OKLAHOMA'S CAREER AND TECHNOLOGY CENTER SUPERINTENDENTS' PERCEPTIONS ON THEIR PREPARATION AND THE PREPARATION OF FUTURE SUPERINTENDENTS

By

MYRON KIM HOWARD

Bachelor of Science in Sociology
Southwest Missouri State University
Springfield, Missouri
1991

Master of Science in Trade and Industrial Education
Oklahoma State University
Stillwater, Oklahoma
1999

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Oklahoma State University
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Dissertation Approved:

Lynna Ausburn

Dissertation Adviser

Mary Jo Self

Patrick Forsyth

Gary Conti

A. Gordon Emslie

Dean of the Graduate College

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The position of America's public school superintendent is perhaps the most influential position in determining the quality of education for today's youth. Therefore, understanding what constitutes a quality superintendent should be of utmost interest to students, parents, educators, social reformists, and the public at large. A superintendent must have the leadership qualities to navigate the school system through the educational storms. Top education leaders should possess a multitude of talents that he or she needs to "be a culture builder, an organizational change agent, a visionary, and a leader who knows how to build a learning organization through the development of people" (Sparks, 1993, p. 22). The caliber of education our youth receive directly impacts their employment opportunities, quality of life, as well as the entire American economy.

A prepared leader, ready to embrace educational challenges, not only starts with certain intrinsic qualities but should also know how to use those qualities. While some have an enhanced proclivity to be a leader, others obtain their leadership characteristics through a multitude of trainings. Regardless of one's predisposition to be a leader, both formal and informal training programs have a significant impact on preparing a superintendent to be a dynamic leader. However, based on much of the literature that has permeated the educational arena in recent decades, studies have found schools' top position expressing a lack of preparation for success in leading today's schools. A review of the literature suggests that very little research has been conducted on superintendent training

programs. This type of research has been largely neglected, and the majority of literature that has been published suggested educational leadership programs were not adequately preparing administrators for success (Glanz, 1995; Lashway, 1999; Mutsch, 1997; Progressive Policy Institute, 2003). Berg and Barnett (1998) stated that there is such "an absence of reflection upon, and empirical examination of, the chief education officer's role" (p. 2) that further attention must be paid if aspiring individuals were going to be ready for school leadership in the 21st century. In fact, studies in general concerning school superintendents have been very limited since 1920 (Cuban, 1988; Glanz, 1995). Jeffrey Glanz (1995), author of *Exploring Supervision History: An Invitation and Agenda,* provided the following comments on the lack of literature on the school superintendency:

> The field of supervision has been a practical one, concerned more with administrative and supervisory strategies for school operation than with analysis and introspection. Consequently, the field of supervision has produced few histories, since history is not considered a "practical" art. (p. 95)
>
> Regrettably, …supervision as a field of study and practice has escaped serious and ongoing investigation by educational historians. Despite the fact that administration, curriculum, teaching, teacher education, urban schooling, and even special education, for example, have received notable attention, school supervision remains largely unexamined and neglected. (p. 96)
>
> Recently, over a six-month period, the *Journal of Curriculum and Supervision* received 82 manuscripts for possible publication. Only two were historical inquiries, neither specifically relating to supervision. (p. 108)

Much appears to be lacking in understanding the duties, responsibilities, and preparedness of the superintendent.

Numerous articles have been published on the school principal as an administrator, including principal preparation initiatives. By contrast, "there is very little literature focusing just on superintendent preparation" (Glass, Bjork, & Brunner, 2000, p. viii). A recent article entitled, *Role of the School Leader*, (Lashway, 2003) acknowledged and gave credit to the principal as the school leader versus the superintendent. The term principal was mentioned over thirty-five times, whereas the term superintendent was only noted once. This article and many others like it served as examples to this researcher of how superintendents were being left out of the educational leadership spotlight far too often and principals were being credited for their leadership roles. This discovery and a desire to address what were personally perceived as serious issues in preparing for the superintendency served as the impetus for this study.

Establishment of America's Public Education

In order to understand and appreciate the establishment of the American superintendent position, it is appropriate to briefly discuss a few significant events in the history of education. "The history of the superintendency parallels the development of the public school system in the United States" (Callahan, 1966, p. 11). In 1779, Thomas Jefferson, author of the Declaration of Independence was the first legislative leader to discuss the idea of a free public education system (Rippa, 1984). Jefferson's plan of a formal national education system was not well received, as documented by several researchers:

> Although this plan, viewed in today's light, appears strikingly elitist, in Jefferson's day it was considered excessively liberal and philanthropic. In fact, it was defeated by the Virginia legislature, no doubt in large part because of the unwillingness of the wealthy

> to pay for the education of the poor. Nonetheless, the plan is considered important because it removed the stigma of pauperism from elementary schooling (Rippa, 1984) and because it proposed a system of universal, free, public education, if only for three years. (Webb, Metha, & Jordan, 1992, p. 104)

Although the Virginia legislature rejected the plan in 1779, the public had now been exposed to the idea of providing a free education system to the masses by a respected public figure in Jefferson. "His ideas formed the basis of education systems developed in the 19th century" (Thattai, 2001, para. 2). As America's public education system began to gain momentum, an organized system began to develop in the early 19th century. Prior to this time, "the education system was highly localized and available only to wealthy people" (para. 5). Although a national education system was developing, it was unstructured and primarily geared toward the elementary level. It was not until the 1840's and 1850's that American education began to become more than just a collection of disjointed and localized education institutions (Thattai, 2001; Hiner, 1999).

In 1852, Massachusetts passed the first law requiring children to attend elementary school and New York quickly followed suit, passing its version of a compulsory school attendance law in 1853 (Thattai, 2001). From the 1850's on, the nation began to see a proliferation in various state laws supporting public schools. States began to establish schools for elementary students as well as secondary students. According to the tenth amendment in the Bill of Rights, individual states were responsible for the education of their citizens. The tenth amendment declares that "the powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States

respectively, or to the people" (Kinney, 1964, p. 15). Since the Federal government declined the responsibility for education, states were forced to find ways to finance their schools for all children.

In 1874, a Michigan Supreme Court ruled that local property taxes could be used to support secondary education (Pautler Jr., 1999). Once a system of financing public education had been established, America's education institutions began to grow at a rapid rate. Public education within the United States in the late 19th century was firmly supported by local taxes in most states. By 1910, 72% of children in America were included in the country's public education system. "In 1940 local property taxes financed 68 percent of public school expenses, while the states contributed 30 percent" (Thattai, 2001, p. 3). Today both local and state monies significantly fund America's public education, with the Federal government contributing only a small percentage. Once a structured and reliable funding source for schools was established, the foundation for trained superintendents was in place.

The Evolution of Administrative Preparation Programs in America

Many authors of literature on education preparation recognize that there are four distinct periods of development in the evolution of America's administrative preparation programs. Joseph Murphy (1998) has identified these periods: Ideological Era (1820-1899), Prescriptive Era (1900-1946), Scientific Era (1947-1985), and Dialectic Era (1986-present).

In the Ideological Era, administrative preparation programs were quite limited, in both quantity and quality. In 1860, only "27 cities with school districts

had created a position called the superintendency" (Glass, Bjork, & Brunner, 2000, p. 17). During the late 19th century and the early 20th century a greater numbers of American youth began to enroll in public schools, thus causing America's educational institutions to become increasingly complex (Callahan, 1966, 1997-2005). This influx of student enrollment sparked a significant degree of decision-making authority to be transferred from boards of education to the superintendent. School boards were beginning to realize the need for a full-time professional to manage the daily educational affairs. In addition to the increasing student enrollments, the scientific management movement "helped produce the position of school superintendent" (Bjork & Lindle, 2001, p. 79). Between these two events, a proliferation of formal administrative training programs in the early 20th century was born. The Scientific Era offered leadership training programs that were facilitated by faculty that can be described as "discipline-focused specialists with little practical experience and a strong bent toward rigorous theory and research" (Lashway, 1999, p. 2). The final period or the Dialectic Era seems to be plagued with growing criticism of the deficiencies of current preparation programs and the leaders it produces (Murphy, 1998). The apparent weaknesses in the present system of preparing school superintendents for their leadership roles present a rationale for the present study.

The Evolution of Career and Technical Education

Throughout the history of Career and Technical Education a number of factors can be credited for raising the awareness of and need for what has been historically referred to as "vocational education" (Stewart, 1982). These factors

include, but are not limited to, automation during the Industrial Revolution, youth unemployment, war and the threat of war, special interest groups, and global competition. As a result of these factors, a significant amount of legislation was introduced over the last 100 years that significantly funded Career and Technical Education.

The Constitution of the United States does not make any provisions for the Federal government to fund, regulate, or maintain an educational system for its citizens. This responsibility is bestowed upon each state (Gordon, 2003). However, the Federal government does have a vested interest in the quality of education within each of the 50 states. In past years the Federal government has contributed greatly to the support of educational initiatives. Specifically, the Federal government has provided states with an impressive amount of support for training programs, usually in the form of matching funds (Stewart, 1982).

There is little doubt that the Morrill Act of 1862 had unprecedented influence on Career and Technical Education by establishing land-grant colleges which focused on developing agriculture and mechanical arts. However, many educational authorities espouse the Smith-Hughes Act of 1917 as the most enduring piece of legislation for Career and Technical Education. It created the Federal Board of Vocational Education, marked the beginning of federally funded support, and specified teacher-training activities (Barlow, 1992; Finch & McGough, 1991; Gordon, 2003). Since the Smith-Hughes Act of 1917 there have been numerous federal enactments to perpetuate the advancement of Occupational

Education. Chapter two will discuss the major legislation of Career and Technical Education.

Career and Technology Education in Oklahoma

Even before statehood, training programs existed in the Oklahoma territory. For example, the territorial legislature established Oklahoma A & M College to teach agriculture and mechanical arts. However, it was not until the Smith-Hughes Act of 1917 that Oklahoma made its commitment to Career and Technical Education. The 1917 legislature with House Bill 213 agreed to meet all necessary provisions of the Smith-Hughes Act (Stewart, 1982). The commitment was made, a formal plan was created, and Oklahoma was now eligible to receive federal dollars. "That first year the sum of $70,832 was appropriated for Oklahoma. Of this, one half (or $35,416) was for fiscal 1917-1918 and an equal amount for 1918-1919 (Stewart, p. 17). House Bill 213 is often viewed as the milestone that established Oklahoma's first commitment to Career and Technical Education. During this time period, all Career and Technical Education was operated under higher education, secondary education, or private education.

In 1927, the Oklahoma legislature placed "vocational education" under the direction of the State Board of Education (Stewart, 1982). It was during this same year that the Division of Vocational Agriculture was created. Ross Floyd and James B. Perky were the men chosen to spearhead the division (Goble, 2004). On June 6, 1941, James B. Perky became Oklahoma's first director of vocational education (Stewart). J.B. Perky is still respected in the state as one of the primary leaders in Oklahoma's Career and Technology Education system.

By 1964, Oklahoma's division of vocational education was ready to expand on an unprecedented scale. The impetus for this expansion was the National Education Improvement Act of 1963. Goble (2004) expressed it this way: "Largely in response to the 1963 act, the state vocational department adds new divisions responsible for business and office education, health occupations, and area schools. In addition, a new Division of Special Services is made responsible for various functions that are unrelated to any particular occupation or division" (p. 184). Just two years later, Oklahoma's Career and Technical Education system experienced another milestone when voters approved State Question 434, which authorized the formation of area vocational-technical schools (AVTS) and provided separate elected school boards (Goble).

One of the greatest champions of Oklahoma's Career and Technical Education system was Governor Dewey Bartlett who is often referred to as the "job-gettingest" governor in Oklahoma's history (Stewart, 1982). Governor Bartlett recognized that a state could not successfully attract jobs, especially high paying jobs, without a skilled labor force. In 1968, Governor Bartlett signed legislation that created a separate governoring board and a separate state department for AVTS (Area Vocational Technical Schools) called the State Department of Vocational-Technical Education (Goble, 2004). Over the next couple of decades, AVTS began to form across the state.

According to Goble (2004), during the 1980's and 1990's Career and Technical Education gained such respect that in 1987 the State Department of Vocational and Technical Education and the State Regents for Higher Education

began to give college credit for certain vocational courses through cooperative agreements. In 1992, sixty-four of the state's sixty-six largest processing and manufacturing companies utilized instruction from the State Department of Vocational and Technical Education to train their existing workers. Not only did Career and Technical Education refuse to remain stagnate in action, but underwent two name changes during this same time period. The first name change was small when the word State was dropped, making the agency the Oklahoma Department of Vocational and Technical Education (ODVTE). The second name restructuring was in 1999, when the name became the Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education (ODCTE). Given the strength, size, and influence of the ODCTE and career education in Oklahoma, and its strong relationship to the state's economic well-being, a study of the preparation of its educational leaders is particularly important.

Career and Technical Superintendents

Career and Technical Superintendents in General

While a limited amount of literature exists on preparation programs and certification examinations for superintendents of common education, the literature in these areas for Career and Technology Superintendents is practically non-existent. An investigation of the literature found few relevant articles on Career and Technology administration. Of the few research studies on Career and Technology administration, the vast majority did not investigate administration exclusively at the superintendent level. A review of the literature found that when preparation programs were discussed, virtually no distinction was made between

leadership training at the campus director level and the superintendent level. It is unclear why different levels of administration did not receive separate trainings. All levels of administration were simply grouped together during the leadership trainings.

Similar to superintendents in common schools, "there is a growing concern that appropriate educational leadership for career and technical education programs may be approaching a critical shortage" (Zirkle & Cotton, 2001, p.15). For several years experts in Career and Technical leadership have reported on how administrative preparation programs were diminishing across the nation. Zirkle (1998) confirmed these reports in his article, *Vocational Administrator: An Endangered Species*. In the article Zirkle found a decline in the number of preparation programs in Career and Technical administration. Thus, the literature seemed to support the need for a research study that just focused on preparation programs and certification exams for Career and Technical Superintendents.

The way in which Career and Technical Education is structured and serves its learners vary greatly from state to state. After an in-depth search on the Internet of states with separate state departments for secondary Career and Technical Education systems, it was discovered that Oklahoma is very unique. The only states with a separate Department of Career and Technology Education like Oklahoma are Arkansas, Connecticut, Georgia, Kentucky, and North Dakota. These states deliver Career and Technical Education to its students in various ways. For example, Ohio promotes Career and Technology Education from the Office of Career-Technical and Adult Education and does not have Career and

Technical Superintendents in charge of individual school districts. Another example is the state of Nebraska. In this state, Career and Technology Education is under the umbrella of the Nebraska Department of Education.

Career and Technology Superintendents in Oklahoma

Although Deeptha Thattai (2001) acknowledged, "The Smith-Hughes Act of 1917 helped create vocational programs in high schools" (para. 11) throughout the nation, it was not until 1968 that Oklahoma's State Department of Vocational-Technical Education was formed (Goble, 2004). Since 1968, Oklahoma has seen the development of 29 Career and Technology School Districts (CTSD). Each CTSD has its own school board and district Superintendent. These school heads currently receive their leadership preparation in the following ways: University based training programs, non-university based programs, and/or on-the-job experience. It is important to recognize that leadership preparation occurs in both informal and formal situations. Darkenwald and Merriam (1982) defines informal as "any purposeful, systematic and sustained learning activity that is not sponsored, planned, or directed by and organization" and formal as occurring "in natural social settings". Universities in Oklahoma do offer various types of educational leadership programs; however, they are not exclusively for Career and Technology Superintendents. Leadership preparation programs are often viewed as unfocused and generally lacking in sequence, continuity, and practical experiences (Hoyle, 1989). Non-university based preparation programs are typically more focused on specific vocational issues, but once again the learners are from different levels of administration.

The Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education does offer administrative training programs for all current administrators and those interested in becoming an administrator. Currently the same preparation training exists for all levels of administration. According to the ODCTE (2006) website, there are two leadership programs that the state department offers. Leadership CareerTech is considered to be the basic leadership program offered by ODCTE. This program is geared toward CareerTech employees who have shown an interest in pursuing a leadership position within the CareerTech system. A more advanced leadership program called TechCAP (Technology Center Administrative Program) is also offered by the ODCTE. This program is intended for current CareerTech administrators and potential administrators. The first time this leadership training program was offered was in 2003, with a graduation class of twenty-three. The participants of the leadership class represented several position levels within the CareerTech system. Table 1 describes numbers of positions represented.

Table 1

Participants of TechCAP'03

Positions	Frequency	Percent
Directors	8	35%
Assistant Superintendents	4	17%
Coordinators	3	13%
Instructors	3	13%
Assistant Directors	2	9%
Dept. of CareerTech Program Administrators	2	9%
Chief Financial Officer	1	4%
Total	23	100%

As one can see, while leadership preparation programs do exist, the audience is typically from several administrative levels. When a diverse administrative population occurs, the curriculum, class discourse, and teaching strategies are not likely focused on areas and issues that pertain specifically to superintendents. This situation provided another impetus for this researcher to examine the training and preparation of Oklahoma's CareerTech superintendents.

Theoretical Perspective

The researcher approached this study from a constructionist perspective. This conceptual lens provided the theoretical rationale that allowed the researcher to adequately investigate the perceptions of the participants, and construct a meaningful analysis of the data. It recognized the fact that the participants' knowledge was based on the culmination of their constructed experiences and events; therefore, it was ideal for this type of mixed model research. Several elements were considered in selecting the theoretical perspective, elements such as maintaining empathetic neutrality during the study, conducting inquiry, interpreting data, and constructing the final narrative. In sum, since a superintendent's knowledge and reality are derived from actual personal experiences, this conceptual approach produced the type of rich data needed to understand and improve professional leadership programs.

Statement of the Problem

While studies do exist that show superintendents do feel well prepared their first year as superintendent. There is a debate that historically superintendents as a group have not, and currently are not, receiving adequate

training prior to assuming their position (Haller, Brent, McNamara, & Rufus, 1994; Hannaway & Crowson, 1989; McCarthy, 1999; Progressive Policy Institute, 2003). Little research on Oklahoma's Career and Technology Center Superintendents' perceptions on their preparation and the preparation of future superintendents exists. Until empirical research identifies the skills, attributes, and knowledge perceived as necessary for preparation programs, adequate training programs are not likely. The problem is that it is impossible to develop appropriate and effective training because it is unclear what skills, attributes, and knowledge are relevant and appropriate for modern day preparation training programs for aspiring CareerTech superintendents. A preliminary review of the literature revealed, "the literature on school reform is largely silent regarding the role of the superintendent" (Berg & Barnett, 1998, p. 3). The availability of books and articles published on superintendents and their role as school leaders has been a declining trend since the 1920s (Cuban, 1998). With regard to the literature that does exist, top-level education leaders have overwhelmingly reported the inadequacy of administrative preparation programs. In fact, referencing the research, Bjork and Lindle (2001) wrote, "Most practitioner assessments of their preparation programs are decidedly negative" (p. 87). According to the literature, this is not a problem reported by a small handful of school heads, but an educational epidemic. An article in *The International Journal of Educational Management* reported:

> Consequently, school administrators routinely appear to be unprepared to respond to new challenges. This apparent lack of preparation on the part of school administrators may be due to a lack of programs in continuing education directly related to

> superintendent development needs. (Ovando, Harris, & Menefee, 1998, para. 1)

Moreover, Weindling and Earley (1987) conducted a two-year survey of superintendents from 1982 to 1984. The findings were clear: Less than one half of central office executives perceived themselves to be adequately prepared to lead a school during their initial appointment. The unfortunate combination of the nation's experienced superintendents nearing retirement, the ever expanding administrative complexities, and programs not sufficiently preparing practitioners for leadership roles are likely to have negative repercussions for the future of America's educational system.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to describe the perceptions of current Oklahoma Career and Technology Superintendents about the skills, knowledge, and attributes that are obtained through on-the-job experience, university based, and non-university based preparation programs for Career and Technology Superintendents in Oklahoma. One of the major goals of this research was to determine the various types and extent of leadership training needed to prepare individuals for success as the Chief Executive Officer for the 21st century. In other words, the aim of the research was to not only understand the phenomenon of providing adequate preparation for CareerTech superintendents, but to establish what subjects, strategies of learning, and practical experiences are needed prior to assuming a top-level administrative position.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. How well do Oklahoma Career and Technology (CareerTech) superintendents perceive they were prepared to perform their job duties their first year on the job?
2. Which job duties do Oklahoma CareerTech superintendents perceive they were least prepared to fulfill their first year of work?
3. To what degree do Oklahoma CareerTech superintendents perceive there is a need for an exclusive preparation program for superintendents?
4. What topics, delivery methods, and specific preparation learning strategies do CareerTech superintendents suggest?
5. Who should provide CareerTech superintendent preparation programs?
6. What do current CareerTech superintendents perceive as the future training needs?
7. How do the opinions of these superintendents compare to literature and theory?

A five-page written questionnaire was created to obtain data necessary to answer the seven questions. These seven questions were open-ended, a modified Likert rating scale, and limited choice responses. The participants' responses to the questionnaires produced the raw data needed to allow the researcher through analytical discourse, to probe deeper into why the participants responded as they did. The data obtained from the questionnaires and interviews were analyzed using a mixed-method approach that combined qualitative and quantitative techniques.

Population and Sample

This research study was designed to involve the entire population of the 29 Career and Technology Education (CareerTech) superintendents of the Oklahoma Career and Technology Education System. All of the 29 CareerTech superintendents in Oklahoma were initially involved via the mailed questionnaire. Once the mailed questionnaires were returned and analyzed, a sample of six superintendents (20%) were purposefully selected for personal interviews. The criteria for selection of these six superintendents were contingent on the school district funding tier classification as determined by the Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education. The sample of superintendents for the interviews consisted of the following: One superintendent from tier one, two superintendents from tier two, two superintendents from tier three, and one superintendent from tier four. The number of superintendents selected from each tier was determined by the relative size of each funding tier: Tier number one represented four subjects; tier number two represented twelve subjects; tier number three represented nine subjects; and tier number four represented four subjects.

Assumptions and Limitations of the Study

In designing this study, the researcher made the assumption that the participants wanted better training, would be honest in responding, and knew how to deliver the content that is needed in effective preparation programs. To the extent that these assumptions are false, they represent limitations of the study.

The study is confined to CareerTech superintendents in the state of Oklahoma. This delimitation makes generalizations of its findings and recommendations beyond these population boundaries inappropriate.

A third limitation of the study is that while it was intended to be a population study, not all Oklahoma CareerTech superintendents chose to participate. The effects and extent of this limitation are discussed in chapter three.

Definition of Terms

The following conceptual definitions from several sources provide explanations of terms used in this study:

Administration---School management

Author---"The member sponsoring a measure introduced in either house" (Glossary of Legislative Terms, 2006, p. 2).

Bill---"Draft of a proposed law presented to the Legislature for consideration" (Glossary of Legislative Terms, 2006, p. 2).

CareerTech--- is the term often referred to as Oklahoma's system of Career and Technology education. (www.okcareertech.org).

Career and Technology School Districts (CTSD's)---Individual school districts within the Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education. Oklahoma has 29 Career and Technology School Districts.

Certification---"A process of legal sanction, authorizing the holder of a credential to perform specific services in the public schools of the state." (Kinney, 1964, p. 36)

Chamber---"Official place where a legislative body meets" (Glossary of Legislative Terms, 2006, p. 3).

Constructionist Perspective--- This particular perspective or theoretical framework recognizes and considers all knowledge and reality to be constructed from the practices and experiences of the individual (Crotty, 1998).

Continuing Professional Development (CPD)---"is the systematic maintenance and improvement of knowledge, skills and competence, and the enhancement of learning, undertaken throughout an individual's working life" (The Institute of Continuing Professional Development, 2006).

Educational Practitioners---Practicing educators who are considered to be professionals and experts.

Joint Resolution---A proposal, which must be passed by both chambers and has the authority and force of a law (Glossary of Legislative Terms).

Leader---"An individual who accepts the authoritative expectations of others to responsibly guide the activities and enhance the performance of an organization" (Guthrie & Reed, 1991, p. 10).

Leadership---Someone who directs the operations, activities, or performance of others (Webster, 1997).

Learning ---"What people do when they want to make sense of experience. It may involve an increase of skills, knowledge, understanding, values and capacity to reflect" (McLean, 2004, p. 19).

Life Long Learning---The process by which learning occurs throughout ones lifetime in both formal and informal situations.

Mentor---An experienced and knowledgeable adult (such as a school superintendent) who accepts the responsibility and who expresses a desire to share his/her acquired knowledge and skills with a less experienced adult (such as a newly appointed superintendent) by supporting and guiding him/her and also by acting as a role model during the initial stage of the superintendency (Westhuizen & Erasmus, 1994).

Mentoring---"A dynamic, reflective work relationship between an experienced official (mentor) and a newly appointed employee in an organization (protégé), in the sense that the work relationship is guided by the professional development of both the participants" (Daresh, 1988, p. 4).

