community nor school board wants the district to be listed as a site in

need of improvement according to the NCLB guidelines established by the Oklahoma

State Department of Education.

Table 5 highlights the information gathered from School District B (SD-B).

Table 5: Summary of Data for School District B

School District – B	Question 1: Roles & Ranking	Question 2: Possible Changes	Question3: Factors of Change

SD-BS Superintendent	Ranking of roles/responsibilities
	  1. Monitoring academics
	  2. Budget & finance management
	  3. Facilities management
	  4. Directing personnel
	  5. Resolving conflicts
	    a. Staff conflicts
	    b. Parent conflicts
	    c. Vendor conflicts
	  6. Federal programs management
		1. Instructional leadership
		  a. Delegated to site principals.
		  b. Shift in the management of funds to meet federal mandates.
		  c. Staff development – contacted out
		  d. Administrative oversight
		  e. Superintendent was going into classrooms more 10 years ago than today.
		  f. Paperwork and administrative oversight of NCLB has had a reverse effect of being involved in the instructional process.
		  g. Maintaining federal documentation consumes a large amount of time.
		  h. Spending time trying to form partnerships to bring in additional money and student services to the school district.
		2. Previous role of the superintendent
		  a. Budget and finance management
		  b. Facilities management
		  c. Directing personnel
		  d. Federal programs management
			1. External factors
			  a. Federal – NCLB
			  b. Community and school board does not want the school district to be on the school improvement list
			  c. Parent concern – push to have their child do better than they did
			2. Internal factor: Self-imposed desire to make the school district successful.

Table 5 (continued)

School District – B	Question 1: Roles & Ranking	Question 2: Possible Changes	Question3: Factors of Change

SD-B1	Ranking of roles/responsibilities
	1. Policy and procedure implementation
	2. District finances
	3. Leadership role/collaboration – Community and staff relations
	4. Technology and teacher resources
	5. Director of personnel
		1. Leadership role - district needed to move towards improvement.
		2. Community involvement – goal was to get parents involved
		3. Management of district finances
		4. Technology has increased over the course of time due to increased funding and a focus on academics.
		5. Policies and procedures implementation
		6. Personnel director
			1. External Factors: Community involvement
			2. Internal Factors
			  a. Superintendent: push to make the school district better
			  b. Faculty/Staff – included in mission of the school district

SD-B2	Ranking of roles/responsibilities
	1. Development and implementation of policy and procedures.
	2. Community relations
	3. Management of district finances
	4. Facilities management and construction
	5. Curriculum director
	6. Personnel director
	7. Climate of the school
		1. Leadership role - district needed to move towards improvement.
		2. Financial director
		3. Development and implementation of policy and procedures.
		4. Facilities management and construction management
			1. External
			  a. NCLB
			  b. Public scrutiny and media pressure
			  c. Accountability and responsibility
			2. Internal pressure
			  a. Desire of the superintendent to have the district succeed
			  b. Internal pressure greater than external

Description of Interview Subjects and Locations for School District C

School district C (SD-C) is a rural school system with an enrollment of 683 and a free and reduced lunch percentage of 44.51% (Oklahoma State Department of Education, 2008). The school district has a bonding capacity of 1.3 million and employs 57 certified staff members. Six of those staff members have Master's degrees.

All interviews for this district take place in the small rectangular board room. A large table with a light oak veneer finish occupies the middle of the room, surrounded by six padded office chairs. Floor level book shelves cover half of the wall on three sides of the room. The book shelves, which match the board table, are filled with policy manuals, finance books, and blueprints of recent construction projects. On one of the long walls, the only wall without a bookshelf, is a row of six small black office chairs matching the six chairs surrounding the board table. These chairs are probably kept for visitors attending school board meetings. Beside the sixth chair is a small table covered with more blueprints of recent construction projects. Adjoining the room is the superintendent's office and a medium-sized central office reception area containing office space for the superintendent's secretary and community space for visitors.

Superintendent (SD-CS). SD-CS is an average-sized man, approximately 5'11" and 195 pounds. A Caucasian male of approximately 50 years, he has been the superintendent for seven years. He has a bit of a pot belly and very coarse hands, the type of hands that have been aged over time and hard labor. His hair is brown, as is the coarse mustache that fully covers his upper lip. He is wearing black pants with black shoes and a long-sleeved, button-down light orange shirt that sets off his colorful orange tie. During our conversations, he appears poised and confident. He likes to be informed

and in charge of all situations, is passionate about both his students and his school district, is committed to his community, and is proud to be a home town product.

Principal 1(SD-C1). SD-C1 is a middle-aged, average-sized Caucasian male with eight years of experience. He is approximately 50 years old, has silver hair, and wears glasses. His black slacks, black belt, black shoes, charcoal black shirt, and black leather jacket remind me of Johnny Cash. He is confident in his beliefs and decision-making processes, and has a warm, comfortable smile. He laughs throughout the interview, yet his answers to my questions are confident.

Principal 2(SD-C2). SD-C2 is a tall, thin, Caucasian woman with a confident demeanor and a warm smile. She is approximately 50 years old and has more than three years of experience. The wind is blowing outside (I see her walking across the street toward the administration building), yet her short, wavy hair looks perfectly combed when she enters the building. She is wearing a gray business suit accented with a white silk blouse and very little make-up. Her smile is warm and her hand-shake firm. She takes the time to make me feel welcome by offering me a soda or a cup of coffee. I politely decline. She is very apprehensive about my questions and thinks carefully before speaking. She appears to be a very intelligent, serious woman with no time for nonsense. Her answers are precise, with very little opinion to support her presentation of the facts (as she sees them). The interview lasts approximately 35 minutes due to her short and direct responses to my open-ended questions.

Description of Interviews for School District C

Superintendent (SD-CS). SD-CS was asked to describe his role:

To me, it's just like a CEO of a large business. I mean, we have to know

about buildings, maintaining buildings, building new buildings, grounds

keeping, and not just teaching kids and hiring. You know, our main

responsibility is to hire good teachers for our kids to be successful and

learn.

The superintendent also believes that it is his responsibility to provide a safe learning

environment for students and a good working environment for staff members.

Technology is great, and you have to provide good technology and

buildings. You have to heat and cool them. We have to provide buses to

get them here. We have to provide a good environment, and a good

teacher is the main thing to me.

SD-CS also indicated that managing the district's financial budget and the transportation

of students, which requires constant maintenance of a bus fleet, is a responsibility of the

superintendent. According to the superintendent, the importance of both of these

responsibilities had increased. The rising cost of equipment, materials, supplies, and labor

made the management of district operations a difficult task. He was asked to outline the

significance of the responsibilities he had described.

Number one is providing a safe learning environment for the students as

far as importance, and then finance has to be right up there with it; I mean

we have to not spend more money than we take in, …but as far as taking

the most time, you know, I can make a list of things I want to do and may

have a list over here and a list over there, and I may not get to any of those

during the day because I feel that the majority of the time is taken on

things that come up.

SD-CS described his position as multi-tasking, where he is constantly juggling various responsibilities. In his position, the necessary tasks vary from day-to-day. According to the SD-CS, the responsibilities of managing district finances, district personnel, and facilities have remained constant over time.

SD-CS perceived that NCLB has placed pressure on his role as the superintendent. He described the difficulty in a small district of continually financing unfunded federal and state mandates. Compliance with the requirements of NCLB was also described as a difficult task for this superintendent.

We run the risk of getting into trouble by not being highly qualified.

We're supposed to have all teachers, 100% you know, all of our teachers

are 100% and that's tough to do. You know the paperwork needed with

keeping up with highly qualified and building a "HOUSSE" [process of

gain the status of being a highly qualified teacher] for these teachers; some

of it just seems kind of silly. Sometimes I don't think we have very good

choices. We try to hire the best out here and sometimes our options aren't

very good.

Over the course of seven years, external pressure has also increased the volume of paperwork associated with the superintendent's position, increasing his responsibilities. NCLB has not increased the academic or instructional leadership responsibilities for the superintendent. According to the SD-CS, his responsibilities regarding NCLB are the

management of mandates and the processing of the paperwork. Principals are delegated

the responsibility of instructional leadership.

   Principal 1(SD-C1). SD-C1 was asked to describe the role of the superintendent

of schools.

>   I guess he's kind of the CEO of the school district. I think he needs to be
>
>   involved in the -- not so much the day-to-day activities of the things that
>
>   are going on in the building -- but the overview of it, especially the
>
>   financial part of it.

SD-C1 stated the daily activities of his building were not the responsibility of the

superintendent. It was his responsibility to keep the superintendent informed, but not

involved. He stated that the district was presently involved in a construction project that

was consuming a large amount of the superintendent's time. He continued by listing

financial management, personnel director, and public relations as responsibilities of the

superintendent. SD-C1 believes the management of the district's finances is the

superintendent's most important responsibility, followed by the management of district

personnel, public relations, and facility maintenance. Again, he compared SD-CS to a

CEO and explained that it was not his responsibility to micro-manage the district, but to

delegate responsibilities and manage personnel, statements congruent with SD-CS.

>   He believes in hiring teachers and letting them teach. Whether or not they
>
>   are doing their job is the responsibility of the principals.

According to SD-C1 the principals, not the superintendent, are responsible for curriculum

and instruction. The superintendent may be informed of the process, but the principals

make decisions regarding the instruction of students. These statements support the lack of perceived instructional leadership responsibilities of the superintendent.

According to SD-C1, not much has changed regarding the role of the superintendent. In the past, the superintendent was responsible for managing district personnel, increasing public relations, and managing facilities, construction, and finances. "No, I don't think anything has gone away," he replied. He did perceive that the volume of paperwork for the position had increased over time.

When the superintendent first assumed the position, the function of public relations took precedent over other responsibilities. The district was attempting to pass a bond issue, which required community involvement. Upon the passage of the bond issue, this responsibility decreased, and the responsibility for facilities management and facilities construction became the primary focus of the superintendent.

External pressure had affected the role of the superintendent most, according to SD-C1. He perceived that NCLB had increased the volume of paperwork required of the superintendent. As a result of these mandates, the district is having a difficult time finding highly qualified staff members. He explained that complying with these mandates makes the position of superintendent very frustrating.

Principal 2 (SD-C2). When SD-C2 was asked her perception of the role of the district's superintendent, she immediately responded, "Finances." The most important responsibility of the superintendent, in her opinion, was managing district's finances, followed by managing personnel and public relations.

SD-C2 was asked to explain the role of the superintendent seven years ago. She responded, "Basically, those [previously stated]. I mean the finances and everything. I

mean he does all of the finances." She was asked if anything had changed regarding the role of the superintendent. She quickly replied, "No." Later she added that she has noticed an increase in the number of reports that are have been added to the position. When asked to clarify her statement regarding the concept of added reports, she elaborated that the required reports were generated for the state and the federal governments and that these actions were the result of newly established bureaucratic mandates.

SD-C2 believed external pressures had been added to the position of superintendent, that none of the superintendents responsibilities had been decreased or removed, and that new responsibilities may have been added because of external pressure of NCLB. At the conclusion of the interview, the principal added that she believed facility management was also both a current and previous responsibility for the superintendent of schools.

Summary of Findings for School District C

Data from question one, the role of the superintendent, indicate that the superintendent is perceived as the CEO who is responsible for school facilities, construction projects, school personnel, student instruction, community relations, school finances, student safety, technology implementation, and student transportation. The top three responsibilities, according to this superintendent, are managing school finances, directing school personnel, and developing community relations. The superintendent precieved that his responsibilities changed depending upon the daily tasks needed to make the school district successful. "I don't think his job has lessened by anything, and I

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don't think it is going to get anything but progressively worse" (SD-C1). SD-CS and SD-C1 mentioned instructional leadership, but noted these responsibilities were delegated to site principals.

