BARRIERS TO SCHOOL DISTRICTS' PARTICIPATION IN TYPE I ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAMS

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PROGRAMS

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Beginning in the early 1990's, zero-tolerance and school violence increased the demand upon the already popular, alternative education programs. Due to parental and community demands for safer schools, the use of alternative schools for the purpose of serving disruptive students increased dramatically (Lockwood, 1997). The key for success of both the program and the student soon proved to be the careful and informed choice of placements made and required by educators and administrators (DeBlois, 1994, Raywid, 1982, 1994, 1998).

Although highly successful with a broad range of at-risk youth, even alternative education has its limitations. When considering the arena of alternative education and youth at-risk, the old adage one size fits all does not apply. Alternative programs cannot continue trying to be everything to everyone. There are several specific groups of at-risk youth such as dropouts, suspended youth, delinquent youth and basically only three major types of alternative school programs (Raywid, 1990, 1994, 1998).

In many current large metropolitan school districts a number of alternative education programs are available for at-risk youth. Although these programs differ slightly from each other or have some unique program characteristics that set them apart from each other, they will generally share some common characteristics. Several characteristics have been

identified and are considered to be responsible for being the major contributors to overall program effectiveness. Although a much longer list of Alternative Education descriptors exists, four commonly mentioned effective structural characteristics of alternative programs are consistently cited in the literature: (a) small classes and low student-to-teacher ratio, (b) concern for the whole student, (c) whole student supportive environment, and (d) strong sense of community (Morley, 1991).

Rotter (1989) writes that students from certain types of alternative programs develop or exhibit a different loci of control when typical locus of control measurements are recorded for these populations The staff in the Type I and Type III school programs respond appropriately to the physical and emotional needs of the students (Edmonds, 1979; Lipsitz, 1984).

Alternative schools or programs typically are categorized as Type I, Type II, and Type III. The labels or characterizations were first determined by Mary Ann Raywid (1982) in her primarily descriptive study where she contacted 2,500 secondary alternative schools and programs. An extensive survey allowed information to be gathered on the types and distribution of alternative education options around the country (Young, 1990).

Type I programs are characterized by being a school of choice or membership school. They are extremely popular and are known for having a very different atmosphere and student friendly, caring culture/environment when compared to large traditional secondary schools. Type I alternative schools are those typically that a student may attend until graduation (Raywid, 1994, 1998).

The Type II programs are a last-chance type of program and are consistently found to be punitive in nature. The students attending these programs report feeling sentenced

(Raywid, 1994). Type II alternative schools are a change of placement that typically only serve disruptive and/or suspended students for a specified length of time. The student attends these Type II programs in lieu of being suspended out of school (Raywid, 1994).

The Type III schools are treatment-based and require a referral by schools or parents for the student to receive some form of treatment or rehabilitation. Students attend only for a specified period of time and then are returned to their home school.

A significant amount of time and energy appears to be spent planning and providing the formation of relationships with students within the Type I and III alternative education programs (DeBlois, 1994; Raywid, 1982, 1994, 1998). The school staff of these programs consistently expend more effort in establishing meaningful relationships within a different type of environment with the students attending their alternative education programs. Students who do not thrive in one school environment need another environment. And obviously, one that strikes them as worse than the last one is not going to cut it (Raywid, 2001). Tom Gregory (1997) refers to a frightening number of schools he calls "soft jails" that will not solve the problem these students are experiencing. Gregory contends that what is needed is a school with a different sort of "personality" – one that feels different – and a program that strikes the student as a clear change from the previous school. As the scholars have put it, "we must change the experience of school – the way it looks, tastes, and smells, and the reactions it produces in those who are there" (Raywid, 2001 p. 582).

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this study was to explore the relationship among three barriers of change - understanding of the change, acceptance of the change, or acting upon the change -

and the selection, design, and implementation decisions made in support of Type I and non-Type I alternative education programs. The superintendents, district demographics and the districts' dominant barrier of change were examined.

Multiple types of alternative education programs exist nationally: Type I, Type II and Type III. For years an impressive amount of research has clearly indicated that the Type I programs have the greatest success rate for students and that they consistently demonstrate higher program evaluations (OTAC, 1995, 1998 and 2000; (Raywid, 1994, 1998); yet they are still not found in some Oklahoma school districts.

Conner and Lake would explain the anomaly of the lack of implementation of any alternative education programs or the implementation of Type II punitive (forced-choice) programs (in lieu of Type I) by the existence of certain change barriers perceived by the major stakeholders in school districts. Specifically, these change barriers are the understanding of the change, the acceptance of the change, and the actual acting upon the specific change (Conner & Lake, 1994); specific change in this stance is alternative education programs. In other words, what individuals understand about alternative education programs, the populations they serve and their purposes, can act as a barrier to their choice of non –implementation or implementation of alternative programs or to the specific type of program. While understanding is the key, acceptance of the need and use and implementation of alternative education programming for special populations within the district influence whether to implement alternative programs or the specific type of program. Finally, the ability to act in support of one type of program impacts implementation.

Specifically, previous researchers were concerned that the change barriers of understanding, acceptance, and acting (Conner & Lake, 1994) as perceived by the

superintendents and principals of school districts might have a significant influence upon the choice for types of alternative education programs or resistance to implementing any type of program. Indeed, McQuire (2001) found a significant association (r = .26) between the size of a school district and the barrier of acceptance.

As depicted in the State Plan for the Implementation of Statewide Alternative Academies (SDE,1994), stakeholders were interested in creating these programs to serve dropouts, disruptive students, chronic truants, and certain levels of suspended youth. Today, after nearly 10 years since publishing the state plan, a small number of school districts have failed to initiate and implement any type of alternative education program. Additionally, the State Department of Education (SDE) and the Oklahoma Technical Assistance Center (OTAC) have identified a significant number of districts using an authoritarian, rigid, and nearly punitive TYPE II alternative program.

The research on alternative schools and at-risk youth indicates that the students coming to alternative education programs bring with them unique backgrounds and stories (Barr & Parrett, 2001; (Brendtro, Brokenleg & Van Brockern, 1990; Glasser, 2000; Raywid, 1994). However, they all share a common thread. Each of them seems to be lacking a positive and sustained history or sense of success while in traditional school settings.

Research Questions

1. How do the barriers of acceptance, understanding, and acting restrict school districts from participating or implementing a Type I or Type II alternative education program?

2. What are the characteristics of districts and superintendents providing a Type I alternative education program?

3. What are the characteristics of districts and superintendents providing a non-Type I alternative education program?

Variables

For this study, the independent variables were the superintendent and district demographic factors: superintendent gender, years of experience as a superintendent, the superintendent's highest education level, district enrollment, the district's state alternative education allocation amount, and the amount a district spent on alternative education.

The dependent variables were the choice of an alternative program (Type I and non Type I alternative school programs) and the dominant barrier of change category.

Hypotheses

Three hypotheses were generated to help answer the three previously stated research questions that dealt with the characteristics of school districts and superintendents, the type of alternative school program they implement, and how the characteristics of superintendents and school districts relate to the three barriers of acceptance, understanding, and acting. The same school district demographic factors and the superintendent characteristics used in the hypotheses were modeled after, McGuire's study (2001). The uses of the three barriers of change were modeled after both McQuire and Connor and Lake, (1994). These researchers were concerned that the change barriers of understanding, acceptance, and acting upon as perceived by the superintendents and principals of school districts might have a significant

influence upon the choice for types of alternative education programs or resistance to implementing any type of program.

Hypothesis 1

There is no significant relationship between demographic variables and implementing a certain type of alternative education program.

Ho_1 There is no significant relationship between a superintendent's gender and the choice of an alternative education program.

Ho_2 There is no significant relationship between a superintendent's years of experience as a superintendent and the choice of an alternative education program.

Ho_3 There is no significant relationship between a superintendent's highest education level and the choice of an alternative education program.

Ho_4 There is not a significant relationship between the district size enrollment and the choice of an alternative education program.

Ho_5 There is no significant relationship between the district's per pupil valuation and the choice of an alternative education program.

Ho_6 There is no significant relationship between the state alternative education allocation amount and the choice of an alternative education program.

Hypothesis 2

There is no significant relationship among the three barriers of change and the choice of alternative education program types.

Ho 1 There are no significant differences for the frequency of choice of the barriers identified.

Ho2 There is no significant relationship between the selected district size and the dominant barrier category

Ho3 There is no significant relationship between the district's state alternative education allocation amount and the dominant barrier category.

Hypothesis 3

There is no significant relationship between the demographic variables and the choice of the barriers of change.

Ho1 There is no significant relationship between superintendent gender and the barriers of change.

Ho2 There is no significant relationship between superintendent experience and the barriers of change.

Ho3 There is no significant relationship between superintendent education level and the barriers of change.

Limitations

1. Because some superintendents chose not to participate, data for their districts are not included.
2. All data gathered from the superintendents is in a self-reporting format.

3. Instrument limitation – This was a quantitative study primarily with one opened-ended item only.
4. Participants' understanding of the survey items may have varied resulting in a range of responses

Theoretical Framework

Change Theories

A central, conceptual view for this study evolved around the theory of change or change theories and barriers to change. School districts as organizations and individuals are responsible for their operation and change over time. Whether they participate in any type of alternative education program involves history and tradition. All of this occurs in an unknown amount of time and sequence. However, change unfolds in full view, and administrator attributes and attitudes of both the type of students served and the type of educational structure needed for their districts affect their decisions (Barr & Parrett, 1995).

Fullan (1993) traced the development of change themes in education over the past four decades:

1. The 1960's - Adoption of Reforms – focus on academic excellence and social equity
2. The 1970's – Implementation Problems – focused on failed implementation of innovations
3. The 1980's – Multiple Innovations
4. The 1990's – Systemic Reform

Kurt Lewin (1951) offered a theory that, among other things, described the forces serving to facilitate change and those involved in restraining or resisting attitudinal change. It was this groundbreaking work in the area of motivation and attitudes that laid the foundation for this young, but critical, area of attitudinal and organizational change (Lewin). Lewin first described the process of change as consisting of three stages: unfreezing, moving, and refreezing.

This notion of fluidness of change was Grundy's (1993) three varieties of change: smooth incremental change, bumpy incremental change, and finally discontinuous change. Grundy's suggested it was possible to differentiate between a number of types of change by considering the rate of change over time. For change to occur successfully, the organization requires leaders who are prime movers and pushers for innovation (Senge, 1990). Morgan (1997) found that successful leadership required individuals to be skilled in supporting change and nurturing knowledge.

Michael Fullan (1991, 1993) has provided valuable insights into the process of educational change through a description of a history of the field:

> The history of large-scale focus on educational innovation and reform is remarkably short. Although ideas about progressive education and the need for improvement in schools in the United States have been debated and tried since the turn of the century, only in the post-Sputnik era has the push for reform taken on national proportions. Thus, the intensive study of change has essentially occurred only in the last half of the 20th century. (1993, p. 116)

Fullan (1991) shares other researchers' thinking in the change field when he speaks to the evolutionary nature of change: "change is a process not an event …. a lesson learned the hard way by those who put all their energies into developing an innovation or passing a piece of legislation without thinking through what would have to happen beyond that point" (p. 49).

Fullan (1991) references Pincus (1974) who claims that compared to the private sector corporations, school districts are:

1. Less likely to engage in cost-saving innovations unless the funds saved can be re-purposed within the district.
2. Less likely to engage in innovations "that change the resource mix or the accustomed roles."
3. More likely to adopt new instructional processes that do not significantly change structure, or to adopt new wrinkles in administrative management.

Fullan (1993) identified eight basic lessons of a new change paradigm:

1. You can't mandate what matters.
2. Change is a journey, not a blueprint.
3. Problems are our friends.
4. Vision and strategic planning come later.
5. Individualism and collectivism must have equal power.
6. Neither centralization nor decentralization works by itself.
7. Connect with the environment
8. Every person needs to be his or her own change agent

Fullan (1993) offers a very persuasive message that educational change is technically simple and at the same time, socially complex.

Resistance and Barriers to Change

Resistance to change, any attempt to maintain the status quo when there is pressure to change (Duncan & Zaltman, 1977), is included in virtually all discussions of organizational change. Greiner (1967) stated that one could depict managing change along a sequential power continuum. Halfway through this continuum, between what he called unilateral and delegated approaches, was the area of shared approach. This approach involves the use of sharing power and a significant interaction between the manager and the target group. This work of Greiner's eventually led to a more descriptive approach, the Facilitative strategies (Duncan & Zaltman, 1977).

Coined by Duncan and Zaltman (1977), the Facilitative strategies invite followers to commit effort and psychological energy to the common cause. As compared to transformational leadership that operates in a top-down manner (Blase & Anderson, 1995), facilitative strategies offer teachers a daily partnership in bringing the vision to life. The leader works in the background, not at the center of the stage.

Soon after, the Expectancy Theory, another model of motivation, was instrumental in adding to an understanding of the inner workings of assumptions and values that move people both toward change objectives and away from them (Daft & Becker, 1978). Eventually, more work unfolded in the area of resistance to change bringing closer the specific generalized resistance to change that is at the core of the study. Conner and Lake (1994) is critical to the conceptual framework of this study, were the first to categorize a group of different causes that

come from a variety of sources. These causes or sources are grouped into three categories: barriers to understanding, barriers to acceptance, and barriers to acting. Their notion of barriers to understanding has to do with a misunderstanding of the proposed change; it is simply a lack of understanding of the change.

The second barrier, barriers to acceptance, is actually a resistance phenomenon. In this situation, change agents cannot or will not accept the change, clearly believing the change is not needed.

Finally, the third type of resistance to change involves the barriers to acting-upon or carrying out the change. This phenomenon stems from two direct sources: the change targets themselves or the larger organizational environment. Barriers to acting are a result of a change target's lack of skills or abilities.

Schools and Perception of Change

Louis (1989) clarifies the difference between type A and type B changes in school programs. Type A changes involve a deeper and more comprehensive change that starts with revamping the organization's core beliefs and values. This in turn changes the actual culture of the organization. Type A changes are more pervasive, encompassing and far reaching. In comparison, Type B changes simply involve modifying parts of the organization. Incorporating new policies or procedures would be an example of a Type B change. Without Type A changes, Type B changes rarely make a difference. Sizer and Comer have written more about Type B changes, those that fail to promote the type of systemic change schools require (Louis). Alternative schools particularly require a Type A change to take advantage of the benefits of a truly different and supportive environment (Gregory, 1986, Neumann, 1992,

1994). Type A changes are associated with school staff creating and sharing certain beliefs and values about students and their education and thus fostering school membership, engagement, and a sense of community. All three of these factors are of critical important for a successful alternative school (Barr & Parrett, 1995, 1997, 2000; Wehlage, 1989; Wehlage & Smith, 1986). Rossi and Stringfield (1995) recognized shared vision, shared sense of purpose, and shared values as critical fundamentals for developing community in schools.

Louis and Miles and (1990) identified at least five issues involved with change with high schools to move from knowledge to action.

1. Clarity – The knowledge must be understood clearly – not fuzzy, vague, or confusing.

2. Relevance – The knowledge must be seen as meaningful, as connected to one's normal life and concerns – not irrelevant, inapplicable, or impractical.

3. Action images- The knowledge must be exemplified in specific actions, clearly visualized. People must have an image of "what to do to get there."