ODCTE---Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education, formerly known as the State Department of Vocational and Technical Education.

Preparation Programs---Leadership trainings designed to promote school leaders for administrative positions. They may be university based or non-university based.

Professional Development---"All those activities which focus on the personal growth and development of an individual which enable him/her to comprehend the nature of the new post and to comply with the requirements of that post" (Westhuizen & Erasmus, 1994, p. 1).

Protégé---A less experienced adult (such as a newly appointed superintendent) who accepts the responsibility for his/her own professional development by depending on a mentor (such as an experienced superintendent) to help him/her to

acquire the necessary skills, as well as to define an individual professional conviction in order to handle the post effectively (Westhuizen & Erasmus, 1994).

Reflective Practice---The practice of looking back and learning through experience and practice (Hortog, 2002).

SDVTE---State Department of Vocational and Technical Education (Stewart, 1982, p. 23). Currently known as the Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education.

Standing Committee---"A committee established in a house for consideration of legislation" (Glossary of Legislative Terms, 2006, p. 14).

Superintendent---The person in charge of a school. Sometimes referred to as: School Head; Top-level Administration; Chief Executive Officer; Chief Education Officer; Central Office Executive; Local, District, County Superintendent; or Commissioner.

Vocational Administration---Can refer to either the vocational superintendent or other vocational administrator, or both. Also known as Career and Technology Administration or Career-Technical Administration.

Significance of the Study

For well over a century, considerable effort has been devoted to preparing educational leaders for their roles. However, this effort has not been entirely successful, and with the onset of technological advancements and socio-political initiatives in recent decades, the educational dynamics have been changing at a much faster pace than leadership training programs, resulting in a current lack of specific training for superintendents. Thus, the lack of adequate preparation for a

school's CEO (Chief Education Officer) is an unresolved dilemma that continues to plague the educational arena. This research has the potential to benefit current superintendents and aspiring superintendents because it will identify what topics need to be taught, when they need to be taught, and how they need to be taught. Furthermore, the research results can provide important information to improve content, modify existing training strategies, and address any areas of preparation currently not being taught. Therefore, this study's significance lies in the findings, conclusions, and recommendations of the research that will help improve the preparation of Oklahoma's Career and Technology (CareerTech) superintendents by the ODCTE and Oklahoma universities. Since both the university and state department have a vested interest in how top-level administrators are prepared, it is reasonable to assume that the potential exists for either entity to use the research to support changes in the state law concerning the preparation of CareerTech superintendents.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

A review of the literature investigated several areas affecting the preparation of superintendents. Some time was devoted to learning more about the relevancy of state certification examinations. Preparation programs for the Chief Education Officer were a major topic of the review of the literature. The literature review investigated the dilemma of aging superintendents and how this dilemma might impact the pool of qualified school leaders. A look at the recent proliferation in job duties and responsibilities of top-level administrators was examined in the literature. Recommendations for improving preparation programs were explored to some extent, as well as many other areas affecting America's educational leadership preparation. All of these areas were investigated in the literature to gain greater insight into the research study. This chapter will begin with a discussion of leadership, in the general sense, then focus on educational leadership.

Leadership

"Social changes over the next few decades will place a burden on our educational system as great as any it has ever faced" (Swanson, 1981, p. 215). Quality educational leadership is paramount in effectively addressing these social changes. The word leadership can be very ambiguous. In order to understand and appreciate educational leadership, a short discussion of what constitutes leadership is in order. In addition to the leadership definition identified in chapter

one, there are many other popular definitions. There are at least 276 generally accepted definitions of leadership (Progressive Policy Institute, 2003). Consider the following three explanations of leadership. The Progressive Policy Institute suggested, "Leadership is both art and skill. It entails both the prosaic skill of managing routine processes and the dynamic task of leading individuals through technological, organizational, and cultural change" (p. 4). A less comprehensive definition of leadership is provided by Northouse (2001): "Leadership is a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal" (p. 3). Clark and Clark (1996) emphasized this definition: "Leadership is an activity or set of activities, observable to others, that occurs in a group, organization, or institution and which involves a leader and followers who willingly subscribe to common purposes and work together to achieve them" (p. 25). As one can see, the term leadership can be studied from a number of definitions; therefore those that have devoted much research to the study of leadership often view leadership in terms of different theories and approaches.

Common Theories of Leadership

In recent decades, volumes of literature have been written on leadership theory. The various models of leadership, which permeate both private and public organizations, influence educational leadership. According to Palestini (1998), "The successful administrator needs to have a sound grasp of leadership theory and the skills to implement it" (p. 34). This need would certainly apply to school Superintendents. Therefore this section will provide a brief overview of a few popular leadership theories that could impact a superintendency.

Palestini (1998) discussed several common leadership theories. The first was the Trait theory which "suggests that we can evaluate leadership and propose ways of leading effectively by considering whether an individual possesses certain personality traits, social traits, and physical characteristics" (p. 25). For example, this theory would support the notion that a person with above average communication skills, large in stature, or very friendly has a greater proclivity of being a successful leader than someone with less noticeable qualities. The second theory described leadership in terms of a leader's behavior. The Behavior theory was broken down into two categories: Production-oriented and employee-oriented. Leaders with production-oriented behaviors demonstrated behaviors such as the drive to accomplish a task or counting results, whereas the employee-oriented behaviors concentrated on the satisfaction of the worker. The third theory was the Contingency or Situational theory. It recognized that no particular trait or behavior works in all situations, that one's leadership ability is contingent on the situation. The fourth was the Leader-environment-follower interaction theory which indicated "that effective leaders first analyze deficiencies in the follower's ability, motivation, role perception, and work environment that inhibit performance and then act to eliminate these deficiencies" (p. 27). The fifth theory suggested a different type of Situational theory. This Situational model was analyzed in the four unique areas of structural, human resource, political, and symbolic to determine its level of effectiveness. The sixth theory mentioned was the Structural theory. It focused on the implementation of ideas into actions, by first understanding the relationship between the organization's structure, strategy,

and environment. The seventh theory was the Human Resource theory, which promoted leadership through people. Effective human resource leaders empower people by allowing them to be very involved in the decision-making process. The eighth theory discussed by Palestini was the Political theory. It constantly assesses the distribution of power and interests. Critical thought is given to the decision-making process and who has the power.

Transformational Leadership Theory

Transformational Leadership theory is a common theory of leadership; it is perhaps the most popular educational leadership theory today. Therefore additional time will be devoted to this theory. Palestini (1998) explained that, "Transformational leadership theory combines aspects of the early trait theory perspective with the more current situational or contingency models" (p. 35). In other words, transformational leaders utilize certain personal traits or qualities, such as having a new vision, the ability to empower others, being a strong role model, and motivational skills to transform their relationship with their followers. According to Northouse (2001), "Transformational leadership refers to the process whereby an individual engages with others and creates a connection that raises the level of motivation and morality in both the leader and the follower" (p. 132). In this model the charisma of the leader inspires followers to go beyond their personal interests by increasing their inspiration to focus on the goal of the team. This type of leadership approach is concerned with developing followers to their fullest potential (Avolio, 1999), in an effort to change the existing structure.

While this theory of leadership has gained popularity since the early 1980's (Northouse), it is not without its critics.

Critics contend that the Transformational theory has a number of weaknesses. Some would argue that this leadership model is elitist or antidemocratic (Avolio, 1999), because while it can give the impression that there is a focused relationship between the leader and followers, the leader is actually trying to create change by promoting his or her vision and advancing a new direction. Another criticism of the theory is that the leader has so much influence over the followers by formulating new values and reestablishing their morality that this type of leadership has the potential to produce destructive consequences. The risk of abuse by manipulating others is always present within an organization since a necessary component of Transformational Leadership is the charismatic quality of the leader (Conger, 1989; Howell & Avolio, 1992). Critics also contend that the theory lacks conceptual clarity. Northouse (2001) stated, "Because it covers such a wide range, including creating a vision, motivating, being a change agent, building trust, giving nurturance, and acting as a social architect, to name a few, it is difficult to define clearly the parameters of transformational leadership" (p. 146). Moreover, many leadership practitioners have a difficult time understanding the difference between Transformational and Charismatic Leadership and often treat the two as one (Bryman, 1992). Finally, according to Lashway (2000) a limitation is that "Transformational strategies also create high expectations that cannot be easily maintained, especially when change is slow to come" (p. 33).

History of Leadership Preparation Programs

While today's school administrator is not perfect and still faces many challenges, educational leadership training has made great strides in improvement since the early 1800s. The advancement of quality preparation programs has seen four periods of evolution (Glass, Bjork, & Brunner, 2000). Each period had certain developments and key dimensions, which distinguished them from one another. All four eras were general time frames, which included common events, prevailing educational philosophies, and specific training objectives. Murphy (1998) described these four eras as "The Ideological Era, 1820-1899; the Prescriptive Era, 1900-1946; the Scientific Era, 1947-1985; and the Dialectic Era, beginning around 1986" (p. 359).

The Ideological Era (1820-1889)

During the 1800's the American public was beginning to realize the benefits of public education. "By 1865 systems of common schools had been established throughout the Northern, Midwestern, and Western states, and more than 50% of the nation's children were enrolled in public schools" (Webb, Metha, & Jordan, 1991, p. 116). In its infancy years, the school superintendency was recognized by many titles depending on the community, county, state, and decade. Webb, Metha, and Jordan acknowledged that terms such as City, District, or County School Superintendent were used to describe the superintendent position. Whereas, other school districts referred to the position as a "head teacher" or a "clerk" because of the duties prescribed to them by the school board (Glass, Bjork, & Brunner, 2000, p.18). Many school boards wanted to retain absolute

authority, so the "head teacher" or "clerk" was hired to assist teachers and do clerical work. Kinney (1964) identified several terms to describe a school's head teacher as "the County Superintendent of Schools, County Superintendent of Education, County Superintendent of Public Instruction, or County School Commissioner" (p. 46). The point of recognizing the various names of the school superintendent was to highlight the lack of continuity from one district to another.

However, not only did the name of the position vary, but the duties, responsibilities, and the district's expectations greatly differed. Society in the 19th century perceived school administration much differently than how today's public views a superintendent. School heads of this era, especially in the first few decades, received very limited or no administrative training. Leadership preparation programs were practically non-existent. The need for a school superintendent was in its infancy. School superintendents were given very limited and specific roles by the school boards. "Little, if any, formal specialized preparation was needed, and none was provided. The minimal formal education which was designed for teachers was deemed sufficient for those who would become administrators" (Murphy, 1998, p. 361). In most districts, early superintendents assumed only a few duties, such as:

- Supervise instruction by developing a "uniform course of study" (Webb, Metha, & Jordan, 1991, p. 117);
- Provide guidance to teachers in the area of curriculum and instruction (Murphy, p. 361);

- Assume "the power to strike the one session bell in stormy weather, to close schools a limited number of times in the year for teachers' meetings, and once in two years, to assign schools and departments of school work to the several supervisors (Callahan, 1966, p. 24);
- Examine and grant certification to teachers so they could be hired for the district (Kinney, 1964); and
- Served as "moral role models, disseminators of the democratic ethic, and most importantly, builders of the American dream" and "clerical supervisor of students and teachers". (Glass, Bjork, & Brunner, 2000, p. 18)

It was the school board that retained all the authority and made the vast majority of educational decisions for the district.

During this Ideological Era, there was a struggle between proponents of school boards having absolute management of the school and advocates of superintendents operating the school. Callahan (1966) reported that well into the 19th century, highly respected people vehemently objected to one person having authority to make important decisions for the school district. One of those highly respected people was William Torrey Harris, United States Commissioner of Education, who publicly stated that school heads should not be given "arbitrary authority" (p. 79). Elected officials such as Aaron Gove and Andrew Draper also warned against giving superintendents liberal authority to select teachers.

The efficacy of school boards having total control of educational management was challenged in 1866 when the National Association of School Superintendents was formed. This organization has been regarded as one of the major catalysts behind superintendents expanding their supervisory roles. It provided a network of communication and ideas that facilitated the operational authority of the school's top administrative officer (Callahan, 1966).

Although administrative education in the 19th century was seen as providing few educational leadership programs, there were pockets within the education community that did promote administrative training programs for superintendents. For instance, the University of Michigan taught the first college level course in 1879 on educational administration. The primary curriculum consisted of teaching educational philosophy and school management (Murphy, 1998). After the University of Michigan's administrative preparation program was established, other institutions began to offer their version of administrative training. Regardless of the institution, leadership training was reasonably simple, limited in curriculum, and focused on basic supervisory skills. Callahan and Button (1964) and Button (1966) have espoused two doctrines of school leadership before 1900 that, at least to some extent, exerted influence on thinking about how administrators were prepared for educational leadership. Callahan and Button and Button identified the doctrine of administration as the teaching of teachers (1870-1885) and stated that "administration was very simple, really; administration was supervision" (Button, p. 218). The second doctrine was the doctrine of administration as applied philosophy (1885-1905), which viewed the

administrator at having eternal wisdom and being the best authority on any matter. This doctrine "made the administrator into something like the clergyman and borrowed from him some of the clergyman's status" (Button, p. 219). Excluding a handful of isolated preparation programs, the main method of preparing superintendents for duty was disseminated through books, journal articles, and public lectures regardless of the administrative doctrine being used.

One of the most renowned writers of school supervision was Henry Barnard, the first U. S. Commissioner of Education and former Connecticut legislator. He was known for his many public lectures and his editorship of the *American Journal of Education*. Webb, Metha, and Jordan (1991) stated "Barnard's greatest success lay in his democratic philosophy 'schools good enough for the best and cheap enough for the poorest'" (p. 115). Historians have recognized him for his many accomplishments in the common school movement. Barnard is considered by many to be the "Father of American School Administration" (Webb, Metha, and Jordan, p. 115). From the Ideological Era of 1820-1899 it has been established that due to the limited and fragmented role of the school superintendent, leadership preparation was often inadequate and difficult to obtain.

The Prescriptive Era (1900-1946)

The Prescriptive Era was also known as the Era of Scientific Management (Glass, Bjork, & Brunner, 2000, p. 18) because of the prevailing social philosophy ushered in by Frederick Winslow Taylor, Founder of the Scientific Management Philosophy. It was during this second period that " reformers sought to centralize

control of community schools under professionally trained educators" (Progressive Policy Institute, 2003, p. 6).

As the educational system began to grow and become more complex, school boards throughout the country realized the need for a full-time professional to operate and manage the school on a daily basis. By the early 20th century, the term professional superintendent was established, and the school board began to transfer a significant amount of the management responsibility to the superintendent. The transfer of power and authority to the superintendent did not come easily; school boards found it very difficult to increase the superintendent's discretion while decreasing their own influence. In fact, "Ellwood Cubberley, a former superintendent who wrote books and articles on school administration in the early 1900's, called this transition the 'struggle to become true professionals'" (Glass, Bjork, & Brunner, 2000, p. 18). Cubberley, like Barnard, is known as "a founding father of school administration" and credited with incorporating the Scientific Management philosophy into education (Trotter, Keller, Zehr, Manzo, & Bradley, 1999, p. 3).

Because of the transfer of authority and power from the school board to the superintendent and the increasing needs of the American school system, leadership preparation programs were now a necessity for effective school operation.

> In 1900, no institutions were offering systematic study in the area of school management. By the end of World War II, 125 institutions were actively engaged in preparing school administrators (Silver 1982). A first generation of educational administration professors was actively engaged in laying the foundations of the field and in training a second generation of

> professors to take their place. Many states were requiring formal coursework in educational leadership for administrative positions and were certifying graduates of preparation programmes for employment. (Murphy, 1998, p. 362)

From 1911 to present day, the principles of scientific management have not only influenced the business sector's way of thinking, but also changed the management philosophy of the entire nation. In education, the thoughts and ideas of scientific management greatly influenced both the course content and structure of administrative preparation programs. Callahan (1966) discussed how, by 1925, superintendent training highly resembled the management training of the private sector. In support of Callahan, other authors have given a similar account of how school leadership programs were influenced. Consider the following quote from Murphy (1998):

> The education received by superintendents and principals was largely undifferentiated from that of teachers until the onslaught and widespread acceptance of the scientific management movement throughout the corporate world between 1910 and 1915. For the next 20 years, business was to exert considerable influence over preparation programmes for school administrators. (p. 363)

In addition to the above description, Murphy (1992) further delineated the Prescriptive Era by the following statement:

> The scholarship that informed course content throughout this era was little more that "naked empiricism" (Griffiths, 1965, p. 34; Halpin, 1957, p. 197) or "factualism" (Griffiths, 1959, p. 9), resulting in the development of "fuzzy concepts" (Griffiths, 1988, p. 29); "inadequately field-tested principles" (Crowson & McPherson, 1987, p. 47); and a mere "encyclopedia of facts" (Griffiths, 1959, p. 9) that lacked "the power of unifying interpretive theories" (Goldhammer, 1983; Tyack & Cummings, 1977, p. 62). The knowledge base was comprised of "folklore, testimonials of reputedly successful administrators, the speculation of college professors" (Griffiths, 1959, p. v);

> "personal success stories and lively anecdotes" (Marland, 1960, p. 25); "personal accounts or war stories, and prescriptions offered by experienced practitioners" (Silver, 1982, p. 51); "experiences of practicing administrators as they managed the various problem areas of school administration" (Gregg, 1969, p. 996). (p. 31-32)

Culbertson (1998) concluded that during the Prescriptive Era, "Program content was consistent with prevailing emphases of science on fact gathering, inductive reasoning, and empirical generalizations" (p. 9). Although the philosophy of Scientific Management was the catalyst behind legitimizing the school superintendent, there were significant events and developments that gave rise to this phenomenon. These events and developments included legislative mandates, the industrialization of America, and various court decisions that allowed tax dollars to be used for public education.

Numerous authors of educational leadership programs have recognized this era of administrative preparation as one governed by professional educators implementing the ideals of the Scientific Management philosophy (Callahan, 1966; Culbertson, 1998; Murphy, 1992, 1998). After all it was this era that, "saw the establishment of formal leadership programs, most of which emphasized technical skills, with a strong flavoring of business efficiency" (Lashway, 1999, p. 3). It was also this time period that saw the birth of administrative and supervisory credentials. Kenney (1964) stated "as early as 1910 seven states issued supervisor's credentials and three states issued superintendent's credentials, on the basis either of examination or training" (p. 85). While the leadership training in the second era was much broader, more management oriented, and sought to give school executives the knowledge they needed to

scientifically manage the school, it had its weaknesses. There was very little research- based leadership training; university professors lacked experience in practical education administration; and theoretical principles to stimulate ideas and new ways of management were limited, primarily because of the underdevelopment of the social sciences (Murphy, 1998).

The Scientific Era (1947-1985)

Preparation programs of this period were based on theoretical ideas and models of the social sciences. Social sciences refer to such disciplines as Sociology, Psychology, Communication, Anthropology, and Economics. The social sciences offered numerous theories and models for administrative preparation programs to reference in training educational management. Knezevich (1984) classified several of the more influential models into two categories: Organization-oriented models and administrator-oriented models, which he organized as follows:

Organization-Oriented Models

A. Social-system models
B. Economic models
C. Decision-rendering, power, or political models
D. Communication models
E. Service models
F. Organizational structure models
G. Dynamic or change models

Administrator-Oriented Models

A. Leader models
B. Innovator or change-agent models
C. Policy-scientist models
D. Mediator or conflict resolver models
E. Technician-expert models
F. Organization-man models
G. Decision-maker or influence models
H. Educational planner models (p. 137-138).

In addition to the social science models in this era, a number of theories were also utilized in an effort to prepare educational leaders for the workplace challenges in a structured and systematic way. These theories from the social sciences according to Knezevich (1984) "portray a meaningful mental picture of how an organization works, can be an immensely productive means of generating better practices and thereby to enhance the effectiveness of administration" (p. 131). While the administrative preparation programs benefited from several theoretical perspectives, there are a few theories that received much notoriety. Experts in the field of educational training have recognized many of the social science theories that gained popularity from 1947 to 1985. Knezevich identified a few examples:

- The Hawthorne effect---This theory is derived from a study conducted at the Hawthorne plant in Chicago, Illinois that demonstrated that participants of an experiment could actually increase "their efficiency simply through knowledge of participation in an experiment" (p. 93).
- Theory X and Theory Y---These theories are two opposing theories that attempt to explain human beings associations with organizations. Theory X asserts several basic assumptions about human beings', such as: "People dislike work and will avoid it if they can, are not creative by nature, are innately lazy, and unreliable, and therefore, must be coerced, controlled, and directed by outside authorities" (p. 94). Theory Y suggests: "People like to work as well as play; people strive to establish cooperative social relations and do enjoy being loners; people are basically

self-directive by nature and do exhibit self-control in working toward organizational objectives they agree with" (p. 94).

- Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs---This theory postulated that human behavior is based on a hierarchy of needs. The hierarchy of needs consists of five levels: First, Physiological (Biological) needs; Second, a need for safety; Third, a need for social affection and belonging; Fourth, a need for status or esteem; and Fifth, a need for self-actualization. This theory asserted that before one can be motivated at the next level one's needs must first have been satisfied at the previous level and not everyone with obtain all levels.
- Leadership Style Theories---These type theories have influenced the social sciences by categorizing and grouping distinct attributes such as behaviors, actions, and/or strategies to a particular theory in an effort to explain how individuals exert authority and power over others. While many leadership style theories emerged in educational training there were several that gained much credibility and popularity, for example, Autocratic, Democratic, Anarchic (Laissez Faire), Idiographic, and Transactional.
- Fiedler's Contingency Theory of Leadership Effectiveness--- This theory offered a new perspective on efficient leadership by analyzing and assessing leadership effectiveness. Fiedler espoused that leadership effectiveness is contingent on the interaction of two factors: Leadership styles and situational favorableness. In other words, an effective leader is

one in which leadership style is matched appropriately with the work environment. By contrast, an ineffective leader is one in which leadership style is poorly matched with the work environment.

This change from training in the Scientific Management philosophy to training under the theories and models of the social sciences developed as a result of public attacks on school leaders. Critics argued that administrators were not concerned with school quality and did not value public opinion. Training was considered weak and administrators were seen as being unprepared to assume school leadership roles (Progressive Policy Institute, 2003).

Moreover, school reformers, especially in the second half of this era, had become increasingly dissatisfied with what they perceived as school leaders intentionally contributing to the educational bureaucracy and impeding equal treatment of all students (Glass, Bjork, & Brunner, 2000). Public support and demand for change was so strong that the United States experienced intense growth in leadership preparation programs during the Scientific Era. Public opinion was the catalyst for changing the way school superintendents were prepared and a rapid growth in the number of institutions offering preparation. Murphy (1998) cited the National Commission on Excellence in Educational Administration as follows: "While approximately 125 institutions were in the business of preparing school leaders in 1946, 40 years later over 500 were involved" (p. 365). Lashway (1999) explained how the administrative preparation programs differed from the second era to the third era pointing out that

preparation programs from the Prescriptive Era were grounded in Scientific Management with university faculty having extensive experience in school administration. Leadership curriculum was based on the experiences of administrative practitioners.

In contrast, the educational leadership programs of the Scientific Era embraced a complete overhaul in its style and philosophy of instruction compared to the Prescriptive Era. Administrative training within the third era was research driven, based more on theory than experience, and often facilitated by faculty with limited experience in school leadership. Superintendent training during this era was based on, "a problem-solving format in which students solve real-world problems using the theories taught in previous classes" (Glass, Bjork, & Brunner, 2000, p. 20). Many educational experts have agreed that the Science of Administration was born from the theories and models of the social sciences that unraveled over a 40-year period (Crowson & McPherson, 1987; Knezevich, 1984).

The Dialectic Era (1986-Present)

The previous two eras had experienced public outcry to improve school leadership programs. While this public pressure was acknowledged, it did not compare to the immense scrutiny that school officials have to deal with today. Murphy (1998) stated, the Dialectic Era "is being fuelled by devastating attacks on the current state of preparation programmes, critical analyses of practicing school administrators and references to alternative visions of what programmes should become" (p. 366). This era has demonstrated some of the most critical

attacks on educational leadership that this country has seen since the Ideological Era. Murphy argued that there was a perception that school officials were often viewed as managers operating a "dysfunctional and costly bureaucracy" (p. 366). The precipitating factor of these educational criticisms was the publication of one report.

The publication of *A Nation at Risk* in 1983 launched an unprecedented wave of public criticism, which resulted in a major reform movement. This report emphasized specific shortcomings in the American school system. Glass, Bjork, & Brunner, (2000) summarized the impact of the report in the following statement:

> The 1980's will likely be remembered as the time in American public education when many players –the private corporate sector, politicians, and citizens of all races and socioeconomic levels– become sufficiently displeased to trigger a nationwide reform movement. With the publication of *A Nation at Risk* in 1983, a diverse group of civil rights and corporate interests led a national educational reform movement. This was inspired by concern over equity issues and the inability of industry to compete successfully in world markets because of the low knowledge and skills levels of high school graduates. (p. 21)

A Nation at Risk pointed out that according to academic test scores, students of other industrial countries were outperforming American students. The academic superiority that America had come to appreciate was being threatened. Most states responded by initiating legislation and policy to better monitor students' academic progress, revamp state testing standards, and implement more challenging curriculum (Thattai, 2001). While this report was not the only publication to criticize the American educational system, it was, however, the most powerful. It provided the ammunition educational reformers needed to

conduct a series of critical reports and to ultimately defend their position to restructure professional leadership programs for school administrators, specifically superintendents.