Question 2 highlights possible changes between previous and current responsibilities of the district's superintendent. According to the responses, managing school finances, maintaining public relations, and managing personnel were all key components of the superintendent's role in previous years. All three interviewees indicated that the primary responsibilities of the district's superintendent had not changed over the span of seven years. However, they believed that overall, the responsibility of the position had expanded to include more paperwork. "Astronomically, I mean, you know, I spend more time doing paperwork than I do probably any other part of the job" (SD-CS).

External pressure seemed to be the driving force in the defining the role of SD-CS. The implementation of NCLB required the adoption of additional state mandates; state mandates forced compliance and, consequently, added responsibilities to the superintendent. These requirements were frustrating to all interview participants, and finding highly qualified staff members was difficult. Table 6 outlines the interview data gathered at School District C.

Table 6: Summary of Data for School District C

School District – C	Question 1: Roles & Ranking	Question 2: Possible Changes	Question 3: Factors of Change

SD-CS Superintendent	Ranking of roles/responsibilities
	1. Safe learning environment
	2. Managing district finances
	3. Situational – Based upon the daily operations and needs of the school district
	  a. Manage facilities
	  b. Construction of buildings
	  c. Maintenance of grounds
	  d. Director of personnel
	  e. Instructional leadership (delegated to site principals)
	  f. Manage community relations
	  g. Implement instructional technology
	  h. Director of transportation
		1. Finances
		  a. State budget cuts force this to be the focus
		  b. Primary focus then and now
		2. Director of personnel – increased difficulty hiring and recruiting highly qualified teachers
		3. Management and construction of facilities
		4. Director of transportation
		5. Responsibilities of superintendent have not changed. However, overall the accountability of the position has grown due to increased paperwork from NCLB mandates
		  a. State department reports
		  b. NCLB reports
		  c. Accreditation reports
		6. Instructional leadership is delegated to principals.
			1) External: NCLB mandates
			  a. Federal and state mandates make it difficult to manage the district.
			  b. Increased paperwork
			  c. Required committees that take up time
			  d. Highly qualified requirements make it difficult to hire staff

Table 6 (continued)

School District – C	Question 1: Roles & Ranking	Question 2: Possible Changes	Question 3: Factors of Change

SD-C1	Ranking of roles/responsibilities
	  1. Managing district finances
	  2. Directing district personnel
	  3. Public/community relations
	  4. Managing/constructing facilities
	  5. Instructional leadership – delegated to site principals
		1. Public relations – attempted to pass a bond issue
		2. Facilities and construction management
		3. Requirements of the position has not decreased but the paperwork assigned to the position increased
		4. Director of personnel
		5. Manger of district finances
			1. External pressure
			  a. State department mandates
			  b. NCLB - Difficult to find highly qualified staff
			2. Internal pressure
			  a. Personal pressure applied to make construction projects successful
			  b. Superintendent wants to leave a personal legacy

SD-C2	Ranking of roles/responsibilities
	  1. Management of district finances
	  2. Director of personnel
	  3. Public relations
	  4. Management of facilities
		1) Same job – nothing changed
		  a. Management of district finances
		  b. Director of personnel
		  c. Public relations
		  d. Management of facilities
		2) Increase in required paperwork
			1. External pressure
			  a. Increased required paperwork meet the requirements of state and federal mandates
			    1. State school board
			    2. State legislature
			    3. Financial management of $$$ to meet the requirements
			  b. Currently: external pressure from the school board to complete the construction project

Description of Interview Subjects and Locations for School District D

School district D (SD-D) is in a rural location with an enrollment of 825 students; 59.80% are eligible for the free and reduced lunch program (Oklahoma State Department of Education, 2008). The school district has a bonding capacity of $1.8 million and employs 88 certified staff members. Eight of those staff members have Master's degrees.

Superintendent (SD-DS). SD-DS is a Caucasian man approximately 6'5" tall and 55 years old. He has eight years experience as the district's superintendent. He is wearing a tan and gray tweed western-cut suit jacket with matching gray pants and has accented his suit with gray-rimmed glasses, cowboy boots, and a muted tie. He greets me with a firm handshake and a warm smile that matches his attire. Because I called for directions, he is waiting for me in the parking lot, and assists me with finding a parking space. Making great effort to make me feel welcome, he directs me toward his office and introduces me to each member of his office staff. He is polite with small talk and spends some time acknowledging the hard work of his office staff.

He explains that the office is temporary. The school district is involved in a major building renovation project and his office/administration building is the last on the list for renovation. The walls of his inner office are temporary but functional. As I look around his office, he catches my eye and asks, "How do you like my dry wall job?" He is proud of this temporary office that he built one Saturday several weeks previously. During the interview, he reveals that he has participated as a laborer in many of the construction projects for the school district. His office is in a state of organized chaos with a functional work space with a large, old desk and non-matching chairs. Wires run haphazardly across the floor, and he points them out so I do not stumble as I take my seat.

A large work table at the back of the office is also surrounded by non-matching chairs. The table is covered with maps and blueprints of construction projects. Hanging on his temporary walls are pictures of family and diplomas of recognition. He is proud to be a graduate of Oklahoma State University. On the wall to the right of his desk, a bookshelf is also filled with family pictures. The very large bulletin board directly behind his desk is filled with notes, things-to-do lists, maps, and receipts from contractors. We briefly make small talk about the state of affairs of education in Oklahoma and then begin the interview.

Principal 1 (SD-D1). SD-D1 is an average-sized, Caucasian male who is approximately 40 years old. He has been the principal for five years. He is wearing a brightly colored shirt, black slacks, and black shoes. Greeting me at the superintendent's office with a firm handshake and a warm smile, he makes every effort to make me feel welcome. We spend some time walking through his building, taking a tour of the facilities. His building has recently been remodeled, and he is proud of all the renovations. Like the superintendent, he tells me with which parts of the construction projects he personally assisted. As we walk down the hallway, he introduces me to teachers who happen to pass. Each teacher calls him by his first name and says "good morning." He does the same before introducing me.

SD-D1's office is large and newly renovated. The outer office contains a big counter with phones and computers conveniently placed for office staff use. His personal office is very large, with four major windows admitting a large amount of light. The office feels comfortable. He shows me to one of two nice leather chairs in front of his large wood desk. The computer desk to his immediate right matches his office furniture.

The computer has a flat screen monitor. On his walls are various diplomas from Oklahoma State University, and on his desk several figurines of Pistol Pete add to the room's décor. Pictures of his family are on a bookshelf across the room, and a framed logo of the school mascot hangs on the wall. His office desk is a compilation of organized clutter. I thank him for his time, and we begin the interview.

Principal 2 (SD-D2). SD-D2 is a petite Caucasian female with highlighted hair in a modern cut. She is wearing jeans, a school logo t-shirt, and new tennis shoes. She has three years experience. I locate her in the gymnasium where she is monitoring the progress of a special-event day for her site. All of the teachers in the gym are also wearing t-shirts in the color. She greets me with a smile, saying she forgot that today was the day of her interview. The secondary principal who escorted me to the gym suggests that we meet in his office since it is close and offers to watch the gym for her. She thanks him, escorts me back to the secondary office, asks me to sit behind the secondary principal's desk, and we begin the interview.

Description of Interviews for School District D

Superintendent (SD-DS). SD-DS was asked to describe his perceptions of his role.

> Well, of course, first of all, we carry out the policies of the local board. I
> also manage the finances of the district and provide an education
> environment which includes capitol improvements, taking care of the
> facilities, and hiring teachers.

SD-DS perceived that his most important responsibility was to manage the district's finances.

> Well, I think you have got to take care of the money first of all. I mean if you can't make ends meet, I think that's the first place that a superintendent is going to lose his job.

His second most important responsibility was ensuring the district's ability to meet the requirements of state law regarding accreditation standards and increasing student testing.

> I think, and I probably haven't named it yet, but the second most important responsibility would be meeting the requirements of the state as far as accreditation, and that goes into accountability as far as testing. The superintendent can lose his job because the students don't perform.

SD-DS added that he was also responsible for public relations. However, this duty was not performed on a district level. He felt disgusted that he was obligated to lobby the state legislature for funding. "We have to lobby against David Boren for dollars to financially operate our districts. So it's a public relations job, a lobbying job; it's everything rolled into one." Additionally, SD-DS described the responsibility of construction management as a top priority in his position.

> It has been to the point that with our limited resources for capitol improvements, I have hired the contractors. I am serving as the district's general contractor to save money. So I have to oversee all construction projects. This means when they are putting on 50 foot sheets on a steel roof, I have to get on the roof with them and carry the sheets and put the

screws in. I have done sheet metal work, rock work, and brick work. I

have done everything!

SD-DS was also responsible for the management of all federal programs and district

personnel. He also perceived that the implementation of instructional technology was a

responsibility of the superintendent, a responsibility he described under the term

instructional leadership. When SD-DS was asked to explain further his responsibilities

regarding instructional leadership, he stated that it was his responsibility to ensure

compliance with accreditation standards and NCLB mandates. The responsibility of

instructional leadership was not defined under the guidelines of academic instruction, but

rather the maintenance of paperwork for the district. Instructional leadership was

delegated to site principals. SD-DS also stated that directing personnel was an important

responsibility of his role.

SD-DS added that his role contained an ad hoc function, that it was his

responsibility to complete lower-level personnel tasks whenever necessary. He drives a

school bus, serves as a custodian, and helps maintenance workers to complete projects.

These activities are necessary when staff members are sick. The district does not have

funding to hire substitutes for these positions.

 A change in societal culture has increased the level of responsibility and

accountability for the position of superintendent. The result of this shift is an increase in

paperwork and policy development. New policies must be written and old policies must

be updated. This was a responsibility for SD-DS upon assuming his position.

I think that there were a lot of superintendents operated as they precieved

the way a school should be. They really did not have written policies or

procedures, and I think they were probably liable. They were vulnerable

to negative situations that could get ugly.

He did not indicate any changes to his role as superintendent. The management of

district finances, facilities, and personnel were all historical responsibilities of the

superintendent. The district was, and still is, involved in construction projects. However,

SD-DS did indicate that the volume of paperwork for his position has increased as a

direct result of additional state and federal mandates. Instructional leadership was not

mentioned as a historical responsibility of the superintendent. The maintenance of

paperwork resulting from NCLB was considered a responsibility of this function. As a

side note, he mentioned that school security has become more of a responsibility as a

result of societal factors.

For SD-DS, change in the position was not a result of different responsibilities,

but rather an increase in accountability for existing job requirements. According to SD-

DS, accountability is achieved through additional paperwork, documentation, and the

filing of state and federal forms. "Over time the job has become more demanding and

more stressful," said SD-DS. Federal mandates were also making his responsibility as

the director of personnel difficult. Recruiting and hiring highly qualified staff members

was difficult due to the district's rural location.

Pressure to perform his job and define his role was generated from an external

force he defined as state and federal mandates: "We get all of this pressure from the

legislature and I don't appreciate it. I don't like getting the blame for kids that don't do

well." SD-DS stated that schools are a product of the societies they serve. As society

changes, so does the school. External pressure has made his position more stressful and

more demanding. "I just think in a school our size, you have more responsibilities."

