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**The role of the principal as viewed by North Carolina school
board members**

Bledsoe, Marsha Eads, Ed.D.

The University of North Carolina at Greensboro, 1992

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THE ROLE OF THE PRINCIPAL AS VIEWED BY
NORTH CAROLINA SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS

by

Marsha Eads Bledsoe

A Dissertation Submitted to
the Faculty of the Graduate School at
The University of North Carolina at Greensboro
in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Education

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Approved by



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APPROVAL PAGE

This dissertation has been approved by the following committee of the Faculty of the Graduate School at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

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The purpose of this study was to investigate the perceptions North Carolina school board members have regarding the role of the principal. A five-conception framework was used to determine school board members' views of the preferred and actual roles of the principal. The effects of nine independent variables (length of service as a school board member, educational background, prior employment in a school setting, reading of current literature on educational leadership, size of school system, gender, age, race, and geographic area) on the roles selected were also examined.

Data were obtained from a stratified random sample of 269 school board members serving on boards of education in North Carolina. Size of school system was considered in selecting the sample to assure representativeness. The findings of the study suggested that school board members prefer the role of Administrator/Instructional Leader or Curriculum Leader for the principal. However, they view the role of most principals in their district and most principals in North Carolina as either General Manager or Administrator/Instructional Leader.

There were no significant differences between the preferred or actual roles of principals when responses were examined according to school board members' length of service as a board member, educational background, prior employment in a school setting, reading of current literature on educational leadership, size of school

system, age, race, and geographic area. School board members' gender was significantly related to their choice of the preferred role of the principal but not to their views of the actual role of principals with whom they work or principals in North Carolina.

Data collected on three free response questions about the duties and qualifications of the principal were consistent with school board members' perceptions expressed on the survey.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Problem

The current educational reform movement in the United States focuses on creating effective schools that have, among other characteristics, principals who demonstrate strong instructional leadership (Lezotte, 1988). The role of the principal is thus viewed as critical to school improvement, and as such it is worthy of study and research.

Historically, the principalship has been characterized in various ways. Principals have been viewed generally as teachers, managers, or administrators. Individuals now employed to fill positions of leadership at the school level may find job expectations that are very different from those of even a few years ago. It is also probable that as school board members make employment decisions, their own perceptions of the proper role of the principal are crucial factors that directly influence the kinds of individuals they hire and, ultimately, the kinds of schools they have in their district. Considering the interaction of two factors, the changing role of the principalship and the importance of school board members' perceptions of the proper role of the principal, this study examines North Carolina school board members' views regarding the principalship.

Beginning with the work of Coleman (1966) and continuing more recently with the work of Edmonds (1978), Fortenberry (1985), and Lezotte (1988), as well as others, there has been an increasingly critical focus on American public education. Numerous books and articles have been written, over forty national reports have been published, and some two hundred state-level committees have been formed (Corrigan, 1986), all aimed at determining causes for what many believe is a largely inadequate system for educating the children in this country. Critics, from highly trained educators to the general public, have called for reforming and restructuring schools as they currently exist.

The search for excellence in public school education has centered around identifying effective schools and determining characteristics they have in common. The work of Lezotte and Edmonds (1979), as well as others associated with the effective schools movement, has been accepted by many educators as a guide for changing the way schools operate and the impact they have on student performance.

Effective schools research has identified certain correlates of an effective school; one of these is strong instructional leadership by the principal. The key words, *instructional* and *leadership*, are helping redefine the role of the principal as never before. The clear implication is that the principal must assist others in effecting change. He/she is expected to initiate and to guide. It is no longer enough for the principal to be simply one who ensures the smooth

day-to-day operation of the school plant. Curriculum development and implementation require active leadership on the part of the principal.

The role of the principal in American public education has changed dramatically since schools were formed in colonial times, yet little has been written specifically chronicling this transformation. The work of Pierce (1934) is a history of the principalship to 1933. As such, it is recognized as a comprehensive study which is still cited today.

Using the work of Pierce and Ensign (1923), and Pellicer, Allen, Tonsen, and Surratt (1981) as a basis, Brubaker and Simon (1986) identified five roles principals have played in the history of our nation. Historically, the principal has been recognized as a principal teacher, general manager, professional and scientific manager, administrator and instructional leader, or curriculum leader. They have termed these "emerging conceptions of the principalship." It should be noted that throughout the country today there are principals who fit into each of the categories defined by Brubaker and Simon. Furthermore, teachers, superintendents, curriculum supervisors, and principals themselves have their own, and often very different, conceptions of the proper role of the principal. Studies by Briggs (1986), McRae (1987), and Williams (1987), for example, illustrate the perceptions certain groups of individuals in North Carolina have toward the principalship. One group, however, is noticeably missing from such research. According to officials of the

North Carolina School Boards Association (Tomasine Hardy, personal communication, October 23, 1990), studies of school board members' perceptions of the principalship have not been done in North Carolina.

School board members, as a group, exert a powerful influence on their local school systems. According to North Carolina statute 115C-12, they have the responsibility for allocating resources, making policy, and employing staff. Therefore, what they believe individually and collectively to be the proper role of the principals they hire may have a direct impact on the kinds of schools which operate in their district. Additionally, what they perceive to be the role of the principals with whom they work also has implications for actions they may choose to take in regard to personnel as well as curriculum.

The role of the principal has changed considerably since the seventeenth century. Significant groups of individuals still have different perceptions of what that role is or should be. However, most do recognize the importance of the principal to school improvement and school success. Examining the views particular groups have of the principalship, particularly those charged with employing these individuals, should provide further insight into the fundamental nature of the role itself.