4. Will – There must be motivation interest, action orientation, a will to *do* something with the knowledge.

5. Skill – There must be actual behavioral ability to *do* the action envisioned.

Of these five issues involved with change, many are closely aligned with the three barriers of change mentioned earlier and at the core of this study. The understanding barrier of change is similar to, and can easily be associated with, *Clarity*. Having clear knowledge of an issue, concept, or idea indicates the person is not confused about the issue. In other words, the issue is understood (Louis & Miles, 1990). The issue of *Relevance* is closely associated with the acceptance barrier of change. A person's acceptance of an issue or change is supported

when one can see the relevance or meaningfulness of the idea (Louis & Miles, 1990). The third barrier of change, acting-upon, is nearly synonymous with the issue of *Action*. When people perceive they have the ability to act upon an issue or idea, this indicates they know what needs to be done or they know what the next step needs to be to accomplish the task. The issue of *Skill* relates the most to the barrier of change, Acting-Upon. When people realize they possess the required skill or set of skills to accomplish something, then the notion of acting-upon that issue is not considered a barrier.

Sarason (1996) describes the existing structure of a setting or culture and defines the permissible ways in which goals and problems are approached. In today's schools, the non-compliant student often challenges the administration's strategies. The administrators must then examine their alternatives to determine what they can do. Therefore, this is precisely the problem or dilemma set before the administrators when planning, designing and implementing an alternative education program for their districts.

How do administrators choose to define or design the culture and structure of their alternative education program so it will meet individually known goals and perceived problems at hand? An administrator (Type II) may view the program goal as fixing the kid; for this administrator the student is perceived as the problem. Conversely, another administrator (Type I) perceives the goal of the program as making this new school culture and environment as different as possible from the traditional school. This second group of administrators perceives that the problem exists because of this mismatch of student and school setting. The second group of administrators (Type I) are not looking for, nor are they expecting, an immediate change in the students' behavior simply for attending a different school. Administrators of the Type I alternative schools believe the students will respond

differently once they are exposed to the new school environment and then, within a relatively short period, their behavior tends to improve (Raywid, 1994, 1998).

However, administrators and alternative educators have observed that when this new school is recognizably different, eventually the greater majority of the students begin to have more success; they seem to cooperate with both peers and staff (OTAC, 1995, 1998, and 2000). (Raywid, 1994, 1998), Most importantly, these at-risk youth now appear to thrive in this TYPE I environment (Sagor, 1999).

Definitions

Alternative Education - An educational perspective based on the belief that there are many ways to become educated, as well as many types of environments and structures within which education can occur. It recognizes that not everyone learns the same way and that all schools do not have to be alike with the same learning modalities and structure (Morley, 1991).

Alternative Education District Cooperatives - Groupings of school districts in close proximity that cooperate to serve a number of students from neighboring districts in a more centralized alternative education site.

At-Risk Student - A student who is unlikely to graduate from high school, or graduate without the skills, self-esteem, or ability to exercise meaningful options of work, leisure, culture, civic affairs and interpersonal relationships. (Sagor, 1999).

Barriers to Acceptance - These are concerns about reallocating resources, changes in personnel roles, or changes in organizational power structure that prevent the use of alternative programs or certain types of alternative programs (Conner & Lake, 1994).

Barriers to Acting -These are the availability of personnel capable of administering and working in alternative education programs, limited space, a shortage of operating funds, or the perception that change is limited by inertia imposed by the organization's culture, preventing the use of alternative programs or certain types of programs (Conner & Lake, 1994).

Barriers to Understanding – These are barriers to action, such as the lack of knowledge of different types of alternative education programs, funding options, or of the law and regulations covering alternative education that prevents the use of alternative programs or types of programs (Conner & Lake, 1994).

Elementary School District - Oklahoma school district serving pre- kindergarten through eighth grade students.

Flow-through funds – Any amount or type of funding originating from the state or federal level that is passed onto a local independent school district for a specific purpose, program service or student population.

Independent School District – A PK -12 Oklahoma school district.

Oklahoma Technical Assistance Center (O.T.A.C.) – This agency serves Oklahoma school districts by providing information and assessment services concerning programs for at-risk youth. O.T.A.C. assists school districts with the development, implementation, and refinement of a variety of research-based programs.

Statewide Alternative Academy System – Beginning in 1996 a total of 92 school districts were awarded Oklahoma State Department of Education funds under a new statewide program. As part of the state's five-year plan, this program awards funds annually

based on the number of dropouts and juvenile justice contacts of each participating school district. By 2004, this statewide program was funding 326 school districts.

Superintendent – The chief executive officer of the Board of Education and the administrative head of a school district. (O.S.70-1-116).

Type I Alternative Schools - Institutions of choice that any student may attend until graduation and that reflect both programmatic innovations and non-traditional organizational and administrative structures. (Raywid, 1994)

Type II Alternative Schools - Institutions that serve only disruptive students for a specified period of time, usually in lieu of expulsion. These programs focus on behavior modification. (Raywid, 1994)

Type III Alternative Schools – Referral institutions that serve students in need of academic, social or emotional development or rehabilitation. Students are enrolled for a specified period of time and after treatment return to the traditional school (Raywid, 1994).

Significance of the Study

Oklahoma has taken a very impressive leadership position when compared to other states in terms of attempting to establish and legislatively adopt standards and criteria for its state-funded alternative academy programs (OTAC, 1995). In the early 1990's, the Oklahoma State Department of Education (OSDE, 1995), an independent consultant, and the state legislature worked carefully to describe and promote a state plan for implementing a statewide alternative education system. All parties involved desired to provide a plan that would promote the highest level of positive student outcomes and a plan with flexibility to respond to changing community needs (OSDE-OK, 1995). Great care was taken early on by

the OSDE, State Plan for the Implementation of Statewide Alternative Academies (OSDE, 1995) to establish guidelines or operational standards that when followed, would make it very difficult for a school district to operate its alternative education program as an in-school suspension program or an alternative discipline program.

The policymakers involved were not against serving chronically disruptive students. However, it was apparent early on that the key state legislators and OSDE staff did not want to spend alternative education funding on punitive or discipline models that had accumulated a poor record of accomplishment for success. As Aleem and Moles (1993) emphasized: Schools may do more to reduce student violence by creating nurturing environments than by placing primary emphasis on trying to control student behavior (p. 121).

Stakeholders were clearly aware of the large body of research, indicating that the deficit models that attempted to fix the child, or the use of scare tactics, authoritarian approaches, and punishment do not produce the types of outcomes that policymakers, patrons and educators want (Willis, 1996). The criteria set in state statutes clearly embraced the notion that the alternative schools were to be designed in a more positive and supportive manner (OTAC,1995).

Some districts in Oklahoma chose not to participate in any type of alternative education program. Others decided to implement and maintain a Type I or Type II alternative education program. A third group of districts chose to participate in a cooperative program without physically implementing a program in their own district.

The principal and interacting propositions co-exist possibly because of the existence of certain change barriers perceived by the major stakeholders of these school districts (McQuire, 2001) need reference listed. The extent to which these change barriers can be identified across

these school superintendents' districts should help explain the decisions and choices made regarding the implementation of alternative education. These perceptions of existing change barriers should also help explain the perceived purpose these individuals hold of alternative education.

Summary

This study is organized in five chapters, a reference list, and appendixes. The remaining portions of the study consist of the following:

1. Chapter II contains a review of literature and research related to (a) Change Theories, (b) Barriers to Change, (c) Schools and perception of Change.
2. Chapter III contains descriptions of the research methods, the subjects and their relationship to the study's purpose, data analysis procedures, accuracy of data and sources of the data.
3. Chapter IV contains an analysis and interpretation of the data gathered.
4. Chapter V contains a summary of the study, major findings, conclusions, and recommendations for further study.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction to Alternative Education

The alternative school has been a well documented success nationwide for creating a positive school environment that supports and nurtures the needs of special students (Hahn, 1987). The concept of alternative education began in the mid-sixties and has since then attracted a wide variety of learners. In their neonate stage, the alternative schools were considered a short-term intervention program designed to provide a structured learning environment within which students could continue their education and earn credits while learning academic and life skills for a satisfactory transition into adulthood (Banks, 2005). Although a standard national model does not exist, the alternative programs are generally designed to create a more successful learning environment through low teacher-student ratios, individualized and self-paced instruction, non-competitive performance assessments, and less-structured classrooms (DeBlois, 1994; Raywid, 1982; 1994).

Barr and Parrett (2001) estimate there are more than 20,000 alternative programs and separate alternative schools in operation within the United States. Several researchers (Kellmayer, 1998; Kleiner, Porch, & Farris, 2002) suggest that alternative education programs tend to be grouped around topical areas inclusive of dropout prevention, special education, and at-risk youth.

The development and promotion of alternative education programs have grown in recent years as a result of the search for alternative solutions to address student misbehavior, as well as an attempt to provide environments and a curriculum that meet the needs of at-risk students (Nichols & Utesch, 1998). Unfortunately, a punitive purpose may cause schools to adopt ineffective models for improving learning or behavior (Gregg, 1999). Research demonstrates consistently that disciplinary alternative programs result in no positive long-term gains and may increase negative outcomes (Cox, Davidson, & Bynum, 1995; Oklahoma Technical Assistance Center, 1995; Raywid, 1994). There is the danger of unconscionably creating a punitive and undesirable school program simply to "teach the student a lesson or in an effort to deter future bad behavior" (Gregory, 1997, p. 579). Wehlage (1983) reports frequent statements from administrators that, "special programs for marginal students must not be too good because it will convey the wrong message to the unconforming student" (p. 216) …"they must pay for their mistakes and poor attitude toward school" (p. 218).

In addition, one of the types of at-risk youth, clearly not benefiting while in alternative education programs, is the delinquent and adjudicated adolescent (Cox, Davidson, & Bynum, 1995). Cox documents that although several studies show causal relationships between certain school-related variables and delinquent behavior, such as school performance (Jarjoura, 1993), school attendance (Fagon & Pablon, 1989) and attitudes toward school (Cernkovich & Giordano, 1992), none of the studies reviewed by Cox show a significant reduction in delinquent behavior. In their study, Cox and his associates performed a meta-analysis of 57 alternative education evaluations and again found positive factors such as school performance, attitude and self-esteem. However, alternative

schools did not significantly change participants' delinquent behavior. Researchers investigating the merits of alternative education for delinquents suggest that these programs have been too little and late for the serious and older juvenile delinquents (Arnove & Strout, 1980).

Comment [c1]:

Comment [c2]:

This problem of expecting delinquent behavior to decrease is compounded when administrators, unaware of the prognosis of success, demand placement of delinquent students into their local alternative program. Administrators of both public schools and community juvenile justice centers have little regard as to whether a proper placement has been made as long as the so called troublemaker is gone. Arnove and Stroud (1980) were some of the first to document this practice and point out the shortcomings. They found that students with severe problems, in addition to delinquency, were being placed into alternative programs by administrators without their first checking to see if the appropriate mental health, legal, or law enforcement services would be available. Robert DeBlois (1994) has captured this issue of arbitrarily placing delinquents in alternative education brilliantly when he reports:

> Alternative programs usually work well in the beginning. The trouble begins when alternative programs are forced to take a student who really will not benefit from the program, but are placed there because the district has no other place to put them. This muddles the mission of the program and frustrates the students and teachers in it (p. 34).

Perceived Purpose and Value of Alternative Education

Opinions vary regarding the value of certain types of alternative programs that stem from assumptions formed from the reason the student was referred and the general purpose of the program (Duke & Griesdorn, 1999; Kelly, 1993; Raywid, 1981; Sagor, 1999). Three types of alternative education programs were identified by Raywid (1990,1994) in her studies beginning in the early 1990's. She was the first to categorize and differentiate the major differences across the three types of programs.

The figure below, adapted from Raywid (1994), depicts the major characteristics of the three identified types of alternative education programs.

TYPE I	*TYPE II*	*TYPE III*
SCHOOLS OF CHOICE	**FORCED CHOICE**	**THERAPEUTIC**
VOLUNTARY	**DISCIPLINARY**	**VOLUNTARY**
INNOVATIVE INSTRUCTION	**SKILL and DRILL**	**STRESSES BEHAVIOR MODIFICATION**
ENGAGING CURRICULUM	**MINIMAL INTERACTION**	
"FIX" THE ENVIRONMENT	**"FIX" THE STUDENT**	**"FIX" THE STUDENT**

Figure 1. Three Alternative Education Program Types
Adapted from Raywid 1994

Type I programs are characterized by being a school of choice or membership school. They are extremely popular and are known for having a very different atmosphere

and a student friendly, caring culture/environment. Type I alternative schools are those typically that a student may attend until graduation (Raywid, 1994, 1998).

The Type II programs are a last-chance type of program and are consistently found to be punitive in nature. The students attending these programs report feeling sentenced (Raywid, 1994). Type II alternative schools are a change of placement that typically only serve disruptive and/or suspended students for a specified length of time. The student attends these Type II programs in lieu of being suspended out of school (Raywid).

The Type III schools are treatment-based and require a referral by schools or parents for the student to receive some form of treatment or rehabilitation. Students attend only for a specified period of time and then are returned to their home school.

In a very similar fashion, Wehlage (1983) reports that he has frequently heard that special programs for the marginal students should not be too good because these students might get the wrong message. It is believed that they must pay for their mistakes and poor attitude toward school. An extreme example of these Type II programs is the boot camp programs that recently enjoyed a short span of popularity, particularly in the southern and western states during the 1990's (Cummins, 1995).

Type III programs are therapeutic in design and place a heavy emphasis on modifying behavior. Typically the Type III programs do not stress academics and rely heavily upon outside service providers. The Type II and III programs have much more in common with each other, in that both are trying to fix or modify the behavior or attitude of the student. Although the Type III programs tend to be more therapeutic than the Type II, little or no attempt to change anything having to do with school environment or culture is initiated. Both Type II and Type III fail to offer much of a difference in regard to their

instructional strategies or teaching pedagogy when compared to the traditional settings (Foley & Crull, 1984, Raywid, 1994, Wehlage, et al. 1989,).

According to Raywid, "Both Type II and Type III attempt to fix the student based on the notion that the problems lie within the individual student. However, Type I assumes that the students' difficulties are tied to student-school mis-match. " Altering a school's environment will eventually change the students' behavior and attitude" (p. 28).

In 1994 Raywid wrote that the more effective alternative education programs were those that afforded a student the opportunity to attend long-term and eventually graduate from the alternative school. The other short-term, and often punitive alternative schools, simply attempted to fix or rehabilitate the students and then return them to the same school environment that contributed to their earlier difficulties. The former maladaptive behaviors of these same students tended to reoccur at their home school and resulted in further referrals and eventual suspensions (e.g., Brendtro, 1990; Conrath, 2001; Frazer & Baenen, 1988; Glasser, 2000; Gregory, 1997; Gregory & Smith, 1981; Raywid, 1994; Wehlage et al., 1989).

Gregory (1997) regarded school districts' policy of returning former alternative education students to their traditional school as an act resembling malpractice. He believed this practice reinforced the notion that the student had the problem and that it was not a problem of the ''misfit' between the student and the traditional school environment.