Principal 1 (SD-D1). SD-D1 was asked about his perceptions regarding the role of the superintendent. He said, "Well, it's a pretty broad-based job. He oversees not only the financial aspect of the district, but the accountability and curriculum of the district." The interviewee was asked to define what he meant regarding accountability and curriculum. He said that SD-DS was responsible for ensuring that the district met the accreditation standards established by the State Department of Education. It was the responsibility of the principal to manage the instructional process for the site, confirming statements provided by SD-DS. SD-D1 also stated that the superintendent is responsible for public relations, school facilities, and school personnel. The managerial philosophy of SD-DS was to delegate responsibilities to subordinate employees and to hold them accountable for their positions. According to SD-D1, this is how SD-DS manages school personnel. He believed the management of district finances was the most important responsibility of the superintendent. This function was followed by facilities management and public relations. Each of these responsibilities correlates to responsibilities described by SD-DS.

SD-D1 also included an ad hoc function of the superintendent's position. He perceived this responsibility to be contingent upon the needs of the district at the time.

> Oh my, you can't list them all. It is very similar to a principal's job in a small school. He didn't tell me when I took the job that I may be cleaning up a student's vomit in the classroom because there is nobody else right at the moment to do it. I mean, to be blunt, you have the menial tasks as well as the high end tasks. I've seen our superintendent put a roof on a new

building. I've seen him driving a bus route in the afternoon because the

driver got sick. I mean that is one thing, from day-to-day he is willing to

do whatever needs to be done for the district to run smoothly.

When SD-D1 was asked to compare the previous role of the superintendent to the

current role of the superintendent, he indicated that not much of the role had changed but

that external pressure had increased the level of accountability for the position.

I don't know that the job description has changed as much as the added

demands within those descriptions. I think the superintendent has always

been the superintendent. He oversees the district and what goes on. The

superintendent has always been in charge of finances, buses, facilities, and

personnel. I mean those things haven't changed, it's just how they go

about doing them. All of the things, all of the categories that I've listed

probably were in place 20 years ago as a superintendent. But now, with

accountability the job is more demanding.

He clarified his statement that accountability included the district's ability to meet the

requirements of external mandates and regulations of the State Department of Education

and NCLB.

SD-D1 believed that pressure regarding the role of the superintendent derived

from both external and internal factors. External pressure was defined as state and

federal mandates resulting from NCLB. Also listed as an external factor was the

community's perception of what defined a quality school. Internal pressure originated

from the motivation of the superintendent to produce a successful school district.

I mean the superintendent is a tireless person. He sees a need and he tries

to remedy that need. Whether it is doing it himself, whether it is hiring

someone to do it, whether it is rearranging who is there to do it. He won't

ask you to do anything that he is not willing to do himself. He is just a

hard working superintendent and I don't know if we get that everywhere.

According to SD-D1, the superintendent, prided himself on leading his staff by example.

Principal 2 (SD-D2). SD-D2, when was asked to describe the role of the

superintendent, responded, "Well, he is the financial planner for the school. He is the one

that sets forth the vision for the school." In asking for clarification regarding the word

"vision," she added, "He has to put people below who have the same vision he has. I

think that he really sets the vision." She described the superintendent as a very "hands-

on" person. She was referring to the same ad hoc position described by SD-DS and SD-

D1. She stated that the superintendent was on the roof of the building making needed

repairs to the facility.

"If I have to take paperwork to his office, sometimes I have to go and find

him on the roof to get a signature. He is also up at the school on the

weekends pouring cement and whatever. It's just what he likes to do."

SD-D2 stated the superintendent does menial tasks because he enjoys the work. The

superintendent indicated these responsibilities were added in an attempt to save the

district money due to limited resources.

Additionally, she described the superintendent as being responsible for the

district's facilities and for directing personnel. However, SD-D2 indicated that the

responsibility of personnel was often delegated to site principals; this verified statements

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provided by SD-DS and SD-D1. She had been delegated the responsibility of managing

the paperwork associated with federal programs for the district. She stated that managing

the district's finances was the most important responsibility of the superintendent,

followed by the management of district facilities, establishing a district vision, and

managing personnel. It is important to note that SD-D2 did not mention the

responsibilities of instructional leadership.

SD-D2 did not believe the role of the superintendent had changed. However,

because of the need for additional facility improvement, the superintendent's role may

have shifted to include more facilities management or construction. This activity

consumed a large amount of his time. She stated that the daily activities of the

superintendent's responsibilities were situational. The duties changed to meet the needs

of the district, but the primary role of the superintendent remained the same. She

perceived that accountability for the listed responsibilities may have increased over time

and that internal desire is what defined the role and outlined the responsibilities of the

superintendent.

SD-D2 stated that the superintendent did not like to be involved in public

relations. This was due to his personality, not his responsibility. She stated that he was

shy and chose to avoid his public relations duties whenever possible.

The responsibilities of instructional leadership, both past and present, had been

delegated to site principals. It was the superintendent's responsibility to ensure

compliance with accreditation standards and complete all related paperwork. SD-DS also

made attempts to assist in the instructional process through the purchase of instructional

technology and the hiring of outside agencies to assist with staff development. These are

the student benefits of a good financial manager. Curriculum and instruction was the responsibility of site principals.

Summary of Findings for School District D

In their responses to question 1, the interviewees perceived that it was the responsibility of the superintendent to develop and implement policies and procedures, manage district finances and facilities, construct new facilities, supervise personnel, engage in public relations, manage district transportation, maintain accreditation standards, file all related paperwork, and assist with developing the overall vision of the school district. The interviewees indicated that managing school finances was the most important role of the superintendent followed by the management and construction of facilities.

Question 2 highlights possible changes between previous and current responsibilities of the district's superintendent. According to the interviewees, managing school finances and school facilities and directing school personnel had all been responsibilities of the superintendent in previous years. The responsibilities of the superintendent had not changed. All administrators indicated an ad hoc responsibility of the superintendent. This function was defined as activities outside the superintendent's normal duties and included bus driving, construction, and custodial duties. The responsibilities of this position changed and were contingent upon the needs of the district.

The responses to question 3 shows that both external and internal pressure help to define the role of the superintendent. External pressure is derived from state

(accreditation standards) and federal (NCLB) mandates. Internal pressure is derived from

the desire of the superintendent to move the school district forward. Table 7 outlines data

gathered for SD-D.

Table 7: Summary of Data for School District D

School District – D	Question 1: Roles & Ranking	Question 2: Possible Changes	Question 3: Factors of Change

SD-DS Superintendent	Ranking of roles/responsibilities
	1. Management of district finances
	2. Ensure compliance with state accreditation standards and NCLB requirements
	   a. Instructional leadership responsibilities
	   b. Maintenance of paper work
	3. Management and construction of facilities
	4. Management of federal programs
	5. Director of personnel
	6. Public relations - lobbying efforts to ensure state funding
	7. Ad Hoc
	   a. Bus driver
	   b. Custodian
	   c. Maintenance
	8. Instructional technology - purchasing
		1. Management of district finances
		2. Development and implementation of policies and procedures
		3. Director of personnel - difficulty has increased over time in hiring highly qualified teachers
		4. Management and construction of facilities
		5. Accountability has increased
		   a. High stakes testing
		   b. School security
		   c. Increased paperwork
			External Pressure - federal
			1. Legislation of education
			2. State mandates place burden or responsibility on superintendent
			3. Mandates increase stress level
			4. Mandates increase paperwork

SD-D1	Ranking of Roles/Responsibilities
	1. Management of district finances
	2. Management and construction of facilities
	3. Public relations
	4. Director of personnel
	5. Instruction leadership
	   a. Responsible for accreditation
	   b. Increased paperwork
	6. Transportation director
		1. Management of district finances
		2. Management of facilities
		3. Management of Transportation
		4. Management of personnel
		5. Accountability for same responsibilities has increase over time
		   a. Accountability has increased due to external mandates
		   b. Increase in working hours and accountability for the same job
			1. External
			   a. Federal and state mandates
			   b. Community desire to make a better school
			2. Internal: Superintendent's desire to improve the school

Table 7 (continued)

School District – D	Question 1: Roles & Ranking	Question 2: Possible Changes	Question 3: Factors of Change
SD-D2	Ranking of roles/responsibilities 　1. Management of district finances 　2. Management and construction of facilities 　3. Establishing a district vision - same vision as superintendent 　4. Ad hoc position - duties outside of normal job description 　　a. Construction work 　　b. Custodial work 　　c. Bus driver 　5. Director of personnel 　6. Instructional leadership - delegated to site principals	1. Role of the superintendent remained the same 2. Responsibilities 　a. Management of district finances 　b. Management and construction of facilities - May have increased in importance due to construction projects 　c. Ad hoc positions - Responsibilities based upon the needs of the district 　d. Public Relations - Did not like due to shy personality 　e. Instructional leadership 　　1. Delegated to site principals 　　2. Goal was to increase instructional technology 　　3. Staff development contracted out to external experts 3. The position has remained the same but accountability may have increased	Internal: Push from the superintendent to excel

Findings by Role

Superintendents

According to the responses to question 1, the superintendents perceived their responsibilities to be the management of district finances, developing and implementing district policies and procedures, advancing public relations, directing district personnel, managing student transportation, and managing and constructing facilities. They also perceived their responsibility to be the assurance of district compliance to state accreditation standards and NCLB mandates. Instructional leadership was not a responsibility of the superintendents. This responsibility was delegated to site principals or a curriculum director. Managing federal programs, ensuring student safety, resolving conflicts, and establishing the overall vision and direction of the school district were minor responsibilities of the superintendents. Collectively, the superintendents ranked managing school finances, managing and constructing facilities, directing personnel, developing and implementing board policies and procedures, and expanding public relations as their most important responsibilities (see Table 8).

SD-DS outlined ad-hoc responsibilities as a function of the superintendent, duties described by Franz (2003) as noted in Chapter II. These duties can be defined as necessary jobs or responsibilities that are outside the normal functions of a superintendent. SD-DS stated that he occasionally drove school busses and served as a district custodian and construction laborer. SD-BS, SD-CS, and SD-DS described the responsibility of superintendent as situational and their activities as reactionary to the needs of the school district (see Table 8).

The superintendents, responding to question 2, described their role in previous years as including the responsibilities for community relations, managing school finances, directing school personnel, managing and constructing facilities, and implementing policies and procedures. Also included in the responsibilities of superintendents, but not mentioned by all superintendents, were managing federal programs and student transportation (see Table 8).

The superintendents described their historical responsibility for instructional leadership to be oversight. They stated that over the course of time the volume of paperwork associated with this responsibility had increased. These superintendents were responsible for filing papers and ensuring the proper documentation required to meet federal and state law. SD-BS even indicated that paperwork responsibilities were having a reverse effect on her ability to observe classroom instruction. The responsibilities of curriculum and instruction were delegated to site principals. None of the superintendents described a shift towards instructional leadership. SD-CS and SD-DS indicated that their role had not changed over the course of time, but that accountability for their position had increased. This pressure was not being applied by their local school boards, but rather by state and federal mandates. Compliance with federal mandates was difficult. Recruiting and employing highly qualified teachers was difficult for those sites in rural locations.

The superintendents interviewed perceived that external forces affected their role, with the most prominent being the pressure to meet the guidelines established by state (accreditation standards) and federal (NCLB) mandates. External policy dictated the requirements for the district, thus attempting to establish the priorities for the position. In addition, SD-AS and SD-BS perceived that internal motivation was also a key component in defining the role of their superintendency (see Table 8).