Statement of the Problem

School board members in North Carolina exert influence daily on public schools by the decisions they make and the policies they enact. Actions taken in regard to personnel and curriculum are important to students, staff, and parents; and the implications of those acts are extensive. What school board members believe about the operation of schools influences their actions. It is, therefore, useful to have a clearer understanding of school board members' perceptions of certain key elements in public school education.

The principal is essential to the operation of an effective school. Given that principals may assume different roles, it is important to know how school board members view the principalship. It would be useful, for example, to know what they believe is the proper role of the principal. However, information is not available about North Carolina school board members' perceptions of the role of the principal. Formal study and research in this area has not yet been done.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this study is to investigate school board members' perceptions of the role of the principal according to the five-conception framework established by Brubaker and Simon.

Three objectives guided the design of this study:

1. To identify what school board members in North Carolina believe the proper role of the principal should be.

2. To identify what school board members believe is the actual role assumed by most principals (a) with whom they work, and (b) by most principals across North Carolina.

3. To determine whether school board members' perceptions of the principalship vary significantly according to selected personal characteristics (e.g., age, race, gender, educational background).

Research Questions

Three research questions are addressed in this study:

1. Given five descriptions of the role of the principalship, which do school board members in North Carolina identify as:
 - (a) the proper role of the principal,
 - (b) the actual role of most principals with whom they work,
 - (c) the actual role of most principals in North Carolina?
2. Is there a significant difference between the preferred and the actual role of the principalship as identified by school board members in North Carolina?
3. Do the following factors influence school board members' perceptions of the role of the principal:
 - (a) length of service as a school board member,
 - (b) educational background (highest grade completed),
 - (c) prior employment in a school setting,
 - (d) reading of current literature on educational leadership,
 - (e) size of school system,

- (f) gender,
- (g) age,
- (h) race,
- (i) geographic area (rural or urban)?

Definition of Terms

In order to assure consistency throughout the study, the following terms or phrases are presented according to the manner used within the study:

1. Conception - A "paradigm, a pattern of thinking" as defined by Brubaker and Simon's research on the principalship (1986).

2. Effective school - A school characterized as having "a structure, process, and climate of values and norms that channel staff and students in the direction of successful teaching and learning" (Furkey and Smith, 1982).

3. Effective schools research - An area of research in education often identified by the work of Lezotte, Edmonds, and Brookover. A school is recognized as being effective if at least ninety-five percent of all students at each grade level demonstrate minimum academic mastery as measured by performance on a standardized achievement test providing there is no significant difference in the proportion of students demonstrating such mastery as a function of socio-economic class. This research has concentrated on identifying characteristics of schools that can be defined as effective using this criteria.

4. Leadership - The process by which one influences others to act in ways he or she considers to be desirable.

5. Local school system - The local school district or local education agency (LEA) which may be a city or county system.

6. District - A local city or county school system; may be used interchangeably with local school system, local education agency (LEA), or school district.

7. Perception - One's comprehension of reality; may be used interchangeably with view.

8. Principal - The officially appointed head of a school.

9. Role - A function or assignment which members of the organization expect to be performed by a specific individual.

Limitations

The results of this study may be limited by four factors. First, current literature on the principalship generally does not include reference to the influence of school board members in shaping the role of the principal. This area of research has not been fully explored, so previous work related to the concept is scarce. This limitation is one of the major reasons for doing the study.

Second, only school board members in North Carolina were included in the study. Consequently, one should be cautious in generalizing the results to school board members in other states.

Third, the five definitions of the role of the principal used in the questionnaire may be limiting because school board members

were asked to select only one option in answering each of several questions, and there was no allowance for overlap among the definitions themselves. Respondents were asked to choose the best answer, but they did not have a way to combine or modify definitions.

Fourth, since data were collected by a self-report survey, accuracy of the information is dependent on the individual completing the survey.

Significance of the Study

Principals are important to school improvement and school success. The way their role is defined and the way it is perceived by significant individuals or groups in the school system directly influence the kinds of schools that operate in a given district. One particularly influential group in the school setting is the board of education. Individually and collectively school board members shape the principalship through the personnel and curriculum decisions they make. It is, therefore, useful to determine how school board members view the role of the principal.

School board members may differentiate between what they see as the preferred role of the principal and what they believe is the actual role assumed by most principals. Additionally, these views may be affected by a number of variables. Knowing whether school board members distinguish between the preferred and actual role of the principal would be useful information for educational

leaders who are working toward school improvement. Identifying the variables which significantly influence school board members' perceptions of the principalship will be helpful to those who are making decisions and planning for change at the local school level.

Nine variables may significantly influence school board members' perceptions of the role of the principal. The first is length of service as a board member. As members gain experience, their perceptions of the principalship might change.

The second variable is educational background (highest grade completed), and the third is prior employment in a school setting. Individuals with various educational backgrounds might view the principalship differently as might those who have actually worked in a school setting before becoming a member of the board of education.

The fourth variable is reading of current literature on educational leadership. Individuals who are knowledgeable about contemporary research and trends in education may have different views of the role of the principal from those who do not keep abreast of such literature.

The fifth and sixth variables are size of school system and geographic location (rural versus urban). School board members who serve in small rural systems may view the role of the principal differently from those in large urban school systems.

The last three variables are gender, age, and race, all of which may, to some degree, influence school board members' perceptions of the role of the principal.

School board members' perceptions of the preferred and actual role of the principal are dependent variables which are influenced by the nine independent variables cited above.

Summary

Research done in the last ten years has emphasized the importance of the principal in creating an effective school. Most educational leaders regard the principal as vitally important to school improvement and school success. The role of the principal as it is defined today, however, is unlike that which was accepted in the past.