During the 1980's and 1990's, several educational foundations were awakened by the alarming criticism of school leadership. One of the most recognized foundations was the Danforth Foundation. It conducted its own evaluation of how school leaders were being prepared for administrative positions. Milstein and Associates (1993) conducted the evaluation for the Danforth Foundation and concluded:

> most educational administration programs are not programs per se, but are sequences of separate and unconnected courses that give little thought to effective teaching, adult learning theory, linkages with school districts, field experiences that help bridge the theory-practice gap, content closely aligned with desired outcomes, or rigorous evaluation. (p. 18)

Criticism of professional development programs began to gain momentum and eventually prompted a nationwide reform movement to initiate restructuring of superintendent preparation programs. Over the past few decades there have been some strategies and content changes in the way preparation programs are structured. However, critics have continued to maintain that education preparation programs were inadequate (Berg & Barnett, 1998; Bjork & Lindle, 2001; Lashway, 1999; Murphy, 1998; Ovando, Harris, & Menefee, 1998; Progressive Policy Institute, 2003).

Although publications criticizing professional preparation programs and America's educational system in general served as the impetus of education reform, policymakers did their part to improve America's educational institutions

by passing groundbreaking legislation. For example, in 1997 then President Bill Clinton signed into legislation the *IDEA (The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act)* that demanded all schools (public and private) provide appropriate individualized education to children with disabilities no matter what the cost if they were going to receive federal monies. Another example was in 2001, Congress approved President George W. Bush's *No Child Left Behind Act* to insure that all children had academic success (Thatai, 2001). Both the *IDEA* and the *No Child Left Behind Act* have increased the complexity of adequately preparing administrators, as each legislation requires additional specific administrative knowledge. The culmination of intense publications of both private and government reports over the past two decades and powerful federal education initiatives with new skill demands on education leaders have produced a tumultuous climate in the administrative preparation arena known as the Dialectic Era.

In other words, because of the growing complexity, increasing stressfulness, and ambiguous expectations of top level school administrators, educational leadership preparation programs are experiencing constant change (Glass, 2000) in what is described as the Dialectic Era. Lashway (1999) stated, "Increased expectations, conflicting advice, and ambiguous roles have made school leadership a highly stressful job. Leaders are also drained by an increasingly contentious environment" (p. 5). In fact, educational experts are emphasizing the ever-changing climate of preparation programs by recognizing a multidimensional approach for training aspiring school leaders. Hess (2003)

reported that "Richard Andrews, dean of the school of education at the University of Missouri, and Margaret Grogan, professor, surveyed leadership preparation in 2002 and concluded, many essential skills and much important knowledge cannot be delivered by a traditional university based program" (p. 12).

The Evolution of Career and Technical Education

There were many causes that influenced the formation of Career and Technical Education in America. While it is important to recognize the legislative acts that Federally funded Career and Technical Education, it is equally as important to understand the driving forces behind those legislative enactments. Many of the laws of the 19th century were influenced by political and special interest groups, such as the National Association of Manufactures and the United States Chamber of Commerce (Goble, 2004). The desire to mass produce and the advancements in automation during the Industrial Revolution impacted the nation's training efforts as well. The threat of war and war itself was cited repeatedly as a driving force for promoting Career and Technical Education in America (Gordon, 2003).

The first subsection below provides an overview of the development of Career and Technical Education in America by recognizing a few of the major Federal laws passed to promote Career and Technical Education. Significant milestones in the evolution of Oklahoma's CareerTech system will be noted in the second subsection, along with a few of the many people who contributed to CareerTech's history. CareerTech is the term often used to refer to Oklahoma's system of Career and Technology education.

Federal Legislation

Many historians credit the Morrill Act of 1862, as being the major catalyst for stimulating the growth of what today is known as Career and Technical Education. In the Morrill Act the United States government began to recognize the importance of education and training when it encouraged states to establish colleges for the study of agriculture and mechanical arts by donating land to each state. These colleges were referred to as land grant or A & M colleges (Goble, 2004). In 1887, the Hatch Act established agricultural investigation and science under direction of agricultural experiment stations in the nation's land grant colleges originally started by the Morrill Act of 1862 (Hatch Act of 1887). The government was so encouraged by the results of the two previous legislations that the Morrill Act was reauthorized in 1890. This reauthorization did more than just reauthorize, it broadened the scope of Career and Technical Education in America in several ways:

- It required that each state have at least one land grant college.
- It prohibited Federal funds from the reauthorization act to support A & M colleges that practiced racial discrimination.
- It guaranteed continual financial support from the Federal government in annual appropriations for land-grant colleges (Finch & McGough, 1991; Gordon, 2003; Stewart, 1982).

These three congressional acts are often cited in the literature as the major laws for establishing Career and Technical Education in the 1800's.

According to Goble's (2004) history of career and technology education in Oklahoma, by 1900, "Nationwide, some thirty colleges or universities routinely offer courses in domestic sciences like cooking and sewing, as well as in more specialized offerings" (p. 175). This trend did not stop at the postsecondary level. Moreover, Goble noted that in 1910, "According to the NSPIE, twenty-nine of the nation's forty-six states offer at least some form of vocational education in their public schools" (p. 176).

World War I demonstrated a great need for "vocational training" as it demanded more than just general labor skills to prepare the armed forces for battle. The United States Congress embraced the need for specialized training by approving the Smith-Hughes Act. On February 23rd, 1917, President Woodrow Wilson signed the Smith-Hughes Act. This was a powerful piece of legislation for Career and Technical Education because the laws passed in the last century only affected higher education (Pautler Jr., 1999). This authorization was much different, as its goal was to create a training system for secondary students. Smith-Hughes appropriated "$1.7 million for the year 1917-1918, with funding increasing at intervals to $7.2 million for 1925-1926" (Barlow, 1992, p. 31). This act established Agriculture, Home Economics, and Trade and Industrial Education as the first three programs of study in vocational education in the public schools (Goble, 2004). Moreover, states were required to create boards for "vocational" education and develop an education plan. Only nine years later, the American Vocational Association (AVA) was founded (Gordon, 2003) to advance the growth and recognition of vocational education throughout the country.

The next important law passed was the George-Reed Act of 1929, which "authorized an increase of $1 million annually for four years (1930-1934) to expand vocational education in agriculture and home economics" (Gordon, 2003). By this time, Career and Technical Education in America had really begun to gain momentum. The George-Ellzey Act of 1934 provided another major thrust for the advancement of Career and Technical Education. Through the authorization of this act, states received additional funds for trade and industry programs (Finch & McGough, 1991). In 1946, Congress expanded the role of the Federal government in vocational education by increasing annual appropriations from $1.5 million to over $28 million with the passing of the George-Barden Act of 1946. "The act also extended eligible funds to the Office of Vocational Education in Washington and to vocational education for the fishery trades" (Paulter Jr., 1999). Another very large increase in funding was made with the National Defense Education Act (NDEA) of 1958. In fact, this legislative act doubled the previous year's appropriation because Congress insisted that highly skilled technicians be trained in occupations needed for national defense (Goble, 2004).

The 1960s proved to be a decade of growth for Career and Technical Education with the enactment of three laws. The Area Redevelopment Act in 1961 and the Manpower Development and Training Act both contributed significantly to Career and Technical Education by expanding its mission to include training for the persistently unemployed and underemployed with $370,000,000 in funding to be spent over a three year period (Gordon, 2003; Monthly Labor Review, 1962).

Another great milestone for Career and Technical Education was Title V of the National Education Improvement Act of 1963. This Improvement Act is often referred to as the "Vocational Education Act of 1963". R. L. Martinez (personal communication, April 07, 2006) described the Vocational Education Act of 1963 in the following words:

> This act was the first federal legislation that took a universal perspective regarding vocational education. This act clearly stated that vocational education was for any and all populations, youth as well as adults. This is a very different perspective from previous legislations.

While there were a number of provisions associated with this act, it is recognized by many as the legislation that established the funding for "area vo-tech" schools. Thus, with this act the federal government introduced the idea of "area vocational" schools and encouraged states to establish these schools. This act re-established the way federal aid would be distributed to states. Previously, the federal government set percentages according to particular divisions. The new formula was based on the number of each state's residents and their age group (Goble, 2004).

Vocational Education Amendments of 1968 and 1976 (Public Law 90-576 and Public Law 94-482, respectively) have also been identified as significant public laws passed in an effort to strengthen America's Career and Technical system. Congress actually authorized "more than $800 million for the 1970 fiscal year, although only $365,347,467 was actually appropriated" (Barlow, 1992, p. 32). This appropriation has been considered a major boost for the Career and Technical Education system. The amendments to vocational education in 1976

had a special focus. They established specialized programs to address social issues by insisting that programs be implemented to serve special populations, disadvantaged students, and combat gender discrimination (Goble, 2004; Hayward & Benson, 1993).

Many authors (e.g. Gordon, 2003) of literature on Career and Technical Education recognize the Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act of 1984 (PL 98-524) as another major piece of legislation passed by Congress. The Perkins Act had two primary goals: To raise the productivity of the work force and to make the programs available to targeted populations. These targeted populations or "special populations" included the following: Disadvantaged and handicapped individuals, students entering nontraditional occupations for their gender, single parents or homemakers, individuals with limited proficiency in English, adults who needed of training or retraining, and individuals who were incarcerated (Hayward & Benson, 1993). These targeting goals were to be accomplished by strengthening the research process in vocational education, ensuring program policies and procedures were in place that encouraged and facilitated the recruitment, enrollment, and advancement of all populations, and modernizing high-quality programs (Pautler Jr., 1999). Since 1983, there have been several new laws, reauthorizations, and amendments passed, but the ones highlighted above were the initial federal laws that established today's Career and Technical system.

When Congress reauthorized the Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act of 1984 as the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act

of 1990, another powerful piece of legislation was born. It allowed for the advancement of Career and Technical Education in two distinct categories: Greater funding and increased emphases on technology preparation (Tech Prep) for the disadvantaged. This reauthorization according to Barlow (1992) "brought the largest ever federal funding authorization for vocational education---up to $1.6 billion a year through 1995---with a major portion of funds earmarked for tech prep programs and greater opportunities for disadvantaged people" (p. 32). Many believe this reauthorization and its emphasis on integrating vocational and academic education was critical to passage of subsequent legislation, which improved Career and Technical Education's relationship with business and industry.

The School-to-Work Opportunities Act (STWOA) of 1994 (Public Law 103-239) was the next major historical law to promote Career and Technical Education. The STWOA was passed to address the nation's shortage of skilled labor by insisting that educators build partnerships with employers. Gordon 2003 summarized the STWOA contribution by identifying seven notable points of the act: "(a) collaborative partnerships, (b) integrated curriculum, (c) technological advances, (d) adaptable workers, (e) comprehensive career guidance, (f) work based learning, and (g) step-by-step approach" (p. 89-90).

The last major legislation to affect Career and Technical Education in a significant way was the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act of 1998 (Public Law 105-332). Not only did Congress reauthorize funds, but also specific monies were set aside to serve special populations such as Native

Americans and Native Hawaiians. In addition, specific guidelines were established for states to follow. Guidelines for evaluating programs, funding the incarcerated, secondary and post-secondary activities, comprehensive professional development, and involving interested stakeholders in the education process were incorporated in this legislation (Gordon, 2003).

Lifelong Learning

In recent decades, Malcolm Knowles has been recognized as one of the central figures in adult education in the Western world. His *Informal Adult Education*, launched a modern paradigm for which adult learners gain practical knowledge throughout their lifetime without the experiences of formal education programs (Knowles, 1980). Knowles espoused a distinct differentiation between formal and informal adult education in his writings during the last half of the 20th century. Knowles (1950) defined it this way:

> Formal programs are those sponsored for the most part by established educational institutions, such as universities, high schools, and trade schools. While many adults participate in the courses with working for credit, they are organized essentially for credit students… Informal classes, on the other hand, are generally fitted into more general programs of such organizations as the YMCA and YWCA, community centers, labor unions, industries and churches. (p. 23)

It was key figures such as Knowles (with his Informal Adult Learning theory) that brought to life the credible notion of individuals learning throughout their lifetime in the absence of traditional formal education programs.

Today the phrase *lifelong learning* is a reasonably common phrase, especially in the field of education and refers to formal as well as informal learning. In its simplest and broadest meaning, lifelong learning might be defined

as continuous learning over the course of one's lifetime in both formal and informal environments. Barry (1999) stated "Lifelong learning has re-emerged in the past few years as one of the 'hottest' topics in public discussion about the organization of education and training for adults in the 21st century" (para. 1). Barry explained that the phenomenon of globalization is why organizations and individuals need to embrace the concept of lifelong learning more so than any other time in history. His position is expressed in the following comments:

> globalization is characterized by the emergence of instantaneous communication without regard to national borders and the subsequent availability of knowledge irrespective of space and time. New information and communication technologies mean that we can learn at any one moment in time from sources of knowledge anywhere on the globe. (para. 8)
>
> Globalization confronts societies, organizations, and individuals with new learning challenges as they struggle to cope with and survive in a rapidly changing and unstable environment. (para. 9)

In other words, globalization is changing the way in which we understand and operate our organizations at such a fast pace that in order to be competitive and productive, our learning exposure must be a continual process. It needs to move beyond the formal educational environments and into everyday experiences. Zorga (2002) claimed:

> Everyday life situations offer many learning opportunities. Experts carrying out research on learning in adulthood have established that such learning is mostly base on life experience (and through this also on work experience) and is not acquired through formal education. (p. 269)

As globalization forces the increased acquisition of knowledge in all sectors of society, it becomes increasingly obvious that educational leaders cannot afford to ignore the concept of lifelong learning. To lead their schools in a continuously

changing environment and guide the preparation of a globally competitive workforce, Career and Technical superintendents must participate in both formal and informal learning throughout their working lives.

A recent trend for administrator preparation programs has been to incorporate learning strategies that promote formal lifelong learning for superintendents. One such administrative program is the "Strategic Model for Administrator Preparation" partially funded by the Danforth Foundation to encourage non-traditional educational leadership programs. The Danforth Foundation was involved in partially funding a total of 22 non-traditional preparation programs across the United States. Kraus' (1996) study on administrative training that prepares for on-job success analyzed this model. Her focus was on addressing "research questions regarding perceptions of administrators' job preparedness and how components of formal training programs (i.e., internships, mentoring relationship, reflective practice, and student cohorts) prepared school leaders for their jobs" (Kraus, p. 3). The research study found that the participants described the four components of the training model as preparing them for lifelong learning in the field of educational leadership. These components helped them acquire the experience and knowledge base they would need in order to adequately address future educational challenges.

Another educational leadership preparation course claimed to have the qualities and learning strategies needed to prepare its graduates for lifelong learning was reported by Boone (2001), who suggested a non-traditional model based on the eight standards of the American Association of School

Administrators and the Texas superintendent certificate of 1994. Boone referred to his model as a "Standards-Based Superintendent Preparation Program". He described his preparation model as student-centered, grounded in adult learning theories, and incorporating a Constructivist framework for learning. Constructivism assumes "that learning is an active process by which the learner builds new knowledge and understanding from his or her own individual experience" (p. 17). Instructional strategies used in this unique model include: "Reflective writing, problem-based learning, guided discussion in a seminar setting, collaborative research, leadership assessment directed reading, simulation, mentoring, and reflective seminar" (p. 15). Although his leadership model is reasonably comprehensive Boone recognized that it could not teach its graduates everything they need to know. In fact, he stated:

> But what the preparation program can and should be expected to do is to send graduates into their chosen professional field equipped with the skills, knowledge, and attitudes that will permit initial satisfactory performance and the framework for continuing professional development. (p. 13)

In short, the non-traditional Standards-Based Superintendent Preparation Program model reportedly can not only provide its students with a basic level of experience and knowledge, but with the mental framework to engage in lifelong learning as it applies to educational administration. This investment of equipping educational leaders with the skills needed for lifelong learning is an invaluable feature of many non-traditional superintendent training models, because administrators are taught to engage in learning activities that will continually sharpen their skills.

Reflective Practitioner

While lifelong learning is an important concept, equally as important in the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) arena is the concept of reflective practice. Reflective practice "is about critically questioning and reflecting on what we do" (Cranton & King, 2003, p. 33), how we do it, and why we do it. The practice of reflection cultivates a person's opportunity to learn, because it enhances the ability to integrate new understandings (Westberg, 2001). The idea of professionals becoming reflective practitioners has demanded much attention in recent years. According to Hartog (2002), a reflective practitioner "is concerned with looking back and learning through experience and practice" (p. 233). Hartog further explained that, "Developing oneself as a reflective practitioner is concerned with doing and being, with feelings as well as cognitive processes, with the development of the self as a moral agent, and reflection on and in action (p. 424). Cranton and King contributed to the reflective practitioner discussion with the following statement:

> If we do not consciously think about and reflect on our practice, we become nothing more than automatons following a dubious set of rules or principles---rules or principles that are unlikely to be relevant in the ever-changing, complex context of teaching and learning. (p. 32)

The reflective practitioner engages in the pursuit of new knowledge by utilizing a number of strategies, such as thinking critically about past experiences, being open to change, being open to feedback, accepting the evaluation of others, identifying biases and assumptions, integrating new understandings, and formulating generalizations in order to simulate positive changes in future

situations (Westberg, 2001). The process of reflective practice is about practitioners examining their past experiences and holding them up to scrutiny, thus allowing the opportunity to learn and make new discoveries.

Many experts in the field of CPD recognize the need for professionals to utilize both lifelong learning and reflective practice. McLean (2004) expressed, "A good way of making learning a more conscious process is to become a lifelong learner and reflective practitioner by engaging in continuous professional development (CPD)" (p. 19). The professional who engages in CPD can maximize learning opportunities by reflecting on lifelong experiences in order to use old information to create new learning experiences. The new knowledge that professionals acquire as a result of using past experiences and situations can give an organization a competitive edge in the global market. "In the new knowledge and information era, where individuals' intellectual capital is fast becoming the competitive advantage, taking an active part in lifelong, reflective learning would enable you to effectively contribute to your organization's success" (McLean, p. 19).

Reflective practice is becoming a common component in non-traditional administrative preparation courses. According to Edmonson and Fisher (2002), Sam Houston State University recently initiated an innovative new program for preparing superintendents, which is grounded in reflective practice. This educational leadership preparation program is based on the various standards established by the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education, the state of Texas, and the unique needs of the learners. Students utilize reflective

activities throughout the training process. "They must not only describe what they have learned in assignments and examinations, but also apply that knowledge in reflecting how this learning affects them" (p. 1). Reflections in coursework are paramount in bridging the gap between knowledge and application. Reflective practice allows aspiring superintendents to focus on their own thinking, understanding, and overall experience in an effort to be more creative and to better problem-solve.

The Standards-Based Superintendent Preparation Program described by Boone (2001) highlighted earlier in the Lifelong Learning section recognized reflective practice as an important component in the model. Reflective writing was noted as a specific instructional strategy. But this is just the tip of the iceberg; in this training model the use of reflective practice is so important to the success of the program that a specialized reflective seminar is incorporated into the learning process. The reflective seminar teaches the students how to best use reflective activities to bring about desired change in educational settings. Learners consider the multitude of perspectives from which existing educational dilemmas may be viewed, by examining and questioning the beliefs and values that affect decision-making (Schon, 1987).

Zigler (1994) conducted *A Case Study Evaluation of the Reflective Process in a Preparation Program for Educational Administrators,* which explored how reflective practice is used in the University of Cincinnati's innovative Administrator Development Academy. The academy lasted six-weeks, involved 45 subjects and eight facilitators, used adult learning principles, and made use of a

multitude of learning activities and strategies. Several activities and strategies were acknowledged, for instance, reviewing case studies (verbally and written), contrived situations, self-examination of the students' position, and specific questions to answer. A major goal of the Academy was to link theory with practice and promote self-directed learning. The study revealed that graduates "felt that personal reflection came to be very important to them" (p. 10). This reinforces the concept of using reflective practice strategies in superintendent preparation programs.

Mentorship Programs

"Only a few years ago, mentoring was not a commonplace feature of educational practice in the United States" (Davis, Jr., 2001, p. 1). However, "Increasing evidence shows that school leaders, throughout all stages of their careers, can benefit from a mentoring system in which a seasoned leader helps the protégé place theory and practice in the context of experience" (Malone, Winter 2000-2001, p. 1). Although few would debate that administrative mentorship programs alone could replace advanced university preparation programs, many practitioners have suggested that they can be a powerful component in the preparation of school leaders. "The need for mentoring relationships has become even more evident as studies show that graduate training alone does not necessarily translate into better-led schools" (Malone, p. 1). Unfortunately, many superintendents learn their jobs through on-the-job training and miss out on the systematic support and training that a mentor-protégé relationship could have provided. When formal mentorship approaches to administrative preparation are

implemented appropriately the benefits can prove invaluable to both the mentor and the protégé (Daresh & Playko, 1992; Holloway, 2004; Malone, Winter 2000-2001; Westuizen & Erasmus, 1994).

Educational leadership training using a mentorship approach can be a good investment, which often yields major benefits to all parties involved. While mentorships can be informal or formal, most of the literature found concerning educational leaders refers to the formal, structured, and institutionally supported model; therefore this review will focus on that particular type of formal mentorship approach. A formal systematic approach to mentor-protégé relationships has several components to consider: Planning, mentor selection, matching, training, and evaluation (Malone, 2001, p. 2). In addition to these components, certain attributes need to exist for both the mentor and the protégé. According to Westhizen and Erasumus (1994), the mentor must possess the following attributes:

- Outstanding knowledge, skill and expertise in a specific sphere;
- Enthusiasm;
- Ability not only to provide the right answers, but also to generate the right questions;
- Acceptance of alternative ways to act;
- Desire to see people achieving to a higher level than themselves;
- Ability to promote the principles of continuous reflection and purposeful learning opportunities; and

- Practical experiences of how matters in a particular school environment ought to be dealt with (p. 8-9).

There are also important attributes that the protégé must have if an effective relationship is to be developed. The following attributes are recommended by Daresh and Playko (1989) for protégés:

- Enthusiasm for their work, as well as enthusiasm for their personal involvement in the study of the work sphere;
- The ability to show initiative and a conscientious involvement in the development of their own potential;
- A genuine commitment to the execution of envisaged plans and activities in order to rise above the level of the required minimum standard in their achievements;
- An open and objective attitude, with no feelings of being threatened;
- A greater degree of insight in themselves and others; and
- A sense of humor (p. 10).

These lists are only a partial, as other important attributes can exist, such as mutual respect, open communication, and participation by the mentor in a mentorship training session that emphasizes relationship building and professional development.

When both the mentor and protégé possess the desired attributes required by effective mentorships, coupled with good planning, matching, and training efforts, this type of field-based learning model can be an impressive approach for

preparing top level administrators. The aspiring school leader can reap extensive benefits from this type of experience, because a mentoring system can speed up the acclimation process by building self-confidence and enhance decision-making skills. "Protégés who participate in a mentorship manifest a more purposeful approach in their management tasks, a more serious approach to finer detail, and a greater awareness of what their educational leadership entails" (Westuizen & Erasmus, 1994, p. 10). Moreover, the protégé is given an opportunity to use theoretical knowledge in the "real world" under the guidance and supervision of an experience practitioner. Westuizen and Erasmus contend "A mentoring system forms an anchor for the professional formation dimension during the inductive phase" (p. 12). As one can see, an effective mentorship program can produce many rewards for the aspiring school leader.

However, benefits of participating in a mentoring system can be just as rewarding for the experienced practitioner. The personal satisfaction of grooming a colleague can be very rewarding (Kartje, 1996). In addition to mentors feeling good about helping develop a colleague, Daresh and Playko (1993) found four major benefits to the mentor. First, mentors can enjoy an increased recognition from their peers for having participated in the mentoring process. Second, mentoring a promising new school leader can be a challenging and energizing experience, "particularly if the mentor has reached a point in his or her own career where a lot of the earlier excitement is disappearing" (p. 6). This stimulating experience can result in the experienced practitioner formulating new ideas and perspectives. Third, mentors have indicated they found new opportunities for

personal career advancement. Fourth, the mentorship experience introduces the mentor to "a new source of knowledge, insight, and talent" (p. 7). Based on these factors, it should be noted that when careful consideration is given to the implementation of a mentoring system both the mentor and the protégé have much to gain.