Table 8: Summary of Data for Superintendents

Superintendent – A-D	Question 1: Roles & Ranking	Question 2: Possible Changes	Question 3: Factors of Change

SD-AS	Ranking of role/responsibilities
	  1. Communication with school board and constituents
	  2. Management of finances – Oversight
	  3. School board policies and procedures
	  4. Employment and hiring of staff members
		1. Previous Role of the Superintendent: Community relations
		  a. Most important role
		  b. NCLB – Getting parents involved
		2. Situational based upon immediate needs of district.
		3. Personnel Director
		4. Financial Director
		5. Implement school board polices and procedures
			1. Internal: None
			2. External: State mandates/NCLB

SD-BS	Ranking of roles/responsibilities
	  1. Monitoring academics
	  2. Budget & finance management
	  3. Facilities management
	  4. Directing personnel
	  5. Resolving conflicts
	    a. Staff conflicts
	    b. Parent conflicts
	    c. Vendor conflicts
	  6. Federal programs management
		1. Instructional leadership
		  a. Delegated to site principals
		  b. Shift in the management of funds to meet federal mandates
		  c. Staff development – contacted out
		  d. Administrative oversight
		  e. Superintendent was going into classrooms more 10 years ago than today
		  f. Paperwork and administrative oversight of NCLB has had a reverse effect of being involved in the instructional process.
		  g. Maintaining federal documentation consumes a large amount of time.
		  h. Spending time trying to form partnerships to bring in additional money and student services to the school district.
		2. Previous role of the superintendent
		  a. Budget and finance management
		  b. Facilities management
		  c. Directing personnel
		  d. Federal programs management
			1. External factors
			  a. Federal – NCLB
			  b. Community and school board do not want the school district to be on the school improvement list
			  c. Parent concern – push to have their child do better than they did
			2. Internal factor: Self-imposed desire to make the school district successful

Table 8 (continued)

Superintendent – A-D	Question 1: Roles & Ranking	Question 2: Possible Changes	Question 3: Factors of Change

SD-CS	Ranking of roles/responsibilities
	1. Safe learning environment
	2. Management of district finances
	3. Situational – Based upon the daily operations and needs of the school district
	  a. Manage facilities
	  b. Construction of buildings
	  c. Maintenance of grounds
	  d. Director of personnel
	  e. Instructional leadership
	  f. Manage community relations
	  g. Implement instructional technology
	  h. Director of transportation
		1. Finances
		  a. State budget cuts force this to be the focus
		  b. Primary focus then and now
		2. Director of personnel – increased difficulty hiring and recruiting highly qualified teachers
		3. Management and construction of facilities
		4. Director of transportation
		5. Responsibilities of superintendent have not changed. However, overall the accountability of the position has grown due to increased paperwork from NCLB mandates.
		  a. State department reports
		  b. NCLB reports
		  c. Accreditation reports
		6. Instructional leadership is delegated to principals.
			External: NCLB mandates
			1. Federal and state mandates make it difficult to manage the district.
			2. Increased paperwork
			3. Required committees that take up time
			4. Highly qualified requirements make it difficult to hire staff

Table 8 (continued)

Superintendent – A-D	Question 1: Roles & Ranking	Question 2: Possible Changes	Question: Factors of Change

SD-DS	Ranking of roles/responsibilities
	  1. Management of district finances
	  2. Ensure compliance with state accreditation standards and NCLB requirements
	    a. Instructional leadership responsibilities
	    b. Maintenance of paper work
	  3. Management and construction of facilities
	  4. Management of federal programs
	  5. Director of personnel
	  6. Public relations - lobbying efforts to ensure state funding
	  7. Ad hoc
	    a. Bus driver
	    b. Custodian
	    c. Maintenance
	  8. Instructional technology - purchasing
		1. Management of district finances
		2. Development and implementation of policies and procedures
		3. Director of personnel - Difficult has increased over time in hiring highly qualified teachers
		4. Management and construction of facilities
		5. Accountability has increased
		  a. High stakes testing
		  b. School security
		  c. Increased paperwork
			External Pressure - federal
			  1. Legislation of education
			  2. State mandates place burden or responsibility on superintendent
			  3. Mandates increase stress level
			  4. Mandates increase paperwork

Principals

According to the principals, the primary responsibilities of the superintendent are managing district finances, directing school personnel, developing and implementing policies and procedures, advancing public relations, and managing and constructing district facilities. Overall, principals ranked managing the district's finances as the most prominent responsibility of the superintendent. Other responsibilities were leadership (vision and school climate), director of transportation, and an ad hoc position. Instructional leadership was mentioned, but quickly dismissed as a responsibility delegated to site principals).

In responding to question 2, the role of the superintendent in previous years, the principals described the superintendent as having been responsible for maintaining school and community relations, managing district finances, developing and implementing policies and procedures, directing school personnel, and managing and constructing district facilities. The most common responsibility mentioned by the principals was managing district finances and facilities. Other responsibilities were directing student transportation and instructional leadership. Several principals indicated the responsibility of instructional leadership had been delegated to site principals. A limited number of principals indicated an ad hoc position as a responsibility of the superintendent. Several principals perceived that the role of the superintendent had not changed over time; however, they perceived that accountability for the position had increased. Additional responsibility equated to a perceived increase in paperwork (see Table 9).

The principals indicated that both internal and external factors had shaped the role of the superintendent during the previous seven years. The internal factor most commonly

mentioned was the drive or the vision of the superintendent. The most prominent external

factors were state (accreditation standards) and federal (NCLB) mandates (see Table 9).

Table 9: Summary of Data for Principals

Principal (1&2) – A-D	Question 1: Roles & Ranking	Question 2: Possible Changes	Question 3: Factors of Change

SD-A1	Ranking of role/responsibilities
	1. Management of district finances
	2. Personnel director/management of people
	3. "Catch-All" position
	4. Community/school board relations
	5. Implementation of school broad policy and procedures
		Previous role of the superintendent
		1. Climate of the school
		  a. Establishing rules and policies
		  b. Increased student discipline
		2. Director of personnel
		3. Management of finances
		4. NCLB policy implementation - Responsibility shifted to Curriculum Director (staff development & faculty meetings)
		5. Management of facilities
		6. Director of transportation
			1. Internal: Vision of superintendent
			2. External: State mandates/NCLB

SD-A2	Ranking of role/responsibilities
	1. Manager of district finances
	2. Director of personnel
	3. Public relations with the community – Implementation of school board policy and procedures
	4. Instructional leader
		Previous role of the superintendent
		1. Manager of district finances
		2. Public Relations
		  a. School climate
		  b. Staff/Administrative relationships
		3. Multi-tasking
		4. Establish procedures for the school district
		5. Personnel director
			1. Internal: None
			2. External
			  a. Pressure from staff and community to be different from previous superintendent
			  b. Had to prove himself to the community
			  c. Pressure from administrators to develop a relationship
			  d. Pressure to manage the budget (local)

Table 9 (continued)

Principal (1&2) – A-D	Question 1: Roles & Ranking	Question 2: Possible Changes	Question 3: Factors of Change
SD-B1	Ranking of roles/responsibilities 　1. Policy and procedure implementation 　2. Manage district finances 　3. Leadership role/collaboration - Community and staff relations 　4. Technology and teacher resources 　5. Director of personnel	1. Leadership role - district needed to move towards improvement. 2. Community involvement – goal was to get parents involved 3. Management of district finances 4. Technology has increased over the course of time due to increased funding and a focus on academics. 5. Policies and procedures implementation 6. Personnel director	1. External Factors: Community involvement 2. Internal Factors 　a. Superintendent: push to make the school district better 　b. Faculty/Staff – included in mission of the school district
SD-B2	Ranking of roles/responsibilities 　1. Development and implementation of policy and procedures. 　2. Community relations 　3. Management of district finances 　4. Facilities management and construction 　5. Curriculum director 　6. Personnel director 　7. Climate of the school	1. Leadership role - district needed to move towards improvement. 2. Financial director 3. Development and implementation of policy and procedures. 4. Facilities management and construction management	1. External 　a. NCLB 　b. Public scrutiny and media pressure 　c. Accountability and responsibility 2. Internal pressure – desire of the superintendent to have the district be successful - Internal pressure greater than external

Table 9 (continued)

Principal (1&2) – A-D	Question 1: Roles and Ranking	Question 2: Possible Changes	Question 3: Factors of Change

SD-C1	Ranking of roles/responsibilities
	1. Managing district finances
	2. Directing district personnel
	3. Public/community relations
	4. Managing/constructing facilities
	5. Instructional leadership – delegated to site principals
		1. Public relations – attempted to pass a bond issue
		2. Facilities and construction management
		3. Requirements of the position have not Decreased, but the paperwork assigned to the position has increased.
		4. Director of personnel
		5. Manager of district finances
			1. External pressure
			  a. State department mandates
			  b. NCLB
			    1. Difficult to find highly qualified staff
			2. Internal pressure
			  a. Personal pressure applied to make construction projects successful
			  b Superintendent wants to leave a personal legacy

SD-C2	Ranking of roles/responsibilities
	1. Management of district finances
	2. Director of personnel
	3. Public relations
	4. Management of facilities
		1. Same job – nothing changed
		  a. Management of district finances
		  b. Director of personnel
		  c. Public relations
		  d. Management of facilities
		2. Increase in required paperwork
			External pressure
			1. Increased required paperwork meet the requirements of state and federal mandates
			  a. State school board
			  b. State legislature
			  c. Management of money to meet the requirements
			2. Currently: external pressure from the school board to complete the construction project

Table 9 (continued)

Principal (1&2) – A-D	Question 1: Roles and Ranking	Question 2: Possible Changes	Question 3: Factors of Change

SD-D1	Ranking of Roles/Responsibilities
	1. Management of district finances
	2. Management and construction of facilities
	3. Public relations
	4. Director of personnel
	5. Instruction leadership - Responsible for accreditation
	6. Transportation director
		1. Management of district finances
		2. Management of facilities
		3. Management of Transportation
		4. Management of personnel
		5. Accountability for same responsibilities has increased over time
		  a. Accountability has increased due to external mandates
		  b. Increase in working hours and accountability for the same job
			Internal: Push from the superintendent to excel

SD-D2	Ranking of roles/responsibilities
	1. Management of district finances
	2. Management and construction of facilities
	3. Establishing a district vision - Common vision as superintendent
	4. Ad hoc position - Duties outside of normal job description (ex: construction work)
	5. Director of personnel
	6. Instructional leadership - Delegated to site principals
		1. Role of the superintendent remained the same
		2. Responsibilities
		  a. Management of district finances
		  b. Management and construction of facilities - May have increased in importance due to construction projects
		  c. Ad hoc positions - Responsibilities based upon the needs of the district
		  d. Public Relations - Did not like due to shy personality
		  e. Instructional leadership
		    1. Delegated to site principals
		    2. Goal was to increase instructional technology
		    3. Staff development contracted out to external experts
		3. The position has remained the same but Accountability may have increased
			1. External: Community driven needs
			2. Internal: Push from the superintendent to excel

Triangulation

Principals were interviewed for the primary purpose of triangulation (Patton, 2002). The requirements of triangulation were achieved through superintendent interview data being vouched for and supported by statements from that district's principals. As an example, SD-DS stated that the management of district finances was the most important role of the superintendent. Both principals of SD-D agreed. SD-AS indicated that managing district finances was a priority responsibility, a statement verified by both principals of SD-A. Superintendents indicated that external pressure in the form of federal or state mandates helped to define their role as superintendent, and this statement was verified by at least one, and in some districts, both site principals.

To achieve accuracy regarding interview data, the researcher engaged in member checking (Creswell, 2003). Upon the conclusion of transcription, interview documents and field notes were read for clarification. Interview subjects were contacted to provide a deeper explanation of terminology and concepts used during the interview. The researcher also asked the interviewee to expand on the topics of superintendent responsibilities (past and present) described during the interview. These responses were added to the original interview data.