In the history of American public education, principals have assumed at least five distinctively different roles. Although limited, some research has been conducted concerning the perceptions certain groups of individuals have regarding the preferred role of the principal. Because school board members exert influence on the principalship, it is important to assess their perceptions of the role of the principal. Such information would be a valuable resource for principals, superintendents, and other practicing administrators.

Utilizing a survey format, this study examined the perceptions school board members in North Carolina have regarding the role of the principal. It further assessed whether selected factors are related to school board members' views of the principalship.

Chapter Two contains a review the literature dealing with the importance of the principal in creating an effective school, the

historical role of the principal, and the functions and responsibilities of school board members in North Carolina. Chapter Three describes the procedures used in the study. It includes a description of the population used in the study, the research methodology, and the research instrument itself. Chapter Four is a report of the results of the study in relation to the specific research questions. Conclusions drawn from the results as well as recommendations for further study are presented in Chapter Five.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to investigate North Carolina school board members' perceptions of the role of the principal according to a five-conception framework. Additionally, it examined nine variables to determine whether they were related to views school board members held about the principalship. This chapter reviews the literature associated with the role of the principal. It contains four sections, each of which focuses on a specific topic related to the study. The first section examines the principalship from a historical perspective with emphasis on the various roles principals have assumed since the seventeenth century as identified by Brubaker and Simon (1986).

The second section is a review of Brubaker and Simon's study (1987) of how North Carolina principals view themselves. This study was based on their earlier work (1986) in which they identified the various roles principals have assumed since 1647. Both of their works form the conceptual basis for this study. Furthermore, other studies of the principal's role based on Brubaker and Simon's work have been conducted since 1987, and they are reviewed as well.

The third section is a review of effective schools research as it relates to the role of the principal. It focuses on the principal's role

in creating an effective school as well as his/her role as a curriculum leader.

The fourth section is an examination of the literature concerning the roles and responsibilities of North Carolina school board members. It also reviews literature pertaining to their attitudes and beliefs as these issues relate to the role of the principal.

All four sections in the chapter provide background information about the role of the principal. Understanding the development of the principalship as well as current expectations for individuals who serve in that position will be useful in further defining and clarifying the role. The added examination of school board members' beliefs about the role of the principal will provide a new dimension to this field of study.

Historical Perspective

Since schools began operating during colonial times, the role of the school's leader or principal has been constantly changing. The principalship has evolved over time influenced by any number of social factors. It is useful to employ a framework to understand the various roles principals have assumed during the course of history. Brubaker and Simon (1986) have proposed a five-conception framework which will be used to examine the roles that have emerged since the seventeenth century. Although related to historical periods, this framework should be viewed as a continuum rather than a distinctively divided measure. A description of each of

the conceptions of the principalship from Brubaker and Simon's work (1987) follows:

The Principal Teacher (1647-1850)

Routinely engages in classroom teaching for a portion of each school day; also responsible for daily school routines and clerical duties; does not believe special training is needed to be an effective principal.

The Principal as General Manager (1850-1920)

Is the official liaison between the school and the central office; spends the majority of time on clerical duties; relies upon common sense and reacts to problems as they arise; has the right to give and enforce orders to teachers; implements the curriculum as mandated by the state and local school board.

The Principal as Professional and Scientific Manager (1920-1970)

Spends more time in classroom supervision than routine administrative duties; uses test data as a basis for planning, implementing, and evaluating instruction; is accustomed to the bureaucratic command-compliance organizational system; is interested in efficiency and the use of time to meet management goals and objectives.

The Principal as Administrator and Instructional Leader (1970-present)

Recognizes that his/her role encompasses both governance functions and instructional leadership functions; handles governance functions through the bureaucratic organizational structure; handles instructional leadership functions through a collegial organizational structure; expects and accepts some friction between governance and instructional leadership functions; treats teachers as professionals, giving them significant input into staff hiring, scheduling, evaluation, procurement of materials, selection of objectives, methods, etc.

The Principal as Curriculum Leader (present-sometime in the future)

Views the curriculum in very broad terms (more than a course of study) to mean: what each person experiences in cooperatively creating learning settings; believes that the role of principal is too complex to reduce to simple technical procedures; does not attempt to dichotomize administrative and instructional functions, realizing that all tasks have an impact on what is learned; believes that the learning of adult educators is as important as the learning of children and youth.

This framework is both flexible and non-judgmental. It represents a continuum with certain points that coincide with the dominant thinking about the principalship at various times in history. It is continuous rather than segmented; one conception does

not end when another begins. There is constant change and overlap. Although the conceptions differ significantly, the model does not imply right or wrong - only a changing pattern that continues to evolve with the passing of time.

There are principals currently serving in schools who represent each of the five conceptions identified by Brubaker and Simon. Accordingly, there are citizens and educational leaders who have different views of the what the role of the principal is or should be.

Role of Principal Teacher

In 1647, the General Court of Massachusetts enacted the first law pertaining to public schooling. Known as the famous "ye old deluder law," it required every town of fifty or more families to establish a school and to appoint a teacher of reading and writing. It further required towns with one hundred families to provide a grammar school to prepare youth for the university (Johns, Morphet, & Alexander, 1983, p. 2). Thus, the first schools were formed in the colonies.

In schools with more than one teacher, one person typically emerged as a head teacher. Schools were maintained and managed by selectmen who named special committees to help manage the schools. These committees were comparable to the school boards of today (Brubaker & Simon, 1986).

As schools grew and became more complex, the role of the head teacher evolved into that of the principal teacher. The primary

duty of the principal teacher was teaching, but he also became an "administrator of routine and a clerk" (Pierce, 1934, p. 14). Because there was no theory of administration or model of the principalship at this time, no formal training was available for the principal teacher. According to Pierce (1934), this person was usually chosen because of "his knowledge of teaching methods, characteristics of children, and common problems of schools" (p. 12). The prevalent opinion was that any teacher could be a principal teacher.