In recent years, universities and foundations throughout the country have been instrumental in sponsoring new and innovative ways of preparing educational leaders for their profession through non-traditional avenues. The Danforth Foundation provided a portion of the funds necessary to develop 22 non-conventional preparation programs throughout the country in an effort to encourage unique leadership preparation for future educators. These programs were referred to as a "Strategic Model for Administrator Preparation". Kraus (1996) conducted a study in which he analyzed various aspects of these 22 non-conventional programs. Kraus found that each of the 22 non-conventional programs utilized the same training model, which contained seven specific components: situated learning, modeling, coaching, reflection, articulation, exploration, and authentic assessment. The study found that there were many positive qualities associated with all the components. It was established that the mentor/mentee relationships continued even after the preparation program had ended. The research noted that the program graduates acknowledged "mentoring relationships affected job preparedness and learning" (p. 12). Mentoring was also perceived by the graduates as providing opportunities for reflection and enhancing students' proclivity of experiencing a success internship experience.

Internship Programs

As school districts today demand greater skills and abilities than in the past, administrative internships are becoming more popular (Cordeiro & Smith-Sloan, 1995). "Unfortunately, existing research and literature on administrative internship is relatively limited" (Jean & Evans, 1995, p.6). A recent review of the literature did, however, acknowledge that an administrative internship can greatly ameliorate the acclimation period of new superintendents. Internships can provide powerful insights into the realities of administrative leadership "not available within the scope of a traditional classroom setting" (Edmonson, 2001, p.2). Administrative internships provide significant opportunities for trainees to be prepared for the challenges that school administrators face. Moreover, administrative trainees are encouraged to apply the knowledge acquired over years of academic learning to real world application. According to Cordeiro and Smith-Sloan, interns can acquire knowledge in four areas: "(1) basic knowledge about day-to-day building operations; (2) strategies for information collection and problem-solving; (3) effective ways to work with a variety of adults; and (4) how to manage their time, given multiple tasks" (p. 2). These four areas of knowledge can prove invaluable to a new administrator.

While the literature on administrative internships demonstrates that internships often vary greatly in length, educational setting, expectations, and objectives, one area of consistency is that the literature overwhelmingly supports the use of internships in administrative preparation programs. Raines and Alberg (2003) stated "A formal administrative internship can offer not only hands-on

experience and a comprehensive view of the administrator's world but also a gateway to administrative positions" (p. 36). Literature on administrative internships suggests that although effective internships do differ from one another, a few characteristics remain constant in implementing a successful internship. These characteristics include the following: Both the experienced practitioner and the trainee must have a genuine interest in helping the trainee to improve, a university supervisor is appointed to oversee the internship, academic preparation should precede the internship, the trainee should be required to articulate what they are learning during and after the internship through reflection activities (Edmonson & Fisher, 2002; Marshak, 2003).

"Growing evidence in the 1980's and 1990's showed that to be an effective educational leader, part of the preparation had to be in the field" (Jackson & Kelley, 2001, p. 7). This philosophy is apparent in many states today as indicated by the internship requirement for obtaining the appropriate credentials to become a superintendent. California, Indiana, Montana, Utah, West Virginia, and Wisconsin require that superintendent candidates participate in an administrative internship program. An administrative internship is specified as an optional component in receiving a superintendent state license in Maine, Nevada, and New York. Unlike the aforementioned, many states simply offer the option of participating in an administrative internship within the state's particular superintendent preparation programs (National Center for Education Information, 2005).

Problem-Based Learning

Proponents of problem-based learning view this training strategy as an effective alternative approach to the traditional classroom lecture. Lashway (1999) reviewed a publication entitled *Problem-Based Learning: Resources for Urban School Leadership Training* by Philip Hallinger and made the following conclusion:

> Graduates of leadership preparation programs are often quick to criticize course work as being irrelevant, insignificant, and uninspiring. Abstract theory and tired anecdotes do not add up to a curriculum that prepares prospective leaders for the complex, fluid, and demanding challenges of today's schools. (p. 3)

This finding is certainly not unique; similar conclusions have been made by a number of other writers. O'Sullivan and Cooper (2003) have argued "The traditional teaching method of lecturing to classes is not always the most successful approach. Encouraging students to formulate their own ideas, draw conclusions from experimental evidence, and participate in other similar activities can be more effective" (p. 448).

When implemented appropriately "problem-based learning can help students acquire a deep understanding of critical knowledge, develop problem-solving and lifelong learning skills, and enhance their capacities for the job ahead" (Lashway, 1999, p. 3). Levin (2001) defined problem-based learning as " an instructional method that encourages learners to apply critical thinking, problem-solving skills, and content knowledge to real-world problems and issues" (p. 1). In addition to providing this definition Levin noted that this type of learning can also enhance self-direction through the use of small group

discussion, comprehensive and complex scenarios, personal reflection, research, group presentations, and written expression such as reports. Typically, the instructors of the problem-based learning course take on more of a facilitative type role utilizing small groups or teams to formulate a plan of resolution and adequately address the problem (Lashway, 1999; Levin, 2001). These facilitators strive to help the learner analyze problems and think critically about solutions.

Many experts in the area of educational leadership are starting to promote problem-based learning as an impressive training method for acquiring problem-solving skills that are necessary in top-level administrative positions. In the last decade there has been an explosion in the number of preparation programs using problem-based learning (Lashway, 1999). While traditional lecture based preparation has its merits, problem-based learning also has many positive qualities. Levin (2001) recognized that problem-based learning has similar qualities to project-based learning, citing the following similarities:

- learner centered, focused on authentic tasks, and provide opportunities for learners to construct meaning rather than just receive it.
- Learners have opportunities to practice a variety of skills they need for success in school and real life.
- Learners may work collaboratively with partners or in small groups.
- The problem is centered on content to be explored.
- Work can be assessed in a variety of ways.

- Learners plan, solve problems, and make decisions throughout the process.
- The teacher facilitates rather than directs, although in problem-based learning, the teacher may act more as a coach or tutor to scaffold the problem-solving experience with timely questions (p. 123-124).

In addition to the above, there are other beneficial qualities of the problem-based learning approach. Levin (2001) identified three characteristics: Focus is placed on the problem and its solution, learners are required to produce several possible solutions base on research, and learners are expected to work as a team (p. 124).

Similar to other learning approaches, problem-based learning has its own features or elements that make it unique. These elements are important to the learning process. Common elements of the problem-solving process include:

- Interpreting and defining the problem.
- Generating questions that need to be answered about eh problem.
- Conducting research to find answers to the questions.
- Proposing a variety of hypotheses and potential problem solutions that are warranted by the data collected.
- Discussing the pros and cons of these potential solutions.
- Selecting and presenting potential problem solutions to a real audience (Levin, 2001, p. 122-123).

When these elements are included in a problem-based learning approach, the aspiring leader is much more equipped through his or her training experience to solving real-world situations.

The Aging of School Leadership

While superintendents continue to recognize that they have been ill prepared to lead the school district upon taking office, this problem is further complicated by a decline in the pool of superintendent prospects. The Savannah Morning News reported, "Finding topnotch candidates can be daunting. This is particularly true when an employer is attempting to fill a key position that has a limited pool of excellent qualified candidates" (Durham, 2000, p. A15). Education experts probably would not agree on the reasons for this candidate shortage. Some may argue the tests that establish a minimum level of qualifications are not measuring the most important SKAs (Skills Knowledge Attributes) needed to be successful on the job. Others may make the point that certification tests are too difficult in the way they are designed, thus preventing experienced academically proven candidates who just may not be good test takers from obtaining certification. Regardless of the argument there is extensive evidence indicating that today's school leadership population is aging and notching ever closer to retirement (Zirkle & Cotton, 2001).

A review of the literature suggested that a lack of effective leadership in education currently exists and is anticipated to get worse because of the increasing number of superintendents edging closer to retirement. Education professionals have been aware of this phenomenon for several years. In a report by the

Progressive Policy Institute, Paul Houston, executive director of the American Association of School Administrators, (Glass, Bjork, & Brunner, 2000) was quoted as saying, "The pool of good [superintendent] candidates is shallow. Five years ago, the pool was fairly shallow, and I thought it was as bad as it could get. I was not nearly pessimistic enough. It's gotten worse" (Progressive Policy Institute, 2003, p. 4). Regarding the large number of central office executives nearing retirement, "In large part, the reason is simply that baby boomers in leadership positions are aging" (Nussbaum, 2002, p. 1). As America's baby boomers edge closer to retirement, the need for an increased number of prepared superintendents is more critical than at any other time in America's educational history. The state of New York has some sixty-two percent of its superintendents eligible for retirement in the next five years (Rosenberg, 2000). A slightly more recent study by the Fund for New Jersey, a nonpartisan research organization found that within the next five years fifty percent of New Jersey's superintendents are likely to retire (Nussbaum, 2002, p.14). Moreover, the average age of superintendents continues to increase. For example, in 1923 the average age of a superintendent was 43, in 1992 the average age was near 50, and in 2000 the average age increased to 52 (Glass, Bjork, & Brunner, 2000). Progressive Policy Institute (2003) acknowledged that superintendents are reaching retirement at an accelerated rate, but also recognized that aspiring individuals are losing interest in pursuing these top-level positions. In addition, Glass (2000) contented that the number of qualified superintendent candidates applying for educational headships has greatly diminished over the past few years, stating that "Reports from search

consultants, superintendents, school boards, and state agencies point as well to a fast-developing shortage of talented and experienced people eager to take on the top district management post" (p. 1).

Licensure Law and Policy Formation in Oklahoma

In Oklahoma, the creation of the superintendency licensure is the result of a complex process. Oklahoma has two ways of making changes to the state superintendent licensure requirements. Law Formation (Statute Formation), which utilizes the Bill Formation Process (Professional Limited Liability Company, 2004) and is often recognized as the most popular process. This is the process used by the Oklahoma State Legislature to enact state laws. The other process that is used to support or modify the enacted laws is called the Policy Formation. This process is the approach used by various state departments to make changes that affect administrative licensure. Upon competition of the formal process, Policy Formation has the force of law.

Regardless of the formation process used to establish superintendent licensure requirements for CareerTech superintendents, the Oklahoma State Department of Education (OSDE), the Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education (ODCTE), and the Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation (OCTP) are all charged with specific responsibilities in facilitating the process of licensing CareerTech Superintendents. CareerTech superintendents in Oklahoma obtain their licenses from the OSDE. The OCTP is responsible for managing the testing process for individuals interested in becoming CareerTech

superintendents. The ODCTE provides individuals the career and technology endorsements needed to work at a technology center.

Law Formation in Oklahoma begins with a bicameral or two-chamber legislature, consisting of the House of Representatives and Senate. The House of Representatives has 101 members, and the Senate has 48 members. Each chamber has special powers and numerous standing committees (Professional Limited Liability Company, 2004).

Policy formation in Oklahoma is created by a specific process, which starts with the state legislature. This complex process involves many steps, variables, and strategies for creating legislation. There are two types of legislation that have the force and effect of law: Bills and joint resolutions (Definition of Types of Legislation). Both bills and joint resolutions are initiated by author(s) who can be either a House or a Senate member (Professional Limited Liability Company, 2004; Oklahoma Legislative Service Bureau). Often a bill or a joint resolution is co-authored by a House of Representative and a Senate member(s). During the initial stages of the legislative process, bills and joint resolutions are often referred to as proposals. Professional Limited Liability Company explained the initial stage involves consideration by a committee. Standing committees consider the majority of legislation. Each standing committee is responsible for a particular subject matter. The Senate has fewer standing committees than the House. When a proposal is submitted to a standing committee of a chamber it is often debated and ultimately modified. Once the standing committee approves a final draft it is sent to the chamber for approval. If

approved, the proposal is then sent to the corresponding standing committee of the second chamber for review and approval. After consideration and approval, the proposal is sent to the second chamber for approval. In the event that a particular proposal is modified by the second standing committee and approved by the second chamber, it must go back to the initial standing committee and be approved by that standing committee before it can go to the first chamber for a vote. In other words, both chambers and the appropriate standing committees of each chamber must approve identical versions of the proposal before it can be sent to the governor for a signature. The governor must approve or veto the bill. A bill can be approved either by the governor signing the bill within 5 days of receiving it or by holding the bill for 5 days without signing when the legislature is in session. The governor may choose to disapprove a bill using one of two processes: Veto the bill and sending it back to the legislature with objections stated or by a Pocket Veto which is holding a bill without taking action for 15 days after the legislature is out of session.

According to the Administrative Procedures Act, Title 75 of the Oklahoma Statutes and an explanation offered by Donna Metcalf of the ODCTE, the ODCTE has the authority to form rules that affect the technology center administrator's credentials that one must obtain to become an Oklahoma technology center superintendent. This process starts with the staff of the ODCTE making rule amendments to the State Board of Career and Technology Education (SBCTE), typically in November and/or December, for preliminary consideration. In February of the next year a final version of the proposed rule

amendments are presented to the State Board of Career and Technology Education for final approval. A public hearing is held at the SBCTE prior to the SBCTE approving the recommendations; that is where the public has the opportunity for comments. If no changes are made, the rule amendments are then sent to the Legislative Service Bureau in Oklahoma City. Once the Legislative Service Bureau receives the rule amendments, the amendments are open for legislative scrutiny until the last day of the legislative regular session (last business day in May). If a member of the legislature objects to the recommended policy changes, the proposal goes back to the state agency. However, if there are no legislative objections to the rule amendments, the policy recommendations become permanent and have the force of law beginning July 1.

Both Law Formation and rule amendments can influence the credentialing requirements for Oklahoma's technology center superintendents. Once the administrative credentialing requirements have been established, it is generally assumed that universities and state agencies will sponsor "Training programs designed specifically to prepare professionals to qualify for superintendent certification" (Wilson, Jr., Ireton, & Wood, 1998, p. 1). Thus, changes in credentialing requirements for the superintendency through either process available, can have an impact on the nature and content of preparation programs.

Superintendent Preparation Programs

The duties, expectations, and pressures of today's superintendent have become increasingly complex relative to even a decade ago. "Preparation for school leadership and management has become one of the major educational

issues of the late 1990's" (Bush, 1998, p. 1). Attempts to deal with this issue have led to a variety of superintendency preparation approaches and programs.

Preparation programs for a school districts Chief Educational Officer vary greatly from state-to-state. However, much effort has been dedicated to bringing some level of continuity to educational leadership preparation programs across the country. According to the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (2006), 20 states have specific training programs to prepare aspiring superintendents for educational leadership and have aligned their superintendent preparation programs to the Educational Leadership Constituent Council (ELCC) standards. These states include Alaska, Arkansas, Colorado, Connecticut, Illinois, Louisiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, New York, North Dakota, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Texas, Virginia, and West Virginia.

The momentum of incorporating a standardized set of standards to guide preparation programs is a growing phenomenon. However, the strategies and approaches to training future superintendents continue to diversify. Despite both standardization efforts and unique approaches, criticism of the quality and relevance of training for superintendency has been significant.

Lashway (1999) stated that, "Administrator preparation programs have often been criticized as ineffective and irrelevant" (p.1-2). *The International Journal of Educational Management* had this to report:

> Consequently, school administrators routinely appear to be unprepared to respond to new challenges. This apparent lack of preparation on the part of school administrators may be due to a lack of programs in continuing education directly related to

> superintendent development needs. (Ovando, Harris, & Menefee, 1998, p. 82)

This is reiterated by Mutsch (1997), in a dissertation, which explored "Superintendents Perceptions of the Skills Required to Effectively Perform". It found many administrative leaders overwhelmingly noted that they were not adequately prepared for leadership in the school district. In fact, "Most practitioner assessments of their preparation programs are decidedly negative" (Bjork & Lindle, 2001, p. 87).

Whether it is because in recent years a significant number of superintendents are reporting that they are inadequately prepared to assume their role as a school district's top level administrator (Hess, 2003) or the influence of public scrutiny on educational leadership (Lashway, 1999), there has been a proliferation in non-traditional administrative preparation programs. Many organizations and universities that sponsor educational leadership programs for a school district's Chief Academic Officer have created non-traditional preparation programs throughout the country. These non-traditional preparation programs vary greatly, each having its own specific components.

Mississippi Vocational Administrators' Academy (MVAA)

Reese (2006) described a training model for Career and Technical Administrators in Mississippi called the Mississippi Vocational Administrators' Academy (MVAA). Most of the participants are Campus Directors. MVAA reflects many of the new training components discussed in current literature. For example, the use of "small groups that meet at the end of each conference day to reflect, journal and share how the knowledge they gained that day will impact

their professional practice" (p. 12). This professional development model is based on both state and national leadership standards such as the National Staff Development Council and the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium standards. "Professional learning activities offered by MVAA include conferences, data retreats, and a series of blended training modules" (p. 12). The academy is rooted in adult learning theories. Online communication and techniques in coaching faculty to succeed are also important components of the academy. The academy is offered in the Spring, Summer, Winter, and Fall.

Institute for Executive Leadership

Schmuck (1992) described an innovative training institute at Lewis and Clark College for a new generation of aspiring superintendents. The Institute for Executive Leadership that she describes prepares its students to become "managers of culture". It was created in 1984 because of the dissatisfaction with conventional training programs. There are about 20 participating students per 220 hour class. These classes meet on certain specified evenings and Saturdays for "Approximately 40 hours per quarter include two weekend retreats, beginning with a challenge course, and monthly meeting of two evenings and a full day Saturday" (p. 67).

This training institute located in Portland, Oregon emphasizes educational administration by learning in teams. The team approach is used in many activities such as class presentations, school board observations, superintendent interviews, challenge course, and so on. These activities focus on certain educational domains such as "Collective bargaining, strategic planning, policy development,

community relations, and finance" (p. 68). Educational issues are frequently analyzed and discussed from a multitude of perspectives. Schmuck described the pedagogy and content of the institute as follows:

> Each class begins with readings from student journals; journals may incorporate reactions to readings, contain thoughtful deliberation about a real situation, or raise new issues for class consideration.
>
> Each student works with a superintendent mentor or field supervisor in a self-tailored practicum for two quarters. (p. 69)

Moreover, students of the Institute are paired up with a mentor from other agencies in an effort to gain different leadership and management perspectives. Elements of reflective practice, establishing strong peer consultation networks, and organizational development are woven throughout the course.

The Institute operates using the facilitator model to promote experiential learning. Experiential learning is presented in many forms including organizational simulations, field observations, cases studies, and various learning exercises. A common learning exercise might include having practicing superintendents come into the class for a question and answer session or presentations in which research, practice, and theory have been synthesized. In sum, the Institute for Executive Leadership strives to transform the traditional superintendent training program into a practical leadership preparation program by promoting a new style of administrative preparation using team building and experiential learning to address specific domains of educational administration (Schmuck, 1992).

Future School Administrators' Academy

Several school districts in the state of New York have demonstrated confidence in a new and progressive training academy called the Future School Administrators' Academy, according to Rosenberg (2000). The academy is designed to train promising individuals already employed by a school district for future administrative roles within the same district. The participating school districts select their own candidates for the academy and sponsor them by paying the academy fee of $13,500. Since the school districts only sponsor existing employees, the "grow your own" philosophy towards preparing aspiring school administrators, including superintendents, has received much recognition.

The Academy "is a partnership made up of the Putnam-Northern Westchester board, 14 school districts and Teachers College at Columbia University" (p. 14). The Academy differs from conventional administrative preparation programs in that emphasis is placed on applied theory through practical situations, case studies, and problem solving. The typical two-year class would include between 20 to 25 students. The Academy utilizes three major components: Academic classes, a mentoring experience, and an internship experience to deliver the educational leadership competencies necessary for administrative success (Rosenburg, 2000).

Strategic Model for Administrator Preparation

Incorporating learning strategies that promote formal lifelong learning for superintendents has been a recent trend for administrator preparation programs. The "Strategic Model for Administrator Preparation" in conjunction with the

Danforth Foundation worked together to promote non-traditional educational leadership programs. As noted earlier, the Danforth Foundation was instrumental in promoting 22 non-traditional preparation programs across the United States. Kraus (1996) studied this particular model of using non-traditional preparation programs and its basic principles. The focus of her research was to answer "research questions regarding perceptions of administrators' job preparedness and how components of formal training programs (i.e., internships, mentoring relationship, reflective practice, and student cohorts) prepared school leaders for their jobs" (p. 3).

Perhaps one of the most unique features about this administrator preparation model is that each participant is assessed using authentic assessment strategies, in an effort to evaluate learning. Authentic assessments such as problem-based scenarios focus on "thinking skills rather than knowledge recollection" (Kraus, 1996, p. 24). These assessments are used throughout all phases of the model. "A student's progress is measured by his or her own goals, intentions, and past achievements rather than against group criteria" (p. 24). The type of assessments used in this model allows the instructor and the learners to evaluate learning in realistic contexts and applications.

Kraus' study (1996) found that the participants described several components of the training model as preparing them for lifelong learning in the field of educational leadership. This model for preparing administrators had several important components: "situated learning, modeling, coaching, reflection, articulation, exploration and authentic assessment" (p. 1). These components

allowed the program graduates to gain the experience and knowledge base they would need to adequately address future educational challenges.

Standards-Based Superintendent Preparation

The Standards-Based Superintendent Preparation model is based on the eight standards of the American Association of School Administrators (AASA) and the Texas superintendent certificate of 1994. Boone (2001) explained that because the Texas superintendent certificate of 1994 was created using the AASA standards as a template both are very similar. The eight learner-centered superintendent performance standards of the AASA are as follows: Leadership and district culture, policy and governance, communications and community relations, organizational management, curriculum planning and development, instructional management, human resource management, and values and ethics of leadership.

This unique standards-based model for preparing superintendents is learner-centered and grounded in adult learning theories. The training courses within the model are titled: "Seminar in the Superintendency, Human Resource Management & Instructional Leadership, School Finance & Business Management, and Field-based Practicum" (Boone, 2001, p. 14-15). Courses meet either on Saturdays or in short mini- sessions lasting a few weeks at a time. There are a number of instructional strategies used in this model such as "reflective writing, problem-based learning, guided discussion in a seminar, setting, collaborative research, leadership assessment, directed reading, simulation, mentoring, shadowing, and reflective seminar" (p. 14-15). Boone's model not

only promotes face-to-face interaction, but also makes use of electronic media (i.e. email, chat rooms, and distance learning) as a way of further enhancing communication efforts among the participants. This particular educational leadership preparation model uses recognized administrative standards to guide a variety of innovative instructional strategies.

Summary of Superintendency Preparation Programs

The above programs differ from the traditional theory-based administrative preparation programs that are often lecture driven and lacking in real world experiences. The publication of *Leaders for America's Schools* by Griffiths, Stout, and Forsyth (1988) endorsed broad-based educational leadership preparation programs that include knowledge, application of knowledge, supervised experience, acquisition of skills, and a demonstration of competence. Each of the preparation programs reviewed above have components consistent with the recommendations espoused by Griffiths, Stout, and Forsyth. In summary, a review of the literature concerning non-traditional preparation models suggested that these may be the next generation of "traditional" preparation models because of the success of specialized combination of theory and application incorporated in a broad-based approach to preparing school administrators.

Oklahoma Superintendent Standard Certification

Common Education Certification

According to the *Administrative Certification Requirements* information sheet distributed by the Oklahoma State Department of Education (OSDE), there

are two ways in which an individual can obtain a valid Oklahoma administrator's standard certification. First, a *Traditional Administrator Certification* can be obtained from the state of Oklahoma when an individual has satisfied three requirements: 1) Hold a master's degree in Education Administration; 2) Have two years of successful teaching, supervisory or administrative experience in public schools; 3) Have passing scores on the required administrator subject area test(s).

The second method for obtaining a standard certification is relatively new. This method is referred to as an *Alternative Administrator Certification.* The OSDE acknowledges that the *Alternative Administrator Certification* was initiated by House Bill 1390 and has been in effect since July 1, 2005. As explained by the Administrator Certification Requirements page found on the OSDE's webpage, the *Alternative Administrator Certification* can be obtained from the state of Oklahoma when an individual has satisfied six (6) requirements:

- Hold a master's degree;
- Have two years of relevant work experience in a supervisory or administrative capacity;
- Have passing scores on the required administrator subject area test(s);
- Have on file with the director of teacher education at an Oklahoma accredited institution of higher education a declaration of intent to earn standard certification through completion of an approved alternative administrative preparation program in not more than three years;

- State Department of Education issues an initial alternative administrative credential valid for three years (non-renewable); and
- Completion of an alternative administrative program and recommendation by the director of teacher education.

Both methods of obtaining a superintendent standard certification reflect the culmination of decades of policy-making in Oklahoma.

Career and Technology Administrator Credential

A superintendent of Oklahoma's Career and Technology system must first obtain the same credentials as a superintendent of Oklahoma's Common Education system. The Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education (ODCTE) "can't process a technology center administrator's credential unless the applicant has obtained the appropriate certifications from the State Department of Education" (Donna Metcalf, personal communication, July 10, 2006). According to the *Technology Center Administrator's Credential* page on the ODCTE website, an Oklahoma Career and Technology endorsement cannot be issued without the following criteria being met:

- Valid Administrator's Certificate (Principal or Superintendent) issued by the Oklahoma State Department of Education
- Five (5) years' experience as a teacher, administrator, or supervisor of an approved career and technology education program
- Valid Oklahoma Vocational Teaching Certificate.