Gregory (1997) went even further and cited four issues or benefits that accompany the notion of continuing in an alternative education program until graduation:

1. Remaining a part of the alternative school community allows for the emergence of leaders within the alternative school. This factor is a critical

component for creating a strong experience in leadership roles and responsibilities.

2. Role models are established and then followed by younger students when alternative school students are allowed to remain at the alternative school until graduation.
3. Older more experienced alternative students are able to help less experienced students regarding the rules and expectations of the alternative school.
4. Allowing an opportunity to stay at the alternative school until graduation establishes closure and success for often the first time in these alternative school students (p. 580).

Finally, the most glaring and negative aspect of the Type II programs are that they are the most unsuccessful of the three types in terms of showing student gains for school related factors, as documented by the Oklahoma Technical Assistance Center (OTAC) (OTAC, 1995; 1997). They also tend to have little or nothing to show in terms of positive outcomes once the student leaves the program (Arnove & Strout, 1980; OTAC, 1994).

Development of Alternative Education for Suspended Students

Secondary schools in America have been offering alternatives for suspended youth for over 200 years. Mintz, Solomon, Solomon, and Muscat (1994) report these options have been available in schools since 1786. Early private schools and parochial schools tended to provide an alternative to the traditional public school programs (Deal & Nolan, 1978). Deal and Nolan noted that these early private schools, although comparable to public schools, had

restricted access typically for either an elite group of students (exclusive private schools) or narrow scope (parochial schools).

In the 1960's and 1970's alternative schools offering a significant departure from traditional schools grew quickly across the public school landscape. Several studies indicated that these alternatives serving suspended youth evolved as both a reaction to bureaucratic or even racist features of traditional schools and also tended to reflect the humanistic and politically loaded climate of the times (e.g., Cremin, 1978; Deal & Nolan, 1978; McGee, 2001; McKinney, 1987; Raywid, 1994, 1995; Smith, Gregory, & Pugh, 1981). During these two decades, these early alternative schools were often called "free schools" and "freedom schools" because they focused on ethnic empowerment and a child-centered philosophy. Almost simultaneously a large number of public school districts began offering other schools as placements for suspended youth (e.g., Cox, Davidson, & Bynum, 1995; McGee, 2001; Nirenburg, 1977).

Controversy quickly grew regarding the use of alternative schools as placements for disruptive students (e.g., Cox, Davidson, & Bynum, 1995; McGee, 2001; Nirenburg, 1977). Educators explained this practice as a means to simply reduce disruptions in the traditional classrooms. Whether this justification is valid or not, Frymier and Gansneder (1989) cited expulsion as one of the six major factors for students to drop out of school.

At this same time, those alternative schools that were committed and designed to provide a very different school environment and experience began to record significant success (Barr & Parrett, 2001; Clark, Lotto, & Astuto, 1984; Raywid, 1994). Larger metropolitan districts in Oklahoma began their first alternative schools in the early 1980's and these schools were all schools of choice (OTAC, 1995; OSDE-OK, 1994).

The past 25 years of research regarding alternative education has formulated the recommendation that alternative schools are philosophically dedicated to changing the school environment in a way to effectively address disruptive student behavior (e.g., Arnove & Strout, 1980; Barr & Parrett, 1997, 2001; Gold & Mann, 1984; Raywid, 2001; Reynolds, 2002; Wehlage & Smith,1986; Wehlage et al., 1989;) . Hodgkinson, 1993 stated:

> As students have deviated more and more from the norm, the [educational] system has served them less and less well. We sometimes seem to say to them, "We've provided the system. It's not our fault if you don't succeed." Whether that attitude is right or wrong, the critical mass of at-risk children and youth has grown so large proportionately that we are in some danger of being toppled by our sense of righteousness. Instead of blaming the students for not fitting the system, we must design and implement a structure that provides appropriate educational services to those most at risk (p. 627).

Summary

This chapter provided a review of the literature and research related to the development of alternative education both nationally and in Oklahoma. In the first section the development, characteristics and promotion of alternative programs for different student populations is traced. Specifically highlighted in this section are the adjudicated and delinquent at-risk youth that have not benefited from alternative education (Cox & Bynum, 1995).

The second section described the purpose and value of alternative education. The major characteristics and purpose of the three identified types (Types I, II and III) of alternative education program are described (Raywid, 1994, 1998). Also included in this section is a discussion of issues and benefits of having students continue in alternative education programs until graduation.

Section three centered about the development of alternative education for suspended students. The review of literature strongly supports the notion that for the period of time that alternative education research has existed, the overall recommendation is for these programs to focus on changing the school environment in a manner that effectively supports and nurtures a change in the students' attitude first, and then eventually their behavior.

CHAPTER III

METHOD

The purpose of this study was to explore the relationship among three barriers of change, (understanding of the change, acceptance of the change , or acting upon the change), and the selection, design and implementation decisions supporting Type I and Type II alternative education programs. Superintendent and district demographics and the districts' dominant barrier of change were examined.

The three different sets of hypotheses involved both superintendent and district variables as they relate to a choice of Type I or non Type I alternative programs, the relationship among the barriers of change and the choice of alternative programs, and the relationship between specific superintendent variables and the choice of the barriers of change. These hypotheses dealt with the theoretical constructs that contribute to a generalized resistance to change and how people tend to resist change or alterations of the status quo (Conner & Lake, 1994; Daft, 1983; Duncan & Zaltman, 1977).

The responses of the school superintendents obtained through surveys were studied to determine if relationships existed between the barriers of change, decisions to implement Type I or non-Type I alternative programs, and certain district and superintendent characteristics. These superintendent characteristics were gender, years of experience as a superintendent, and highest education level. The district demographics were district size, amount the district

spends on alternative education, and the district's state alternative education allocation amount.

The author was provided assistance from several staff members of the Oklahoma Technical Assistance Center (O.T.A.C.). Since 1989, O.T.A.C. has held the state contract provide program evaluation and technical assistance to alternative education programs in Oklahoma. The O.T.A.C. is officially recognized by the United States Department of Education as a nationally certified education program evaluator agency. The O.T.A.C. regional coordinators have first-hand information on all state funded alternative education programs. They are responsible for the collection, organization and publication of annual program evaluation data regarding the type of alternative program the district provides and the effectiveness of each program. A panel of O.T.A.C. staff provided the author technical assistance by identifying the districts considered to be a Type I or non-Type I alternative program.

The sub-topics for this chapter include a description and discussion of the population, the instrument, the reliability of the data, collection of the data, and the analysis of the data. Finally, a summary of the sub-topics in the chapter is provided. Next presented is a description of the population, followed by a description of the instrument. The remaining sub-topics of validity, reliability and implementation of the instrument make up the methodology section of this study.

Population

The initial population consisted of 430 school superintendents of urban, suburban and rural school districts in a mid-western state during the 2006-2007 school year. The population sample consisted of 264 school districts judged to be implementing or participating in either a

Type I program or a non Type I alternative education program. School superintendents were surveyed because they were considered key educational policy makers whose values and beliefs are often reflected in the design and implementation decisions regarding education programs.

The O.T.A.C. provided a pool of 264 districts judged by their panel of regional coordinators to be currently providing or participating in a true Type I alternative program, and those districts which the regional coordinators deemed to be providing or participating in a non-Type I alternative education program. Also included in the population sample were the remaining number of districts in the state that have continued to resist implementing their own alternative education program

Instrument

An on-line survey designed to identify three barriers of change for implementation of alternative education as suggested by Conner and Lake (1994) was used in this study. Conner and Lake (1994) first coined the terms for the three barriers of change. The on-line survey was adapted from a recent dissertation study by McGuire (2001). McGuire's' survey originated in Indiana and was a pencil and paper survey. The McGuire's barriers of change survey was modified only slightly for this study to match and reflect the demographic requirements of Oklahoma school districts. The only adjustments made from the original McGuire survey were in terms of the response set for the size of school districts, per pupil expenditure, and state allocation amounts for alternative education services.

The 33 - statement survey covers three groups of barriers to change. Barriers to Understanding includes the lack of knowledge of different types of alternative programs,

funding options, or of the laws and regulations covering alternative education. Barriers to Acceptance includes concerns about reallocating resources for specific student populations, the perception of the relative value of serving a specific student population, concerns about the effects on their teaching or administrative roles, or concerns about district or organizational change. The terms Barriers to Acting include the lack of availability of qualified personnel, limited space, and shortage of funds and or organizational inertia (McGuire, 2001).

The barriers of change survey was field tested in a pilot study by a panel consisting of two retired superintendents and a local director of educational research and evaluation to help ensure the appropriateness and clarity of items. The use of a panel of experts was to ascertain whether the survey would yield the information the author was seeking and whether the survey statements were presented in a clear manner that would allow the superintendents to understand and respond to the statements (Best & Kahn, 1993; Borg & Gall, 1993).
The survey consists of two major parts. Part I includes two statements regarding whether the district provides it's own alternative program or participates in a neighboring school district's alternative program. Another 33 statements cover the three different barriers of change statements and require the respondents to answer "yes," "no," or "not sure." The final survey item asked for responses to an open-ended statement, "Are there other items or issues concerning alternative education programs that you wanted to address, but were not a part of this survey instrument?" Part II required responses to both superintendent demographic characteristics and specific district characteristics.

Validity

A panel of administrators from the initial study by McGuire (2001) coded each item of the survey into one of the three barriers for change, as suggested by Conner and Lake (1994), to help establish construct and face validity for the instrument. This author consulted with a three member panel (two former area superintendents and one education program evaluator) to review the survey statements and demographic questions to support the established construct and face validity established earlier by the McGuire study (2001). This three member panel concurred that the barriers of change instrument possessed an adequate level of construct and face validity.

Reliability

A post-hoc (odd/even) split-half reliability test was administered on returned data to help confirm an adequate level of internal consistency of the survey items (Borg & Gall, 1993). Specifically, the Cronbach's alpha test was used to obtain a measure of the internal consistency for the instrument. The 33 survey items for understanding, acceptance and acting-upon barriers of change were analyzed for internal consistency. The reliability coefficient for the 42 valid cases was .782 and confirms that for this group of subjects the instrument and the 33 barriers of change items demonstrated a sufficient level of reliability.

Procedure

Each superintendent was sent an announcement letter in February 2007 (see appendix A) which then introduced the author, announced the survey, and briefly explained the nature

of the study. The letter informed the superintendents they would be receiving an on-line survey within the next two weeks regarding alternative education.

This survey was initially e-mailed to superintendents of those districts representing Type I and non-Type I programs and those districts not offering their own alternative program. The survey was accompanied by a cover letter explaining the general interest area of the research and the provisions for consent to participate (see appendix A). All appropriate explanations regarding assurances of confidentiality and research issues were included in the cover letter to the superintendents.

This original paper survey used in the McGuire study was electronically reformatted to allow scanning for scoring and for Internet dissemination. E-mail letters and surveys to superintendents were electronically mailed in spring of 2007. The electronic survey was coded to track the response rate, and the cover letter requested a return of the survey within two weeks. The survey was contained in an attachment within the e-mail cover letter.

A follow-up e-mail message, in addition to a hard-copy of the cover letter and survey, was mailed to any district failing to reply within the 14-day return request. In addition, a follow-up phone call was placed. The author was advised by the statistical consultant that a 50% return rate for the superintendent surveys would be considered an adequate rate of return.

Data Analyses

The three major research questions and the three major null hypotheses for this study are listed in Chapter I. This information is followed by the six specific null hypotheses

statements and then chi-square analysis of that specific null hypothesis is presented in Chapter IV. Where statistical significance was noted, additional analysis and interpretation was conducted to interpret the size or importance of the effect.

The results of this study are presented in the same order as the research questions listed in Chapter I. The first research question asked was "What are the characteristics of superintendents and of districts providing alternative education programs?" The second research question asked was "What are the characteristics of districts and superintendents providing a Type I alternative education program?" The third and final research question asked "What were the characteristics of districts and superintendents providing a non-Type I alternative education program?

For the analysis of the three different barriers and the superintendent's demographic data, it was suggested to use a multiple analysis of variance (MANOVA). If differences were noted an additional one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used and significance was set at the .05 level.

A T-test analysis in Chapter IV was conducted of the state allocation amounts across Type I and Type II programs. This test was to show whether a reliable difference existed between the two program types.

CHAPTER IV

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

Introduction

The problem addressed the barriers to participation in Type I alternative education programs in Oklahoma school districts. Multiple types of alternative education programs exist nationally, Type I, Type II and Type III. For years an impressive amount of research has clearly indicated that the Type I programs have the greatest success rate for students and that they consistently demonstrate higher program evaluations (OTAC, 1995, 1998; 2000, Raywid, 1994, 1998) yet, they are still not found in some Oklahoma school districts.

This study focused on exploring the relationship of three barriers of change that may help explain which type of change factor impedes or interferes with adopting and implementing Type I alternative education programs. These three barriers, understanding the need for change, acceptance of the need for change, and acting upon the need for change, are thought to affect the selection, design, and implementation decisions supporting Type I and non-Type I alternative education programs. School superintendents are considered key educational policy makers whose values and beliefs are often reflected in the design and implementation decisions regarding education programs.

This investigation further examined how superintendent and district demographics related to the existence of Type I, non-Type I, and no alternative education programs. Also included was identifying the barrier of change indicated most often by school superintendents.

In this chapter an analysis of specific superintendent and district demographics of gender, education level, experience as a superintendent, district size, per pupil valuation, and state funding allocation levels is presented. Also presented is an analysis of the responses to the statements in terms of how superintendents relate to the three barriers of change: understanding the need for change, acceptance of the need for change, and having the ability to act upon the change. Then statistical analyses are presented in the same order as the research questions listed in Chapter I. Finally, an analysis of the survey instrument itself is presented.

A questionnaire was selected specifically for the purpose determined to be closely aligned with the intent of this study. The instrument was modified slightly to fit closely the Oklahoma district demographic information required for the study's purpose.

Demographics

One hundred fifty-one responses were received from an on-line survey sent to 254 district superintendents resulting in a 59% response rate. The districts were those identified having either a Type I or non-Type I alternative education program. All 151 respondents answered the first two survey questions. Not every respondent answered each of the questions 3 through 35. Next are six tables displaying responses to the number of districts with alternative education programs, number of cooperating districts, program types, superintendent education level, superintendent gender, and level of superintendent experience.

Question 1. Do you have an alternative education program in your district? Seventy-two percent (108) replied yes, while 28% (43) responded no, indicating that the majority of reporting school districts have alternative education programs.

TABLE 1

DISTRICTS WITH AN ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM

Response	N	Percent
Yes	108	72
No	43	28
Total	151	100

Question 2. Do you cooperate with an adjoining district in sending students to their alternative education program? Fifty-one percent (76) responded yes, while 49 % (75) responded no.

TABLE 2

COOPERATION WITH AN ADJOINING DISTRICT

Response	N	Percent
Yes	76	51
No	75	49
Total	151	100

Of the districts responding approximately half cooperated by sending their students to a neighboring school district to receive alternative education services. Of the 151 superintendents, 21% or 32 superintendents answered yes to Question 1 and Question 2. Slightly over 20% of the superintendents surveyed operate their own alternative education programs and also send some students to their local cooperative alternative education program.

TABLE 3

PROGRAM TYPE

Program Type	Frequency	Percent
Type I	86	57
Type II	64	43
Total	150	100

Of the 150 respondents, slightly over half (57%) were from school districts that provided or participated in Type I alternative education programs. The remaining 43% were previously designated as districts providing or participating in non- Type I alternative education programs.