School board agendas can also serve as a resource for establishing triangulation (Patton, 2002). Board agendas outline the business of the district and help to reveal the responsibilities of the district's superintendent. Upon conclusion of the interview process, the researcher examined several agendas looking for evidence to support the role described by the interviewees. A review of the agendas helped to reaffirm interview data. Financial statements presented monthly and annually to the school board outline the

projected revenues and expenditures for the district and confirm the most prominent role

the superintendents (see Appendixes B-E).

SD-AS perceived his responsibilities to be communicating with constituents,

managing district finances, implementing school board policies and procedures, and

directing personnel. These responsibilities were verified by school board agendas

gathered at SD-A (see Appendix B). A special agenda from August 30, 2007,

highlighted the superintendent's function in the management of district finances. During

this school board meeting, the board ratified the estimate of needs for the 2007-2008

fiscal year. The district also approved supplemental appropriations for additional fund

balances. These agenda items assisted the superintendent in the development of the

budget for district operation and activities.   An additional school board agenda for SD-A

dated August 11, 2007, verified the responsibilities of directing personnel, managing

finances, and implementing board policy and procedures. Each board agenda provides an

opportunity for communication with the public. This agenda item helped the

superintendent fulfill the responsibility of public relations. A sample school board

agenda gathered from SD-B highlighted the superintendent's responsibilities as described

by SD-BS, SD-B1, and SD-B2 (see Appendix C). A school board agenda gathered from

SD-C verified the responsibilities of the superintendent as described by SD-CS, SD-C1,

and SD-C2: managing district finances, managing facilities, maintaining public relations,

and managing personnel (see Appendix D). The same responsibilities can also be

identified by agendas gathered at SD-D (see Appendix E). Using a multi-method

approach to establish triangulation increased the reliability of interview data (Patton,

2002).

Summary of Findings

The purpose of this study was to examine whether, and if so how, the role of small school district superintendents in Oklahoma has changed since 2001, and to identify what factors may have affected or caused a change in that role.   In research question 1, interviewees were asked to describe the current role of the superintendent. Themes emerging from the data suggest that the most prominent responsibilities of the superintendent were managing district finances, maintaining public relations with both the school board and the community, implementing school policies and procedures, directing school personnel, managing school facilities, and managing student transportation. It is important to note that the positions described are those of a manager, not a leader.

Instructional leadership was mentioned as a responsibility of the superintendent; however, the superintendent was only responsible for oversight. The responsibilities of curriculum and instruction were delegated to site principals or a curriculum director. Overwhelmingly, the interviewees perceived managing the district's school finances as the dominant role of the superintendents.

For research question 2, interviewees described the previous role of the superintendent and how the role may have changed over the previous seven years. The interviewees indicated the previous responsibilities of the superintendent were managing school district finances, directing school personnel, maintaining public relations, managing school facilities, and implementing policies and procedures, that is , the same roles as previously described. Specifically, SD-CS, SD-C2, SD-DS, SD-D1, and SD-D2 described the historical roles of the superintendent to be the same as the current role. The

administrators indicated that accountability for the position of superintendent may have increased. Additional paperwork may have been added to superintendents' responsibilities resulting from external federal mandates. The most common superintendent responsibilities mentioned by the administrators were managing district finances and managing facilities.

In research question 3, the interviewees were asked to describe what factors led to possible changes in the role of the superintendent. The respondents indicated that both external and internal forces helped to define the role of the superintendent. External forces were directives issued by the federal and state government in the form of educational mandates. The administrators suggested that accountability for the position of superintendent may have increased. Additional paperwork resulting from external mandates emerged as a theme for the position. Accountability was equated to increased documentation for district activities. They believed that NCLB was the most common source of these mandates. The most common internal factor affecting the role of the superintendent was the desire of the superintendent to move the school district forward.

Change Theory

Change theory provides a framework for data analysis. Clearly, the superintendents participating in the study fulfilled the responsibilities of a manager. A distinct division of labor was outlined. The summary of findings describes a rigid bureaucracy resistant to change. This is evident through data outlining consistent current and historical superintendent responsibilities. The districts described in this study maintained the status quo.

Change theory mandates that an implemented change requires the functions of a leader. The superintendents engaged in none of the tenets of change theory; thus, the implementation of NCLB was limited. The superintendents paid little attention to establishing and communicating a sense of moral purpose for the district. Collaborative relationships regarding student achievement did not exist. Instructional leadership was not a priority of the superintendents, and responsibilities for this function were delegated to subordinate employees. Such occurrences have limited success.

Chapter V summarizes the interview data, presents a conclusion for the study, outlines a theoretical framework for the data presented and recommendations for further study, offers implications for both superintendents and superintendent preparatory programs, and provides final thoughts regarding the research project.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK,

RECOMMENDATIONS, IMPLICATIONS,

AND FINAL THOUGHTS

Summary

The role of a district superintendent has evolved over time. Early roles (1838-1910) of the superintendency were based upon instruction. Additional duties of the superintendent included classroom teacher (Norton, Webb, Dlugosh & Sybouts, 1996; Hord, 1990). Later roles (1900-2009) for superintendents showed an evolution of the position to that of a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) (Fredrickson, 2002; Cuban, 1988). These positions and their related responsibilities may not directly correlate. The goals of these organizations may be very different. Companies or business-run organizations exist to make a profit. School districts are non-profit organizations whose goal is to educate students. However, similarities exist in both the role of the CEO of a corporation and a superintendent of schools. The managerial and financial responsibilities for the leaders of each of these organizations are similar.

The role of any school district superintendent can be complicated and complex, a situation compounded as superintendents attempt to manage new federal mandates such as NCLB (Anthes, 2002). Houston (2007) believes that federal mandates have eroded the

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authority of the position and, at the same time, increased both expectations and accountability.

While increased governmental regulation affects all school districts, small districts have fewer resources fro implementing the required mandates. Superintendents in small school districts may find the superintendency very difficult, due to multi-tasking responsibilities added to the position (Franz, 2003). Because they have a larger number of resources (staff, funds), large school districts cannot superintendents or additional staffing for support in managing new regulations or mandates (Houck, 2002; Marx, 2001). Superintendents in small school districts cannot hire additional staff and may find additional responsibilities difficult to manage, since their responsibilities as the district CEO have not disappeared (Franz, 2003).

The role of Oklahoma small school district superintendents may be in transition. External mandates and forced accountability for academic achievement may be influencing their role. The responsibility for instructional leadership may be moving to the forefront of their duties (Anthes, 2002; King, 2002; Lashway, 2002a, 1999; Berg & Barnett, 1998). Potential changes in the role of the superintendent may affect the description of the position.

The purpose of this study was to examine whether, and if so how, the role of small school district superintendents in Oklahoma has changed since 2001 and to identify what factors may have affected or caused a change in that role. Three questions established the basis for the research project. Research participants were first asked to describe the current role of the district's superintendent. Secondly, they were asked to

describe how their role may have changed over the past seven years. Lastly, participants were asked to describe what factors may have led to any changes.

An exploratory qualitative research method best met the needs of this study. The goal of this approach was to focus on the experiences of the interviewees as a foundation for data collection (Creswell, 2003). Research participants were asked to expand on the three primary questions. Specifically, they were asked to rank their perception of the functions of the superintendent in order of significance. If a change in the role (over the course of time) was indicated, research participants were asked to describe the pressure or force causing the change.

Themes emerging from the data indicate the role of these four Oklahoma small school district superintendents had not changed from 2001 to 2008. While instructional leadership was occasionally mentioned as one of the many responsibilities of the superintendent, managerial functions dominated interview conversations. The responsibility of instructional leadership was delegated to site principals or a curriculum coordinator or was contracted out to external agencies. According to the interviewees, the minimum implementation of NCLB resulted in an inconvenient increase in paperwork. The primary role of these superintendents was that of a CEO: balancing budgets, directing personnel, managing public relations, and managing and constructing facilities.

The data appear to resemble the studies conducted by Bredeson and Johansson (1997) and Reeves (2004). According to these researchers, the major responsibilities of the superintendent were the management of district budgets, school finances, public relations, personnel, and the overall operation of an efficient district. The conclusions of

both studies were that superintendents intended to monitor the instructional process of students; however, their actions did not agree with their intentions. More time was spent managing the school district than being instructional leaders.

Conclusions

Clearly the results of this study show that research participants spend the vast majority of their time performing the managerial (CEO) duties of their position. The conclusions researched are not consistent with the responsibilities of a superintendent outlined in Chapter II. Current research indicates that instructional leadership is the responsibility of the superintendent, who is charged with establishing the academic vision of the district and ensuring compliance with NCLB mandates. This process can increase the academic performance of students (Cuban, 1984; Petersen, 1998;Anthes, 2002; King, 2002; Oklahoma State Department of Education, 2006).

Superintendents did not assume or perceive any responsibilities for instructional leadership. They did not establish an instructional vision for the district, and they assumed little responsibility for the instructional process. These responsibilities were delegated to site principals. In two of the four districts the responsibilities for staff development were contracted to outside agencies. The superintendents viewed their responsibilities as instructional leaders as a burdensome increase in paperwork.

The current and historical managerial responsibilities of the superintendent only reinforce the status quo of the position. Superintendents find comfort in managerial responsibilities. They are trained to manage the system and ensure its efficient operation and the bureaucratic structure of the organization reinforces these responsibilities.

However, to implement change in the organization successfully requires the actions of a leader. Change will not be implemented if the objectives of the superintendent and those of the desired change are not congruent. The responsibilities of a manager must be accompanied by a sense of moral purpose and the responsibilities of a leader before the organization will deviate from the status quo and implement the desired change.

Theoretical Framework

Superintendents are professionals (individuals) working in bureaucracies. Top-down initiatives, such as NCLB, attempt to control the bureaucracy by dictating both policy and practice, and at the local level, implementing those policies is the responsibility of the superintendent (Maher, 1984). An understanding of change theory may assist in explaining both the conclusions of the data and the recommendations of the researcher.

School districts operate based upon a highly bureaucratic structure with defined boundaries (Hoy, 2005; Fullan, 2001). Their hierarchical structures promote a division of labor and produce expertise in a specific field.

The superintendent's power to manage the bureaucratic structure is derived from the local school board (Oklahoma School Laws of, 2008). This positional power enables superintendents to influence recommendations of policy and procedure, personnel, salaries, and budgets (Campbell, 1990). Superintendents have the capacity to control the flow of communication and to guide the overall direction of the school district. This is the role of the district's CEO (Hoyle, 2005).

According to Fullan (2001), leaders are needed for problems that do not have easy answers. A leader mobilizes people to address problems. To do this, leaders must understand change theory and build relationships with subordinates to implement change successfully. Additionally, successful leaders of change are guided by moral purpose. The justification for the change is an outcome that is more beneficial than the status quo. Without a strong sense of moral purpose, the organization will not move from the status quo. Moral purpose is also the foundation for knowledge sharing. Fullan (2001) pointed out that the turning of information vital to the change process into useful knowledge is a social process based upon established relationships. It is the responsibility of the leader to build these relationships (Fullan, 2001).

> According to Fullan (1999),
>
> We have an educational system which is fundamentally conservative. The
> way that teachers are trained, the way that schools are organized, the way
> that the educational hierarchy operates, and the way that education is
> treated by political decision-makers results in a system that is more likely
> to retain the status quo than to change
>
> (p. 3).

The structure of the organization does not lend itself to the free flow of communication. This inherent flaw in the system further slows down the process of change (Fullan, 2001).