A copy of the Technology Center Administrator's Credential application is available in appendix A for review.

Oklahoma First-Year Superintendents

While many of the superintendent preparation models and academies discussed earlier occurred prior to one accepting a school district's top-level position, Oklahoma does require a post-employment training program for first-time superintendents. The first year superintendent training is more of an orientation process and gives new superintendents exposure to basic information they will need to know as they start their careers as the Chief Educational Officer (CEO).

The Oklahoma State Department of Education website explains that it is a requirement that all new superintendents (common education and career and technology education) attend eleven (11) days of professional development training seminars the first year of employment. In the event that these eleven training days are not completed, a superintendent's certificate shall be deemed invalid for the next school year. The page entitled *Oklahoma First-Year Superintendents* outlines the specifics:

- 1 day-----Attend a regular meeting of the Oklahoma State Board of Education.
- 2 days----Attend the Oklahoma Administrator's Annual Conference.
- 8 days----Attend State Department of Education professional

development training seminars scheduled throughout the school year:

- Superintendent/Board of Education Relationship
- Legal Issues/School Law/Open Meeting Laws
- Staff Relationship
- Community Relationship
- Plant Management/School Facilities
- Setting School District/Site Goals

As one can see by the above orientation agenda, Oklahoma does make some attempt to expose its first-year superintendents to essential administrative topics. However, most central office administrators would probably agree that this orientation alone would not be enough to fully prepare them for the position. Therefore, it is paramount that aspiring superintendents participate in a comprehensive administrative preparation program that utilizes innovative teaching techniques in conjunction with adult learning strategies to offer a comprehensive training experience.

Relevancy of State Certification Examinations

In examining the literature surrounding the inadequate preparation of the Chief Education Officer, the literature also indicates that the problem might be further complicated because state examinations may not be measuring all of the important aspects necessary for administrative success. For example, state certification examinations have a tendency to skirt around education laws because laws affecting education can change from year-to-year. Another major area that receives little attention on certification examinations is superintendent and school board relation. By reviewing journal articles and other readings on state superintendent certification examinations, one gains a greater insight as to what

skills, knowledge, and attributes (SKAs) one must posses in order to successfully pass the certification test. The review of the literature revealed what education practitioners are saying about what SKAs should be measured based on their actual experiences.

There are many fundamental leadership qualities associated with successful superintendents that a single timed test cannot measure. Trigg, who has had a career as a teacher, a counselor, a principal, an associate superintendent, a superintendent, and a university instructor, identified several characteristics of a successful Chief Education Officer (CEO). The top four characteristics identified by Trigg are honesty and integrity, clear and simple vision, high expectations, and courage. Trigg promotes these four characteristics as the main ingredients for a quality superintendent. However, he does cite several other factors as being key to maintaining a superior educational environment where teachers can teach and students can learn. These key factors include:

- Provide a safe school environment;
- Hire, train, and retain creative individuals;
- Focus on the educational mission; and
- Develop a positive working relationship with the board of education (Trigg, 1997).

For one person to have mastered all these qualities may be asking a lot, but for a certification exam to capture these proficiency may be nearly impossible.

Some education experts who suggest state certification tests are "missing the boat" in terms of not measuring the necessary SKAs required to succeed as a

superintendent may have a valid argument. An article written by Metzger (1997) on involuntary turnover of Superintendents reported a study by Douglas and Sharon Giles who conducted research on former superintendents who were either fired or asked to leave their position and the factors that led to their separation. The California study lasted from 1984 to 1989. The two most frequently noted factors mentioned, "were related to personnel issues and political agendas of board members" (p. 20). The study found eighty-five percent of the superintendents cited board member's political agendas as the contributing factor, and personnel issues were mentioned sixty-six percent of the time. Metzger also noted other factors from the interviewees:

> Financial problems in the district were cited by one third of the superintendents. Union problems and collective bargaining issues were mentioned in about one-fourth of the cases. A few superintendents felt that racial/ethnic issues were a factor in their situations. For example, some felt that there was conflict among board members and superintendents because of their belonging to a certain racial or ethnic group. Only one superintendent reported student achievement concerns as an issue in his leaving. (p. 21)

School board and superintendent relations are an important area in which any head administrator must possess appropriate skills. Former superintendent, Jack Kaufhold offered a few key suggestions for successful superintendents. He acknowledged that handling the school board requires special skills and a lot of time. Even though the school board hires a professional to lead the district, they often feel as though they are the experts and demand special attention. Kaufhold reported that coping with micro-managers was a very important aspect of his job. He learned diplomacy in dealing with these individuals by establishing policies,

seeking the help of outside consultants, and resolutions (Kaufhold, 2003). He stated, "One superintendent recently confided to me that he regularly spends from 65-75 percent of his time communicating with board members and dealing with their concerns" (p. 36). Another attribute that usually cannot be found on a test is keeping fit. Kaufhold noted, "Proper diet and daily exercise cannot be neglected" (p. 36). Communicating with parents is another necessary credential for maintaining a strong network of support for any district. These are common qualities of a school's top-level manager and are documented time-and-time again in the educational community.

Another very important factor in determining a superintendent's success and longevity is his or her ability to deal effectively with community pressures and special interest groups, neither of which can be measured very well on a state certification exam. Hord (1990) stated that the superintendent "has been significantly impacted by the emerging importance of politics and action-oriented interest groups" (p. 20). These politics and interest groups can come from both inside and outside of the school district.

Preparing for these types of complex issues by taking a state certification test does not seem possible, yet most states try to assess the necessary SKAs of a superintendent's job by administering a timed test. Currently, the majority of states do require individuals to pass an administrators exam before they could be considered for a superintendent position

However, some states do not place much stock in certification examinations in terms of measuring whether or not a person is ready to become a

superintendent. In fact, California, Connecticut, Florida, Michigan, New York, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Wyoming do not have any type of state assessment tests for an administrators license (Required Regular Superintendent Certification, 2003). Instead, these states value school leadership qualifications and preparation such as teaching and/or supervisor experience, completing State Board Continuing Education Unites (SBCUs), having an advanced degree, an administrative internship, recommendations from an approved university, and completing an administrators program.

Unrealistic Expectations of Superintendents

This section sheds light on the unrealistic expectations of today's top-level administrators. Practitioners would agree that it is crucial for a superintendent to recognize and understand the expectations of the school board. Of course, school board expectations vary from district to district and are constantly evolving. *The Salina Journal* reported on November 4, 2003, what the Salina Board of Education would like to see in the credentials of a new superintendent. The Salina School Board held three forums at the district's high schools to "brainstorm" with the general public concerning the upcoming employment of the district's executive office position. Together the school board, community members, and district teachers identified a lengthy list of attributes such as sensitivity to diversity, appreciation for non-core courses, willingness to be a follower, having good listening skills, and not being a know-it-all. The local newspaper somewhat made light of the crowd's demands by summarizing their discussions as saying a superintendent would need to be "A good, honest

communicator who can savvy budgets, motivate staff, increase diversity and help low-performing students catch up while not forgetting those at the high end and maintain the district's new buildings and technology and do something about gang activity" (Strand, 2003, p. A7). In fact, the Salina School Board president Richard Brake jokingly said, "Not afraid of kryptonite" as he made reference to Superman-like attributes. As the article demonstrates, the expected skills, knowledge, and attributes of a school leader can be extremely high. Most practitioners in the educational arena would argue these high demands are typical of most school districts.

Further investigation of the literature showed some newspaper reporters who write on educational issues have identified similar expectations of school officials. Freelance writer Kathleen Durham of the *Savannah Morning News*, Savannah Georgia, gave her interpretation of the unspoken qualities and expectations that the Chatham County school board asked for in a new superintendent:

> 1. Walk on water while carrying the weight of the educational system on your back. 2. Leap tall buildings in a single bound. 3. Be all things to all people at the same time. 4. Heal a fractured board. 5. Make changes without making them. 6. Act like an empowered CEO even though you have no power. 7. Say the right thing without saying anything. 8. Know when to hold them; know when to fold them. 9. Be Madeleine Albright or Henry Kissinger. 10. Produce immediate results. 11. Restore faith in a system with an image problem. 12. Overcome being a newcomer. 13. Do it differently but do it our way. 14. Be held accountable for results without having sufficient authority to achieve the results. 15. Be willing to be micromanaged and second guessed by everyone. 16. Increase the test scores immediately. 17. The policy is set and the state mandates what's to be taught, so don't go thinking you're in charge of anything. 18. You are taking on a challenge I wouldn't take on in a million

> years, but I know better than you how to do it. 19. Your every move will be watched. 20. Don't count on us to support you. (2000, p. A15)

While the above may sound like another over-exaggerated report by a local newspaper, other established newspapers that report on educational issues have carried related comments. For example, the *Washington Post* recommends "luring a candidate who possesses sound judgment, has exhibited inspiring leadership and has a proven record of student achievement, success with entrenched bureaucracies and several layers of political authority, and skill at managing a billion-dollar budget and dealing with a host of community/advocacy groups and an aggressive local press corps?" (Haggray, 2004, p. A20). With such unrealistic expectations by the public at large and many local school boards, it is no wonder many superintendents are not perceived as being equipped with fundamental required leadership skills.

The outlandish superintendent expectations identified by former superintendents, newspapers, and school boards were further corroborated by Paul Houston, current executive director of the American Association for School Administrators (AASA) when he said, "There are really just four problems with the current leadership system: the job is impossible, the expectations are inappropriate, the training is inadequate, and the pipeline is inverted" (Mathews, Floyd, llg, & Rohn, 2002, p. 24). As many educational experts continue to stress the difficulties and high demands of a school's top-level office, it sends out a wave of curiosity about whether or not certification exams can really assess the

most important qualities and leadership preparation programs can effectively prepare a person for success as a superintendent.

Superintendents' Responsibilities Continue to Increase

So, what are the increasing complexities that top administrators have had to deal with in recent years? Investigation of the literature disclosed a significant number of complex issues. But before these issues can be fully understood in terms of why the recent expansion of executive responsibilities has occurred, one must step back in time to the Civil Rights Era of the 1960s.

During the 1960s the immense social tension began to set in motion a series of events that would ultimately manifest itself in major reform movements in the American public schools. It is in part because of these reform movements that today's superintendents are dealing with such complex job duties and responsibilities. According to the American Association of School Administrators, these reform movements were initiated when "Issues such as equal educational opportunities for minority groups, community control, compensatory programs, and desegregation resulted in policymakers having a stronger focus on the training and selection of superintendents" (Glass, Bjork, & Brunner, 2000, p. 20). Although it was the 1960s that set the wheels of change and reform in motion, it was not until the 1980s and 1990s that policymakers and educational experts began to impact the educational dynamics of this country. A very powerful publication in 1983 entitled, *A Nation at Risk*, is often credited as being the catalyst for energizing the educational reform movement of the 1980s and 1990s (Thattai, 2001).

Conclusion

Today the stakes of being ready to assume a school's top administrative role are higher than at any other time in history because there are greater complexities in education than ever before. A review of the literature found a significant number of superintendents are not being prepared to address the increasing complexities of school administration in recent decades. "As the complexity of school organizations increases, and participation in governance and decision making expands, administrators will need to learn new ways of working" (Glass, Bjork, & Brunner, 2000, p. 27). Recent educational initiatives such as *No Child Left Behind* and the *Individuals with Disabilities Educational Act (IDEA)*, coupled with the proliferation in school violence, globalization, and unprecedented culture shifts have profoundly impacted the complexity of the superintendent position. This increase in complexity must be addressed with solid preparation avenues for the Chief Education Officer, if America's schools are going to maintain a competitive edge in the world markets. Because career and technical education is intimately link to workforce preparation and thus the economic well-being of the nation, sound and effective preparation of multi-skilled Superintendents in this educational sector is of particular importance.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to describe the perceptions of current Oklahoma Career and Technology Superintendents about the skills, knowledge, and attributes that are obtained through on-the-job experience, university based, and non-university based preparation programs for Career and Technology Superintendents in Oklahoma. The research provided insight into the perceptions of Oklahoma CareerTech superintendents concerning their training preparation. This research topic was selected because the literature reported that superintendent preparation programs were generally regarded as inadequate and there were no studies investigating how well CareerTech superintendents felt prepared for their jobs. The methodology for the study was selected to ensure the gathering of relevant and appropriate data. For this purpose, the researcher used a mixed-method approach to gather the data in an effort to strengthen the validity of the research findings. A mixed-method design enhanced the validity of the research because data obtained from one approach corroborated data obtained from the other (Gay & Airasian, 2003).

General Approach

The researcher selected a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods for this study. This research method is often referred to as a mixed-method approach. According to Gay and Airasian (2003, p.184), "In recent years, educational researchers have become increasingly interested in combining

quantitative and qualitative research methods." Because of the unique qualities of a mixed-method approach, it can potentially yield greater benefits than simply using one research approach. For example, the validity of the qualitative results was enhanced by the results of the quantitative statistics.

The research in this study was descriptive in nature. Its purpose was to describe what Oklahoma CareerTech superintendents perceive about their professional training in order to understand and enhance the preparation practices. This study utilized both qualitative and quantitative instrumentation and data gathering methodologies for compiling descriptive data.

A mailed questionnaire was used to collect the initial quantitative data. The mailed questionnaires were sent to 29 superintendents, each of whom represented one of Oklahoma's Career Technology Education Districts. Questions on the questionnaire were reflective of the review of the literature that identified preparation issues regarding superintendents.

Based upon the analysis of the mailed questionnaires, a series of qualitative questions were developed for personal interviews. These questions were generated to better understand the responses of the 22 superintendents. Data from the interviews allowed a deeper investigation of the reasons for the survey's findings and thus led to greater understandings to answer the research questions.

All four of the interview questions were selected for specific reasons. Question number one was selected because it allowed the superintendents to share greater insights as to "if and how" the current superintendent gender ratio would be affected in both the short-term and long-term future and how changes might

influence training needs. Question number two probed deeper into the concerns that the current superintendents have with the future leadership of the CareerTech system as a significant number of superintendents are eligible for retirement. Question number three gave some clarification from the superintendents' perspective as to why universities rated low in terms of having influence on preparing CareerTech superintendents on the written questionnaire, yet when the superintendents were asked who should be providing leadership preparation for superintendents, universities were rated high. Finally, question number four was selected in an effort to obtain specific input as to how superintendents believe important topics should be taught.

Each of the four interview questions were prefaced for the superintendents with a specific research findings that presented data obtained from the written questionnaire (see Appendix B). Based on the findings of the written questionnaire and personal interviews, conclusions and recommendations for further study were developed and are presented in the final chapter of this study.

Population and Sample

Population

This research study was designed to involve the entire population of the 29 Superintendents of the Oklahoma Career and Technology (CareerTech) Education System. Each of the 29 CareerTech superintendents in Oklahoma was emailed a questionnaire and invited to participate in the research; 22 Superintendents completed and returned the questionnaire.

Sample

A questionnaire was emailed to all of the 29 CareerTech superintendents in Oklahoma. A total of 22 CareerTech superintendents completed and returned the questionnaire. This sample of 22 respondents from the population of 29 represented 76 percent of the population. The demographics of the sample, drawn from the questionnaires data, are shown in Table 2.

Table 2

Demographic Profile of Sample

Demographic Variable			Frequency	Percent*	Mean**
Years of Experience as a CareerTech superintendent by Quartile Intervals					
0	to	5	7	32%	
6	to	11	6	27%	
12	to	16	2	9%	
≥ 17			7	32%	
Total			22	100%	10.6
Years in Education					
18	to	24	4	18%	
25	to	31	4	18%	
32	to	38	9	41%	
> 39			5	23%	
Total			22	100%	32.9
Years in Education Administration					
8	to	16	5	23%	
17	to	25	3	14%	
26	to	34	11	50%	
≥ 35			3	14%	
Total			22	101%	24.4
Years in CareerTech Education					
1	to	10	3	14%	
11	to	21	6	27%	
22	to	32	5	23%	
≥ 33			8	36%	
Total			22	100%	25.2

Gender					
Male			19	86%	
Female			3	14%	
Total			22	100%	N/A
Age of Participants					
42	to	48	5	24%	
49	to	55	2	10%	
56	to	62	10	48%	
≥ 63			4	19%	
Total			21	101%	56
Campuses of the School District					
1	to	3	17	77%	
4	to	6	4	18%	
7	to	9	0	0%	
≥ 10			1	5%	
Total			22	100%	N/A

Table 1 (continued)

Note. *The Percent column is plus or minus one percent due to rounding.
**The Mean column is rounded to the nearest tenth.

Table 2 shows 17 of the 22 (78%) participants have been in education administration for 17 years or longer. Furthermore, 9 out of 22 (41%) of the participants have at least 12 years of experience as a CareerTech superintendent with an overall average of 10.6 years. Table 2 data reveals out of the 22 participants 19 (86%) were male and 3 (14%) were female. Table 2 also shows data consistent with the review of the literature concerning a large number of top level administrators reaching retirement age. There were 18 out of the 22 (82%) participants with 25 or more years in education and 14 of the 21 (67%) participants that responded to the part of Table 2 concerning age were age 56 or older. In sum, Table 2 suggests that the participants in the study are experienced administrators, nearing retirement age, and predominately male which appears to

be similar to the seven CareerTech superintendents that did not participant in the study.

Upon review of the seven CareerTech superintendents who did not respond, the researcher found nothing systematic about these non-respondents. In other words, their traits and characteristics were similar to the 22 respondents shown in Table 2. There was no reason to believe that the 22 respondents were not reasonably representative of the population. Because the sample of 22 represented such a large percentage of the population and showed no systematic demographic bias, they were treated as the population, and this was considered to be a census study.

Once the emailed questionnaires were returned and analyzed, a sample of six superintendents were purposefully selected for personal qualitative interviews. The six superintendents selected for the interviews represented 20 percent of the population. The selection of these six superintendents was based on the school district funding tier classification system as determined by the Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education (ODCTE).

According to Diane Durham (personal communication, December 6, 2006) of the ODCTE, the tier classification system is used to summarize and compare the total district valuation of Oklahoma's technology centers. The total district valuation is also known as the total *ad valorem* valuation. The total district valuation is the result of a school district's real property, personal property, and public service. Furthermore, Ms. Durham elaborated that each tier has the number of technology centers it does because of four factors: Make-up of the

school, number of campuses, natural breaks in the taxable funding amount, and whether or not a school is urban or rural.

The ODCTE has determined that four distinct funding tiers exist. According to the Technology Center Financial Data Fiscal Year 2004, the first tier had an average total *ad valorem* valuation of $95,269,198; the second tier had an average total *ad valorem* valuation of $234,504,635; the third tier had an average total *ad valorem* valuation of $579,808,714; and the fourth tier had an average total *ad valorem* valuation of $1,854,655,234. The data reflect the fact that as the tier number increases so does the total average state allocations. For a more detailed review of the Technology Center Financial Data Fiscal Year 2004 see Appendix C.

The sample of superintendents for the interviews consisted of the following: One superintendent from tier one, two superintendents from tier two, two superintendents from tier three, and one superintendent from tier four. The number of superintendents selected from each tier was determined by the number of technology center superintendents represented in each funding tier: Tier number one includes four superintendents; tier number two includes twelve superintendents; tier number three includes nine superintendents; and tier number four includes four superintendents.

Instrumentation

Two instruments were used during the research to collect data: A written questionnaire and a set of interview questions. The written questionnaire was based on information obtained in the literature review. One-on-one interview

questions were developed from an analysis of the returned written questionnaires (See Appendix B). According to Sagor (2000), "Written surveys offer the advantage of providing a great deal of information quickly. The drawback, however, is that the responses tend to be shallow. The interview is just the opposite. Interviews are time consuming, but they provide in-depth information" (p. 107). Therefore, the researcher used a combination of these instruments to obtain the rich data needed to draw comprehensive conclusions.

Both instruments were pilot tested as explained below for clarity, content, and appropriateness, prior to being delivered to the participants.

The written questionnaire used in the research was developed from a review of the literature. The questionnaire or emailed survey was organized into the following four sections: 1) Demographics for Oklahoma CareerTech superintendents, 2) Preparation Programs, 3) Personal Preparation, and 4) Training for Future Superintendents. Questions used in the four sections were open-ended and relied heavily on subjective responses or expressed using a four-point Likert-type scale. A four-point Likert-type scale was selected to prevent the participants from choosing a neutral position. The emailed survey was pilot tested with a panel of experts composed of three former CareerTech superintendents, one ODCTE administrative personnel, and one professor at Oklahoma State University (see Appendix D). They were asked to review the survey questionnaire, make recommendations, and return it to the researcher within one week. These experts were chosen based on their personal and

professional knowledge and experience regarding the duties of a CareerTech superintendent and/or their expertise in survey research.

Data from the returned mailed questionnaires provided the basis for developing the questions that were used for the interview. Specifically, the superintendent responses were organized into various themes, which allowed the researcher to focus a number of specific questions on each theme to conduct deeper investigation of the reasons for participants' responses to the items on the emailed questionnaire and thus lead to greater understandings to answer the research questions. The interview questions were pilot tested for content validity and clarity with Oklahoma State University faculty. The interview questions were then used in one-on-one personal interviews by phone. In the interview sessions, the researcher presented the interview questions' by using a standard question/response approach. While structured questions were used in the interviews, the questions were arranged in a format that allowed for unstructured questions to be used when the respondents' comments needed further explanation.

In summary, two different sets of questions were used in this research. The reasons for using the initial emailed questionnaire were to generate demographic data and to establish a baseline that provided basic perception information and themes needed to create a second set of questions for conducting structured interviews. The decision to use emailed written survey questionnaires was based on specific advantages suggested by Gay and Airasian (2003):

- The participant can remain anonymous (except to researcher);
- The cost of disseminating the survey is relatively inexpensive;

- The method of scoring data is reasonably easy; and
- The consistency of the research is increased because of the use of standardized items and procedures.

In addition to Gay and Airasian's endorsement, Sagor (2000) acknowledged written surveys were popular because they were not only efficient and versatile, but "depending on how you frame the questions, you can use surveys to gather data concerning affective, cognitive, or attitudinal issues" (p. 104).

Interview questions were chosen for this study for their qualities in obtaining first hand data from experts in the field of executive level Career and Technology school administration. According to Gay and Airasian (2003), personal interviews have a number of unique advantages, which include delivery of rich in-depth data, asking questions that are difficult to structure in an objective type format, and often result in more accurate and honest information because the participants are allowed to explain their positions.

Procedures

Before the study was conducted, permission was requested and granted from the Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education (ODCTE) and the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Oklahoma State University to collect the necessary data.

The researcher conducted an in-depth investigation of the literature on the preparation of superintendents, including Career and Technology Education Superintendents. The review of the literature provided the basis for establishing

key research questions concerning the preparation programs for aspiring CareerTech superintendents.

The next major phase of the study was to develop a written questionnaire from the review of the literature that addressed the research questions. The draft written questionnaire was submitted to the researcher's dissertation committee for approval, then was sent to a pilot group for review of content to establish content validity and obtain suggestions for improvement. After the pilot questionnaires were returned to the researcher, corrections were made and resubmitted to the dissertation committee for further approval.

Two weeks before the written questionnaires were e-mailed, a phone call was placed to all 29 CareerTech superintendents advising them of the research study and asking for their participation. The day before the written questionnaires were e-mailed, an e-mail was sent out reminding the subjects of the questionnaire.

Two weeks after the phone call was placed by the researcher to all 29 superintendents advising them of the research study and asking for their participation, a cover letter, participant consent letter, and a written questionnaire were e-mailed to each superintendent. The cover letter noted the potential benefits of the study, the study's purpose, and the overall process of the study. To help gain support from the participants and maximize confidentiality, each of the e-mailed questionnaires was identified by a coded system known only to the researcher. This coded system was expressed in writing to each participant.

The superintendents were asked to return their consent form and completed questionnaire within five days. Follow-up contact was made to those

superintendents not returning the consent form and questionnaire within the five-day deadline. A total of 22 of the 29 superintendents returned completed questionnaires. The data from these 22 questionnaires were analyzed using quantitative methods, as explained in the section on Data Analysis.

Based on the results of the returned questionnaires, interview questions were developed to conduct deeper investigation of the reasons for the survey's findings and thus lead to greater understandings to answer the research questions. The first draft of the interview questions were sent to an Oklahoma State University faculty for review and recommendations for improvement.

Participating Career and Technology Education Superintendents were contacted by telephone to determine if they would be willing to participate in a one-on-one interview, based on the established purposive sampling criteria of randomly selecting subjects from each of the Technology Center funding tiers as established by the Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education. Six of the responding superintendents were selected to be interviewed. The researcher believes this selection offered a representative perspective because either one or two superintendents were randomly selected from each tier, depending on the size of the tier. The six superintendents were then contacted by phone to establish the date, time, and location of the interview.