TABLE 4

SUPERINTENDENT EDUCATION LEVEL

Education Level	Frequency	Percent
M.S./M.A.	116	78
MBA	6	4
Ed.S.	5	3
Ed.D./Ph.D.	23	15
Total	150	100

Question 37. For respondents indicating their educational level, 15.3% (23) had a Ph.D. or Ed.D. and 4% (6) had a MBA. The largest percentage (77.3) indicated they had a M.S. or M.A. degree. Three percent (5) currently held an Educational Specialist (Ed.S.) degree. These proportions for the four levels of education were similar to the statewide distribution of all district school superintendents (OSDE, 2007).

TABLE 5

SUPERINTENDENT GENDER

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	124	85
Female	22	15
Total	146	100

Question 38. The tabulation for gender of the superintendents revealed a majority of male superintendents. Approximately 85% (124) of 146 superintendents were male and the remaining 15% (22) were female. As compared to the overall state proportions, this sample of respondents is identical to the gender information from the Oklahoma State Department of Education (SDE State Directory, 2007) that reports approximately 365 (85%) male superintendents as compared to 64 (14.9%) female superintendents.

TABLE 6

SUPERINTENDENT EXPERIENCE

Years of Experience	Frequency	Percent
< 3 years	5	3
3-6 years	9	6
7 or more years	135	91
Total	149	100

Question 39. The majority of respondents, (91%), indicated they had seven or more years of experience as a superintendent. Another six percent reported between three and six years of experience with the remaining three percent reporting fewer than three years of experience as a school superintendent.

TABLE 7

DISTRICT ENROLLMENT

Enrollment Level	Frequency	Percent
< 1,200	105	70
1,201 to 2,500	23	16
2,501 to 3,500	3	2
3,501 to 4,500	6	4
4,5001 or >	12	8
Total	149	100

Question 40. The great majority of superintendents (70.5%) indicated their school district enrollment size to be fewer than 1,200 students. Fifteen percent indicated a student population of 1, 201 - 2,500 students. Only nine superintendents reported a school population within the 2,501 to 4,500 range. Twelve superintendents reported more than 4,500 students in their district. The large number of small school districts in this study is reflective of the state given the prevalence of small rural communities in Oklahoma.

TABLE 8

PER PUPIL EXPENDITURE

Expenditure Level	Frequency	Percent
< $3,500 to $5,000	18	12
$5,001 to $7,500	63	42
> $7,501	69	46
Total	150	100

Question 41. Approximately an equal number of superintendents (63) and (69) reported per pupil expenditure to be $5,001 to $7,501 or greater than $7,500, respectively. Only 18 indicated the amount to be less than $ 5,000.

TABLE 9

STATE ALLOCATION AMOUNT

Program Type	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Type I	86	$35,425.36	$57,253.14
Type II	64	$64,174.58	$247,804.28
Total	150		

The mean state allocation amount for Type I programs was slightly more than half of the mean allocation amount for Type II programs. The standard deviation established for the non Type I programs was nearly five times the range for the Type I programs. A comparison of the average state alternative education allocation amount for districts with Type I programs and Type II programs shows the mean for the former to be nearly half of that for the latter. Two implications to help explain these findings are that generally Type II programs are more costly and Type II districts represented in this study were larger school districts. As the size of school district increases, the state allocation dollars tend to increase. State allocation amounts were based on the total number of dropouts and juvenile justice referrals per district at the end of the 1995-1996 school year (OSDE- OK, 1994; OTAC, 1995).

Analysis of Data

The questionnaire contained statements to reflect an interpretation of barriers to change and superintendent/district demographic information regarding alternative education. A Chi-Square test, Pearson product-moment correlation, *t*-test, and analysis of variance were used to either reject or accept hypotheses and to help identify pertinent findings from the study. A chi-square analysis was the appropriate and suggested statistical test for the hypotheses involved with the frequency of demographic and district data placed in observed data sets (Shavelson, 1996).

Three main hypotheses were involved with this study:

1. There is no significant relationship between certain superintendent and district demographic variables and implementing a certain type of alternative education program.

2. There is no significant relationship among the three barriers of change and the choice of alternative education program types.
3. There is no significant relationship between the demographic variables and the barriers of change.

For this study the independent variables were the superintendent and district demographic factors: superintendent gender, years of experience as a superintendent, the superintendent's highest education level, district enrollment, the district's state alternative education allocation amount, and the amount a district spent on alternative education.

The dependent variables were the choice of an alternative program (Type I and Type II alternative school programs) and the dominant barrier of change category. There were three barriers of change categories: understanding, acceptance and acting-upon.

Analysis was conducted for superintendents' gender, experience level, and education level, and district size, per pupil expenditure and state allocation amounts for those districts providing or participating in a Type I alternative education program. The same analysis was conducted for superintendents' gender, experience level, and education level, and district size, per pupil expenditure and state allocation amounts for those districts providing or participating in a non - Type I alternative education program in the form of null hypotheses. Finally, an analysis was conducted to explore a relationship between a superintendent's gender, years of experience and education level and the three different change barriers.

The three major research questions are listed first followed by the major null hypotheses and a series specific null hypotheses. Where statistical significance was noted, additional analysis and interpretation were conducted to interpret the size or importance of the

effect. The results of this study are presented in the same order as the research questions listed in Chapter I.

The first research question asked, "How do the barriers of acceptance, understanding, and acting impact school districts from participating or implementing a Type I alternative education program?" To answer the first research question, a series of hypotheses were created and analysis conducted for characteristics including superintendents' gender, experience level, and education level for the three different barriers of change.

The second and third research questions asked were "What are the characteristics of superintendents and districts that provide alternative education programs?" and "What are the characteristics of districts and superintendents providing a non-Type I alternative education program?" The same analysis was conducted for superintendents' gender, experience level, and education level, and district size, per pupil expenditure and state allocation amounts for those districts providing or participating in a Type I or Type II alternative education program in the form of a null hypotheses.

TABLE 10

SUPERINTENDENT GENDER AND PROGRAM TYPE

Gender	Program Type		Total
	Type I	Type II	
Male	50	55	124
Female	14	8	22
Total	83	63	146

Chi Square Value = .48
DF = 1
*Not significant at the p. 05 level – The null hypothesis is accepted and the non-directional hypothesis is rejected

Null hypothesis 1.1 - There is no significant relationship between a superintendent's gender and the choice of an alternative education program.

TABLE 11

SUPERINTENDENT EXPERIENCE AND PROGRAM TYPE

Experience	Program Type		Total
	Type I	Type II	
< 3 years	2	3	5
3 to 6 years	6	3	9
7 or > years	77	58	135
Total	85	64	149

Chi Square Value = .93
DF = 2
*Not significant at the p. 05 level – The null hypothesis is accepted and non-directional hypothesis is rejected.

Null Hypothesis 1.2 – There is no significant relationship between a superintendent's years of experience as a superintendent and the choice of an alternative education program.

TABLE 12

SUPERINTENDENT EDUCATION LEVEL AND PROGRAM TYPE

Education Level	Program Type		
	Type I	Type II	Total
M.S./M.A.	65	51	116
M.B.A.	4	2	6
Ed.S.	2	3	5
Ed.D/ Ph.D.	15	8	23
Total	86	64	150

Chi Square Value = 1.492
DF = 3
*Not significant at the p. 05 level – The null hypothesis is accepted and the non-directional hypothesis is rejected.

Null Hypothesis 1.3: There is no significant relationship between a superintendent's education level and the choice of an alternative education program.

TABLE 13

DISTRICT SIZE AND PROGRAM TYPE

District Size	Program Type		
	Type I	Type II	Total
< 1,200	59	46	105
1,201 to 2,500	14	9	23
2,501 to 3,500	1	2	3
3,501 to 4,500	5	1	6
4,501 or >	6	6	12
Total	85	64	149

Chi Square Value = 2.792
DF = 4
*Significant at the p. 05 level – The null hypothesis is accepted and the non-directional hypothesis is rejected.

Null Hypothesis 1.4: There is no significant relationship between the selected district size and choice of an alternative education program.

TABLE 14

PER PUPIL VALUATION AND PROGRAM TYPE

Allocation Amount	Program Type		Total
	Type I	Type II	
< $5,001	10	8	18
$ 5,001 to $ 7,500	37	26	63
$ 7,501 or >	39	30	69
Total	86	64	150

Chi – Square Value = .92
DF = 2
*Not significant at the .05 level – The null hypothesis is accepted and the non-directional hypothesis is rejected.

Null Hypothesis 1.5: There is no significant relationship between the districts per pupil valuation and the choice of an alternative education program.

TABLE 15

STATE ALLOCATION AMOUNTS AND PROGRAM TYPES

Program Type	N	Mean	S.D.
I	86	$35,425.36	$ 57,252.14
II	64	$64,174.58	$247,804.28
Total	150		

Chi – Square Value = .092
DF = 2

*Significant at the p. 05 level – The null hypothesis is accepted and non-directional hypothesis is rejected.

Null Hypothesis 1.6: There is no significant relationship between the state alternative education allocation amount and the choice of an alternative education program.

TABLE 16

T-TEST ANALYSIS OF STATE ALLOCATION AMOUNTS

Type	N	Mean	S. D.	Standard Error	Probability >t
I	86	$28,749.21	$57,253.14	$27,634.79	1.04
II	64	$64,174.58	$247,804.28	$31,584.79	.91

A *t* – test for the differences between means was conducted to determine whether a reliable difference existed between the two program type groups.
Hypothesis – Do not reject the null hypothesis (t (148) = -1.04, p> .05).
There was no difference between the two groups.

Barrier of Change Survey Questions

Of the 35 survey statements, 33 addressed the three barriers of change categories: Understanding the need for change (14), Acceptance of the need for change (13) and Acting-upon the need for change (6). An analysis of the data will be by the barrier of change category.

Table 17 shows the three barriers of change categories and the corresponding survey items.

TABLE 17

BARRIER OF CHANGE SURVEY ITEM NUMBER

Barrier of Change Category	Number of Statements	Survey Item Numbers
Understanding the need for change	14	3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 11, 12,13, 16, 17, 24, 25, 30, 31
Accepting the need for change	13	8, 9, 10, 14, 15, 18, 19, 20, 22, 23, 32, 33, 34
Acting – upon the need for change	6	21, 26, 27, 28, 29, 35
Total	33	

The three category items above address aspects of the change process. This first barrier of change category includes statements relating to the superintendent's familiarity, awareness and knowledge of alternative programs. Acceptance of the need for change includes concerns about reallocating resources for specific student populations, the perception of the relative value of serving a specific student population, concerns about the effects on their teaching or administrative roles, or concerns about district or organizational change. Acting – upon the need for change considers the availability of personnel capable of administering and working in alternative education programs, limited space, a shortage of operating funds, or the perception that change is limited by inertia imposed by the organization's culture. The statements tap a general understanding of a number of education issues in terms of operation, philosophy and funding of alternative education programs.

Understanding the Need for Change

The table below describes the results of the 14 understanding the need for change statement responses. The number and percentage of yes, no, and not sure responses are provided for each statement.

TABLE 18

UNDERSTANDING THE NEED FOR CHANGE SURVEY STATEMENTS

Item	Statement	Yes		No		Not Sure		Total
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n
1.	Familiarity with Alternative Education Programs	129	86	15	9	7	5	151
2.	Familiarity with Funding for Alternative Programs	60	40	74	49	16	11	150
5.	Awareness of Placement Laws and Regulations	126	84	14	9	10	7	150
6.	Laws and Regulations for Programs	136	91	4	3	10	6	150
7.	Understanding current Alternative Grant Program	114	76	22	15	14	9	150
11.	Read SDOE information on Alternative Programs	138	92	7	5	5	3	150
12.	School Board Familiarity for Alternative Programs	54	36	57	38	39	26	150
13.	School staff Familiarity with Alternative Programs	118	79	20	13	12	8	150
16.	Grant Not Sufficient To Develop Programs	121	81	12	8	17	11	150
17.	Alternative Grant Not Sufficient for Programs	123	82	15	10	12	8	150
24.	Separate Facility Not Available	63	42	81	54	6	4	150
25.	No Extra Space Within Existing Facility	53	35	90	61	6	4	150
30.	Staff Size Not Affected by Addition Of Program	54	36	87	58	10	6	150
31.	Lack Of Funding for Continuing Programs	65	43	66	25	19	12	150

Item 3. I am familiar with different kinds of alternative education programs. Table 18 shows that 86% were familiar, nine percent were not, and five percent were not sure.

Respondents are familiar with alternative education options and thus, would appear to be able to respond knowledgeably to the items in the survey. Fourteen percent of the respondents indicated they were either not familiar with alternative education or not sure of their familiarity.

Item 4. I am familiar with several potential funding sources for an alternative education program. Respondents indicated in the previous item that they were knowledgeable about alternative education programs, yet here admit to being unfamiliar with potential funding sources. Table 18 reflects only 40% reporting familiarity.

Item 5. I am aware of the laws and regulations governing the placement of a student in an alternative education program. Of the returns, 84% were yes, nine percent were no, and six percent were not sure. Placement regulations are known as are legal aspects of establishing an alternative education program (see Table 18) as surveyed in item 6.

Item 6. I am aware of the laws and regulations governing the establishment of an alternative education program. Of the returns, 91% (136) were yes, three percent were no, and six percent were not sure.

Item 7. I understand Oklahoma's current alternative education grant program. Of the returns, 76% were yes, 15% were no, and six percent were not sure. Eighty-six percent responded yes to question 3, I am familiar with different kinds of alternative education programs, yet only 76% indicated an understanding of Oklahoma's alternative education grant program.

Item 11. I have read information from the Oklahoma Department of Education Division of Alternative Education. Of the returns, 92 percent were yes, five percent were no, and three percent were not sure. This statement indicated that a higher percentage of

respondents (92%) had read Department information on Alternative Education, compared to a slightly lower percentage who were familiar with different kinds of alternative education programs (86%).

Item 12. Some members of my school board are familiar with different kinds of alternative education programs. Of the returns, 36% were yes, 38% were no, and 26% were not sure. Respondents indicated their school board members were less familiar with different kinds of alternative education programs compared to themselves.

Item 13. Some members of my school staff are familiar with different kinds of alternative education programs. Of the returns, 79% were yes, 13% were no, and eight percent were not sure. Respondents indicated that their school staff was more familiar with different kinds of alternative education programs then were their school board members.

Item 16. The current alternative grant from the state is not sufficient to develop an alternative program. Of the returns, 81% were yes, eight percent were no, and 11% were not sure.

Item 17. The current alternative grant from the state is not sufficient to sustain an alternative education program. Of the returns, 82% were yes, 10 percent were no, and eight percent were not sure. Respondents indicated that alternative education grants were both not sufficient to develop (Item 16) or to sustain (Item 17) an alternative education program.

Item 24. A separate facility is not available for an alternative education program. Of the returns, 42% (63) were yes, 54% (81) were no, and four percent were not sure.

Item 25. There is no extra space within existing facilities to house an alternative program. Of the returns, 35% were yes, 61% were no, and four percent were not sure

(Table 18). Nearly half of the respondents (42%) indicated there was not a separate facility available for an alternative program in their district, while approximately one-third (35%) indicated there were no extra space within existing facilities to house an alternative program. The responses from both questions emphasize an apparent lack of classroom space for school districts to house alternative education programs.