Organizations are complex (Fullan, 2001). Yet, they are composed of individuals who have and quite often interject their own needs, beliefs, interests and value systems, which often cause conflict within the goals of the organization (Hoy, 2005). Change will not be successfully implemented if the goals of the initiative and the leader are not the

same (Fullan, 2001; Siccone, 1997). A similar result will occur if the goals of the top-down initiative and the local level superintendent are not the same. The depth of change implementation is contingent upon the leader of the organization (Fullan, 2001). Bureaucratic structures will not change on their own.

> It is simply unrealistic to expect that introducing reforms one by one, even major ones, in a situation which is basically not organized to engage in change will do anything but give reform a bad name. You cannot have an educational environment in which change is continuously expected, along-side a conservative system and expect anything but constant aggravation (Fullan, 1999, p. 93-4).

The significance of the discord is brought into sharp focus by the participants of the study.

NCLB is a sweeping piece of federal legislation that was intended to change and improve the process of education; however, according to this research, the role of the superintendents changed very little. The research indicates that most common superintendent role, both past and present, is the management of district finances and facilities.

These superintendents complied with the minimum standards of NCLB to maintain the status quo of their position. For them, NCLB is an inconvenient disruption and an increase in their paperwork. They appeared to be very comfortable and very successful serving as the district's CEO. The movement of their position to that of an instructional leader (as suggested by research) was outside of their comfort zone. Change

theory suggests that, for these superintendents, the status quo is maintained through the bureaucratic process and a lack of moral purpose for the change.

Change is a slow and gradual process, and implementing new policies or practices may be a difficult, complex, long-term task (Fullan, 2001). Hoy (2005) refers to this process as homeostasis. Administrators (managers) as evident by the data are making minimal efforts to implement a change and, thus, maintain homeostasis by protecting the status quo.

<div align="center">Recommendations for Practice</div>

Elmore (2000), Fullan (2001), Kelleher (2002), King (2002), and McEwan (2003) suggest that school superintendents should expect their role to change through the addition of instructional leadership functions. This role is necessary for school districts to successfully meet and implement the requirements of NCLB. In order to change their role, superintendents must first identify their current role and compare their activities to the prescribed responsibilities of a leader. This research may indicate to some school district superintendents that they are not functioning as NCLB requires. Student achievement is the primary focus of NCLB, and some superintendents may be ignoring the component of instructional leadership by continuing to function in the role of a CEO.

To assist with the problem of implementing NCLB mandates, superintendents should engage in practices to recruit highly qualified staff members. The activities could include attendance at job fairs and coordination with education departments of state colleges and universities. Additional coordination with the Oklahoma State Department of Education may also be required. Advertising may assist with solving this problem, but it is not the only solution. Action by the superintendent to actively recruit is required.

Recommendations for Study

An expansion of the current research would be to study the role of small
Oklahoma school district principals by examining potential changes in their
responsibilities or duties. Superintendents may be delegating the responsibilities of
instructional leadership, forcing principals to implement change at their site. Principals
may be responsible for implementing the requirements of NCLB. The responsibilities of
instructional leadership could include the implementation of a required curriculum,
leading staff development, establishing an academic vision, establishing professional
learning communities, and analyzing student academic performance data. A study
highlighting the current and previous role of site principals may provide insight into the
change process.

Implications for Superintendent Preparatory Programs

University preparatory programs may benefit from this research by identifying
potential problems in preparing graduates to evaluate critically the responsibilities of
superintendents and provide them with strategies to implement change in organizations.
Course work should be aimed at giving students a clear understanding of NCLB
requirements and of strategies for implementing its mandates successfully.

Additionally, the Oklahoma State Department of Education should increase rigor
for achieving a superintendent license. In-depth academic course work in instructional

leadership should be required, because lack of understanding may result in failure to

implement the tenets of instructional leadership.

Final Thoughts

It is a travesty that this research project does not mimic the current literature.

NCLB was intended to be the most sweeping piece of federal legislation to bring about

change and to reform public education. Yet, for these small Oklahoma school district

superintendents, very little has changed. NCLB appears to be more of a nuisance than

legislation to increase the academic performance of students.

Only a leader can operate as a change agent. NCLB is not just asking for change,

it is mandating change. This is the responsibility of a superintendent. Understandably,

the managerial responsibilities of the position will not disappear. The effective operation

of the district is a necessary function of the superintendent. However, the responsibilities

of instructional leadership must be added to the superintendent's role. This function

cannot be the sole responsibility of site principals. Superintendents have the positional

power and influence to ensure NCLB implementation increases academic achievement, a

top priority of the district only when the superintendent assumes the responsibilities of

instructional leadership.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

RESEARCH CONSENT LETTERS

Oklahoma State University Institutional Review Board

Date: Monday, January 07, 2008

IRB Application No   ED07117

Proposal Title: The Role of Oklahoma Superintendents in Small School Districts

Reviewed and   Expedited
Processed as:

Status Recommended by Reviewer(s): Approved   Protocol Expires: 1/6/2009

Principal
Investigator(s

Shannon Goodsell   Ken Stern
15008 Salem Creek Rd.   311 Willard
Edmond, OK 73013   Stillwater, OK 74078

The IRB application referenced above has been approved. It is the judgment of the reviewers that the
rights and welfare of individuals who may be asked to participate in this study will be respected, and that
the research will be conducted in a manner consistent with the IRB requirements as outlined in section 45
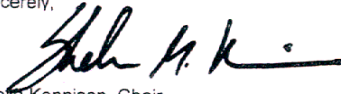CFR 46.

☒ The final versions of any printed recruitment, consent and assent documents bearing the IRB approval
stamp are attached to this letter. These are the versions that must be used during the study.

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

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

Please note that approved protocols are subject to monitoring by the IRB and that the IRB office has the
authority to inspect research records associated with this protocol at any time. If you have questions
about the IRB procedures or need any assistance from the Board, please contact Beth McTernan in 219
Cordell North (phone: 405-744-5700, beth.mcternan@okstate.edu).

Sincerely,

Sheila Kennison, Chair
Institutional Review Board

Dear Principal:

I am a doctoral student at Oklahoma State University. I am conducting research on the role of small Oklahoma school district superintendents. You have been chosen at random to be one (1) of (2) site principals in your school district to participate in this research project.

Apart of this qualitative research process I would like to interview you. The interview will be approximately one (1) hour in length. The interview will be recorded for later transcription and coding. You will have the opportunity to view the interview transcript for final approval. The data collected from these interviews will remain anonymous and confidential. During the research process all tapes will be locked in a vault/filing cabinet and will be destroyed (burned) upon completion of the research project. All names of interview participants and the school districts where they are employed will be changed for reporting.

From the responses provided I will try to examine trend lines in the role of small Oklahoma school district superintendents, highlighting how that role has changed over the past seven (7) years, and what factors have contributed to that change.

Participation in this research project is voluntary and I appreciate the value of your time. Please help with what I consider to be valuable research in understanding the role and possible factors that impact the role of small Oklahoma school district superintendents. By agreeing to be interviewed for this research project, you are providing your consent to participate. There are no known risks associated with this project which are greater than those ordinarily encountered in daily life.

If you have any questions about your rights as a research volunteer, you may contact Dr. Sue Jacobs, IRB Chair, 219 Cordell North, Stillwater, OK 74078, 405-744-1676 or irb@okstate.edu.

I will follow up this letter with a phone call regarding your possible participation.

Thank you,

Principal Investigator

Shannon Goodsell
Crooked Oak Public Schools
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Academic Advisor

Dr. Ken Stern – Assoc. Professor
Educational Leadership Studies
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Stillwater, OK 74078
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(405) 744-8929

Dear Superintendent:

I am a doctoral student at Oklahoma State University. I am conducting research on the role of small Oklahoma school district superintendents. You have been chosen at random to be one (1) of only (4) from a list of possible school districts who qualify (based upon size of student population) to participate in this research project.

Through a qualitative research process I would like to interview you and one site principal chosen at random. The interview will be approximately one (1) hour in length. The interview will be recorded for later transcription and coding. You will have the opportunity to view the interview transcript for final approval. The data collected from these interviews will remain anonymous and confidential. During the research process all tapes will be locked in a vault/filing cabinet and will be destroyed (burned) upon completion of the research project. All names of interview participants and the school districts where they are employed will be changed for reporting.

From the responses provided I will try to examine trend lines in the role of small Oklahoma school district superintendents, highlighting how that role has changed over the past seven (7) years, and what factors have contributed to that change.

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I will follow up this letter with a phone call regarding your possible participation.

Thank you,

Principal Investigator

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APPENDIX B

SD-A SCHOOL BOARD AGENDAS

SD-A
agenda 1

SPECIAL MEETING
AUGUST 30, 2007
██████████ CENTRAL OFFICE
██████████ AVE ██
3:00 P.M.

I   CALL TO ORDER

II   ROLL CALL AND ESTABLISH A QUORUM

III   CONSIDER A REQUEST TO VOTE TO APPROVE THE ESTIMATE OF NEEDS AND PUBLICATION SHEET FOR THE 2007-2008 FISCAL YEAR.

IV   CONSIDER A REQUEST TO VOTE TO APPROVE SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS FOR ██████ FUND AND FEDERAL BREAKFAST-LUNCH FUNDS FOR THE 2006-2007 FISCAL YEAR.

V   ADJOURNMENT

THIS AGENDA WAS POSTED AT THE ██████ ANNOUNCEMENT BOX OF THE HIGH SCHOOL BUILDING, ANNOUNCEMENT BOX AT THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL LOCATED AT ██████. SUPERINTENDENT'S OFFICE ANNOUNCEMENT BOX, ANNOUNCEMENT BOX AT THE ██████ LOCATED ON THE ██████ OF THE ██████, WINDOW AT ██████ BULLETIN BOARDS AT ██████, AND THE ██████ ██████ BETWEEN 2:30 AND 5:30 P.M. TUESDAY, AUGUST 28, 2007 BY ██████ BOARD CLERK.

██████ BOARD CLERK

SD-A
agenda 1

▆▆▆▆▆▆ BOARD OF EDUCATION ▆▆▆▆▆
SPECIAL MEETING
AUGUST 30, 2007

▆▆▆▆▆ AND CENTRAL OFFICE ▆▆▆
▆▆▆▆ 168 ▆▆▆▆▆▆▆▆

3:00 P.M.

I   CALL TO ORDER

II   ROLL CALL AND ESTABLISH A QUORUM

III   CONSIDER A REQUEST TO VOTE TO APPROVE THE ESTIMATE OF NEEDS AND PUBLICATION SHEET FOR THE 2007-2008 FISCAL YEAR.

IV   CONSIDER A REQUEST TO VOTE TO APPROVE SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS FOR OCMAPS FUND AND FEDERAL BREAKFAST-LUNCH FUNDS FOR THE 2006-2007 FISCAL YEAR.

V   ADJOURNMENT

THIS AGENDA WAS POSTED AT THE EAST DOOR ANNOUNCEMENT BOX OF THE HIGH SCHOOL BUILDING, ANNOUNCEMENT BOX AT THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL LOCATED AT ▆▆▆ 168TH AVE, N▆▆. SUPERINTENDENT'S OFFICE ANNOUNCEMENT BOX, ANNOUNCEMENT BOX AT THE MIDDLE SCHOOL LOCATED ON THE SOUTH WALL OF THE ▆▆▆ ▆▆▆▆▆▆▆, WINDOW AT ▆▆▆▆▆▆▆▆▆▆▆▆▆▆ BULLETIN BOARDS AT ▆▆▆▆▆▆▆▆▆▆▆▆▆▆▆▆▆▆, AND THE ▆▆▆▆▆ ▆▆▆ COMMUNITY CENTER BETWEEN 2:30 AND 5:30 P.M. TUESDAY, AUGUST 28, 2007 BY ▆▆▆▆▆▆▆▆, BOARD CLERK.