The researcher conducted the personal interview by phone with each of the randomly selected superintendents. Each interview was tape-recorded and the data transcribed in an effort to maintain the integrity of the research. The transcribed interview notes were sent to the six superintendents to make any

corrections as a member check. Tape recording the interviews allowed the researcher maximum reflection and accuracy of the interview data. Participants were allowed 5 days to review and respond to the transcriptions.

Based on the participant responses obtained from the personal interviews and the responses from the initial written questionnaire, the data were analyzed, synthesized and interpreted. Findings were developed based upon the analysis of the data. The researcher then developed conclusions and made recommendations for future practice and further research.

Data Analysis

Data obtained from the written questionnaire and the interview questions were organized and analyzed using a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods. The researcher used a mixed-method approach in order to analyze the data from more than one perspective and triangulate findings. While the research study utilized a mixed-method approach to analysis the data, the qualitative data analysis method was heavily relied on. The nature and methods of qualitative research allowed the researcher to obtain and empathetically analyze, interpret, organize, and synthesize the raw data.

Analysis of Quantitative Data

The responses from the written questionnaire were analyzed and interpreted using several basic quantitative descriptive statistics. The quantitative data were organized into a data matrix similar to one described by Shavelson (1996, pp.43-80). Data tables were then constructed to show quartile intervals,

frequency counts, means, and percentages. The quantitative data were reviewed for accuracy and corrections were made by an independent quantitative specialist.

Analysis of Qualitative Data

Standard qualitative analysis methods were used for the qualitative data. The specific qualitative data analysis method applied was the constant comparison technique, which was used to interpret the raw qualitative input. Using constant comparison, participants' responses were categorized and organized by using sorting and coding techniques that allowed similar data to be placed in categories. Sagor (2000) described this process in the following manner: "the researcher tries to systematically cut, sift, and sort the data into piles of like or similar objects" (p. 20). The following steps from Rossman and Rallis (2003) explain the process used by the researcher.

First, all data were prepared for analysis. Data from both the open-ended parts of the written questionnaires and the interviews were compared and synthesized. Several key points were then extracted from each source of data and written on flashcards. Each key phrase or fact was noted on a separate 3" x 5" flashcard. For example, one transcript from a superintendent's interview might have had over a dozen key points. The result was a very large stack of flashcards containing key pieces of data from the interview questions. The entire stack of flashcards was then shuffled and the researcher reviewed each flashcard one-by-one and sorted them into new categories. During this process several subcategories emerged and ultimately became their own category. Each of the flashcards was coded according to the specific category pile in which it was

placed. This sorting and categorizing process was repeated multiple times to ensure that if a particular flashcard belonged to more than one category it was coded appropriately. Some flashcards had many different codes identifying them as being associated with more than one category. Once the various categories had been established, a number of themes emerged, allowing inferences to be made and conclusions to be drawn.

Throughout the entire study, the researcher was in a continual process of analyzing and re-analyzing the data through both quantitative and qualitative methods to synthesize, triangulate, and interpret the data. Findings and conclusions were eventually derived from this iterative analysis process.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

Introduction

This chapter presents the data from the written questionnaire and the findings of the telephone interviews. Section one of the questionnaire collected the participants' demographic data and was presented in Chapter Three in describing the study's sample. This chapter presents the quantitative findings from sections two and three of the written questionnaire. The quantitative findings are presented in table format in addition to a written explanation. The qualitative analysis of section four of the written questionnaire and the one-on-one qualitative telephone interviews are also presented using a similar format. Both the quantitative and qualitative findings are presented below the corresponding research questions identified in chapter one.

Research Question Number 1:

How well do Oklahoma Career and Technology (CareerTech) superintendents feel they were prepared to perform their job duties their first year on the job?

Question number 1 of section 3 in the written questionnaire addressed research question number 1. Question number 1 asked: How do you rate your preparation to serve as a CareerTech superintendent your first year? Using generally accepted definitions of *Excellent, Good, Fair, and Poor* the data from question number 1 in the written questionnaire are presented in Table 3.

Table 3

Perceived Preparation For First Year of Service as Superintendent

Rating	Frequency	% of Frequency*
Excellent	6	27%
Good	12	55%
Fair	3	14%
Poor	0	0%
No Response	1	5%
Total	22	101%

Note. *The Percent column is plus or minus one percent due to rounding.

These data indicate that the majority of superintendents felt they were adequately prepared for their position the first year on the job by 18 out of 22 or 82% of the superintendents rating their preparation at the good or excellent level.

Research Question Number 2:

Which job duties do Oklahoma CareerTech superintendents feel they were least prepared to fulfill their first year of work?

Question number 2 in section 3 of the written questionnaire was structured as a two-part question with three blank lines for the participants to respond. Part one asked: What aspects of your job do you feel you were the least prepared for during your first year as a CareerTech superintendent? Part two asked the participant to rank each of the responses. The analysis of the data was conducted by using a sigma rank point and a tier analysis. Using the sigma rank point (ΣRank Point) system, the lower the ranking the higher the point value (Rank 1 = most important) and the higher the ranking the lower the point value. The table also used tier analysis to group items based on ΣRank Points. Tier or cluster breaks were made based on similar scores within a tier and major gaps between tiers. Table 4 shows the top five aspects of the job that the superintendents indicated that they were the least prepared for during the first year on the job.

Table 4

Aspects Least Prepared for During First Year

Aspects	ΣRank Points	% of Total Points	Rank	
Audits/Finance/Budgets	30	23%	1st	Tier1
Legislative Process & Edu. Politics	14	11%	2nd	
Personnel Management	12	9%	3rd	
Facilities Planning	10	8%	4th	
Collective Bargaining/Contracts/Insurance	9	7%	5th	Tier 2
All (18) other aspects	54	42%	N/A	
Total	129	00%	N/A	

Three inferences can be drawn from the data in Table 4. First, the top 5 aspects identified by the superintendents comprise more than half of the total points of all identified job aspects, which indicates a common opinion of the superintendents that these areas were the aspects that they felt least prepared for during their first year as superintendent. Secondly, since the Audits/Finance/Budgets category received nearly one-fourth of the total 129 points given to all job aspects, this indicates that this job aspect was a critical area of weakness for current superintendents during their entry year. Finally, while the other 18 job aspects mentioned by the superintendent that did not make the top 5 rankings were noted as areas needing more preparation attention, they were not regarded as significant weakness as for the majority of superintendents.

Research Question Number 3:

To what degree do Oklahoma CareerTech superintendents feel there is a need for an exclusive preparation program for superintendents?

Quantitative Data

Section 2 question number 1 of the written questionnaire addressed this research question by asking the following: Do you feel that there is a need for a separate and distinct superintendent preparation training program in Oklahoma's CareerTech system? Table 5 presents the responses to this question.

Table 5

Perceived Need for Separate Superintendent Training

Participant Response	Frequency	Percent
Yes	20	91%
No	2	9%
Total	22	100%

Those data clearly indicate that the Oklahoma CareerTech superintendents perceive a need for a specialized training program for the superintendency. This perception was probed more deeply by a second question that addressed the level of the perceived need.

Section 2 question number 2 of the written questionnaire asked: To what degree you feel there is a need for a CareerTech superintendent preparation program in Oklahoma? Table 6 presents the responses to this question.

Table 6

Degree to Which Superintendent Training is Needed

Degree	Frequency	Percent
Very High	11	50%
High	9	41%
Low	2	9%
None	0	0%
Total	22	100%

Table 6 indicates that the majority of superintendents surveyed (91%) felt strongly (as indicated by a "High" or "Very High" rating) that a distinct

CareerTech superintendent preparation program in Oklahoma is needed. Moreover, the same 9% of the participants in question number 1 of section 2 who indicated "No" for needing a separate and distinct CareerTech superintendent preparation program in Oklahoma checked "Low" for the degree rating. This is particularly interesting because these participants could have checked "None", but chose not to for whatever reason. This would appear to indicate that when given the opportunity to express their opinion in terms of a degree that a different outcome can result. In this case it could be interpreted that the 9% that originally indicated "No" actually perceive that a separate and distinct CareerTech superintendent preparation program in Oklahoma is needed, but at a low level. It could also be that the 9% believe that there is some need for specific CareerTech superintendent training in Oklahoma, but not necessarily within the CareerTech system.

Qualitative Data

To provide data relating to this and other research questions, six superintendents participated in one-on-one phone interviews with the researcher. Prior to each question a specific research finding from the written survey was presented to the interviewee (See Appendix B). Each question directly related to the research finding. This format was selected because the researcher believed it would not only provide direction for the participants' responses, but provide specific information for the participants to consider.

Table 7 provides demographic data on each of the six superintendents who participated in the one-on-one phone interview.

Table 7

Demographics of Interviewed Participants

Participant #	Demographics*
1	Male, Small rural campus, More than 20 years as CareerTech superintendent
2	Male, Mid size urban campus, Less than 5 years as CareerTech superintendent
3	Male, Large urban campus, More than 15 years as CareerTech superintendent
4	Female, Mid size rural campus, More than 5 years as CareerTech superintendent
5	Male, Large rural campus, More than 20 years as CareerTech superintendent
6	Male, Small rural campus, Less than 5 years as CareerTech superintendent

*Note. The years of experience as superintendent are in increments of 5 years.

The second question on the one-on-one phone interviews probed deeper to address research question 3. This question helped to establish a greater understanding of why the superintendents may have indicated that there is a need for a separate and distinct superintendent preparation training program in Oklahoma's CareerTech system. It asked the following question: Do you anticipate any concerns among CareerTech superintendents over the next few years with many of Oklahoma's CareerTech superintendents retiring, if so what kind of concerns? Each of the six participants expressed concern with the number of CareerTech superintendents expected to retire in the next few years. In fact, participant # 5 estimated that 14 CareerTech superintendents will be eligible for retirement in the next two years. Participant # 6 estimated 13 to 16 CareerTech superintendents will be eligible for retirement in the next five years. These two estimates would suggest nearly half of the sitting superintendents could retire. These two estimates are consistent with the data in Table 2 which provided

statistics on the participants' age and number of years in education. These participants expressed their concerns with the following comments:

Participant # 1	"The mistakes of the past may be repeated without the wisdom of the past."
Participant # 2	"I am very concerned, there is a tremendous amount of leadership, knowledge, and history that those folks are carrying around."
Participant # 3	"I think that we have a dramatic shortage of qualified candidates." "The continuity of the system is another concern"
Participant # 4	"My concern is that there are not people being prepared across the state." "I have great concern about quality and sustainability with new people coming in."
Participant #5	"Some tremendous void in the ability to get some things done, particularly in the political process and just the overall credibility of the group from a statewide perspective."
Participant #6	"I have some very significant concern, because of the experience and wisdom that we will be losing."

Although all the participants shared concern about CareerTech superintendents reaching retirement age, several did maintain some level of optimism with the potential of new ideas infiltrating the CareerTech system as superintendent position are filled with new administrators.

Research Question Number 4:

What topics, delivery methods, and specific preparation learning strategies do CareerTech superintendents suggest?

In an effort to gain greater insight into the topics that superintendents believe they need to receive training about so they can be adequately prepared for tomorrow's educational challenges, this research question requires the participant's recommendations from two different perspectives: Pre-and post-employment in the superintendency. Therefore, the data addressed the topics

needed from both perspectives. Pre-employment topics reflect those topics needed in a superintendent preparation (pre-service) training program. Post-employment topics reflect those topics that should be included in superintendent professional development (in-service) training programs.

Quantitative Data

Section 2 question number 4 of the written questionnaire asked the participants to "Rank the five most important topics by placing a 1 by the most important topic through 5 as your fifth rated topic that should be included in CareerTech superintendents preparation programs?" All of the ranked topics were assigned a reversed point value using sigma rank point to determine a final ranking of the topics that should be included in a superintendent preparation program. A tier analysis was used to identify item clusters based on ΣRank Points. The participants identified a total of 26 different topics that they perceived should be included in CareerTech superintendent preparation programs (See Table 8).

Table 8

Topics That Should be Included in a Superintendent Preparation Program

Topic	ΣRank Points	% of Total* Points	Rank	
Administrative Leadership	49	18%	1st	Tier 1
School Board Relations	33	12%	2nd	
CareerTech Education Philosophy	33	12%	2nd	
Budget Development	32	12%	3rd	
School Law	26	9%	4th	
School-Community Relations	25	9%	5th	Tier 2
Legislative Process	15	5%	6th	
Business-Industry Relations	15	5%	6th	
Hire, Train, & Retain Staff	13	5%	7th	
Politics of Education	11	4%	8th	

Administrative Ethics	11	4%	8th	
Staff Relations	9	3%	9th	
Establishing New Programs	6	2%	10th	
Motivation of Staff	6	2%	10th	
Facilities Planning	6	2%	10th	
Facilities Management	5	2%	11th	
Fostering organizational Stability	5	2%	11th	
Marketing the School	5	2%	11th	
Funding Formula	5	2%	11th	
Negotiating Contracts	4	1%	12th	
Collective Bargaining	3	1%	13th	
Fostering Innovation	2	1%	14th	
Utilization of Advisory Committee	2	1%	14th	
Managing Special Interest Groups	2	1%	14th	
Ad Valorem Tax Process	2	1%	14th	
School Audits/Evaluations	1	0%	15th	Tier 3
Total	277	118%	N/A	

*Note. The Percent column is plus or minus eighteen percent due to rounding a large number of categories.

Table 8 not only identifies the topics the participants perceived as being important to include in a pre-service superintendent preparation program, but ranks these topics in order of perceived significance. Given the 10 point drop in points between the 5th and 6th ranked topic it can be further concluded that the first 6 topics (with a tie for 2nd rank) are clearly endorsed as most important by the participants. The 16 point gap between the 1st and 2nd ranked items indicates reasonable agreement that this is the single most important topic. Conversely, the lowest 11 rank topics are of much less importance to the preparation of CareerTech superintendents as indicated by much smaller sigma rank points. The point value of all of the 11 lowest ranked topics only totals 36 points, which equates to less than 74% of the first ranked topic. In sum, while numerous topics were noted by the participants, it is the top 6 topics that merit the most attention and should be emphasized in superintendent preparation training programs.

Similarities might have been expected between Table 4 (Aspects Least Prepared for During First Year) and Table 8 (Topics That Should be Included in a Superintendent Preparation Program). However, the data suggest something different, with marked discrepancies between the two tables. For example, Table 4 lists Audits/Finance/Budgets, Legislative Process & Education Politics, Personnel Management, Facilities Planning, and Collective Bargaining/contracts/Insurance as first, second, third, fourth, and fifth, respectively. The order of importance in Table 8 varies in each category from Table 4. Table 8 lists Budget Development as fourth, not first; Legislative Process as seventh and Politics of Education as tenth, not second; Hire, Train, & Retain Staff as ninth and Staff Relations as twelfth, not third; Facilities Planning as fifteenth, not fourth; and Negotiating Contracts as twentieth with Collective Bargaining placing twenty-first, not fifth.

It appears that the perceived training needs of today's experienced (average 10.6 years) CareerTech superintendents may have changed since many of the participants were first year superintendents, thereby requiring a different emphasis on the various skills, knowledge, and attitudes (SKAs) needed by tomorrow's superintendents.

Table 9 presents data from section 4 question number 3 of the written questionnaire. Participants were asked to respond to the following question: "What are the top three areas of your job that require professional development training?" The participants were not asked to rank these areas. One point was

given to each area each time a participant suggested an area. Only 20 of the 22 participants responded to this question; the results are presented in Table 9.

Table 9

Needed Professional Development Training

Areas	Frequency	% of Total* Frequencies
New Laws/Policy Development	14	23%
Management of Personnel	7	11%
Working with Legislature	7	11%
Financing CareerTech Districts	7	11%
New Concepts with CareerTech	5	8%
Budgeting	3	5%
New Organizational Skills & Planning	3	5%
Board Relations	2	3%
Leadership	1	2%
School Security	1	2%
Managing Change	1	2%
Coordinating Resources	1	2%
Working with Sending Schools	1	2%
Ideas Regarding New Programs	1	2%
Computer Skills	1	2%
Measuring School Performance	1	2%
Effective communications	1	2%
Coping with Stress	1	2%
Personal Development	1	2%
Community Relations	1	2%
Developing a Vision	1	2%
Total	61	103%

*Note. The Percent column is plus or minus three percent due to rounding.

While some similarities exist between Table 8 and 9, there are several new areas or topics suggested in Table 9 such as Coping with Stress, School Security, Managing Change, Coordinating Resources, Ideas Regarding New Programs. Comparison of Tables 8 and 9 would suggest that not only do superintendents need additional training even after becoming experienced administrators, but they desire different types of training in in-service programs than what they feel should

be included in a pre-service superintendent preparation program. Superintendents perceived the area of New Laws/Policy Development as a constantly evolving arena requiring continuous professional training above all other areas as indicated by its high response percentage. New Laws/Policy development clearly dominates the list of topics that superintendents believed require professional development training. It is interesting however, that New Laws/Policy Development does not appear on the list of areas that superintendents perceived a lack of preparedness (Table 4) or on the topics for pre-service training list in Table 8. However, Financial, Human Resource, and Legislative topics hold priority positions in all three tables.

None of the three tables show that participants' responses indicate that measuring school, student, or individual performance appeared important to superintendents and their professional preparation and development.

Qualitative Data

Question number one of the one-on-one phone interviews consisted of two parts. Therefore, question number one is examined here in two independent parts. The first part of question number one asked: Do you anticipate the gender ratio to change much in the short-term (2-4 years) or long-term (4 or more years) future? The results were: One participant indicated no change in the short-term or long-term future, while five participants predicted some type of change in the future of the current gender ratio among CareerTech superintendents.

The following reports how each of the five participants responded who did predict a change in the gender ratio:

- Participants number two and five predicted an increase in the number of females employed as CareerTech superintendents, but did not specify short-term or long-term future.
- Participant number three predicted an increase in the number of females employed as CareerTech superintendents in both the short-term and long-term future.
- Participant number four predicted an increase in the number of females employed as CareerTech superintendents in the long-term future, but did not expect much change in the short-term future.
- Participant number six predicted a slight increase in the number of females employed as CareerTech superintendents, but did not specify short-term or long-term future.

Three of the five participants who predicted an increase in the number of females entering the position of CareerTech superintendent indicated that the increase would be contingent on certain initiatives and circumstances: More health and information technology programs, vacancies in the next 3-5 years, efforts to recruit females, and succession plans neutral to gender.

The second part of question number one asks: And if so, how do you anticipate the gender ratio change will influence the types of skills/trainings needed to prepare CareerTech superintendents in Oklahoma? Each of the five participants who predicted an increase in the number of females entering the CareerTech superintendent position in the future expected no differences in the preparation of CareerTech superintendents based on gender. Although one

participant disagreed with the majority in terms of expectancy of gender ratio change in the short-term future, this participant did agree that gender alone does not influence the types of skills and training needed to adequately prepare one for a superintendent position.

These data indicate that most participants anticipated some type of change in the current gender ratio in either the long-term or short-term future, but did not perceive gender to be a factor in the preparation of aspiring superintendents. In summary the CareerTech superintendents foresaw an increase in the proportion of females as superintendents, but did not feel this would impact the nature of the training needed for the position.

Question number four of the one-on-one phone interviews asked: How would you suggest administrative leadership, school board relationship, and CareerTech philosophy be taught? Based on an analysis of the interview responses, a summary of the data for each topic was created.

The participants acknowledged that leadership could be taught effectively by either universities or the State Department of CareerTech, *as long as* the instructors were knowledgeable practicing and/or experienced administrators such as superintendents or in some cases principals. Moreover, the Oklahoma State School Board Association (OSSBA) and Consortium of Social Science Associations (COSSA) were also noted as having a potential positive impact on leadership training. Small group settings, internships, and book reviews of leadership books were suggested to be included in the leadership training. One participant even offered two examples that should be considered models for

training administrative leaders. These examples were Ohio's system of training educational leaders and the Automotive Youth Education System (AYES) and its approach to internships. Participants indicated that leadership preparation should occur at more than one level on an annual basis. A final suggestion was aligning administrative leadership programs with the types of leadership training provided to Fortune 500 companies.

Suggestions for preparing superintendents for effective school board relationships in some cases paralleled the participants' administrative leadership preparation recommendations. For example, using experienced superintendents to facilitate training and small discussion groups were suggested. In addition to experienced superintendents facilitating the school board relationship training, it was suggested that several other stakeholders be involved. These stakeholders included school board members, the Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education, universities, and the Oklahoma State School Board Association. Considerable emphasis was placed on the Oklahoma State School Board Association providing workshop training, which was recommended by four of the six participants. Participant #1 stated, "Methods should contain theory, case studies mixed with actual attendance and observation of board meetings". Additionally, emphasis was placed on teaching school law as part of preparing superintendents for positive and productive school board relationships.

The suggestions for delivering effective CareerTech philosophy training were clear and concise. The data from the participants revealed that CareerTech philosophy could best be taught by either experienced administrators and/or

teachers who have actually been a part of the CareerTech history-making process in small group settings, in conjunction with studying books such as *Programs for People* that presents historical and philosophical perspective on the CareerTech system. University courses were not endorsed as an avenue for teaching Oklahoma's CareerTech philosophy to aspiring superintendents. In fact, participant number six stated, "Colleges don't have any idea what our state CareerTech philosophy is".

Research Question Number 5

Who should provide CareerTech superintendent preparation programs?

Table 10 presents the responses to question number 3 in section 2 of the written questionnaire. This asked the participants to: Please indicate which organization should provide the preparation training for CareerTech superintendents?

Table 10

Recommended Superintendent Training by Organization

Organization(s)	Frequency	% of Total* Frequencies
State Dept. of CareerTech Education	9	40%
University and State Dept. of CareerTech	7	32%
CareerTech superintendents	3	14%
Oklahoma Assoc. for Career and Technical Edu. and State Dept. of CareerTech	1	5%
University, State Dept. of CareerTech, and Experience in a school system	1	5%
CareerTech Superintendents and State Dept. of CareerTech	1	5%
Total	22	101%

*Note. The Percent column is plus or minus one percent due to rounding.

Table 10 shows the various organization(s) that CareerTech superintendents felt should provide the pre-service preparation training for CareerTech superintendents. This table indicates a perception that the State Department of CareerTech should be largely responsible for the training preparation of a district's top level administrator, with support for universities only when combined with other options.

Section 2 question number 5 of the written questionnaire asked the participants to rate each factor listed in Table 11 in terms of its impact on preparation training to become a CareerTech superintendent. The data are shown in Table 11 using sigma rank points and a tier analysis. Each participant was given the following rating choices to choose from: Strong (3), Moderate (2), Some (1), or No Impact (0). Table 11 presents a summary of the response data.

Table 11

Factors that Influenced the Preparation Training of CareerTech Superintendents

Factors	ΣRank Points	% of Total* Points
On the Job Training	63	17%
Mentors	56	15%
Peer/Colleagues	54	15%
Self-Study	49	13%
Technical Training	42	12%
Seminars/Conference	30	8%
University Courses	29	8%
Internships	22	6%
Mentor Program	20	5%
Total	365	99%

*Note. The Percent column is plus or minus one percent due to rounding.

Table 11 provides an overview of the types of preparation experiences that current CareerTech superintendents believe impacted their preparation as a

superintendent. The top four factors reflect informal, relatively unstructured training experiences, whereas the bottom five factors reflect more formal and structured types of training. This suggests that current superintendents of the CareerTech system perceive and recognize the positive impact of less formal types of career preparation to be greater than that of formal, structured types of trainings such as programs and courses that might be offered by a university. Table 11 shows that *experiential* types of learning activities can have a strong impact on the preparation of CareerTech superintendents and are actually perceived by them to be more beneficial.

When Tables 10 and 11 are compared, they suggest that CareerTech superintendents would like the State Department of CareerTech, possibly in conjunction with universities, to provide "hands on" or experiential type learning activities when preparing superintendents.

Qualitative Data

Question number three of the one-on-one phone interview asked: Why do you feel that university courses rated seventh place out of nine when superintendents were asked to rate their preparation factors, yet these same superintendents suggested the combination of university and State Department of CareerTech as the second highest preferred preparation method? Question number three required two distinct sets of responses. Therefore, the data was analyzed in two different parts. The first part of question number three explored why universities ranked seven out of nine in terms of factors that were perceived to have positively impacted the preparation of CareerTech's top level

administrators. The data revealed that the six participants described university preparation in the following ways:

Valuable preparation ---One participant
Necessary, but could be more valuable---One participant
Little or no preparation value---Four participants

The superintendent that acknowledged universities' efforts most positively in terms of preparing aspiring CareerTech superintendent commented:

Participant # 2 "It's what you build your foundation on and you are probably using it more than you realize, but it doesn't stick out."