Individuals who assume the role of principal teacher are identified by three primary characteristics. They engage in classroom teaching for all or part of the school day; they are responsible for daily routines and clerical duties; and they do not believe it is necessary to have special training to be an effective principal (Brubaker & Simon, 1987).

Role of General Manager

By the mid-nineteenth century, the role of the principal teacher was expanding. Principal teachers were given supervisory duties; they served as liaisons between the teachers and the central office; and they were asked to introduce graded courses of study. Boards of education and superintendents continued to enlarge the administrative role of the principal teacher and eventually compensated for these added duties by providing released time from teaching (Brubaker & Simon, 1986).

As enrollment in schools increased, principals had to assume more managerial duties. Some of the clerical responsibilities were assigned to assistants, so principals could give attention to crowded conditions and minimally qualified teachers. During this time, the principal was recognized as having the right to give and enforce orders to teachers. Whereas the principal teacher had focused on the classroom, the principal as general manager was expected to give attention to the general interests of the school (Brubaker & Simon, 1986).

By 1900 large city school systems had full-time principals who had no teaching assignments. Principals were expected to keep order in the schools and give attention to teachers with problems. In general, the principal of this period sought to maintain the status quo. He administered the prescribed curriculum but did not introduce creative change. He was more of a reactor rather than an actor in the school setting (Brubaker & Simon, 1986).

Principals who typify the general manager description serve as the official liaison between the school and the central office. They spend the majority of their time on clerical duties in an effort to keep the school operating smoothly. When problems arise, they react and rely on common sense to resolve issues. They have the authority to give and enforce orders to teachers. In curriculum matters, principals who are general managers simply implement the course of study mandated by state and local school boards (Brubaker & Simon, 1987).

Role of Professional and Scientific Manager

In 1920 a national organization of elementary school principals was founded under the guidance of the Department of Education at the University of Chicago. Its affiliation with the National Education Association signaled an important step in the development of the principalship. According to Pierce (1934), "it turned the attention of the principal to the scientific study of the problems of his position" and "stimulated the professional interests not only of individual principals, but also of principals' associations throughout the country" (p. 22). Departments of education began training programs for principals, and journal articles appeared highlighting the professional activities of principals. Clearly the role of the principal was changing from one that emphasized managerial skills to one that encouraged a scientific, professional approach to the position.

The works of individuals such as Frederick W. Taylor, Henri Fayol, and Ralph Tyler were popular during this time, and their thinking influenced the development of the principalship. In 1911 Taylor, the father of the scientific approach to management, authored The Principles of Scientific Management. Callahan (1962) described Taylor's thesis this way: "It was a new role for management - an active role of analyzing, planning, and controlling the whole manufacturing process in detail" (p. 27).

In 1949 Henri Fayol, a French industrialist and the father of Management by Objectives (MBO), published his work, General and

Industrial Management. The management essentials he identified were organization, command, coordination, and control.

Also in 1949 Tyler published Basic Principles of Curriculum and Instruction which was a linear, sequential model for curriculum planning and development. It provided a map of "control, order, and predictability - basic elements of 'scientific' management" which principals could follow and teachers could replicate (Brubaker & Simon, 1986, p. 11).

The scientific approach to management in business was thereby transmitted to the management of schools. For example, educators began to think that principals needed special qualifications for their job and continued training in order to perform efficiently. As part of a bureaucratic organization, principals recognized lines of authority. They worked to achieve identified goals and objectives, and they used concrete data as a basis for making decisions. Principals during this era began to spend more time "in the field" (the classroom) and less time doing administrative duties. Just as industrial managers supervised assembly-line workers, principals were expected to supervise teachers during their daily instruction.

A key element in this period of the principalship was control. Brubaker and Simon (1986) contend: "The industrial bureaucratic organizational model didn't teach educators to think for themselves. They were instead expected to locate authority outside themselves in a method of study and the organizational hierarchy itself, (and as such) the educator as person was neglected" (p. 14).

Principals who serve as professional and scientific managers spend more time in classroom supervision than routine administrative duties. They use test data to plan, implement, and evaluate instruction, and they are accustomed to the bureaucratic command-compliance organizational system. They are interested in efficiency and the use of time to meet goals and objectives.

Role of Administrator and Instructional Leader

During the 1970s a new conception of the principalship began to emerge. It retained some of the elements of the previous period (the principal as a professional and scientific manager) while adding a second dimension. It still recognized the principal as an administrator who was accountable for the governance of the school, a function that required a bureaucratic organizational structure somewhat similar to that used from 1920 to 1970. This new conception, however, added a professional aspect to the role. The principal was at times expected to suspend his positional authority in order to be a colleague and instructional leader. Thus, the role of the principal became a dual one of bureaucratic governance and professionalism which emphasized both efficiency and effectiveness (Brubaker & Simon, 1986).

This conception of the principalship acknowledges two important elements. First, the dual nature of the role implies that at times there may be friction between the administrative and instructional leadership functions. However, this friction can be

healthy if it serves to generate creative ideas and actions. Such conflict can be viewed positively as a necessary part of school progress. Secondly, this conception gives importance to the development of human potential. Unlike previous periods in the history of the principalship, this one values professional leadership and growth on the part of principals and teachers (Brubaker & Simon, 1986).

Principals who act as administrators and instructional leaders recognize that their role encompasses both governance functions and instructional leadership functions. They handle governance through the bureaucratic organizational structure and instructional leadership through a collegial organizational structure. They expect and accept some friction between the two functions. Because they view teachers as professionals, these principals give teachers significant input into decision-making at the school level (Brubaker & Simon, 1987).