▆▆▆▆▆▆▆▆ BOARD CLERK

SD - A
agenda - 2

AGENDA
REGULAR MEETING
AUGUST 11, 2007
8:00 A.M.
ELEMENTARY CAFETERIA

I   CALL TO ORDER

II   ROLL CALL AND ESTABLISH A QUOURM

III   FLAG SALUTE

IV   APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

V   RECOGNITION OF VISITORS AND READING OF CORRESPONDENCE

    1.   Recognition of ██████ middle school student ██████ for winning a $20,000.00 college scholarship for 3rd place in the ██████ ██████ "softball throw."

    2.   Guests who have registered with Board President prior to the meeting.

VI   PERSONNEL

    1.   Consider a request to enter into executive session to discuss affirming the resignation from ██████, high school math teacher, effective immediately, ██████ Middle School Science Teacher, effective immediately, and ██████, assistant high school principal's secretary, effective immediately, so the Board may return to open session and vote to affirm the resignations from ██████ high school math teacher, effective immediately, ██████, Middle School Science Teacher, effective immediately, and ██████, assistant high school principal's secretary, effective immediately. 25 O.S. Section 307 (B)(1).

    2.   Consider a request to enter into executive session to discuss employing ██████ as fourth grade teacher for the 2007-2008 school year, on a temporary contract, subject to assignment, pending results from background checks and drug testing, so the Board may return to open session and vote to employ or not employ ██████ as fourth grade teacher for the 2007-2008 school year, on a temporary contract, subject to assignment, pending results from background checks and drug testing. 25 O.S. Section 307 (B)(1).

3. Consider a request to enter into executive session to discuss employing ████████ as second grade teacher for the 2007-2008 school year, on a temporary contract, subject to assignment, pending results from background checks and drug testing, so the Board may return to open session and vote to employ or not employ ████████ as second grade teacher for the 2007-2008 school year, on a temporary contract, subject to assignment, pending results from background checks and drug testing. 25 O.S. Section 307 (B)(1).

4. Consider a request to vote to enter into executive session to discuss employing ████████ as Middle School math teacher for the 2007-2008 school year, on a temporary contract, subject to assignment, pending results from drug testing and background checks, so the Board may return to open session and vote to employ or not employ ████████ as Middle School math teacher for the 2007-2008 school year, on a temporary contract, subject to assignment, pending results from drug testing and background checks. 25 O.S. Section 307 (B)(1).

5. Consider a request to vote to enter into executive session to discuss employing ████████ as High School math teacher for the 2007-2008 school year, on a temporary contract, subject to assignment, pending results from drug testing and background checks, so the Board may return to open session and vote to employ or not employ ████████ as High School math teacher for the 2007-2008 school year, on a temporary contract, subject to assignment, pending results from drug testing and background checks. 25 O.S. Section 307 (B)(1).

6. Consider a request to vote to enter into executive session to discuss employing ████████ as Custodian for the 2007-2008 fiscal year, pending results from drug testing, so the Board may return to open session and vote to employ or not employ ████████ as Custodian for the 2007-2008 fiscal year, pending results from drug testing. 25 O.S. Section 307 (B)(1).

VII   CONSENT DOCKET

INFORMATION: This item is placed on the agenda so that the Board of education by unanimous consent, may designate those routine agenda items that they wish to be approved or acknowledged by one motion. If any item proposed does not meet with the approval of all Board members, that item will be heard in regular order.

1. Consider a request to vote to enter into a lease-purchase agreement between the ████████ Board of Education and ████████ Inc. for the 2007-2008 school year for 8 school buses and 1 handicap school bus.

2. Consider a request to vote to approve the following request within the Activity Fund Accounts for the 2007-2008 school year:

    a. Consider a request to vote to approve the following fundraisers for the 2007-2008 school year:

        i. Sale of Sonic Cards by the ██████ Community Education to raise funds for the purchase of supplies, travel and meeting expenses, contract based salaries, lodging, food, airfare, incentives and appreciation meals.

        ii. Sale of Middle School planners by the Middle School account to raise funds for CRT snacks, CRT Incentives, 8th Grade Dance, Six Flags Trip, student/teacher appreciation, community service, field trips, parties, dances, 100% Club trips, No Tardy party, student/teacher supplies, curriculum and resource helps, office supplies, induction ceremonies, and benevolence expenses.

        iii. Sale of t-shirts and sweatshirts and pizza on Fridays by the high school boy's basketball team to raise funds for equipment, uniforms, meals, awards and supplies.

        iv. Admission to all athletic events and concessions by the athletic department to raise funds for equipment, uniforms, conferences, dues, officials, supplies, awards and facilities.

        v. Gate admissions to the Flag Football game, Horseshoe Toss, and donation jars by the High School Football Touchdown Club to raise funds to purchase a football Run-out.

VIII   REQUESTS

1. Consider a request to vote to appoint a Board Member to serve as ██████ ██████ School District's representative to the OSSBA 2007-2008 Delegate Assembly that will be incorporated into the OSSBA/CCOSA convention.

2. Consider a request to vote to approve or not approve Policy ██████ School Security Lockdown and Procedure ██████ School Security Lockdown.

IX   REPORTS

1. Report by ██████████, Curriculum Director, regarding 2006-2007 test scores.

X   DISCUSSION

XI   FINANCE

1.   Discussion and vote to approve the financial encumbrances, the
      encumbrances for payment and the warrant registers for the following
      appropriated funds:

GENERAL FUND

    a.   2007-2008 General Fund Encumbrances for Approval of Purchase
        Orders ████.
    b.   2007-2008 General Fund Warrant Register 07-01-07 through 07-
        31-04 (Report Date: 08-06-07)
    c.   2006-2007 General Fund Warrant Register 07-01-07 through 07-
        31-07 (Report Date: 08-06-07)

BUILDING FUND

    a.   2007-2008 Building Fund Encumbrances for Approval of Purchase
        Orders ██.
    b.   2007-2008 Building Fund Warrant Register 07-01-07 through 07-
        31-07 (Report Date: 08-06-07)
    c.   2006-2007 Building Fund Warrant Register 07-01-07 through 07-
        31-07 (Report Date: 08-06-07)

CHILD NUTRITION FUND

    a.   2007-2008 Child Nutrition Fund Encumbrances For Approval of
        Purchase Orders ███.
    b.   2007-2008 Child Nutrition Warrant Register 07-01-07 through 07-
        31-07 (Report Date: 08-06-07)
    c.   2006-2007 Child Nutrition Warrant Register 07-01-07 through 07-
        31-07 (Report Date: 08-06-07)

BUILDING FUND

    a.   2007-2008 Building Fund Encumbrances for Approval of Purchase
        Orders ███
    b.   2007-2008 Building Fund Warrant Register 07-01-2007 through
        07-31-07 (Report Date: 08-06-07)
    c.   2006-2007 Building Fund Warrant Register 07-01-2007 through
        07-31-07 (Report Date: 08-06-07)

OCMAPS FUND

        a.   2007-2008 ████████ Fund Encumbrances for Approval of Purchase Order ▮

   2.   Discussion and vote to approve expenditures for the following cash fund for the 2007-2008 school year as listed in the August 11, 2007 Board record book.

        a.   Activity Fund

XII   OLD BUSINESS

   1.   Consider a request to vote to approve or not approve the 2007-2008 ████ ████ Student Handbooks.

XIII   NEW BUSINESS

XIV   ANNOUNCEMENTS, COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS

XV   ADJOURNMENT

ANY PERSON WISHING TO ADDRESS AN ISSUE ON THE AGENDA MUST SIGN IN WITH THE BOARD PRESIDENT AND GIVE SUBJECT MATTER PRIOR TO ROLL CALL. THE BOARD MAY VOTE TO CONVENE IN EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS ANY MATTER ON THIS AGENDA DEEMED APPROPRIATE BY LAW. SUCH VOTES MAY BE TO ADOPT, REJECT, TABLE, REAFFIRM, RESCIND, OR TAKE NO ACTION ON ANY AGENDA MATTER

THIS AGENDA WAS POSTED AT THE ████████ ANNOUNCEMENT BOX OF THE HIGH SCHOOL BUILDING, ANNOUNCEMENT BOX AT THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL LOCATED AT ████████. SUPERINTENDENT'S OFFICE ANNOUNCEMENT BOX, ANNOUNCEMENT BOX AT THE ████████ LOCATED ON THE ████ WALL OF THE ██ ████, WINDOW AT ████████ BULLETIN BOARDS AT ████████, AND THE ████████ BETWEEN 2:30 AND 5:30 P.M. WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 8, 2007 BY ████████ BOARD CLERK.

████████, BOARD CLERK

APPENDIX C

SD-B SCHOOL BOARD AGENDAS

Board of Education Regular Meeting Minutes
November 5th, 2007

The ████████ Board of Education met in a regular meeting on November 5th, 2007, at 6:00 p.m. in the ██ presided and the following Board members, staff and guest were present: ████████████████████████████████
██
████████ Christine Harrison████████████████████████████████████
████████

██
██
██

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Board President ████████████████ at 6:00 p.m.

INSPIRATIONAL EXPRESSION

Inspirational Expression was given by ████████████

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was said in unison.

ROLL CALL

The roll was called by ████████ Deputy minute clerk. All Board members were present.

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion was made by ████████████ and seconded by ████████████ to approve the agenda as printed.

Motion carried by the following vote:

██
██
████████████████

2. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

October 1st, 2007, Regular Meeting

A motion was made by ███████████ and seconded by ███████████ to approve the minutes of October 1st, 2007, regular meeting.

Motion carried by the following vote:

███████████████ ███████ Frances Percival, ██████████████
█████████████████████████
███ Nays None

3. STATEMENT (S) OF PUBLIC CONCERN

██████████████ spoke on the ███████ role that should be established in ████████ football program. He feels ████████ should invite more ████████ ████████ volunteer coaches to help with the team. He stated ████████ coaches will have a better understanding of the team and the players.

4. RECOGNITION OF SPECIAL GUEST(S) AND SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT(S)

███████ welcomed alumni that were seated in the gallery as well as ███████████ ████████. She made the following announcements.

The Veterans assembly will be held November 8th, 2007 at 9:30 a.m. Those in attendance will be ██████████████ the VFW post and a Vietnam Vet. It is being called a "Celebration of Freedom".

████████ reminded everyone that schools will be closed November 16, 2007 for "Statehood Day".

████████ announced the coming of "Dealing with Disaster" to be held at the ████████████ on November 13, 2007. The Agenda covers dealing with the public during a disaster. Registration forms may be obtained from ███████ in the superintendent's office.

5. **SUPERINTENDANT'S REPORT**

A. **Vote to approve Child Nutrition Services Class A Breakfast and Lunch Prices for** ███████████████████ **and** ████████ **High School, effective November 1, 2007**

	Class A Breakfast	Class A Lunch
Full Price	$1.65	$2.45
Reduced Price	.30	.40

A motion was made by ████████████ and seconded by ███████████ to approve submission of the of the application to the Oklahoma State Department of Education, Child Nutrition Program.

Motion carried by the following vote:

██
████████████████████████████
████████

B. **Vote to adopt a resolution calling for the annual school election to be held February 5, 2008, and the annual school runoff election, if necessary, to be held April 1, 2008.**

A motion was made by ██████████ and seconded by ███████████████ to approve the resolution.

Motion carried by the following vote:

██
████████████████████

6. TREASURE'S REPORT

████████████ gave a power point presentation to the Board members.