In contrast to the one superintendent who recognized the value of administrator preparation programs from universities, four superintendents indicated universities provide little or no preparation value with comments such as:

Participant #3 "When I went through my graduate school courses, they didn't teach the kind of things that I needed to know to be a superintendent. For the most part they taught on a very high level of theory based on ideas rather than the realistic things that take place. In my opinion the universities have never had an outstanding teaching training program nor an administrator training program."

Participant #4 "I think first of all my experience with university courses is that they were totally irrelevant to CareerTech."

Participant #5 "I think there is a disconnect with what actually should be taught and the types of training that ought to take place and what is actually being done today."

Participant #6 "I can't think of a course I took that was as beneficial as the experience I had."

The second part of question number three focused on explaining why the combination of universities and the State Department of CareerTech working together was a good approach to preparing CareerTech superintendents. After reviewing the participants' interview responses, several patterns could be

observed. First, there was a belief among the CareerTech superintendents that universities and the State Department of CareerTech should team up and work together to train CareerTech administrators. Second, universities alone were viewed as far too philosophical and theory based. Third, universities were felt to be necessary for degrees and certifications. Fourth, preparation programs were felt to need facilitation by more practicing and knowledgeable administrators. Finally, it was felt that an advisory board of practicing superintendents and university faculty working together to develop specific training courses would be beneficial.

Research Question Number 6

What do current CareerTech superintendents perceive as the future training needs?

Quantitative Data

Section 2 question number 6 of the written questionnaire asked the participants to rank the five most important skills that a CareerTech superintendent should possess by placing a 1 by the most important through 5 as the fifth ranked skill. The data are shown in Table 12 using sigma rank points and a tier analysis. Table 12 shows the cumulative ranking points of the top 5 skills as identified by the participants in descending order.

Table 12

Five Most Important Perceived Skills of a CareerTech Superintendent

Skills	ΣRank Points	% of Total* Points	
Leadership	79	22%	Tier 1
Decision-Making	40	11%	

Personnel Management	35	10%	
Visionary	33	9%	Tier 2
School Finance	26	7%	Tier 3
All (14) Other Skills	152	42%	
Total	365	101%	

*Note. The Percent column is plus or minus one percent due to rounding.

The data in Table 12 demonstrate the high degree of importance the participants placed on the top 5 skills, as the total ranking point value is 213 for those 5 skills, or 58% of all the 19 skills listed by the group. Based on the tier structure of the ranking responses, numerous skills were felt to be necessary for CareerTech superintendent to posses, but five were clearly viewed as most essential to the position, and one skill (i.e. leadership) was agreed upon as the most essential

To determine how CareerTech superintendents believe preparation training should be provided, section 3 question number 3 of the written questionnaire asked the participants to rate how valuable a list of 12 types of programs would be in preparing CareerTech superintendents for their job duties and responsibilities. All of the ranked trainings were assigned a reversed point value using sigma rank point to determine a final ranking of the potential training value of each program. This was combined with a tier analysis to analyze the rankings. Table 13 shows the results of how the participants ranked each program in descending order.

Table 13

Potential Training Value of Each Program

Training Program	ΣRank Points	% of Total Points	
On-The-Job Training	57	14%	
State Dept. of CareerTech	54	13%	
Mentorship	53	13%	Tier 1

Employment in Entry-Level Administrative Program	48	12%	
Internship	42	10%	Tier 2
University Based Preparation	38	9%	
Self-Study	37	9%	
Seminars/Conferences	30	7%	
Job Shadowing	29	7%	Tier 3
Distant Learning	17	4%	
Job Coach	3	1%	
CareerTech Superintendent	3	1%	Tier 4
Total	411	100%	

Table 13 indicates that the 22 participants perceived the top 9 programs in three tiers as having considerable potential for preparing aspiring superintendents. The importance of the top nine items is the fact that from the first position to the ninth position there is only a difference of 7%. This difference of only 7% suggests that the 22 participants recognized the potential value of each of the top nine programs, and clearly differentiated them from the remaining alternatives. Programs ranked 10 through 12 had a combined ranking point value of only 23 out of 411, or 6% of the listed programs. Additionally, the sigma rank point scores indicate that the superintendents differentiated the top three programs from the next six.

Data from section 4 question number 1 of the written questionnaire is presented in Table 14. Table 14 provides similar data to Table 8. Although the questions that were asked for Table 14 and Table 8 were similar, there was a difference in the way the questions were asked, thus yielding a different set of data. The question for Table 8 asked the participants to rank a given list of 29 independent topics with the option of an "Other" category to indicate preferences in CareerTech superintendent preparation training programs. By contrast, the

question for Table 14 did not provide a list of given topics and did not ask for any type of ranking. In Table 14 the participants were simply asked: What types of trainings are needed for future CareerTech superintendents to be successful on the job? Participants were then provided blanks lines to fill in. The frequency with which each item was listed was calculated. This was combined with a tier analysis to analyze the frequency. Table 14 shows the data obtained.

Table 14

Type of Trainings Needed for Future CareerTech Superintendents

Trainings	Frequency	% of Total* Points	Rank	
Budget & Finance (Funding Formula)	13	14%	1st	Tier 1
Legislative & Politics of Education	10	11%	2nd	
Laws/Regulations/Policies	8	9%	3rd	Tier2
Personnel Management	6	7%	4th	
School Board Relations	6	7%	4th	
Community Relations	6	7%	4th	
Leadership	5	5%	5th	
Business & Industry Services Relations	5	5%	5th	
Sending School Relations	5	5%	5th	
Organizational Planning/Goal Setting	4	4%	6th	Tier3
History & Philosophy of CareerTech	3	3%	7th	
Program Standards and Operations	2	2%	8th	
Dealing with Change	2	2%	8th	
Economic Development	2	2%	8th	
Public Relations	2	2%	8th	
Facilities Planning	2	2%	8th	
Superintendent Mentorships	2	2%	8th	
Collective Bargaining	1	1%	9th	
CareerTech Acronyms	1	1%	9th	
Curriculum Development	1	1%	9th	
Best Practices	1	1%	9th	
Safety	1	1%	9th	
Understanding Trends in Technology Edu.	1	1%	9th	
Higher Education	1	1%	9th	
Listening Skills	1	1%	9th	Tier4
Total	91	97%	N/A	

*Note. The Percent column is plus or minus three percent due to rounding.

Table 14 indicates that current CareerTech superintendents perceived that a wide range of topics are needed for training future superintendents. The top five ranked topics in Table 8 are consistent with the top five ranked topics in Table 14. There is, however, one exception: Table 8 ranks CareerTech Education Philosophy in a two-way tie for third out of 26 topics, whereas Table 14 ranks History & Philosophy of CareerTech as seventh out of 25 topics. This decrease in ranking from one question to another suggests that while this topic was viewed as important and worthy to be part of preparation training programs, its priority may not be as high as that of the top 5 ranked topics. Although the question asked for Table 8 was closely related to the question asked for Table 14, a few different categories were recommended by the superintendent: Sending School Relations, Organizational Planning/Goal Setting, Dealing with Change, Economic Development, Superintendent Mentorship, CareerTech Acronyms, Best Practices, Safety, Understanding Trends in Technology Education, Higher Education, and Listening Skills.

Section 4 question number 4 of the written questionnaire was a fill in the blank question. This question required the participants to not only offer their suggestions, but to rank order their suggestions. All of the ranked suggestions were assigned a reversed point value using sigma rank point to determine a final ranking of the suggested leadership trainings. This was combined with a tier analysis to analyze the rankings. The exact question asked the participants to: List and rank the five most important types of leadership training that are needed

to prepare future CareerTech superintendents. Table 15 shows the data for this question.

Table 15

Needed Leadership Training for Future CareerTech Superintendents

Leadership Training	ΣRank Points	% of Total Points	Rank	
Personnel Management	56	39%	1st	Tier 1
Leadership	28	20%	2nd	
Developing a Vision	24	17%	3rd	Tier 2
Organizational Management	19	13%	4th	
Community Relations	16	11%	5th	Tier 3
Total	143	100%	N/A	

The top 5 leadership trainings identified in Table 15 are closely related to Table 14, Table 12, and Table 8 which asked similar questions. This consistency in recommendations by the participants indicates a strong concurrence among the participants. Table 15 shows the superintendents perceived their top five leadership training needs in three tiers, each clearly differentiated from each other. There was clear concurrence that Personnel Management was perceived as the single greatest leadership training need for future CareerTech superintendents.

Qualitative Data

Section 4 question number 2 of the written questionnaire asked an open-ended question in an effort to determine how frequent trainings should be offered. The question asked: How often should these trainings be offered? The response data showed considerable variation. Some of the participants were very clear as to whether they were referring to pre-service preparation programs or in-service professional development training, while others were not so definite. The data

could be grouped into several recommended time periods, and complete agreement on when trainings should be offered was not possible to obtain. However, several common time periods did emerge from the data. Analysis of the data revealed that many superintendents recommended trainings for professional development on a monthly basis, at least for the first year and quarterly after the first year. Other ideas that emerged included an Individual Plan (IP) established for each new superintendent to determine training needs. The IP would serve as a guide that allowed the superintendent to attend the types of trainings needed and avoid the trainings already mastered. Participant # 9 who suggested this approach did not identify the stakeholders that should be involved in establishing the IP. Another ideas was that preparation programs for the superintendency should be offered either on an annual basis, every other year, or on a three year rotation basis "depending on the number of upper level administrative jobs that are coming open" (Participant # 19 on written questionnaire). These three recommendations reflect the participants' suggestions as a whole. In addition to these suggestions, participant # 9 did provide an in-depth recommendation that supported the current TechCAP program offered by the Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education for preparing aspiring superintendents. While the recommendations varied regarding how often superintendent preparation programs should be offered, one point was clear: The frequency of preparation training programs should be contingent on the needs of each individual and should be ongoing.

Research Question Number 7

How do the opinions of these superintendents compare to literature and theory?

The opinions of the superintendents were neither completely aligned nor completely disconnected from the literature and theory found in the review of the literature for this study. A comprehensive comparison indicated a number of points of both agreement and disagreement.

An alarming amount of the literature reviewed suggested that educational leadership programs were not adequately preparing superintendents (Glanz, 1995; Lashway, 1999; Mutsch, 1997; Progressive Policy Institute, 2003). Although all the participating CareerTech superintendents in the study did not indicate a perfect rating in terms of their preparation their first year as superintendent, Table 3 does show that 82 percent rated their preparation level as good or excellent. This suggests that while there may be a perception of room for improvement for adequately preparing CareerTech Superintendents in Oklahoma, the personal preparation rating of the participants exceeds the perceived preparation level indicated by the literature. However, despite the opinions of the participants contradiction of what the literature revealed concerning superintendents feeling inadequate prepared the first year on the job, Table 6 still indicated a High to Very High degree of support for having an exclusive CareerTech superintendent preparation program in Oklahoma.

Similar to the literature, the participants in the study expressed strong concern with the high percentage of top level administrators eligible for retirement in the next few years. The literature indicated that, “In large part, the

reason is simply that baby boomers in leadership positions are aging" (Nussbaum, 2002, p. 1). This phenomenon is not a secret, nor is it unknown by Oklahoma's CareerTech superintendents. The comments of the participants in the study demonstrated serious concerns with a significant number of CareerTech superintendents nearing retirement, much like those found in the literature. During the one-on-one phone interviews all six participants were asked: Do you anticipate any concerns over the next few years with many of Oklahoma's CareerTech superintendents retiring? Participant # 3's statement provides a good summary of the others comments. Participant # 3 stated, "I certainly have some concerns. I think that we have a dramatic shortage of qualified candidates". Clearly, the opinions of the participants in the study concerning a shortage of qualified candidates for the superintendency are consistent with what the literature revealed.

Another key point of agreement between the participants' opinions and the literature and theory was in the area of leadership theory. The literature stressed the importance of leadership theory and even identified several popular leadership styles and theories. According to Palestini (1998), "The successful administrator needs to have a sound grasp of leadership theory and the skills to implement it" (p. 34). The superintendents in this study also acknowledged the importance of leadership. However, they did not identify any of the specific leadership theories or attributes identified in the literature. In fact, Table 8 (Topics That Should be Included in a Superintendent Preparation Program) identifies *Administrative*

Leadership as the number one topic that the participants perceived as being important to a superintendent preparation program.

The review of the literature and the perceptions of Oklahoma's CareerTech superintendents were in agreement concerning the necessity of specialized training for the superintendents. Similarly, the Oklahoma CareerTech superintendents agreed with the literature in expressing a high level of concern with preparing the next generation of CareerTech superintendents in Oklahoma. Those concerns were consistent with a substantial amount of the published literature which espoused that educational leadership programs fail to offer administrative preparation programs that adequately prepare top level school administrators (Glanz, 1995; Lashway, 1999; Mutsch, 1997; Ovando, Harris, & Menefee, 1998; Progressive Policy Institute, 2003). Many points raised by the study's participants demonstrated a correlation between the literature and the participants' perceptions. The superintendents did however, acknowledge that they felt they were adequately prepared their first year on the job, which is contradictory to the literature. A few possible ideas that may explain this inconsistency are: First, the current superintendents are very confident in their abilities and may have forgotten what being a new superintendent was like since the average tenure of the superintendents in the study was over 10 years ; second, superintendents are less confident about current preparation programs; third, the CareerTech system has become increasingly complex over the years due to many factors such as changes in the policies and practices of the Oklahoma Department of CareerTech, economic needs of the district, social pressures, and laws (i.e.

IDEA and No Child Left Behind), thus making it difficult for new superintendents to be totally prepared.

On balance, while the opinions of the CareerTech superintendents in this study were not totally consistent with the literature and theory base for the study, there were several points of agreement. Further discussion and comparison are presented in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

Summary of Study

The intent of the study was to determine the perceptions of Oklahoma CareerTech superintendents regarding their pre-service preparation and to obtain their suggestions for preparing future superintendents at both pre-service and in-service levels. Seven research questions guided the study:

1) How well do Oklahoma Career and Technology (CareerTech) superintendents feel they were prepared to perform their job duties their first year on the job?
2) Which job duties do Oklahoma CareerTech superintendents feel they were least prepared to fulfill their first year of work?
3) To what degree do Oklahoma CareerTech superintendents feel there is a need for an exclusive preparation program for superintendents?
4) What topics, delivery methods, and specific preparation learning strategies do CareerTech superintendents suggest?
5) Who should provide CareerTech superintendent preparation programs?
6) What do current CareerTech superintendents perceive as the future training needs?
7) How do the opinions of these superintendents compare to literature and theory?

The study surveyed all 29 of Oklahoma's Career and Technology (CareerTech) superintendents with a written questionnaire, and 22 of the 29

superintendents responded. Based on a specific and pre-determined set of criteria, 6 of the 22 participants were selected to participate in a one-on-one interview. The data obtained from both the written questionnaires and the one-on-one interviews were analyzed using a mixed-method approach. The result was a number of major findings.

Major Findings

First, the superintendents involved in the study established a strong perceived need for specialized training for CareerTech superintendents. Second, 21 topics were generated for use in providing professional development (in-service) training to current CareerTech superintendents. This is an important finding of the study because it identified specific topics necessary to keep experienced superintendents adequately prepared to address future educational issues. Third, the study identified the various topics the participants felt should be included in a superintendent preparation (pre-service) program. Fourth, the study found that a majority of the current superintendents felt they were reasonably well prepared as the district's top level administrator the first year on the job. Fifth, data from the one-on-one interviews indicated that the current superintendents are very concerned about a significant number of superintendents being eligible for retirement in the next two to three years and the adequate preparation of future superintendents. Sixth, the five most important skills needed for a district's top level position were suggested by the current superintendent practitioners. Seventh, 25 training topics to be used in preparation programs for aspiring superintendents were also identified in rank order.

Eighth, the study found that the number of females assuming CareerTech superintendent positions were predicted to increase slightly over the next few years. However, the participants predicted that this perceived increased number of females entering the superintendency would not affect preparation training programs. In other words, the participants felt preparation training programs are not contingent on gender, which could be important when developing a sound comprehensive preparation program.

Ninth, in comparing and contrasting the review of the literature with the participants' perceptions, the data revealed some agreements as well as some differences. This was an important finding of the study for two reasons. First, the overlap of information and suggestions from the two perspectives confirmed one another and gave credibility to the Oklahoma superintendents' opinions. Second, the areas of disagreement gives rise to the creativity needed to develop a unique training model for future CareerTech superintendents in Oklahoma.

Tenth, another major finding of the study was identification of who the CareerTech superintendents recommended to provide the necessary pre- and post-employment training for a district's top level administrator. Universities degree programs did not receive strong support for this role. The current superintendents perceived that universities alone do a less than adequate job of preparing superintendents for their positions. Participants provided data on both the written questionnaires and the one-on-one interviews that revealed their belief that outside the area of educational certifications, universities operating alone are of little or no value in preparing CareerTech superintendents.

Conclusions and Discussion

The findings of this study led to the following conclusions:

1. The Oklahoma CareerTech superintendents are concerned about replacing the large number of retiring leaders with well-prepared new chief administrators.
2. The CareerTech superintendents strongly support specialized, targeted training

   programs at both pre-service and in-service levels.
3. The CareerTech superintendents have clear opinions about several specific topics and skills that should be included in training programs.
4. The CareerTech superintendents do not believe universities to be appropriate or successful as the sole providers of training for CareerTech administrators.
5. There may be an element of support for, and ever protection of, the CareerTech network and tradition in the perceptions of the CareerTech superintendents.

First Major Conclusion

The Oklahoma CareerTech superintendents are concerned about replacing the large number of retiring leaders with well-prepared new chief administrators. The written questionnaire devoted two specific questions to better understand this issue. The data presented in both Table 5 (p. 113) (*Need for Separate Superintendent Training*) and 6 (p. 113) (*Degree to Which Superintendent Training Is Needed*) suggests the 22 CareerTech superintendents involved in the study perceive a great need for a separate superintendent training program to address the high number of superintendents retiring in the next few years.

Each of the 6 superintendents who participated in the one-on-one interviews acknowledged a high level of concern for the preparation of future CareerTech superintendents. Two participants in the interviews did express a little optimism concerning the next generation of CareerTech superintendents. One stated, "Parts of that's not bad. I mean new blood, new ideas, new people coming in". The other stated, "I also want to say that anytime you have new people coming in they have great ideas. And not all change is bad change". Despite these two optimistic comments, all of those interviewed expressed much concern during the interviews. The following comments of the participants are indicative of the groups concerns:

Participant # 1	"to my knowledge, the knowledge and the experience base is shrinking. This base I am talking about is the group of superintendents that have experienced the trials and challenges to our system."
Participant # 2	"There are lots of big shoes to fill."
Participant # 3	"There really has not been much effort on the state level to put a transition programs in place. While we have one program at the state level, I really don't think that it has been that effective."
Participant # 4	"I absolutely have a great concern on this." "My concern is leadership for our system and our schools."
Participant # 5	"There is just a lot of concern. It deals with the evaporation of the brain trust."
Participant # 6	"I'm just saying it's going to take the new superintendents 3 to 4 years before they feel comfortable on their job."

These data clearly indicate that there is a feeling of immediate need at the state level to develop an effective pre-service preparation programs for aspiring CareerTech superintendents.

Second Major Conclusion

The CareerTech superintendents strongly support specialized, targeted training programs at both pre-service and in-service levels. Similar to the literature, the participants of the study supported the use of specialized training programs with experienced facilitators teaching both knowledge and application. Distance learning and Internet based learning courses were not very well endorsed. Participants vehemently recommended field-based learning strategies such as On-job Training, Mentorships, Employment in Entry-Level Administrative Programs, and Internships (See Table 13, p. 130, *Potential Training Value of Each Program*). Programs offered through the Oklahoma Department of CareerTech were also highly recommended, such as when experienced superintendents sit on a panel to discuss "War Stories" (Participant # 2). The participants also suggested the use of small groups discussions, guest speakers, book reviews of leadership books, case studies, role playing activities, and the teaching-learning strategies of Fortune 500 companies as an effective way of preparing both current superintendents and aspiring superintendents for the educational challenges of tomorrow.

The participants recommended the use of a facilitator model that promotes experiential learning through "Hands-On" experiences with limited theory. The participants felt that the traditional training programs typically offered through universities are far too theoretical and lacking in "Real World Experiences"

Third Major conclusion

The CareerTech superintendents have clear opinions about several specific topics and skills that should be included in training programs. Similar to the uniqueness of the models presented in the review of the literature, the participants in this study clearly stated their ideas as to what topics and skills should be covered in both pre-service and in-service programs.

First, Table 8 (p. 117) (*Topics That Should be Included in a Superintendent Preparation Program*) identified over 25 different areas that the participants perceived as necessary topics and skills that should be included in CareerTech superintendent preparation (pre-service) programs. Tables 14 (p. 132) (*Type of Trainings Needed for Future CareerTech Superintendents)* and 15 (p. 133) (*Needed Leadership Training for Future CareerTech Superintendents)* also identified and ranked the topics and skills that are important to a successful pre-service preparation training program as perceived by CareerTech superintendents. The data obtained from Table 12 (p. 129) (*Five Most Important Perceived Skills of a CareerTech Superintendent*) provided valuable information for developing pre-service training programs because it identifies current needed skills.

Second, topics and skills to be included in superintendent professional development (in-service) programs were suggested by the participants in Table 9 (p. 119) (*Needed Professional Development Training*). This list of topics and skills could be very valuable for developing adequate on going trainings for current CareerTech superintendents. The data in Table 9 (p. 119) (*Needed Professional Development Training*) represent the opinions of 22 of the 29 or 76% of the sitting CareerTech superintendents in Oklahoma.

List of topics, skills, and delivery methods that could be used to develop a unique training model for both pre-and post-service training programs for Oklahoma's CareerTech superintendents based on agreement among experienced CareerTech superintendents were an important outcome in this study.

Fourth Major Conclusion

The CareerTech superintendents do not believe universities to be appropriate or successful as the sole providers of training for CareerTech administrators. There are three important considerations to keep in perspective as this four major conclusion is presented. First, it should be noted that not all of the participants may have experienced university-based preparation training in administration to the same degree. Second, because the participants have an extensive numbers of years of experience it may have been many years since they participated in university-base preparation training programs and the programs that they refer to may not necessarily reflect current preparation programs. Third, there is the element of faulty memory to consider since the study is dealing with experienced CareerTech superintendents with an average tenure of 10.6 years.

The overall opinions of the CareerTech superintendents regarding the adequacy of university-based preparation programs for education administrators were generally negative. This prevailing perception was indicated in the data from the written questionnaires and later confirmed in the one-on-one interviews.

Table 10 (p. 125) (*Recommended Superintendent Training by Organization)* supported universities in providing preparation programs only in conjunction with another organization, but not by themselves, unlike the Oklahoma Department of CareerTech which was ranked the highest as a stand-alone organization. Furthermore, when participants were asked to rate factors in terms of their impact on preparation training to become a CareerTech superintendent "University Courses" received a mere 29 points (8%) of the 365 total points.

The data from the study suggest CareerTech superintendents favor a "Partnership Approach" for both pre- and post-service preparation training programs. In addition to a partnership between the Oklahoma Department of CareerTech and universities, the superintendents also acknowledged other key training partners such as the Oklahoma State School Board Association (OSSBA), Consortium of Social Science Associations (COSSA), experienced administrators, and district level school board members. Throughout the data much praise was given to the types of trainings offered by the Oklahoma Department of CareerTech.

One participant recommended the formation of an advisory board made up of "A group of current setting superintendents, OSU, a group of technology board members, and Oklahoma School Board Association" The goal of this board would be to discuss issues and make recommendation to both the universities and the Oklahoma Department of CareerTech concerning the types of trainings needed for superintendents.

Some superintendents did recognize the value of universities for degrees and certification purposes. They considered universities as valuable training institutions when teamed up with other organizations, in a "Partnership Approach" to guide and direct pre- and in-service preparation training programs.

Fifth Major Conclusion

There may be an element of support for, and ever protection of, the CareerTech network and tradition in the perceptions of the CareerTech superintendents. Data from the one-on-one interviews with the superintendents

indicate some concern with individuals being hired as CareerTech superintendents who lack adequate experience in the CareerTech system or who do not have a CareerTech background at all.

Superintendents were a little apprehensive to endorse aspiring superintendents' who do not have a CareerTech background. Two participants in the one-on-one interviews expressed concerns that such individuals may not work together well or understand the history of Oklahoma's CareerTech system, lack understanding in "Vocational" philosophy and practice, and may lack passion for the system. Another possible reason why superintendents did not endorse individuals without CareerTech backgrounds may be because current CareerTech superintendents feel individuals without a CareerTech background do not possess the experience needed to lead a CareerTech district. Although concern was expressed with individuals assuming CareerTech superintendent positions without a CareerTech background, the superintendents were quick to offer much praise to those who are current CareerTech superintendents that do not possess a CareerTech background.