Role of Curriculum Leader

Contemporary thinking on the role of the principal centers on the importance of being a curriculum leader. The critical point in this concept is the definition of curriculum. It is not intended to be simply a course of study; but rather as Brubaker (1986) defines it, curriculum is "what each person experiences in cooperatively creating learning settings" (p. 19). Sarason (1972) says, "Creating a setting is one of man's most absorbing experiences, compounded as it is of dreams, hopes, effort, and thought. To say that the creation of a

setting can be like a work of art is to say that it can involve in an organized way the most productive attributes of the human mind" (pp. 272 and 284).

This holistic view of the principalship focuses on all that occurs in a school setting. It does not make a point of separating administrative duties from instructional duties. Principals who serve as curriculum leaders in this sense are interested in giving leadership to the creation of learning settings for students and adults in schools. They have vision which Bennis and Nanus (1985) identify as a "universal principle of leadership" (p. 89).

Principals who are curriculum leaders view the curriculum in very broad terms. They believe the role of principal is too complex to reduce to simple technical procedures. Realizing that all tasks have an impact on what is learned, they do not attempt to dichotomize administrative and instructional functions. These individuals believe the learning of adult educators is as important as the learning of children and youth (Brubaker & Simon, 1987).

Since 1647 the role of the principal has changed dramatically. Once narrowly defined, the role is now much broader and more encompassing. The early focus on teaching and managing has now moved to leadership. Today the challenges for principals are greater than ever, but the rewards are potentially limitless.

Research on Perceptions of the Role of the Principal

Four studies have been conducted on the perceptions various groups of individuals in North Carolina have regarding the principalship. Each utilized the five-conception framework of the historical role of the principal described above. The first study, conducted by Brubaker and Simon during the 1985-86 school year, investigated how principals in North Carolina view themselves and other principals. Following this initial work, three more studies were conducted to examine the views other groups in North Carolina have concerning the role of the principal. Briggs studied views of the principalship held by central office curriculum leaders in 1986, and in 1987, McRae examined superintendents' perceptions of the role. Also in 1987, Williams studied teachers' perceptions of the principalship.

Brubaker and Simon (1987) based their study of the principalship on three assumptions: (1) "How principals perceive their role is an important influence on the leadership they actually provide in the school setting; (2) Like others in positions of authority, they often adjust their behavior to this perception in the interest of good relations; and (3) The way principals view other principals is also instructive, for one's perception of self is to some extent the result of comparisons and contrasts with others who have the same professional title" (p. 72).

During the 1985-86 school year principals who attended the summer and fall Consortiums of North Carolina Principals and

Assistant Principals participated in a survey of principals' leadership roles. Three hundred seventy (370) principals representing 94 of the 140 school systems in the state responded to the following questions using Brubaker and Simon's framework for the five roles principals have assumed in the history of the United States:

1. What is your present leadership role?
2. What leadership role would you like to have?
3. What leadership role do the three principals you know best assume?
4. What leadership role do most principals in North Carolina play?

Additional data were collected regarding participants' length of experience as a principal, grade levels in the principal's building, highest academic degree acquired, and gender.

The researchers analyzed the aggregate data from this study as follows:

1. Seventy-one percent of the principals surveyed viewed their actual leadership role as "Administrator and Instructional Leader." At a distant second was "General Manager."
2. When asked which role they would prefer to assume, 64 percent chose to keep the same role ("Administrator and Instructional Leader"). The most popular second choices were "Curriculum Leader" and "Professional and Scientific Manager."
3. Forty-nine percent of the respondents believed the three principals they knew best were also "Administrators and

Instructional Leaders." However, more than a third (35) felt that the three principals they knew best were "General Managers."

4. Of the 370 respondents, a total of 60 percent categorized most North Carolina principals as "General Managers."

When they analyzed the data by subgroups, Brubaker and Simon concluded that number of years' experience as a principal and the grade levels in a principal's school did not seem to be related to significant differences in the way principals responded to any of the items on the survey instrument. Gender differences, however, were apparent. A much larger percentage of women (73%) than men (56%) described most North Carolina principals as "General Managers." Men (30%) more frequently labeled most North Carolina principals as "Administrator and Instructional Leader" than did women (19%). A larger percentage of women (14%) than men (4%) viewed their actual leadership role as "Curriculum Leader," and more women (25%) than men (14%) said they would prefer to operate in that leadership role. Furthermore, a larger percentage of men (16%) than women (6%) viewed their present leadership role as "General Manager."

The amount of formal, professional education completed also seemed to be related to how the respondents answered certain questions on the instrument. Three major differences were apparent. First, results of the study revealed that the greater the academic training, the less willing the respondent was to characterize his or her present leadership style as that of a "General Manager."

Not a single principal with a doctorate admitted to this leadership style. Fewer principals with a sixth-year certificate viewed themselves in this leadership style than those principals with a master's degree. Second, respondents with higher educational degrees tended to consider themselves an "Administrator and Instructional Leader" (Master's 68%; Sixth Year: 70%; Doctorate: 88%). Third, the percentage of principals who identified themselves as a "Curriculum Leader" or who said they would prefer this role tended to increase directly with the amount of formal, professional education the respondent had completed. For example, the percentage of principals who characterized themselves as a "Curriculum Leader" was twice as great for those holding the doctorate as for those with a master's degree. In identifying the preferred role of the principal, those holding the doctorate were nearly three times more likely than master's level principals to choose the role of "Curriculum Leader."

This study examined actual and preferred roles of the principal as identified by North Carolina principals themselves. It further considered whether there were significant differences in responses based on four criteria. The researchers concluded that gender and amount of formal, professional education were related to the types of responses on the survey instrument, while length of experience as a principal and grade levels in their building were not associated with the responses of the principals who participated in the study.