Item 30. Our staff size would not be affected by the addition of an alternative education program. Of the returns, 36% were yes, 58% were no, six percent were not sure. Over half of the respondents (58%) indicated their staff size would be affected by the addition of an alternative education program.

Item 31. There is not enough funding to continue existing programs. Of the returns, 43% were yes, 25% were no, and 12% were not sure. A smaller percentage of respondents (43%) indicated in Item 31 that current funding could not continue existing programs compared to the percentage indicating that current funding could not develop, nor sustain (82%) alternative education programs.

These understanding the need for change statements relate to the superintendent's familiarity, awareness and knowledge of alternative programs. The statements tap a general understanding of a number of education issues in terms of operation, philosophy and funding. It appears that although the majority of superintendents are familiar with different types of alternative programs, they are less familiar with different sources of funding for those programs. Results also indicate that superintendents view their staff as more familiar with different types of alternative programs, than their board members. The superintendents report that approximately 75% of their staff was familiar with different types of alternative programs. This percentage is slightly lower than the percentage reported for their own familiarity.

Superintendent awareness of the legal regulations governing placement of students and establishment of alternative programs was extremely high. Fewer than 10% of all superintendents indicated a lack of awareness for either statement.

Nearly all the superintendents (92%) indicated they read information from the Oklahoma State Department of Education Division of Alternative Education. However, a lower percentage (76%) of superintendents indicated they actually understand Oklahoma's current alternative education grant program.

Forty-three percent of the superintendents agreed with each of the two statements pertaining to alternative education funding. The funding to develop alternative programs and sustain them was viewed as inadequate. However, when responding to the item of insufficient funding to continue existing programs, a significantly lower percentage of superintendents (43%) agreed with the statement.

A possible explanation for this difference could be that the superintendents consider sustaining an alternative program to mean they continue to put additional monies into the program to keep it at the initial funding level, retain the same number of staff, and continue to increase the different budget line items in the face of increasing costs. Possibly the item addressing sufficient funding to continue the program is interpreted as simply continuing to provide the program, but to provide it at a lower level of staffing, operating budget, and size of enrollment.

Although the superintendents appear to be split evenly when reporting on separate facilities not being available for an alternative education programs, a lower percentage of superintendents (35%) report there is no extra space within existing facilities to house an

alternative program. Over half (58%) of the superintendents responding indicated that their staff size would not be affected by the addition of an alternative education program.

Acceptance of the Change

The next barrier of change category is aligned with the notion of acceptance of the change. The acceptance barrier of change category includes 13 survey statements dealing with the acceptance of the need for change. These barriers of change relate to the superintendent's perspective regarding the allocation of resources, the role of personnel, formal exposure to alternative education, and changes in the organizations' administrative functions.

TABLE 19

ACCEPTANCE OF THE NEED FOR CHANGE SURVEY STATEMENTS

Item	Statement	Yes		No		Not Sure		Total
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n
8.	Attended An Alternative Session At Conference	101	67	48	32.5	1	.5	150
9.	Attended An Alternative Conference	52	35	97	64	1	.5	150
10.	Heard the State Director of Alternative Education	88	58	58	38	5	4	150
14.	Alternative Programs Are Dumping Grounds	13	9	128	85	9	6	150
15.	Alternative Programs Better Used for Others	8	5	120	80	22	15	150
18.	Alternative Education Has Lower Standards	56	37	78	52	16	11	150
19.	Alternative Programs Require Too Much Change	14	9	129	86	7	5	150
20.	Alternative Programs Reward Kids For Not Making It	19	13	119	79	12	8	150
22.	Teacher Interest For Working In Alternative Education	76	51	49	33	25	16	150
23.	Alternative Education Magnet For Misfits	21	14	112	75	17	11	150
32.	Adequate Administrator Training/Experience	41	27	104	69	6	4	150
33.	Teachers With Adequate Training/Experience	43	28	96	64	12	8	150
34.	Alternative Credit Not Equal to Traditional Schools	39	26	97	65	15	9	151

Item 8. I have attended an alternative education session at a conference. Of the returns, 67% were yes, 32.5% were no, and .5% was not sure.

Item 9. I have attended an alternative education conference. Of the returns, 35% (52) were yes, 63.5% (97) were no, and five percent were not sure. Approximately one-third of the superintendents reported to have attended an alternative education conference compared to approximately two-thirds reporting attending an alternative education session at a conference. This difference could be explained by the fact that there are only one or two alternative education conferences per year in Oklahoma, compared to several annual state and national conferences where a breakout session on alternative education is offered.

Item 10. I have heard the Director of Alternative Education for Oklahoma present information on alternative education programs. Of the returns, 58% were yes, 38% were no, and 4% were not sure.

Slightly more than half of the respondents reported having heard the State Director for Alternative Education present information. This can be compared to the much smaller percentage of respondents (35%) reporting ever attending an alternative conference. These differences could be explained by the numerous opportunities, other than speaking at an alternative conference, where the current and the former state directors for Alternative Education have had the occasion to speak. However, the responses to statements concerning superintendents hearing information on alternative education (Items 8, 9, and 10) are all reported fairly low and suggest that fewer than the majority of superintendents have taken the opportunity to hear about alternative education issues and information.

Item 14. Alternative education programs are a dumping ground for unsuccessful students. Of the returns, nine percent were yes, 85% were no, and six percent were not sure. A significantly high number of respondents disagreed with this negatively worded statement.

Item 15. The funding for an alternative education program would be better used for other student populations. Of the returns, five percent were yes, 80% were no, and 15% not sure. Approximately 20% of the respondents either agreed with this negatively worded statement or reported they were not certain what they thought about the funding for alternative education being used for another student population.

Item 18. Alternative education programs have lower standards for granting grades than a traditional school. Of the returns, 37% were yes, 52% were no, and 11% were not sure. The majority of respondents indicated that alternative programs do not have lower standards for granting grades when compared to traditional schools.

Item 19. An alternative education program would require too much organizational change here. Of the returns, nine percent were yes, 86% were no, and five percent were not sure. Responses to this statement indicate superintendents think little organizational change would be necessary to implement alternative education programs in their districts.

Item 20. Alternative education programs reward kids for not making it in the traditional school. Of the returns, 13% were yes, 79% were no, and eight percent were not sure. A significantly high percentage of superintendents thought alternative education programs reward students for inappropriate educational reasons.

Items 22. Teachers in our district have an interest in working in the program. Of the returns, 51% were yes, 33% were no, and 16% were not sure. Approximately half of the respondents indicated their teachers have an interest in working in the alternative programs

Item 23. Alternative education programs are a magnet for misfits. Of the returns, 14% were yes, 75% were no, and eleven percent were not sure. Three-fourths of the superintendents reporting disagreed suggesting their preference for alternative schools to be viewed in a positive manner.

Item 32. We do not have an administrator with the training/experience to operate an alternative education program. Of the returns, 27% were yes, 68% were no, and four percent were not sure. Slightly over a quarter of the superintendents appear to doubt that they have an adequately prepared administrator to operate an alternative program in their district. This percentage (27%) is quite similar to the percentage (28%) of superintendents that do not have an alternative education program in their school district (Table 19).

Item 33. We do not have teachers with the training/experience to work in an alternative education program. Of the returns, 28% were yes, 64% were no, and eight percent were not sure. These reported percentages regarding teachers being adequately prepared to work in alternative education are very similar to the results of the previous item regarding administrators being adequately prepared.

Item 34. Alternative education course credit is not equal to traditional high school credit. Of the returns, 26% were yes, 65% were no, and nine percent were not sure. Response groupings for this question are very similar to the statement regarding lower standards for granting grades (Table 19). However, a slightly lower percentage agreed with this question (26%) as compared to Item 18, (26%, Table 19).

These barriers to acceptance statements examine the superintendent's perspective regarding the allocation of resources, the role of personnel, formal exposure to alternative education, and changes in the organization's administrative functions relating to alternative

education. The statements within this acceptance category concern the district's power structure and the administration's perceived positive or negative view of alternative education in terms of instructional rigor and standards.

Approximately two-thirds of the superintendents reported they had attended an alternative education session at a conference, with the same number reporting having never attended an alternative education conference. A related statement concerned with exposure to alternative education information indicated that well over half (58%) of the reporting superintendents had actually heard the State Director of Alternative Education present information on alternative education.

Several statements were intentionally phrased in a negative manner regarding the perceived value of alternative education; (e.g., Alternative education programs are a dumping ground for unsuccessful students; Alternative education programs have lower standards for granting grades than a traditional school). With the exception of the statement regarding lower standards, between 75% and 89% of the superintendents disagreed with the negatively worded statements. However, only slightly half (52%) of the superintendents agreed that alternative education programs have lower standards for granting grades.

Approximately two-thirds of the superintendents disagreed with the similar negative statement: Alternative education course credit is not equal to traditional high school credit. Although barely half of superintendents (51%) view an adequate interest by their teachers in working in alternative programs, slightly over only one quarter (28% & 27%) of superintendents believe they have teachers or administrators respectively with the training/experience to operate an alternative education programs.

Acting Upon the Need for Change

The third and final barrier of change category includes six survey statements concerned with superintendents/administrators acting upon the need for change. These include among others, the availability of personnel capable of administering and working in alternative education programs, limited space, a shortage of operating funds, or the perception that change is limited by inertia imposed by the organization's culture.

TABLE 20

ACTING UPON THE NEED FOR CHANGE SURVEY STATEMENTS

Item	Statement	Yes		No		Not Sure		Total
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n
21.	Interest In Implementing Alternative Programs	96	64	46	31	8	5	150
26.	Alternative Education Endorsement	141	93	5	4	4	3	150
27.	Endorsement In My District	138	91	9	6	4	3	151
28.	Community Support For Alternative Education	123	82	8	5	20	13	151
29.	School Board Support For Alternative Education	129	86	9	6	12	8	150
35.	Faculty/Staff Support For Alternative Education	125	83	9	6	17	11	151

Item 21. Administrators in our district have an interest in implementing an alternative education program. Of the returns, 64% were yes, 31% were no, and five percent were not sure. Response to this item was very similar to Item 1 regarding whether the district currently has an alternative education program.

Item 26. I endorse the use of alternative education programs in Oklahoma. Of the returns, 93% were yes, four percent were no, and three percent were not sure. Endorsement of Alternative Education was one of the highest favorably rated statements across this survey.

Item 27. I endorse the use of alternative education programs in my district. Of the returns, 91% were yes, six percent were no, and three percent were not sure. For both Items 26 and 27, a significantly high percentage (93%) and (91%) of superintendents indicated they endorse the use of alternative education.

Item 28. Our community would support an alternative program. Of the returns, 82% were yes, 5% were no, and 13% were not sure.

Item 29. My school board would support an alternative program. Of the returns, 86% were yes, 6% were no, and 8% were not sure.

Item 35. Our faculty and staff support the alternative education program concept. Of the returns, 83% were yes, six percent were no, and 11% were not sure. Responses for statements 28, 29 and 35 were very similar with respect to the percentages of superintendents agreeing with how their community, board, and faculty support alternative education programs. All three items indicated over 80% of the superintendents believed the alternative programs had support from the community, school board, and school staff.

When compared to the other two barriers of change categories, the acting upon barrier of change showed more consistent and significantly higher percentages of superintendents agreeing with the statements. Percentages across all six acting-upon categories were consistently at or above 86 in terms of agreement with the statements. The only acting upon statements falling lower than that level dealt with administrators having an interest in implementing alternative education programs. Nearly two-thirds of the superintendents

reported they had administrators with an interest in implementing alternative education programs.

Frequency for Barriers of Change

Figures 2, 3, and 4 display the distribution and frequency for each of the three barriers of change indicated by the superintendents. These following three figures illustrate the frequency rate for the three different barriers of change as indicated by the survey responses. Figures 2, 3 and 4 display how often each of the three barriers of change was indicated across the sample of 149 superintendent questionnaires. For each of the barriers of change, the figure illustrates how often the superintendents indicated a specific barrier of change. Across the x axis these three charts display Numbers of Barriers Indicated. Superintendents indicated a specific barrier of change range from 0 -11 times for the Understanding Barrier of Change, 0 - 9 times for the Acceptance Barrier of Change, and 0 – 6 times for the Acting- Upon Barrier of Change. The y axis indicates the number of superintendents indicating that specific barrier of change. Figure 2 shows that the most superintendents reported from three to eight Understanding with more than 30 indicating five barriers.

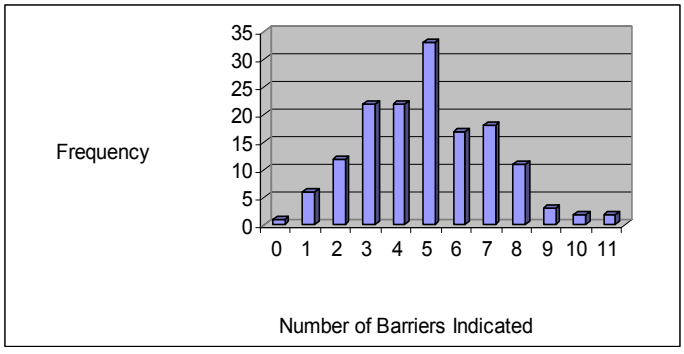

Figure 2. Understanding -- Barrier of Change.

The second figure below indicates the number and frequency of Acceptance barrier of change responses that were reported by the superintendents. Figure 3 shows that most superintendents reported from one to five Acceptance barriers with more than 25 indicating two barriers.

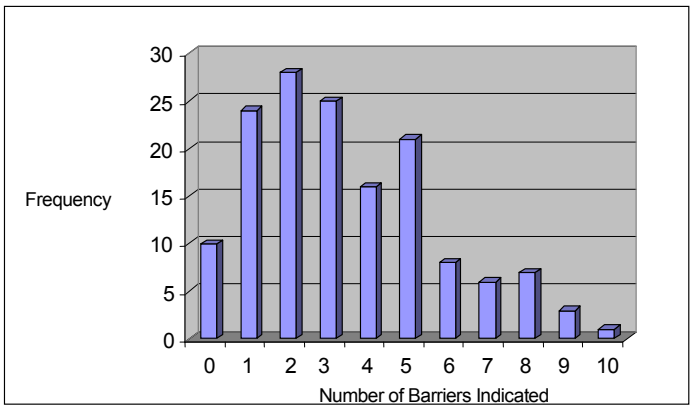

Figure 3. Acceptance– Barriers of Change.

The last figure on the following page displays the number and frequency of acting-upon barrier of change responses reported by the superintendents. Figure 4 shows that most superintendents reported no acting-upon barriers with 40 indicating only one barrier.