However, the hiring of CareerTech superintendents without a "vocational" background might have some benefits. For example, comprehensive schools view CareerTech differently and new approaches to traditional CareerTech administrative challenges may be discovered. On the other hand, as noted earlier individuals who lack a CareerTech background may lack passion for the CareerTech system, lack the philosophical understanding needed to relate to business and industry, lack understanding of competency-based instructional

methods, or may find themselves unprepared to deal with issues unique to the CareerTech system.

The data suggested that current CareerTech superintendents appreciate and approve of the existing CareerTech network in Oklahoma and were concerned with preserving the tradition and integrity of the system. This could be self-protective and could have both positive preservation impact on a highly effective system and negative consequences for innovation and fresh perspectives within the system.

Recommendations

The following recommendations for practice and further research concerning the preparation programs for Oklahoma's CareerTech superintendents are offered by the Researcher:

Recommendations for Practice

The Oklahoma Department of CareerTech and universities should team up and undertake joint efforts to develop a model for both pre-service preparation training programs and in-service professional development programs for CareerTech superintendents. Both institutions should take the lead jointly in forming an advisory board to guide and direct training programs for CareerTech superintendents. The advisory board should include all stakeholders. This partnership could serve to break the traditional training model which uses courses that are often disconnected from one another and not relevant to the real world experiences that superintendents face on a daily basis.

The goal of the new advisory board should be to develop two unique administrative training models. One training model would use the data from this research concerning topics and skills needed to provide a successful pre-service training program. The other training model would also use the data from this research concerning the topics and skills needed to provide a successful in-service training program.

The advisory board should determine cooperatively who should deliver what topics, what instructional methods work best, how often these courses should be offered, how theory and field-based experience should be integrated, and how and by whom administrative credentialing should be done.

Recommendations for Further Research

Although this study offered much data to justify a cooperative training consortium, the development of both pre-and in-service training models, identified specific topics and skills to be incorporated, and recommended an advisory board to guide and direct the training efforts for Oklahoma's CareerTech superintendents, additional research is recommended to facilitate this development.

Research comparing the perceived needs among the various stakeholders in superintendent preparation is recommended. Understanding of the views and needs of all the partners is very important as the stakeholders work towards a common goal. As stakeholders better understand one another's interests a vital consensus can be reached allowing the advisory board to work as a team. The views of the current superintendents, as revealed in the present study, may be

different from those of other stakeholders and the views of all partners must be determined before cooperative training models can be undertaken.

Another valuable piece of research would be the use of the DACUM (Developing A Curriculum) process which "…is a curriculum development process that has proven to be effective, quick, and valid" (Harrisburg Area Community College) to establish a DTL (Duty Task List) for CareerTech superintendents. This DTL could serve as the blueprint for the appropriate content of new pre-service and in-service training models and credentialing processes.

Additional research should also be considered in the area of identifying issues and possible options for credentialing CareerTech superintendents. This might include making certain leadership programs a part of the credentialing process. Until all issues and requirements affecting superintendent credentialing in the State are fully identified, new cooperative approaches and models cannot be considered.

Further research on background of superintendents and how individual differences might impact perception could be an important study. The data from this type of research could be important to new training models because superintendents' backgrounds and difference can and do change with time, thus influencing the topics and skills that are needed.

More research is also needed to identify the delivery methods, instructional strategies, and learning experiences that experienced and aspiring superintendents prefer and find most beneficial. The data found in this research

could potentially impact the learners' application skills, transfer of training to real-world environments, increase the learners' motivation, and allow the learners to more deeply comprehend the repercussions of their decisions.

Conclusion

This study of Oklahoma's CareerTech superintendents' perceptions of the adequacy of their preparation established strong support for a separate and distinct administrative training program for CareerTech superintendents. The study also identified a clear and specific set of topics and skills believed to be necessary for successful training programs for both pre-service preparation training programs geared toward aspiring superintendents and in-service professional development program geared toward experienced superintendents. The study revealed a high level of concern among current superintendents about adequate preparation of the next generation of CareerTech superintendents.

To address their concern, the CareerTech superintendents revealed in this study a strong support for a partnership approach to develop new cooperative models for preparing, developing, and credentialing new administrators. They indicated that these new models should include specific content, integrate theory with hands-on real-world experiences, support and apply CareerTech philosophy, include instructional input and participation by a variety of knowledgeable professionals, and lead to appropriate credentialing.

It is hoped that this study will serve as the impetus for the state universities, the Department of CareerTech, the sitting CareerTech superintendents, and other appropriate stakeholders to open a dialog with a shared

program of research that can lead to the establishment of innovative new pre-service, in-service, and credentialing models for superintendents that will both preserve the strengths and uniqueness of the Oklahoma CareerTech system and infuse it with beneficial new viewpoints and experiences.

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APPENDIXES

Appendix A

APPLICATION
FOR
TECHNOLOGY CENTER ADMINISTRATOR'S CREDENTIAL

Name _____ **School** _____

Title (Job Function) _____

School Address _____ **Home Address** _____

School Phone _____**Home Phone** _____

School E-mail _____**Home E-mail** _____

Complete Sections 1 through 3. If you do not meet the qualifications of Section 2 OR Section 3, go to Section 4 to complete application for a Provisional Technology Center Administrator's Credential.

Section 1	Applicant shall have a superintendent's or secondary principal's certificate as defined by the Oklahoma State Department of Education. Provide a copy of the certificate as an attachment. _____ Certificate Number _____ Expiration Date
Section 2	Applicant shall hold a valid *Career*Tech teaching certificate. Provide a copy of certificate as an attachment. _____ Area of Approval _____ Expiration Date
Section 3	Applicant shall have had at least five years of experience as a teacher, supervisor, or administrator of an approved *Career*Tech program. Provide current resume as evidence of experience.

Number of Years Served	Institution Where Experience was Documented	Program Taught or Supervised	Dates

Section 4 Technology Center Provisional Administrator's Credential

An applicant with a superintendent's certificate or a secondary principal's certificate and at least five years of experience as a teacher, supervisor, or administrator of an approved CareerTech program who does not have a valid Oklahoma CareerTech teaching certificate shall be issued a provisional technology center administrator's credential and be given **THREE** years from the date of issuance to complete the requirements for a standard technology center administrator's credential.

An applicant who has been employed in an administrator, counselor, or coordinator position for at least five years at a technology center, who has a superintendent's certificate or a secondary principal's certificate AND a valid Oklahoma teaching certificate or valid school counseling certification shall be issued a provisional technology center administrator's credential and be given **FIVE** years from the date of issuance to complete the eight semester hours specified below plus the appropriate ODCTE administrator development program(s) identified when the provisional technology center administrator credential is issued. The issuance of the technology center administrator's standard credential shall be based on the completion of a minimum of eight semester hours from three of the following areas:

A. History and Philosophy of Career and Technology Education;
B. Technology Center Finance;
C. Curriculum for Career and Technology Education; and
D. Career and Technology Education Program Planning Development and Evaluation

Applicant shall document experience as an administrator, counselor, or coordinator position for at least five years at a technology center. Provide current resume as evidence of experience.

Number of Years Served	Institution Where Experience was Documented	Type of Activity Coordinated or Supervised at a Technology Center	Dates

I agree that the above information is correct and further documentation can be provided upon request.

Signature _____

Date _____

Appendix B

Research Findings and Questions

Research Finding for Question Number One:

The quantitative data of the CareerTech superintendent preparation research study revealed that out of the 22 participants 19 (86%) were male and 3 (14%) were female.

Question Number One

Do you anticipate the gender ratio to change much in the short-term (2-4 years) or long-term (4 or more years) future? And if so, how do you anticipate the gender ratio change will influence the types of skills/trainings needed to prepare CareerTech superintendents in Oklahoma?

Research Finding for Question Number Two:

A comprehensive review of the literature on educational superintendents found that because of the current age of superintendents throughout the United States that not only are a significant number of superintendents eligible to retire, but will actually be retiring in the next few years. The data from this research identified the average CareerTech superintendent to be 56 years old.

Question Number Two

Do you anticipate any concerns over the next few years with many of Oklahoma's CareerTech superintendents retiring? If so, what kind of concerns.

Research Finding for Question Number Three:

The written questionnaire in this research study asked the participants to rate each of the following factors as each has impacted the participants' preparation to

become a CareerTech superintendent. The results showed a clear ranked order of influence.

On-The-Job Training	First
Peer/Colleagues	Second
Mentors	Third
Self-study	Fourth
Technical Training	Fifth
Seminars/Conference	Sixth
University Courses	Seventh
Internships	Eighth
Mentor Program	Ninth

When asked which organization should provide preparation training for CareerTech superintendents. The same 22 participating CareerTech superintendents reported the following.

State Department of CareerTech	41%
Combination of State Department of CareerTech and University	32%
CareerTech superintendents	14%
Combination of OK-ACTE and State Department of CareerTech	4%
Combination of OJT, University, and State Depart. of CareerTech	4%
Combination of CareerTech superintendents and State Depart. of CareerTech	4%

Question Number Three

Why do you feel that university courses rated seventh place out of nine when superintendents were asked to rate their preparation factors, yet these same superintendents suggested the combination of university and State Department of CareerTech as the second highest preferred preparation method?

Research Finding for Question Number Four:

Superintendents were asked to rate the most important topics that should be taught in a CareerTech superintendent preparation program. A total of 32 topics were recommended. However, only 26 topics were actually rated by the superintendents. The top three topics were:

Administrative Leadership	49 points
School Board Relationship	33 points
CareerTech Philosophy	33 points

Question Number four

How would you suggest each be taught?

Technology Center Financial Data
Fiscal Year 2004

Technology Center	FY04 Valuations	FY04 Millage Levies			FY03 State Allocations (Final)				FY04 State Allocations (Final)				FY04 Programs & Services Cost Data				
	Total Ad Valorem Valuation	General Fund	Building Fund	Total State Allocation	Regular Operations Allocation	Average Allocation per FTE Program (Reg Ops Allocation)	Total State Allocation	Regular Operations Allocation	Average Allocation per FTE Program (Reg Ops Allocation)	Total District FTE Programs	Average Expenditure All FTE Programs & Services	Average Tuition, Fees & other Local Income per FTE Programs & Services	Average Cost all FTE Programs & Services
Chisholm Trail Technology Center	72,484,073	10.30	2.00	874,933	806,342	57,514	865,021	804,199	61,672	13.04	128,413	(10,320)	118,093
Wes Watkins Technology Center	84,377,136	5.14	-	1,475,822	1,457,835	76,048	1,475,185	1,450,412	70,272	20.64	108,658	(22,469)	86,188
Green Country Technology Center	111,717,385	10.00	-	887,852	871,942	54,736	884,122	886,122	52,709	16.47	109,094	(8,995)	99,099
Southwest Technology Center	112,495,199	10.16	-	1,096,695	933,605	40,035	1,096,054	927,518	42,645	21.75	123,736	(31,378)	92,358
TIER AVERAGES	**95,268,198**	**8.90**	**0.50**	**1,081,283**	**1,017,431**	**57,083**	**1,055,096**	**1,012,563**	**55,824**	**17.98**	**118,725**	**(18,290)**	**98,435**
TIER BENCHMARKS		**10.00**									**116,197**		**95,729**
High Plains Technology Center	138,885,673	10.34	2.07	1,580,269	1,466,796	52,077	1,542,890	1,467,909	51,920	28.06	133,665	(27,804)	105,191
Caddo Kiowa Technology Center	143,693,573	10.12	1.01	3,143,145	3,063,210	52,814	3,062,182	3,008,401	55,680	54.03	114,558	(30,822)	83,756
Pontotoc Technology Center	143,920,592	10.26	2.00	1,393,346	1,181,312	55,722	1,197,131	1,164,605	49,410	23.57	131,276	(20,394)	110,882
Northwest Technology Center	147,208,309	10.31	3.09	1,370,051	1,277,508	52,943	1,307,884	1,247,892	51,114	24.41	139,303	(26,469)	112,845
Eastern OK County Technology Center	214,245,048	10.41	5.10	1,626,431	1,604,215	61,724	1,595,499	1,574,526	59,891	26.29	145,296	(11,878)	133,418
Red River Technology Center	229,432,419	10.01	2.00	1,805,006	1,716,747	50,927	1,774,415	1,684,495	49,820	33.61	128,147	(21,847)	107,300
Pioneer Technology Center	270,692,663	10.22	5.00	1,626,938	1,379,608	27,002	1,529,365	1,345,953	30,070	44.76	127,716	(21,531)	106,185
Tri County Technology Center	280,254,419	10.00	5.00	2,504,485	2,352,489	53,710	2,423,125	2,261,021	55,459	41.13	148,278	(19,602)	129,675
Southern OK Technology Center	291,921,657	8.22	2.05	1,955,805	1,669,605	38,688	1,790,919	1,646,764	41,386	39.79	121,442	(12,319)	109,124
Autry Technology Center	305,452,055	10.52	5.15	2,433,292	2,359,676	44,205	2,382,456	2,295,668	41,907	54.78	119,573	(12,361)	109,213
Western Technology Center	309,029,219	10.24	2.00	2,194,678	2,118,044	53,044	2,144,626	2,077,556	49,548	41.93	140,796	(18,702)	122,095
Mid America Technology Center	342,316,746	10.26	1.03	2,501,276	2,393,724	53,551	2,460,001	2,349,770	51,238	45.86	122,260	(10,304)	111,956
TIER AVERAGES	**234,504,365**	**10.08**	**2.96**	**2,011,225**	**1,885,261**	**49,700**	**1,935,872**	**1,844,522**	**48,954**	**38.20**	**131,137**	**(19,601)**	**111,637**
TIER BENCHMARKS		**10.00**									**130,211**		**110,003**
Gordon Cooper Technology Center	359,689,604	10.18	5.09	2,705,798	2,507,860	43,867	2,653,801	2,453,511	45,110	54.39	151,542	(18,466)	133,056
Central Tech	395,715,166	10.17	3.00	5,109,682	3,701,288	42,008	4,928,113	3,619,787	41,279	87.69	114,896	(17,273)	97,620
Meridian Technology Center	395,814,986	10.05	5.02	2,763,166	2,705,516	51,889	2,695,480	2,649,329	50,348	52.62	143,010	(22,105)	120,905
Mid Del Technology Center	415,748,609	7.50	2.50	1,759,943	1,513,559	32,876	1,707,242	1,477,679	32,278	45.78	111,347	(30,198)	81,149
Great Plains Technology Center	483,963,060	10.26	1.02	5,472,559	5,057,265	50,720	5,355,362	4,952,157	48,881	101.31	114,412	(28,762)	87,650
Canadian Valley Technology Center	604,511,183	10.38	5.19	3,531,944	3,223,555	38,059	3,252,491	3,155,779	32,784	66.26	122,462	(11,257)	111,225
Indian Capital Technology Center	769,019,371	8.01	2.00	4,202,785	3,774,463	42,664	3,838,888	3,735,107	42,839	87.19	120,354	(16,037)	104,317
Klamichi Technology Center	879,705,594	10.08	2.02	6,894,821	6,788,104	60,899	6,785,428	6,672,544	57,552	115.94	144,239	(18,433)	124,806
Northeast Technology Center	884,110,651	10.30	-	2,895,189	2,838,419	39,787	2,845,481	2,777,868	41,572	66.82	159,634	(11,567)	148,067
TIER AVERAGES	**573,809,714**	**9.66**	**2.87**	**3,926,246**	**3,567,783**	**44,673**	**3,704,265**	**3,499,308**	**43,627**	**76.67**	**131,324**	**(19,235)**	**112,088**
TIER BENCHMARKS		**10.00**									**122,492**		**111,225**
Moore Norman Technology Center	906,294,894	10.27	4.11	2,874,287	2,780,908	38,473	2,765,958	2,694,943	32,982	81.76	170,580	(29,020)	141,560
Metro Tech	1,058,246,877	10.30	5.15	4,292,953	4,093,240	43,391	3,929,127	3,726,672	33,598	111.02	181,581	(20,283)	161,317
Francis Tuttle	1,609,656,402	10.46	4.59	3,477,488	3,201,787	29,120	3,351,923	3,111,448	25,953	119.69	181,147	(22,785)	158,361
Tulsa Technology Center	3,853,422,772	8.23	5.09	7,240,530	6,917,885	35,542	6,707,392	6,414,590	25,000	256.58	157,582	(14,639)	142,944
TIER AVERAGES	**1,856,655,234**	**9.81**	**4.89**	**4,471,320**	**4,248,455**	**36,624**	**4,193,095**	**3,987,413**	**29,375**	**142.31**	**172,717**	**(21,677)**	**151,041**
TIER BENCHMARKS		**10.00**									**175,963**		**150,643**
STATEWIDE AVERAGES	**541,932,019**	**9.75**	**2.83**	**2,816,588**	**2,613,676**	**44,270**	**2,695,634**	**2,536,386**	**40,692**	**62.33**	**141,706**	**(19,164)**	**122,542**

Note: General Fund does not include capital expenditures

Appendix D

Survey Demographics for Oklahoma CareerTech Superintendents

The following survey is divided up into five sections: Demographic data, preparation programs, personal preparation, Oklahoma superintendent examination, and trainings for future superintendents. Please answer all questions in print or type.

Section One
Demographic Data:

Code: _____

Number of years of experience as a CareerTech District Superintendent: _____

Gender: _____

Current age: _____

How would you classify your school district?

Urban Suburban Rural

How many students are in daytime programs in your school district: _____

How many campus's are within your school district: _____

Section Two
Preparation Programs

1. Do you feel that there is a need for a separate and distinct superintendent preparation training program in Oklahoma's CareerTech system?

   Yes No

2. Please circle to what degree do you feel that there is a need for a CareerTech Superintendent preparation program in Oklahoma?

   Very High-3 High-2 Low-1 None-0

3. Please check who should provide the preparation training for CareerTech Superintendents?

   ____ University
   ____ State Department of CareerTech Education
   ____ Private Organization
   Other (specify):
_____

4. What content should be included in CareerTech Superintendent preparation programs?
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

5. What type of delivery methods would you recommend for CareerTech Superintendent preparation programs?
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

6. What type of specific learning strategies should be used to prepare CareerTech Superintendents?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Section Three
Personal Preparation

1. Please circle how would you rate your preparation to serve as a CareerTech Superintendent your first year?

   Strong-4 Good-3 Fair-2 Poor-1

2. What aspects of your job do you feel you were the least prepared for during your first year as a CareerTech Superintendent? Please identify in ranked order (i.e. number one would be the area that you were the most unprepared for).

   1 _____
   2 _____
   3 _____
   4 _____
   5 _____

4. By circling, rate the following in terms of how valuable each should be in preparing a CareerTech Superintendent for his or her job duties and responsibilities as superintendent?

	Very High	High	Low	None
University Based Preparation Programs	3	2	1	0
The State Dept. of Career and Tech. Ed.	3	2	1	0
Mentorship Program	3	2	1	0
Internship Program	3	2	1	0
On-The-Job Training	3	2	1	0
Other (identify) _____	3	2	1	0

Section Four
Oklahoma Superintendent Examination
Please read the following questions and circle the answer that most represents your opinion.

1. Do you feel the Oklahoma superintendent examination is a good assessment for determining who is or is not prepared to become a CareerTech Superintendent?

   Yes No

2. To what degree do you feel the Oklahoma superintendent examination assesses the knowledge needed to be a superintendent in the CareerTech system?

   Very High-3 High-2 Low-1 None-0

3. To what degree do you feel the Oklahoma superintendent examination assesses the skills needed to be a superintendent in the CareerTech system?

   Very High-3 High-2 Low-1 None-0

4. To what degree do you feel the Oklahoma superintendent examination assesses the attributes needed to be a successful superintendent in the CareerTech system?

   Very High-3 High-2 Low-1 None-0

Section Five
Trainings for Future Superintendents

1. What types of trainings are needed for future CareerTech Superintendents to be successful on the job?

2. How often should these trainings be offered?

4. What are the top three areas of your job that require professional development training?

5. What types of leadership training are needed to prepare future CareerTech Superintendents?

VITA

Myron Kim Howard

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Thesis: OKLAHOMA'S CAREER AND TECHNOLOGY CENTER SUPERINTENDENTS' PERCEPTIONS ON THEIR PREPARATION AND THE PREPARATION OF FUTURE SUPERINTENDENTS

Major Field: Occupational and Adult Education

Biographical:

Personal Data:

Name: Kim Howard
Address: 114 S. Oak, Sapulpa, Oklahoma 74066
E-Mail: kimh@ctechok.org
Telephone: Work (918) 227-9265 Home (918) 227-3004
Cell (918) 519-5029
Spouse: Gina Howard
Married: May 25, 1990

Education:

2007	Doctoral degree in Occupational and Adult Education May, 2007.
1999	Masters of Science in Trade and Industrial Education from Oklahoma State University in Stillwater, Oklahoma.
1991	Bachelors of Science in Sociology and Criminal Justice from Southwest Missouri State University in Springfield, Missouri.
1987	High School Diploma in General Education from Sapulpa High School in Sapulpa, Oklahoma.

Experience:

2000-Present Program Coordinator of Central Tech's Supported Employment Program. The goal of the Supported Employment Program is to assist individuals with disabilities in finding employment. The primary responsibility is complying with the Department of Rehabilitation Services and Developmental Disabilities Services Division contracts. Additional responsibilities include: Marketing of program,

supervising ten staff, providing staff training, recruitment of clients, counseling with clients, and determining acceptance of clients into the program, preparing monthly program progress reports, monitoring the programs budget, and coordinating an annual fundraising activity.

1993-2000 Vocational Instructor for teaching and training secondary and adult students with special needs in the area of building maintenance, food preparation, lawn care, and retail skills i.e. grocery and department stores. Responsibilities include: Educating and training students in several occupational areas, supervising students, evaluating students' progress, assisting students with developing civic and social skills, purchasing training supplies and curriculum, and encouraging and supporting students in local, state, and national contests.

1992-1993 Employment Training Specialist assisting individuals with disabilities with employment opportunities. Responsible for occupational counseling with client, job development, detailed documentation, conducting client assessments, on-the-job training with client, data entry, client advocacy, and attending team meetings.

Summer of 1991 Case Manager Intern at the United States Medical Center for Federal Inmates in Springfield, Missouri. This is a federal prison securing inmates classified from minimum to maximum security. Responsibilities and duties include: Monitoring and supervision of inmates, dispute resolution between inmates, serving as liaison between the inmates' family and the correctional institution, assessing the risk an inmate posses to the general population, and conducting the intake process on an inmate.

Professional Memberships:

2002-present	Kiwanis International
2000-present	Oklahoma Association for Persons in Supported Employment (OK-APSE)
2000-present	Association for Persons in Supported Employment (APSE)
1999-present	American Association of T & I Instructors (AATII)
1999-present	National Association of T&I Educators (NATIE)
1993-present	SkillsUSA-VICA (Vocational Industrial Clubs of America)

1993-present	Association for Career and Technical Education (Former AVA)
1993-present	Oklahoma Association for Career and Technology Education (Former OVA)
1993-present	Trade and Industrial Association (T&I)

Name: Myron Kim Howard Date of Degree: May 2007

Institution: Oklahoma State University Location: Stillwater, Oklahoma

Title of Study: OKLAHOMA'S CAREER AND TECHNOLOGY CENTER SUPERINTENDENTS' PERCEPTIONS ON THEIR PREPARATION AND THE PREPARATION OF FUTURE SUPERINTENDENTS

Pages in Study: 181 Candidate for the Degree of Doctor of Education

Major Field: Occupational and Adult Education

Scope and Method of Study: The study surveyed all 29 of Oklahoma's Career and Technology (CareerTech) superintendents with a written questionnaire, and 22 of the 29 superintendents responded. Based on a specific and pre-determined set of criteria, 6 of the 22 participants were selected to participate in a one-on-one interview. The data obtained from both the written questionnaires and the one-on-one interviews were analyzed using a mixed-method approach.

Findings and Conclusions: The study found that a majority of current superintendents of Oklahoma's CareerTech centers perceive they were reasonably well prepared their first year on the job. However, these same superintendents perceive a strong need for specialized training for aspiring CareerTech superintendents. Superintendents also expressed much concern about their colleagues retiring over the next few years. The superintendents involved in the study perceive that the number of females assuming CareerTech superintendent positions will increase slightly over the next few years. The opinions of the CareerTech superintendents and the literature concerning training programs are not in total alignment. The participants in the study identified who should provide pre- and in-service training and suggested specific skills and topics.

The findings of this study led to the following conclusions: 1) The Oklahoma CareerTech superintendents are concerned about replacing the large number of retiring leaders with well-prepared new chief administrators; 2) The CareerTech superintendents strongly support specialized, targeted training programs at both pre-service and in-service; 3) The CareerTech superintendents have clear opinions about several specific topics and skills that should be included in training programs; 4) The CareerTech superintendents do not believe universities to be appropriate or successful as the sole providers of training for CareerTech administrators; and 5) There may be an element of support for, and ever protection of, the CareerTech network and tradition.

ADVISER'S APPROVAL: Lynna Ausburn