Briggs (1986) investigated the perceptions of central office persons in North Carolina concerning the role of principals as "CURRICULUM" leaders. She used Brubaker's definition of curriculum as "what persons perceive they experience in a setting" placing CURRICULUM in upper-case letters to differentiate it from curriculum simply defined as "a course of study" (p. 5).

Using an adaptation of the survey instrument developed by Brubaker and Simon, Briggs gathered data from 110 central office persons responsible for curricular and instructional programs in their respective LEAs. She examined the actual and preferred roles of principals as identified by this group in regard to four variables: (1) prior experience as a principal; (2) involvement in professional curriculum organizations; (3) awareness of current literature in curriculum and instruction through up-to-date reading; and (4) the perception central office persons hold toward their own role.

The findings of this study led Briggs to five conclusions:

1. Central office persons were more likely to view the principals with whom they work as "General Managers" or "Administrator and Instructional Leaders." They overwhelmingly identified principals across North Carolina as "General Managers."

2. Central office persons who had prior experience as a principal were more likely to view principals with whom they work as "Professional and Scientific Managers," "Administrator and Instructional Leaders," or "CURRICULUM Leaders."

3. Central office persons who indicated involvement in professional organizations were more likely to perceive principals as being "General Managers" and "Professional and Scientific Managers." Those who did not indicate participation in professional organizations were more likely to view principals as "Administrative and Instructional Leaders" or "CURRICULUM Leaders."

4. Central office persons who said they read current literature in curriculum and instruction were more likely to view principals as "Professional and Scientific Managers," "Administrator and Instructional Leaders," or "CURRICULUM Leaders." Those who indicated they did not read current literature were more likely to view principals as "General Managers."

5. The perception of central office persons toward their own role was not significant in relation to their view of the role of the principal.

Briggs also collected data on respondents' age, gender, and educational background (highest degree completed). Unfortunately, she did not summarize the results of this information as it related to central office persons' perceptions of the role of the principal. Therefore, whether these factors were significant in the study is unknown.

McRae (1987) studied the views held by 111 public school superintendents in North Carolina concerning the role of the principal. He examined what they identified as the actual and preferred roles of principals and analyzed that information in

relation to six variables: (1) highest degree earned by the superintendent; (2) prior experience as a principal; (3) length of service as a superintendent; (4) awareness of current literature on educational leadership; (5) size of school system; and (6) the self perception held by the superintendent as to his/her role in the central office.

Based on the results of this study, McRae concluded that none of the six variables was significant in the superintendents' perceptions of the proper role of the principal. However, all six were significant in the superintendents' perceptions of the actual roles being assumed by principals. In general, North Carolina superintendents agreed that the proper role for principals is "Administrator and Instructional Leader;" but according to this study, they did not believe a majority of principals were actually fulfilling that role.

Williams (1987) investigated North Carolina classroom teachers' perceptions of the role of the principal by surveying 416 teachers from the 140 school systems in the state. Using the five-conception framework of the principalship described earlier, she examined teachers' perceptions of the actual and preferred role of the principal. In addition, she collected and analyzed data regarding three variables: (1) the school level of the teacher; (2) the number of years of teaching experience; and (3) gender.

Williams concluded that classroom teachers viewed the actual role of their principal as either an "Administrator and Instructional

Leader" or "General Manager" but preferred the role of "Administrator and Instructional Leader." Although teachers viewed principals across North Carolina as primarily "General Managers," the desired role they identified was that of an "Administrator and Instructional Leader."

There was no significant difference between the role teachers selected for their principal when responses were examined according to the school level and the gender of the teacher. The number of years of teaching experience did not make a difference in the desired role teachers identified for their principal, but a significant difference was noted in the findings when teachers were asked to select the actual role of their principal.

These four studies indicate that there exists among various groups different perceptions of the actual and preferred role of the principal. Furthermore, these perceptions may be influenced by factors such as prior experience as a principal, educational background, gender, school level, size of school system, and awareness of current literature on educational leadership.

Effective Schools Research and the Role of the Principal

The effective schools movement began in 1966 as a reaction to the publication of James Coleman's Equal Educational Opportunities Study (EEOS). Coleman and his colleagues (1966) concluded: "Schools bring little influence to bear on a child's achievement that is independent of his background and general social context . . .

(p. 325). In other words, schools do not (and seemingly cannot) make a difference in the overall educational achievement of children.

Not all researchers, however, agreed with the Coleman thesis, and several began to independently formulate a research strategy that would challenge the "Coleman hypothesis." The strategy was for researchers to go into public schools and try to identify schools that represented clear exceptions to Coleman's theory. Among the early studies were Weber's (1971) Inner City Children Can Be Taught to Read: Four Successful Schools; Elementary School Climate and School Achievement (Brookover, et al., 1978); and the Search for Effective Schools: The Identification and Analysis of City Schools That Are Instructionally Effective for Poor Children (Edmonds and Frederickson, 1979). In fact, these researchers and others were able to locate schools that contradicted the conclusions of the Coleman study.

The effective schools movement then entered a second phase in which researchers turned their attention toward the internal operations of the "effective schools" they had identified. What emerged from the field research were descriptions of characteristics that seemed to detail how these schools were able to maintain an "exceptional status" (Lezotte, 1988, p. 5). Edmonds (1979) summarized five factors associated with effective schools as follows:

1. The principal's leadership and attention to the quality of instruction.
2. A pervasive and broadly understood instructional focus.

3. An orderly, safe climate conducive to teaching and learning.
4. Teacher behaviors that convey the expectation that all students are expected to obtain at least minimum mastery.
5. The use of measures of pupil achievement as the basis for program evaluation.

These five correlates of an effective school have become widely known and accepted by educators. Research on each of the factors has continued since the late 1970s.