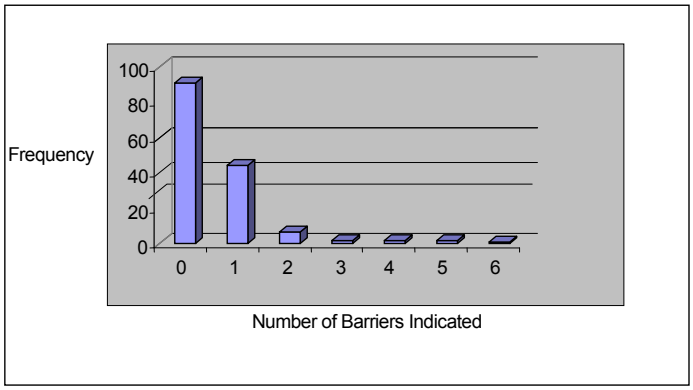

Figure 4. Acting-Upon – Barrier of Change

.Hypothesis #2

The superintendents identified the Acting-Upon barrier to change less often than the Understanding or Acceptance barrier to change. However, there was a difference among the three barriers identified most frequently. The Barrier Type by itself is significant. In other words, there was a significant difference in the frequency and number of times the Acting-upon barrier of change was indicated by superintendents, as compared to the other two barriers of change (Understanding and Acceptance). There is a difference in the proportion of barrier types identified by the superintendents. The difference exists in the proportion of Acting-Upon barriers identified as compared to the other two barriers of change, Understanding and Acceptance. Because the number of possible barriers identified on each scale was so varied (14 – Understanding, 13 – Acceptance, and 6 – Acting –Upon) proportion scores were formulated to compare the three scales to each other.

Opened-Ended Responses

Item 36. Are there other items or issues concerning alternative education programs that you wanted to address, but were not a part of this survey? (Please specify):

A total of 18 open-ended responses was received. The superintendents' comments generally fell into four major categories: lack of adequate funding, response to specific wording of a survey statement, specific state and federal mandates, and general statements regarding alternative education. Following are their verbatim statements which, after careful analysis, generally address only one major issue. Clearly, the majority of the responses were concerned with the lack of adequate funding.

"We need more funds to serve more kids. Current programs are always maxed out.

"Need more money for Alt. Ed"

"Need more funding. The dollars we receive are not nearly enough to cover the total cost of our program."

"Mainly the funding, I think the program is an asset to our state, it is too bad it is not funded better."

"Attendance, funding and security are the major concerns that I have as far as alternative education is concerned."

"Great program supported by the community and district - funding is the problem."

"Even though the funding is not adequate, our district will continue to offer these programs."

"The simple fact is that an alt. ed program at this particular site is not cost effective. Funding from the state pays only 1/2 of the instructor costs!!!"

At least two of the open-ended responses were related to one of the survey questions that used the term "dumping grounds."

"We do not use our alternative program as a dumping ground for discipline problems. We work diligently to prepare these students to deal with and live in the real world. We have been told that our program is unique but we feel it is very good."

"The statement of a dumping ground is poorly worded. Alternative ed. allows students to work at their own pace with less rigor. This is not a bad thing, but a way for students to learn a different way."

The remaining open-ended responses were directed at specific state and federal mandates that were deemed unfair or were general statements regarding alternative education.

"It is unreasonable and impractical for small schools to be expected to have an alternative teacher that is highly qualified in every class offered!"

"Certification requirements of highly qualified are too extreme....no one can be qualified in everything!"

"This is the program the Governor needs to mandate as an alternative for the parent and their child who are not successful in the regular school setting at age 16."

"Alternative Education has a place in education. We need to have more rigorous standards for students."

"High school graduation dates - Can alternative students graduate before their class does? Can they graduate early?"

"If high schools were structured appropriately, we would not need separate Alt. Ed programs except for unusual cases. High schools today force the need for Alt. Ed."

"All of our kids want to go to alternative education."

"Our school size does not merit the need to implement an alternative learning school. However, the coop allows us to send one or two students each year who need the smaller class sizes and the one-on-one instruction."

An analysis of all 35 individual item responses and the results of the open-ended statements have been provided in this previous section. This next section describes the relationship between the barriers of change and alternative education program types beginning with Table 21.

TABLE 21

BARRIERS OF CHANGE AND PROGRAM TYPE

Source	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Probability of F
Barrier Type	6.042	2	3.021	137.650	.000
Barrier Type* x Program Type	.013	2	.006	.288	.750
Error (Barrier Type)	6.452	294	.022		

* denotes significant difference in the proportion of acting-upon barrier types indicated by superintendents

Hypothesis 2.0. There is no significant relationship among the three barriers of change and the choice of alternative program type. The null hypothesis was not rejected F (2, 294) = 0.288, p> .05. There was no difference in the Barrier Type and Alternative Program Type chosen.

The results of the analysis of variance found in (Table 21) indicate in the first row (Barrier Type) that there is a difference in the proportion of barriers indentified within each barrier type. This difference is primarily explained by the fact that very few superintendents indicated a problem with any of the Acting-upon barriers of change.

The second row of the above table (Barrier Type* x Program Type) tests Hypothesis 2.0: There was no difference between the Type I superintendents and the non – Type I superintendents in the proportion of the three types of barriers they indicated by their responses.

The superintendents identified the acting-upon barrier to change less often than the understanding or acceptance barrier to change. However, there was a difference among the three barriers identified most frequently. The Barrier Type itself is significant. In other words, there was significant difference in the frequency and number of times the acting-upon barrier of change was indicated by superintendents, as compared to the other two barriers of change (understanding and acceptance). There is a difference in the proportion of acting-upon barrier types identified by the superintendents. The difference exists in the proportion of acting-upon barriers identified as compared to the other A post-hoc analysis was performed that indicated this significant difference exists between the proportion of acting-upon barriers and the two remaining barriers of change, understanding and acceptance. Because the number of possible barriers identified on each scale was so varied (14 – understanding, 13 – acceptance, and 6 – acting-upon), proportion scores were formulated to compare the three scales.

Figure 5 below describes in graph form the same analysis of Barrier Scores (proportions) by Type of Program.

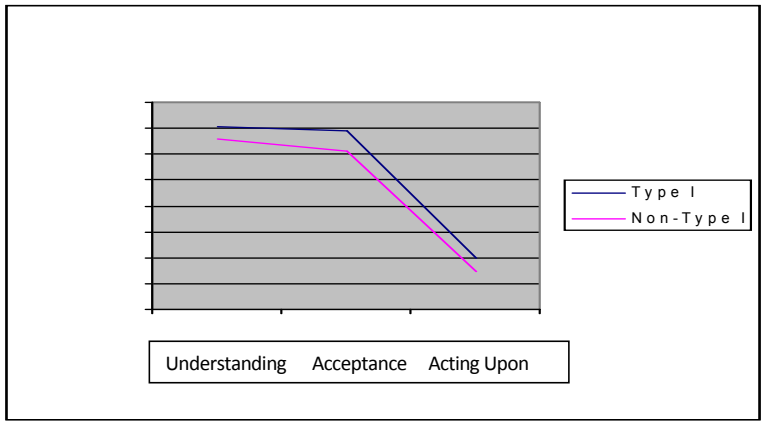

Figure 5. Barrier Scores by Type of Program.

TABLE 22

INTERCORRELATION FOR BARRIERS OF CHANGE

	Understanding	Acceptance	Acting
Understanding	-------	.451**	.341**
Acceptance	.451**	-------	.403**
Acting	.341**	.403**	-------

Pearson *p< 05 ** p< .01

As indicated by the correlation table above, there is simply not much difference across the three barriers of change scales with this group of superintendents. This table shows the intercorrelation of the three scales and indicates all three are moderately correlated with each other. These findings regarding the moderate correlation across all three scales (understanding, acceptance and acting-upon) would support the notion that, at least in this

study, the survey functioned more as one general scale rather than three separate scales. It is possible that the survey simply measures a more general factor for barrier of change.

The graph (Figure 5) also clearly indicates the similar pattern of responses by superintendents of Type I or non-Type I programs in terms of the mean number of barriers indicated. As indicated in Figure 5, the mean number of barrier scores identified by Type I and non-Type I for the understanding and acceptance barriers of change is between 3.0 to 3.5. The mean barrier scores for the acting-upon barrier scores for both Type I and non-Type I programs was 1.0 and .75.

Additional analyses of variance were conducted to determine any differences in proportion of barriers identified when demographic factors were considered. As is evident from the following tables, no significant difference was found.

The third hypothesis in this study included three sub-hypotheses . The following three tables (23, 24 and 25) show the results of the analysis for these three sub-hypotheses.

TABLE 23

BARRIERS OF CHANGE AND SUPERINTENDENT GENDER

Source	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Probability of F
Barrier Type	2.57	2.0	1.289	58.85	.000
Barrier Type* x Gender	.03	2.0	.017	.76	.469
Error (Barrier Type)	6.263	286	.022		

Do not reject H_o, $F(2,286) = .76$, $p > .05$

*denotes significant difference in the proportion of acting-upon barrier types indicated

TABLE 24

BARRIERS OF CHANGE AND SUPERINTENDENT EXPERIENCE

Source	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Probability of F
Barrier Type	1.22	2.0	.61	27.95	.000
Barrier Type* x Experience	.03	4.0	.01	.374	.827
Error(Barrier Type)	6.34	290	.02		

Do not reject Ho, F(4,290) = .374 p> .05

*denotes significant difference in the proportion of acting-upon barrier types indicated

TABLE 25

BARRIERS OF CHANGE AND SUPERINTENDENT EDUCATION LEVEL

Source	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Probability of F
Barrier Type	1.86	2.0	.93	43.63	.000
Barrier Type* x Education Level	.29	6.0	.05	2.246	.039
Error (Barrier Type)	6.18	290	.02		

Do not reject Ho, F (6,290) = 2.246 P> .05

*denotes significant difference in the proportion of acting-upon barrier types indicated

*denotes significant difference in the proportion of acting-upon barrier types indicated

Summary

In this chapter an analysis of specific superintendent and district demographics of gender, education level, experience as a superintendent, district size, per pupil valuation, and state funding allocation levels is presented. Also presented is an analysis of the responses to the statements in terms of how superintendents relate to the three barriers of change: understanding the need for change, acceptance of the need for change, and having the ability to act upon the change. These three analyses demonstrate no difference in Barrier types across the three demographic variables Superintendent Gender, Experience and Education levels. Thus hypothesis three and the sub-hypotheses were not rejected.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

SUMMARY

The purpose of this study was to explore the relationship among three barriers of change - understanding of the change, acceptance of the change, or acting upon the change - and the selection, design, and implementation decisions made in support of Type I and non-Type I alternative education programs. The superintendents, district demographics, and the districts' dominant barrier of change were examined.

Data were gathered from on-line survey responses provided by Oklahoma school district superintendents in spring 2007. The survey instrument was based upon the three barriers to change originally suggested by Conner and Lake (1994), and later by McGuire, (2001) who created and used this survey in his study to help identify barriers to creating alternative education programs in Indiana.

The survey was sent online to 254 district superintendents whose programs had been clearly identified by a state funded education program evaluation agency as being either a Type I or non-Type I alternative school program. One hundred fifty-one responses were returned from the on-line surveys. This resulted in a response rate of approximately 60%.

This study was concerned with a part of change theory (Connor and Lake, 1994) that describes barriers to change. Examined were specific barriers of understanding the need, acceptance of the need, and acting upon the need for change.

This study focused on exploring the relationship of the three barriers of change to superintendent and district demographics as well as Type I and non Type I programs to help explain how the barrier impedes or interferes with adopting and implementing Type I alternative education programs. These three barriers are thought to affect the selection, design, and implementation decisions made in support of Type I and the non-Type I alternative education programs.

The independent variables were these superintendent and district demographic factors: superintendent gender, years of experience as a superintendent, the superintendent's highest education level, district enrollment, the district's state alternative education allocation amount, and the amount a district spent on alternative education.

The dependent variables were the choice of an alternative program (Type I and non Type I alternative school programs) and the dominant barriers of change. The three barriers of change were barriers of understanding the need, acceptance of the need, and acting upon the need for change.

The first major hypotheses for this study involved investigating for a significant relationship between superintendent and district demographic variables and implementing a certain type of alternative education program. The second major hypothesis probed any significant relationship between the three barriers of change and the choice of the alternative program type. Finally, the third hypotheses investigated for a significant relationship between the three barriers of change and certain superintendent demographics. Each of these

hypotheses was divided into sub-hypotheses for the purpose of analyzing more specifically the variables involved.

Findings

Very few of the experimental hypotheses demonstrated a relationship between types of alternative programs, district or superintendent characteristics, and barriers of change. There was no significant relationship between a superintendent's gender, a superintendent's years of experience as a superintendent, a superintendent's education level, the selected district size, or the district's per pupil valuation and the choice of an alternative education program. None of the school superintendent characteristics or the districts demographics was associated with the choice of either a Type I or non-Type I alternative education program.

There was also no significant relationship between the state alternative education allocation amount and the choice of either a Type I or non-Type I alternative education program. Although the means appeared quite different, the results are skewed by the few large districts with large allocation amounts.

There was shown to be no significant relationship among the three barriers of change and the choice of either a Type I or non – Type I alternative education program. In terms of the incidence level of barriers indicated by superintendents, both the understanding and acceptance barrier types were designated often by the majority of superintendents. In comparison, an extremely small number of superintendents indicated any of the acting-upon barriers. A moderate and normal distribution of understanding barrier of change scores was reported. A similar distribution for the acceptance barrier of change scores was also reported, albeit in a more negatively skewed pattern.

The most apparent difference across the three barriers of change was the extremely low occurrence of acting upon barriers. Few superintendents indicated any acting upon barriers. Indeed, over 80 superintendents surveyed indicated no Acting-Upon barrier while another 40 indicated only one acting upon barrier.

Superintendents responding to the survey showed more consistent and significantly high percentages of responses indicating that acting upon barriers of change statements were not a problem in their district. The superintendents consistently agreed in a positive direction that all six of the acting upon statements (approximately 86% of the time) were not a barrier. This lack of such barriers being identified tends to enforce the belief that generally superintendents do not lack availability of personnel capable of working in alternative education and that they do not lack adequate space for alternative education, operating funds, or organizational inertia.

Data in chapter four indicated some significant and valuable information regarding the knowledge, perceptions and beliefs of the reporting Oklahoma school superintendents. Although the great majority of superintendents (86%) reported being knowledgeable of alternative education, approximately 60% indicated they were either unaware of additional funding sources or were not sure of additional funding sources for alternative education.

In a related area, only approximately a third of the superintendents reported attending an alternative conference. In addition, a third of the superintendents reported indicated they have not been to an alternative education session while at a conference. Both of these questions may relate to the general lack of knowledge superintendents have of alternative education and the previous point regarding gaining knowledge of additional funding sources.

Although 86 percent of the superintendents report being familiar with different kinds of alternative education programs, a smaller percentage (76) indicated they have an understanding of Oklahoma's alternative education grant program. Superintendents reported one of the highest percentages (92) when indicating that they have read OSDE information on alternative education, as compared to a lower percentage 86 percent reporting being familiar with different kinds of alternative education program.

Another area regarding knowledge of alternative education was how familiar school board members were with alternative education. Superintendents who indicated either that their board members were unfamiliar (38%) or that they were unsure (26%) regarding school board members familiarity with alternative education, totaled 64%.

The open ended-statement within the superintendent questionnaire also offered some significant and valuable information regarding the superintendents' perceptions and related issues regarding alternative education. The majority of the comments carried with them a general theme of frustration that appeared to stem from a lack of adequate funding, aggravation in terms of philosophical issues, and general sense of disappointment with the lack of governance or the response of state government to alternative education programs. Some statements were very revealing in that they expressed general frustration with traditional secondary schooling that appears to some to be the reason school districts should require alternative education.