A. Vote to adopt the 2007-2008 Budget for Independent School District Number ████████████, Oklahoma

A motion was made by ████████████ and seconded by ████████████ to approve the Budget for 2007-2008.

Motion carried by the following vote:

██
████████████████████████████████

████████████

The ████████ Board of Education uses a consent agenda during school board meetings. Items of a routine nature normally approved at board meetings will be approved by one vote unless any board member desires to have a separate vote on any or all of these items. The consent docket consist of the consideration, review, discussion and possible motion to approve the following items as listed under the appropriate category and identified individually by alphabet.

7. PERSONNEL

Recommended that the following persons be employed as of the effective date specified; and that contracts or assignment notifications with the appropriate persons herein listed be approved and executed in the name of the District by the superintendent or person designated by her; with all other personnel recommendations, including terminations, leaves, retirements, and resignations.

A. CERTIFIED PERSONNEL EMPLOYMENTS

Name	Position/Site	Salary	Effective Date
████████	Science Teacher PreK-8	$35,424.39	August 9, 2007

8. **APPROVAL OF ENCUMBRANCES AND PAYROLL 2007-2008**

General Fund ██ (General Operation)	$33,928.93
General Fund ██ (Payroll)	$96,898.19
Building Fund ██	$525.00
Bond Fund ██	$17,336.30

9. **PROPOSED PURCHASING AND GENERAL BUSINESS-** ██████

    A. Vote to approve a contract between ████████████████████ ████████████ and Independent School District Number ████████ Oklahoma, for Secondary and full-Time ████ ████████████████████ for school year 2007-2008

10. **PROPOSED BOARD POLICY**

    A. Vote to adopt the following administrative regulations

        ████ Use of School Property
        ████ Facility Rental Regulations
        ████ Request/Agreement for Use of School Property

        Vote to approve the above listed Board Policies

A motion was made by ██████ Steele and seconded by ██████ ████ to approve items 7A, 8, 9A, and 10 as provided under the consent agenda.

Motion carried by the following vote:

████████ Mahlek ██████████, Marvin Provo, Sylvester Steele, Frances Perc ████ Christopher ██. ██████ ████son, for ██████████

Board of Education Regular Meeting Minutes
November 5th, 2007
Page 6

11. NEW BUSINESS
None

12. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

None

12. VOTE TO ADJOURN

A motion was made by ████████████ and seconded by ████████████ to adjourn the meeting at 7:30 p.m.

Motion carried by the following vote:

██
██
████████████

████████████████████████ President   ████████████, Vice President

████████████████████████ Clerk   ████████ Marvin E. Prowe ██, Deputy Clerk

████████████████████████ Member   ████████████, Deputy Minutes Clerk

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APPENDIX D

SD-C SCHOOL BOARD AGENDAS

SD-C

AGENDA - *1*

Regular Meeting, July 2, 2007 at 6:30 p.m.
Administration Building
████████████
████████████

(Note: The board may discuss, vote to approve, vote to disapprove, vote to table, or decide not to discuss , any item on the agenda)

1. CALL TO ORDER AND RECORDING OF MEMBERS PRESENT AND ABSENT.

2. ADOPT AGENDA.

3. HEARING OF CITIZENS.

    A. Any citizen that wishes to make a presentation to the board concerning an agenda item.

    B. Any citizen that would like to address the board concerning an item for future consideration.

4. DISCUSS AND APPROVE MINUTES OF THE JUNE 4, 2007 REGULAR BOARD MEETING AND THE JUNE 26, 2007 SPECIAL BOARD MEETING.

5. DISCUSS AND VOTE ON FINANCIAL STATEMENTS, ENCUMBRANCES, APPROVAL OF STATE AND FEDERAL FUNDS (June FY07 and July FY08 purchase orders, sign Encumbrance Registers for FY07 and FY08) WARRANTS, APPROVAL AND PAYMENT OF BILLS.

6. REPORTS FROM SCHOOL PERSONNEL

    A. Superintendent's Report
    B. Principal's Report

7. DISCUSS AND VOTE TO APPROVE OR NOT APPROVE BID PACKAGE # 18 – PLUMBING ON HIGH SCHOOL RENOVATION PROJECT.

8. DISCUSS AND VOTE TO APPROVE OR NOT APPROVE THE CONTRACT WITH NABHOLZ CONSTRUCTION FOR CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT SERVICES ON THE HIGH SCHOOL RENOVATION PROJECT.

9. DISCUSS AND VOTE TO APPROVE OR NOT APPROVE THE VENDING CONTRACT FOR THE 2007-08 SCHOOL YEAR.

10. DISCUSS AND VOTE TO APPROVE OR NOT APPROVE A CONTRACT FOR ALCOHOL AND DRUG TESTING FOR THE 2007-08 SCHOOL YEAR.

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11. DISCUSS AND VOTE TO APPROVE OR NOT APPROVE MEMBERSHIP IN THE OKLAHOMA STATE SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION FOR THE 2007-2008 SCHOOL YEAR.

12. DISCUSS AND VOTE TO APPROVE OR NOT APPROVE PURCHASE OF A BUS.

13. DISCUSS AND VOTE TO APPROVE OR NOT APPROVE PURCHASE OF A PICKUP.

14. NEW BUSINESS

15. PERSONNEL

Discuss and vote on an executive session to discuss personnel, review evaluations, review any applications, discuss resignations, discuss employment of replacements for personnel that have resigned or are resigning, discuss resignation of ███████, ███████, and ███████ discussion of hiring a school treasurer, discussion of appointing an assistant school treasurer, discussion of hiring a middle school teacher, discussion of hiring a Spanish teacher, discussion of hiring a school counselor, and discussion of extra-duty salaries for 2007-2008. (25 O. S. Section 307 (B) (1): Executive sessions will be permitted ..for the purpose of discussing employing, hiring, appointing, promoting, demoting, disciplining, or receiving the resignation of an employee.)

A. Discuss and vote to approve or not approve the resignation of ███████ as middle school teacher.

B. Discuss and vote to approve or disapprove the resignation of ███████ as Spanish teacher.

C. Discuss and vote to approve or disapprove the resignation of ███████ as child nutrition personnel.

D. Discuss and vote to employ or not employ a school treasurer.

E. Discuss and vote to appoint and employ an assistant school treasurer on an as need basis.

G. Discuss and vote to employ or not employ a middle school teacher.

H. Discuss and vote to employ or not employ a Spanish teacher.

I. Discuss and vote on extra-duty salaries.

16. INFORMATION TO AND FROM THE BOARD.

17. ADJOURNMENT.

Posted at: ███████ Administration Office

Date and Time: Friday, June 29, 2007 at 3:00 p.m.

Posted by: ███████
Superintendent of Schools

APPENDIX E

SD-D SCHOOL BOARD AGENDAS

NOTICE. ████████ Board of Education
Special Meeting

SD-D
Agenda 2

PLACE OF MEETING: ████████████████
████████████████
████████████████

DATE OF MEETING: November 13, 2006

TIME: 7:00 P. M.

████████ Board of Education
November 13, 2006, 7:00 P. M.

Limitar de 7:0?
Main de

I. Call to order: ████████, President

II. Roll call of members and recording of present and absent

III. Reading of the minutes of the October 9, 2006 special meeting and vote to approve or not approve

IV. Reading of the minutes of the October 13, 2006 special meeting and vote to approve or not approve

V. Vote to approve or not approve General Fund purchase order encumbrance numbers _ through _

VI. Vote to approve or not approve Building Fund purchase order encumbrance numbers _ through _

VII. Vote to approve or not approve Lunch Fund purchase order encumbrance numbers _ through _

VIII. Presentation of warrants issued since approval of last month's purchase orders and warrants issued from previously approved blanket purchase orders

IX. Presentation of Activity Fund activity and balances for the month and vote to approve or not approve transfers

X. Vote to approve or not approve a resolution calling for the annual school election to be submitted to the voters of the district

XI. Vote to approve a schedule for 2007 regular board of education meetings

XII. Vote to approve or not approve the final general fund operating budget for the 2007 fiscal year

XIII. Vote to approve or not approve acceptance of memorial donations to the athletic account in the name of ████████

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XIV. Vote to approve or not approve declaration of surplus one large mixer and or a range/oven

XV. Vote to approve or not approve authorization of superintendent to solicit sealed bids for purchase of new school bus
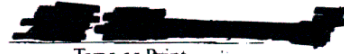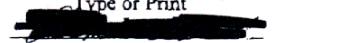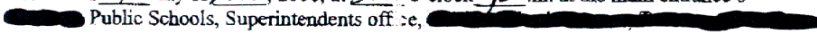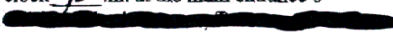
XVI. Superintendent's report

XVII. Principals' reports

XVIII. Motion to adjourn

Next regular meeting: 7:00 P. M. November 13, 2006

Name of person posting this Notice: ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮

| ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ | Type or Print |
| Signature | Title |

Posted this _9th_ day of _Nov_, 2006, at _3.00_ o'clock _p_ .m. at the main entrance of ▮▮▮▮ Public Schools, Superintendents office, ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮

VITA

SHANNON LEE GOODSELL

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Thesis: THE ROLE OF OKLAHOMA SUPERINTENDENTS IN FOUR SMALL
         SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Major Field: Educational Administration

Biographical:

    Personal Data: Born July 16, 1969, Tulsa, Oklahoma

    Education: Graduated from Inola High School, May 1987; received Bachelor of
        Science in Business Administration, December, 1992, Bachelor of Science
        in Secondary Education, May, 1993 from Oklahoma State University;
        Masters of Education, May, 1995 from Northeastern State University;
        Doctor of Education, July, 2009.

    Professional Experiences: Employed as a high school teacher in Miami, OK
        (1993-1994) and Bartlesville, OK (1994-1997). Employed as a high
        school principal in Okay, OK (1997-2000). Employed as a superintendent
        of schools for Liberty, Morris, OK (2000-2001), Crooked Oak, Oklahoma
        City, OK (2001-2009), Tahlequah (2009).

Name: Shannon Lee Goodsell   Date of Degree: July, 2009

Institution: Oklahoma State University   Location: Stillwater, Oklahoma

Title of Study: THE ROLE OF OKLAHOMA SUPERINTENDENTS IN FOUR
                 SMALL SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Pages in Study: 155   Candidate for degree of Doctor of Education

Major Field: School Administration

Scope and Method of Study: Qualitative research to collect data from two sources:
        1) Face-to-face interviews with superintendents and principals representing four
        small Oklahoma school districts and 2) school board agendas.

Findings and Conclusions: The data from the interviews and from the agendas supported
        the conclusions that little change occurred in the role of small Oklahoma school
        district superintendents from 2001-2008. While instructional leadership was
        occasionally mentioned as a duty of the superintendent, managerial functions
        dominated the practices of superintendents. Their primary responsibilities are
        those of a Chief Executive Officer. Balancing budgets, directing personnel,
        advancing public relations, and managing and constructing facilities are the
        primary responsibilities of small Oklahoma school district superintendents. The
        role of the superintendent has been consistent over time.

        Michael Fullan's change theory influenced the conceptual framework of the
        project and was supported by the findings. School districts are small
        bureaucracies which are resistant to change. They are organized into rigid
        hierarchical structures which are designed to maintain the status quo. The
        implementation of change requires the actions of a leader. Change will not be
        implemented if the objectives of the superintendent and the desired change are not
        congruent. The responsibilities of a manager must be accompanied by a sense of
        moral purpose and the responsibilities of a leader for the organization to deviate
        from the status quo and implement the desired change.

ADVISER'S APPOROVAL: _____ Dr. Kenneth Stern