The first correlate of an effective school is the strong instructional leadership of the principal. Many authors and researchers (e. g., De Bevoise, 1984; Blome and James, 1985; Cawelti, 1987) have studied the role of the principal as an instructional leader and have identified certain attributes that effective principals have in common.

Blumberg and Greenfield (1980) studied eight principals identified as effective by their colleagues. The characteristics of strong instructional leaders that they observed were: (1) a propensity to set clear goals which serve as a continuous source of motivation; (2) a high degree of self-confidence and openness to others; (3) the ability to tolerate ambiguity; (4) a tendency to test the limits of interpersonal and organizational systems; and (5) an analytic perspective. According to De Bevoise (1984), "The principals Blumberg and Greenfield observed were not willing to simply "keep the 'peace' . . . to some degree, all were innovators" (p. 88).

Huff, Lake, and Schaalman (1982) studied 31 principals and compiled a list of 14 competencies that characterized outstanding elementary and secondary leaders. Their work paralleled that of Blumberg and Greenfield. Beyond the basic competencies, Huff and her colleagues concluded that the effective principal had a clear sense of mission, tested the limits in providing necessary resources, was persuasive and committed to high standards, used a participatory style, and was not content to maintain the status quo.

Vaill (1982) and Manasse (1984) identified vision as being essential for the successful instructional leader. According to Rutherford (1985) effective principals "have clear, informed visions of what they want their schools to become, . . . and they translate these visions into goals . . ." (p. 32). Rallis and Highsmith (1986) concurred when they described an effective principal as one who is a "visionary . . . (who) must be able to see and communicate possibilities and to transform them into beliefs that can be shared by everyone in the school" (p. 303).

Effective principals are often described as problem-solvers and risk-takers. Manasse (1984) talks about the necessity of principals having good analytic skills, and Dwyer (1984) says, "Successful principals are able to find resources where others see only problems" (p. 80).

Examining the attributes of effective instructional leaders is enlightening, but it is also inadequate. Persell and her associates (1982) contend that most prescriptions for desirable characteristics

do not consider situational factors. In fact, according to De Bevoise (1984): "Perhaps the important lesson to be learned from an examination of the characteristics of effective principals relevant to instructional leadership is the diversity of styles that appear to work" (p. 89). He concluded that research needed to clarify how different styles and personalities interacted with specific contexts to produce desired outcomes.

Since each principal's situation is unique, generalizations about personal characteristics and leadership styles are difficult. Some researchers have, therefore, focused on the common leadership functions that must be satisfied in schools rather than on the person of the principal. Lortie (1982) stated that research should move beyond an examination of how a principal behaves to an understanding of what the principal does to facilitate teaching and learning.

In an attempt to elaborate on how principals contribute to effective instruction, Duckworth and Carnine (1983) wrote of the importance of providing consistent standards and expectations for teachers. They concluded that although teachers desire and need autonomy, they also need the support of organizational policy to sustain their efforts with new strategies.

Bossert and others (1981) and Dwyer and others (1983) developed a framework for examining instructional management in schools which considers context and well as personal characteristics and functions. Despite a high degree of individual variation among

principals, some fundamental functions are shared by all who have an important influence on instruction. These include hiring staff and providing training, monitoring, exchanging information, planning, and interacting directly with students.

According to Hallinger and Murphy (1987), the principal's instructional leadership role comprises three dimensions: defining the school mission, managing the instructional program, and promoting the school learning climate. They believe instructional leaders have a clear vision of what the school is trying to accomplish. Defining that mission involves leading the staff in developing school goals and communicating them to the community. From this comes a sense of purpose that is shared by the staff, students, and community and which, in turn, unites all the school's activities.

Traditionally, instructional management by principals has been seen primarily as supervision and evaluation of instruction. Hallinger and Murphy (1987) report that effective schools research indicates, however, that principals should pay equal, if not greater, attention to coordinating the curriculum and monitoring student progress.

School learning climate refers to the norms and attitudes of teachers and staff. Hallinger and Murphy (1987) believe the principal should provide high quality staff development opportunities to enhance the school climate.

To assess principals' instructional leadership, Hallinger and Murphy (1987) offered an eleven-point rating scale. The

instructional functions they identified as important included the following:

- Framing and communicating goals,
- Evaluating instruction,
- Coordinating curriculum,
- Monitoring progress,
- Protecting instructional time,
- Maintaining high visibility,
- Providing incentives for teachers,
- Selecting and participating in professional development programs,
- Establishing explicit academic standards, and
- Providing incentives for learning.

Research on the role of the principal as instructional leader centers primarily on the principal's personal attributes or on the functions he/she performs in creating an effective school. As such it provides a useful measure of the current status of this critical role. It further serves as a reminder that the role of the principal is evolving, and more study on every aspect of the principalship is both desirable and necessary.

School Board Members

An influential group affecting public schools at the local level is the board of education. They make policy, employ staff, and allocate

resources. In doing so, they extend their influence, not only into the schools that operate in their district, but into the community as well.

Powers and Duties

By position and by law, members of boards of education have certain powers and responsibilities. In North Carolina, the statutes define the board's powers and duties in broad terms. Section 115C-36 of the Public School Laws of North Carolina (1988) states: "All powers and duties conferred and imposed by law respecting public schools, which are not expressly conferred and imposed upon some other official, are conferred and imposed upon local boards of education. Said boards of education shall have general control and supervision of all matters pertaining to the public schools in their respective administrative units and they shall enforce the school law in their respective units" (p. 36). Local boards of education act on behalf of the state and, in turn, the federal government. They use powers given to them by governmental agencies, courts, and legislative bodies (Leonard & Blake, 1980).