Conclusions

Revealed in this study was a very homogenous grouping of perceptions and beliefs toward alternative education among superintendents providing or participating in both Type I or non-Type I alternative education programs. Whether examining superintendent or district

demographics, the superintendents responded in a rather similar manner resulting in few statistically significant differences. Oklahoma superintendents' views of alternative education and their value for implementation of these programs were quite similar. The superintendents appeared to share with each other a rather common understanding and value for alternative education. Simply stated, superintendents in Oklahoma have developed very similar views of alternative education.

These results fall short of conforming to the expectations indicated in the theoretical framework presented in chapter one. In terms of superintendent demographics, the theoretical constructs could affect the ability or propensity to act. The age of a superintendent might influence their propensity to change or adapt new programs. In this study specifically, the incidence for identifying the "acceptance" barrier of change might diminish as the age of the superintendent increases. This was not the case in this study. The education levels of superintendents might suggest differences in awareness or knowledge of alternative education programs. In the McQuire study, the final education level of a superintendent influenced both the usage of alternative education, and having their own alternative education program (2001). This relationship of the final education level of a superintendent and the usage of alternative education was not the case in this current study.

When considering district demographics, the theoretical concepts for this study would suggest that district size might affect the roles of school superintendents for implementing change. However, in this study the size of the district did not show a relationship to having a particular type of alternative program. One would expect that district wealth impacts a superintendents' ability to act. In the McQuire study, larger districts were proportionally more likely to have an alternative program than smaller districts (2001). In the current study, the

district size or wealth did not show a relationship to a particular type of alternative program. Another connection between the theoretical construct used for this study and a specific hypothesis was that superintendents with more advanced degrees and years of experience would be more familiar with research on alternative education and understand how and why Type I programs are more desirable. However, this study showed no significant relationship between a superintendent's education level or years of experience and the selection of a particular type of alternative program.

In terms of barriers of change being identified, the only significant difference among respondents was the small number of Acting-Upon barriers identified by superintendents in comparison to the other two barriers of Understanding and Acceptance. One plausible explanation for more consistency across the barrier of Acting Upon as compared to the other two barriers would be that it is easier for superintendents to report something they do not understand or accept, rather than admit and report that they do not possess the capability to act upon or accomplish something. Another explanation would be that the Acting Upon statements presented a clearer dichotomy in terms of responding to the question of availability of personnel capable of administering and working in alternative education programs, limited space, and a shortage of operating funds.

One of the conjectures formulated is that the survey instrument does not reflect three different barriers of change or consist of three specific scales (Understanding, Acceptance, and Acting Upon), but merely one scale. This one scale could be perceived as simply a general factor and considered a barrier of change. It represents a factor that prohibits or inhibits change taking place within an organization. After the fact, it appears that the instrument used is not sensitive enough to differentiate among the three different barriers (understanding,

acceptance, and acting upon), but rather functions as more of a general factor indicator of this concept of "barrier of change."

The information within the survey's additional comments area produced significant rich information in terms of the superintendents' perceptions, values, beliefs, concerns and knowledge of alternative education programs in Oklahoma. These responses clearly indicated that the majority of Oklahoma school superintendents deal with alternative education programs on a regular basis and must plan for the implementation and execution of either providing for or planning for how their students might be served within some form of alternative education in their districts or adjoining districts.

Type I and Type II alternative education programs currently operate in Oklahoma school districts. Type II programs exist although the preponderance of research both nationally and within Oklahoma clearly indicate the Type I programs are more effective. There was a closely-matched proportion of Type I to non-Type I alternative education programs indicated by superintendents in the survey that supports a concern of this study, that a considerable number of school districts still practice and participate in Type II alternative education programs rather than implementing the more successful Type I models of alternative education. In the face of this, some school districts still continue to operate the Type II programs.

The experimental hypotheses set forth in this study were not supportive of indicating many significant relationships among variables. However, a significant amount of information was revealed in the survey responses that might help to explain this current anomaly.

Recommendations

The method Oklahoma employs to fund or to determine the alternative education funding allocation level for school districts raises issues. Several respondents mentioned in the comment section that they had concerns regarding how alternative education was funded in this state. Established in 1995 by the State Department of Education and provided in the state alternative education plan is a formula that sets the allocation of funding for each school district alternative education program based upon the number of dropouts and the number of referrals to the district's juvenile justice bureau for that specific year. Given that the level of funding for the past 13 years has been based on an estimation of both dropout numbers and referrals to the juvenile justice offices for each district in 1995, it is recommended these numbers be updated.

The dropout numbers for school districts in this state and the number of referrals to the district's local juvenile justice offices have changed. Some districts have lowered the percentage of high school youth who leave their district. Also, there have been changes, increases and decreases, in the number of annual referrals to their districts' Juvenile Justice Office.

Whether the adjustments in numbers for either dropouts or juvenile justice referrals are an improvement or a setback, an adjustment should be made and a change should be put in place in terms of the allocation amount a district receives. Inherent to this recommendation for some type of adjustment is the understanding that school districts that have worked to reduce their dropout rate and referrals to the local juvenile justice offices might be penalized by having their district allocation reduced. However, this adjustment will make it possible for

other school districts showing a greater need to realize an increase in their annual state allocation amount.

Perhaps the superintendents of the school districts are not the true decision-makers in terms of whether a district provides a Type I, or Type II, or no program. The surveys were sent to school superintendents because they were considered to be the key educational policy makers whose values and beliefs would be reflected in the design and implementation decisions regarding alternative education programs.

Possibly the directors of alternative education in school districts, or the principals in charge of the alternative education programs actually decide whether the alternative program is more of a Type I or a Type II. These are the individuals that are charged with the oversite and daily operation of the programs.

It would seem plausible to recommend that this same survey be issued to the directors of alternative education in these districts. If there is not a designated Director of Alternative Education for the district, the survey should be issued to the principal in charge of the alternative program. Perhaps these administrators are actually involved with the planning, design, implementation and actual execution of the specific alternative program for their district.

It is also possible that the governing body of the school district, the district's school board, is actually a significant influence in terms of the type of alternative education program that the district adopts and implements. It may be that the real decisions regarding the type of alternative program are actually by the school board members or school board president.

Real and key decisions being made by school board members regarding alternative education are a very bothersome notion in terms of the indication of board member lack of

familiarity with such a critical area of public education. Superintendents indicated either that of their board members were unfamiliar (38%) or were unsure regarding school board members familiarity with alternative education (26%). The implication here is that both school superintendents and school board members may need additional professional development and information regarding alternative education.

Responses to a questionnaire statement indicated a profound lack of awareness and knowledge of additional funding sources for alternative education programs. The lack of knowledge for additional opportunities or strategies to obtain funding for local alternative education programs would appear to be an area that both the State Department of Education and the Oklahoma Technical Assistance Center may want to consider when planning for professional staff development activities for administrators.

At both alternative conferences and at individual sessions at education conferences, conceivably presenters and participants might share information regarding potential funding sources for alternative education. If superintendents are not seeking out and attending these conferences and sessions, then they must find alternative strategies to increase their general knowledge base for alternative education.

A related recommendation in the area of professional staff development would be for the members and administration of Cooperative Council for Oklahoma School Administration to plan and schedule sessions specifically covering alternative education issues and best practices. An even stronger related recommendation would be for the Oklahoma State Department of Education to mandate superintendents to attend or complete an on-line staff development program on issues and best practices in alternative education.

Another reason for recommending the increase in funding and technical assistance and for the continued study of best practices in alternative education is the recent approach of End of Instruction (EOI) testing that began with the 2007-2008 school year for all incoming freshmen. Many educators and administrators, including this author, fear that a large number of students statewide will have great difficulty meeting the EOI test requirements within the next few years. Without meeting the minimum requirement of passing four of seven EOI tests, the student faces the possibility of being denied a high school diploma. This, in turn, will certainly have a chain-reaction effect and drive up the dropout rate. This author believes the demands for alternative education will increase drastically. Alternative education programs are now, and will continue to be, situated appropriately to assist these high-risk students. Alternative education programs will offer another chance for these students to prepare for these tests in a less threatening, less competitive, and more supportive environment. The small, informal, and supportive classes with higher teacher- to -student ratio (1 to 15 or less), will help provide more attention and more one-to-one facilitation of instruction.

Rich and illustrative information was revealed within the comment section of the survey. Given this fact, it is recommended that a qualitative study be conducted to investigate the reasons, beliefs and perceptions behind a district's decision to implement a Type II , instead of a Type I alternative education program. Such a study could involve interview questions that would help reveal the thinking of other important stakeholders regarding alternative education programs. By using a qualitative interview approach with school superintendents and school board presidents/members, the answers to carefully shaped interview questions should reveal a greater understanding of what is driving the decisions or thinking behind implementing and continuing Type II alternative school programs. At a very

minimum, further evaluation of the efficacy of a predominantly disciplinary approach to alternative education would seem appropriate.

In terms of recommendations for the instrument itself, two suggestions are offered. First, there are several negatively phrased statements within the survey that might tend to confuse the respondents. These statements should be rephrased to remove any confusion on the respondent's part.

Seemingly, the small number of Acting-Upon survey statements is insufficient. Twelve or 13 statements are included for the Understanding and the Acceptance barriers of change. In contrast, only six Acting-Upon statements are included. Creating an additional six to seven Acting –Upon statements would help equalize the comparison of the three barriers of change. Also, additional Acting-Upon statements would help cover missing ideas such as transportation, availability of significant program components, and other program components required for the implementation of alternative programs.

In summary, one of the strongest recommendations that can be offered from this study surrounds the need for continued and increased funding for alternative education in Oklahoma. Many comments reported by Superintendents indicated that the limited funding was definitely hampering the ability both to maintain and grow district alternative education programs.

Final Thoughts

Slightly over half (57%) of the respondents represented school districts that provided or participated in Type I alternative education programs while 43% participated in non-Type I alternative education programs. Research shows that Type I programs are superior to non-Type I programs (OTAC, 1995, 1998, and 2000; Raywid, 1994, 1998; Morley, 1991;

DeBlois, 1994). Of concern for this study were the remaining 43% as indicated from the data analysis that participate in or provide a non-Type I alternative education program. This significant percentage clearly supports a major concern of the study that indeed a significant number of school districts are currently providing or participating in a type of alternative education programming that has not proven to be as effective as the Type I alternative education programs.

Another significant notion involves the need for informing and educating school administrators and school board members in Oklahoma as to the established state and national research findings indicating the effectiveness of Type I alternative programs, as compared to Type II alternative education programs. Although the survey data indicates superintendents report an 86% familiarity with alternative education programs, school board familiarity with alternative education falls to a 36% level, and only 67% of the superintendents have attended an alternative education session at a conference. A lower percentage of superintendents (35) have attended an alternative education conference. These survey results indicate the possibility of a general lack of knowledge in terms of superintendents being presented with information that would demonstrate how the effectiveness of Type I programs surpasses the Type II programs. For that matter, this author strongly suspects that the majorities of Oklahoma school superintendents do not distinguish, or understand the difference between Type I and Type II alternative education programs.

Another major consideration involves professional staff development for those interested or currently working in alternative school settings. Education and professional development issues are crucial to alternative education. Teachers often find themselves under-prepared or totally unprepared for working with high-risk students in these settings.

Knowledge of a wide range of curricula, specialized pedagogical techniques, classroom management, helping skills, and other skills and knowledge related to working with high-risk children and youth are required; yet currently, there are no alternative education undergraduate degree courses in any of the state supported university teacher education programs.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

COVER LETTER

February 25, 2007
Richard F. Palazzo
1022 E. 30th Place
Tulsa, Ok. 74114

Mr. _____
Alternative Cooperative Education
418 Street
Our Town Ok -

Dear Mr. _____,

I am currently working on my doctorate at Oklahoma State University. My dissertation topic involves a long time interest for me—alternative education. Our body of knowledge regarding Alternative Education is growing both here in Oklahoma and nationwide. Today I am soliciting your assistance in adding to the information specific to our state of Oklahoma.

In a few days you will receive via e-mail, an attachment that contains a very brief survey regarding Alternative Education. This survey will take no longer than a few minutes for you to complete. Your responses will be kept totally confidential. I will only see the results of these surveys in aggregate form and they will only be reported back to me in broad categories. I will never see your district's individual data.

At the end of this letter you have been assigned a 5 digit survey code. When you receive your e-mail attachment in a few days simply enter the survey code in the box on the Welcome page of the survey. The title of the e-mail attachment will be the **Alternative Education Program Survey**, or, if you prefer, you may proceed immediately to the survey site by entering the link below into your web browser:
http://www.thompsonway.com/research/schools/

I will be providing copies of my finished study to the Oklahoma State Department of Education. I will be happy to provide you an executive summary of the results of my study if you indicate your interest at the end of the survey.
YOUR SURVEY CODE IS: OGKEE

Respectfully,
Richard F. Palazzo
Director of Alternative Education
Tulsa Public Schools

APPENDIX B

ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION SURVEY

Oklahoma State University

Alternative Education Program Survey

Welcome

Please enter the code that you were provided below.

By doing so you will enable us to verify that the data you provide is unique, as well as actively indicate that you are electing of your own free will to participate in this research and share data related to your unique perspective.

No one is required to participate, and you may opt out of the research at anytime. If you decide to opt out after completing the survey, simply contact the research team using the information at the bottom of the page.

The information collected in this survey is will be used for this research only. All data collected will be maintained in strictest confidence and will only be shared or reported in aggregate statistics.

Survey Code

Enter the **Survey Code** that you were provided into the box to the right:

Next

For questions or comments, please contact:
Richard Palazzo
Department of Education
Oklahoma State University – Tulsa
700 North Greenwood
Tulsa, OK 74106
Email: Palazri@tulsaschools.org

Oklahoma State University

Alternative Education Program Survey

Directions

Please take a moment to answer the following demographic questions.
Select the option in each box that best describes you and your school.

#	Items		
1	Do you have an alternative education program in your district?	○ Yes	○ No
2	Do you cooperate with an adjoining district in sending students to their alternative education program?	○ Yes	○ No

Previous Next

For questions or comments, please contact:
Richard Palazzo
Department of Education
Oklahoma State University – Tulsa
700 North Greenwood
Tulsa, OK 74106
Email: Palazri@tulsaschools.org

Oklahoma State University

Alternative Education Program Survey

Directions

Please answer the following questions by placing a check in the appropriate box.

#	Items			
3	I am familiar with different kinds of alternative education programs.	Yes	No	Not Sure
4	I am familiar with several potential funding sources for an alternative education program.	Yes	No	Not Sure
5	I am aware of the laws and regulations governing the placement of a student in an alternative education program.	Yes	No	Not Sure
6	I am aware of the laws and regulations governing the establishment of an alternative education program.	Yes	No	Not Sure
7	I understand Oklahoma's current alternative education grant program.	Yes	No	Not Sure
8	I have attended an alternative education session at a conference.	Yes	No	Not Sure
9	I have attended an alternative education conference.	Yes	No	Not Sure
10	I have heard the Director of Alternative Education for Oklahoma present information on alternative education programs.	Yes	No	Not Sure
11	I have read information from the Oklahoma Department of Education Division of Alternative	Yes	No	Not Sure

Oklahoma State University

Alternative Education Program Survey

Directions

Please take a moment to answer the following demographic questions.
Select the option in each box that best describes you and your school.

#	Items	
37	Education (Final level):	
38	Gender:	
39	Level of experience:	
40	Size of District:	
41	Per pupil expenditure:	

Previous Finish

For questions or comments, please contact:
Richard Palazzo
Department of Education
Oklahoma State University – Tulsa
700 North Greenwood
Tulsa, OK 74106
Email: Palazri@tulsaschools.org

Oklahoma State University

Alternative Education Program Survey

Thank You

Your participation in this survey is appreciated.
If you would like information about the results of the study, please free to contact the research team using the contact information below.

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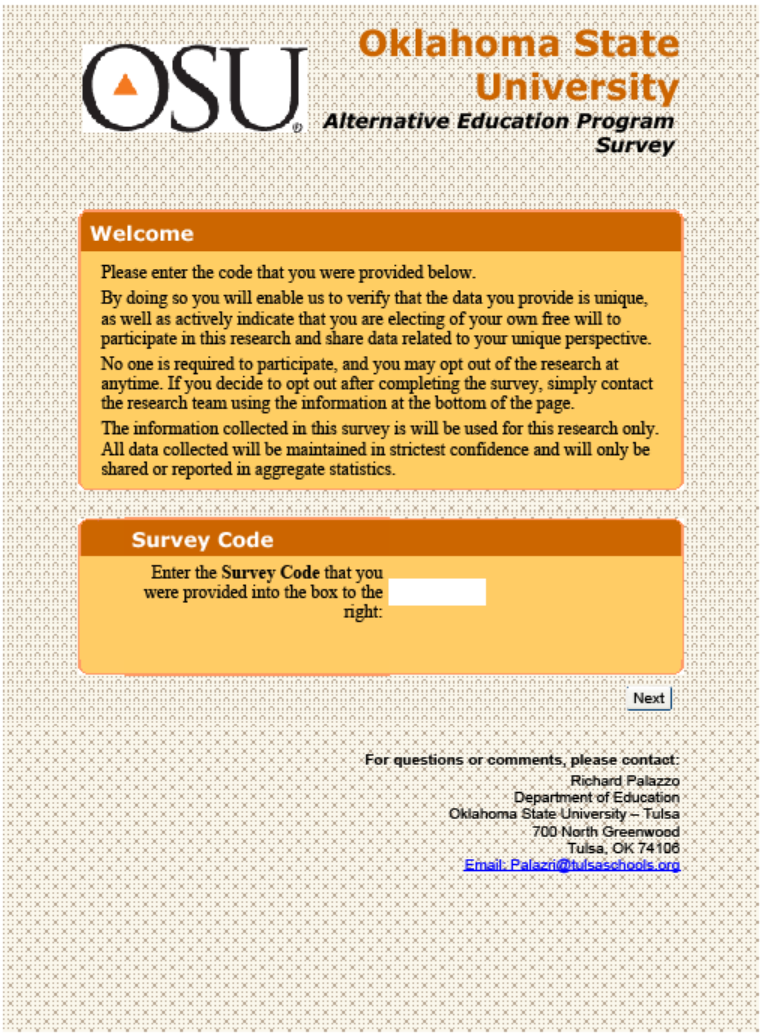
OSU
Oklahoma State University
Alternative Education Program Survey
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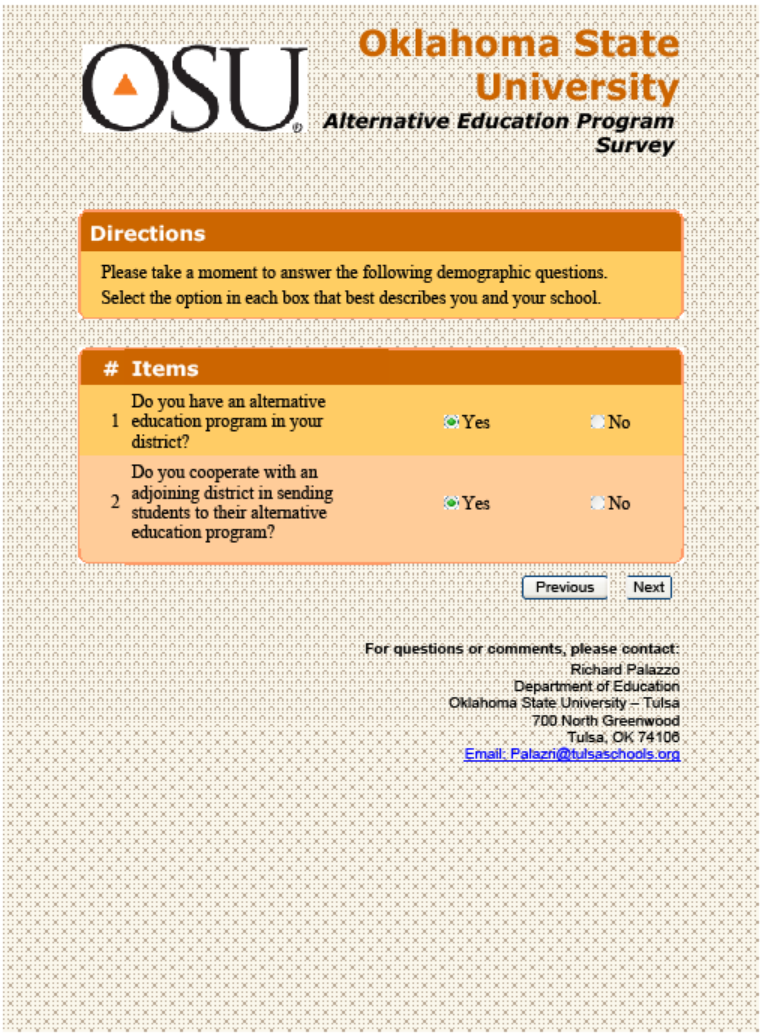

Oklahoma State University

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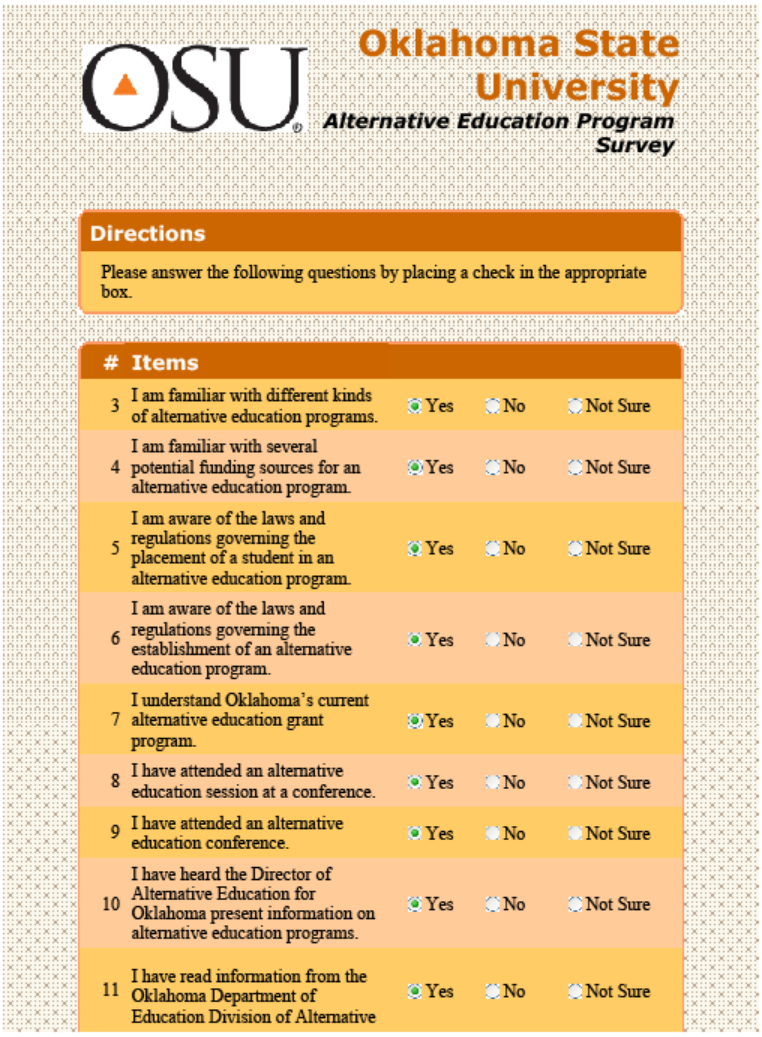

Oklahoma State University

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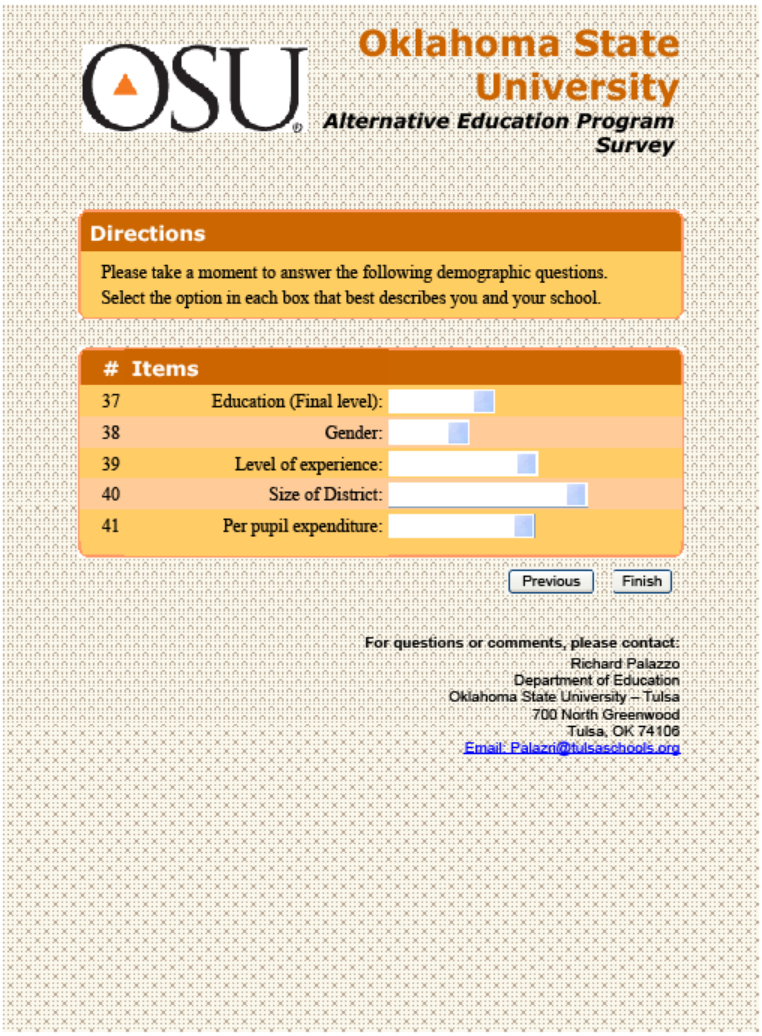
11	I have read information from the Oklahoma Department of Education Division of Alternative	Yes	No	Not Sure



Oklahoma State University

Alternative Education Program Survey

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OSU
Oklahoma State University
Alternative Education Program Survey
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Your participation in this survey is appreciated.
If you would like information about the results of the study, please free to contact the research team using the contact information below.
For questions or comments, please contact:
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Email: Palazri@tulsaschools.org

APPENDIX C

IRB APPROVAL FORM

Oklahoma State University Institutional Review Board

Date:	Tuesday, May 30, 2006
IRB Application No	ED06143
Proposal Title:	Barriers to School District's Participation in Type I Alternative Education Programs
Reviewed and Processed as:	Exempt

Status Recommended by Reviewer(s): Approved Protocol Expires: 5/29/2007

Principal Investigator(s

Richard Palazzo
1022 E. 30th Place
Tulsa, OK 74114

Ken Stern
311 Willard
Stillwater, OK 74078

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

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

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

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

Please note that approved protocols are subject to monitoring by the IRB and that the IRB office has the authority to inspect research records associated with this protocol at any time. If you have questions about the IRB procedures or need any assistance from the Board, please contact Beth McTernan in 415 Whitehurst (phone: 405-744-5700, beth.mcternan@okstate.edu).

Sincerely,

Sue C Jacobs

Sue C. Jacobs, Chair
Institutional Review Board

VITA

Richard F. Palazzo

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Thesis: BARRIERS TO SCHOOL DISTRICTS' PARTICIPATION IN TYPE I ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Major Field: Educational Administration

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in Kansas City, Missouri, the son of Frank and Doris Palazzo.

Education: Graduated from Memorial High School, Tulsa, Oklahoma, May, 1970; received Bachelor of Science degree, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma, May, 1974; received Master of Science degree Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma in May, 1977; completed requirements for the Doctor of Education degree at Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma, December, 2008.

Professional Experience: Certified School Psychologist, Psychological Examiner with the Oklahoma Department of Health and Guidance Services, Executive Director Street School, Inc., Special Consultant for the Oklahoma State Department of Education, Director of Alternative Education and Social Services for Tulsa Public Schools, Director of Alternative Education and Dropout Recovery for Tulsa Tech

Name: Richard F. Palazzo Date of Degree: December, 2008

Institution: Oklahoma State University Location: Stillwater, Oklahoma

Title of Study: BARRIERS TO SCHOOL DISTRICTS' PARTICIPATION IN TYPE I ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Pages in Study: 118 Candidate for the Degree of Doctor of Education

Major Field: Educational Administration

Scope and Method of Study: The purpose of this study was to explore the relationship among three barriers of change, and the selection, design and implementation decisions supporting Type I and non-Type I alternative education programs in Oklahoma school districts. Also examined were the relationship between superintendent and district demographics and the districts' choice of alternative education programs. Finally, the relationship between the three barriers of change and superintendent demographics was examined. This study was concerned with change theory, but more specifically the study examined three specific barriers to change of understanding the need to change, acceptance of the need for change, and acting-upon the need for change. For this study the independent variables were the superintendent and district demographic factors: superintendent gender, years of experience as a superintendent, the superintendent's highest education level, district enrollment, the district's state alternative education allocation amount, and the amount a district spent on alternative education. The dependent variables were the choice of an alternative program (Type I and non Type I alternative school programs) and the dominant barrier of change category. An on-line survey, developed to identify three barriers of change for implementation of alternative education as suggested by Conner and Lake (1994), were sent to 264 school superintendents. The responses from 151 of were studied to determine the outcomes of the three major hypotheses: (a). There is no significant relationship between demographic variables and implementing a certain type of alternative education program. (b). There is no significant relationship among the three barriers of change and the choice of alternative education program types. (c.) There is no significant relationship between the demographic variables and the choice of the barriers of change.

Findings and Conclusions: The study was primarily quantitative in design however, it allowed for one open-ended survey question that yielded information in terms of the superintendent's perceptions, values, beliefs, concerns and knowledge of alternative education programs. A very homogenous grouping of perceptions and beliefs toward alternative education among superintendents providing or participating in both Type I or non-Type I alternative education programs were revealed. Whether examining superintendent or district demographics, the superintendents responded in a rather similar manner resulting in few statistically significant differences across all three experimental hypotheses.

ADVISER'S APPROVAL _____