Besides this broad definition of the responsibility given to local school boards, the North Carolina General Statutes (115C-47) list and define 31 specific powers or duties assigned to local boards of education. They are as follows:

1. To provide an adequate school system
2. To exercise certain judicial functions and to participate in certain suits and actions

3. To divide local school administrative units into attendance areas
4. To regulate extracurricular activities
5. To fix the time of opening and closing schools
6. To regulate fees, charges and solicitations
7. To accept and administer federal or private funds
8. To sponsor or conduct educational research
9. To assure accurate attendance records
10. To assure appropriate class size
11. To determine the length of the school day, the school month and the school term.
12. To implement the Basic Education Program
13. To elect a superintendent
14. To supply an office, equipment and clerical assistance for the superintendent
15. To prescribe the duties of the superintendent
16. To remove a superintendent, when necessary
17. To employ assistant superintendents and supervisors
18. To make rules concerning the conduct and duties of personnel
19. To approve the assignment of duties to an assistant principal
20. To provide for the training of teachers
21. To provide for the prompt monthly payment of salaries
22. To provide school food services
23. To purchase equipment and supplies

24. To purchase activity buses with local capital outlay tax funds
25. To secure liability insurance
26. To provide official recruiting representatives of the military forces of the State and of the United States access to the student information directory on the same basis such information is given to persons or groups which make students aware of occupational or educational options
27. To enter lease purchase contracts for automobiles
28. To authorize the observance of a moment of silence
29. To appoint advisory councils
30. To determine the hours of employment for teacher aides
31. To refer all students who drop out of the public schools to appropriate services (Public School Laws of North Carolina, 1988, pp. 55-59).

North Carolina school board members have vast powers and obligations that range from implementing the state curriculum to hiring the superintendent to setting the time for the opening and closing of the school day. Guided by their attitudes and beliefs, individuals who serve in this capacity make important decisions that affect children and adults in their community.

Attitudes and Beliefs

Knowing what individuals believe and value is useful in understanding the actions they take. Freeman, Underwood, and Fortune (1991) surveyed 3,744 school board members in the United States to determine what they considered to be important to the operation of schools. The top three concerns they listed were lack of financial support, facilities, and state mandates. Curriculum development and management/leadership were rated fourth and fifth respectively along with collective bargaining and use of drugs which were cited almost as often.

Articles published in school board association journals and bulletins reflect the issues that are important to members of the association. A review of all of the issues of The American School Board Journal since 1988 revealed that overwhelmingly articles addressed financial matters, board-superintendent relations, and special needs of children (e. g., abuse and neglect, teen pregnancy, and drug use). These findings support the data of the Freeman, Underwood, and Fortune (1991) study.

Similarly, a review of all issues of Voice of the North Carolina School Boards Association since 1987 yielded the same results. Again, articles addressed funding, board-superintendent relations, and social concerns related to the welfare of children. In addition, a number of articles focused on specific state initiatives such as the Basic Education Program and Senate Bill 2.

Interestingly, not one article in the state or national school board association journals noted above pertained specifically to effective schools research, the principalship, or the role of the principal in creating an effective school. Nothing was published which summarized the last 25 years of effective schools research, and none of the articles addressed the importance of the principalship.

Summary

The role of the principal has evolved since its inception in the seventeenth century. Principals have served as teachers, managers, and administrators. Today educational leaders believe, and effective schools research supports, the premise that the principal is a crucial factor in creating an successful school.

Researchers have begun to study the role of the principal in greater detail in an effort to further define and clarify it. Studies have centered on identifying both the attributes and the functions of effective principals. In North Carolina, researchers have extended this investigation of the principalship to include an examination of the perceptions various groups of individuals have regarding the actual and preferred roles of the principal.

School board members have extensive power and influence on the public schools in their district. The personnel and curriculum decisions they make, tempered by their attitudes and values, affect individual citizens and the community as a whole. Current literature

affirms the impression that often school board members focus more on topics related to finance, the superintendent, and social concerns rather than on leadership at the school level. In view of these findings, it would be useful to further investigate the perceptions school board members have regarding the principalship.

CHAPTER III

PROCEDURES

Introduction

This study was designed to assess North Carolina school board members' perceptions of the principalship according to a five-conception framework. A survey asked school board members to select the conception which best describes their perception of (1) the preferred role of the principal, (2) the actual role of most principals with whom they work, and (3) the actual role of most principals in North Carolina. Information was also collected concerning the school board members who participated in the study to determine whether there is a correlation between their perceptions of the role of the principal and selected characteristics they have as a group.

Responses from the 206 school board members who completed the survey were summarized in order to determine board members' perceptions of the principalship. The role school board members prefer for the principal was then compared to that which they identified as the actual role of the principal.

Further analyses of the responses were completed to determine whether a relationship existed between the dependent variable (school board members' perceptions of the principalship) and each of nine independent variables (length of service as a school board member, educational background, prior employment in a school

setting, reading of current literature on educational leadership, size of school system, gender, age, race, and geographic area). Additional data obtained from 3 free response questions were used to supplement the five-conception framework.

This chapter includes a description of the research methodology, the instrument used in the study, and the sample responding to the survey.

Research Methodology

There are 133 local public school systems in North Carolina each of which is administered by a board of education consisting of 4 to 15 members. The 1991-92 North Carolina Education Directory lists 873 individuals who are currently serving on local boards of education in the state.

For this study, a sample of 269 North Carolina school board members was selected from the population of 873 using a stratified random sampling technique which assured representation according to size of school system. The number of school systems having a specified enrollment of students is as follows:

Table 1

Student Enrollment in North Carolina Public Schools

School Size	LEAs	School Board Members	Proportion
5,000 or fewer	72	439	54%
5,001 - 10,000	32	210	24%
10,001 - 20,000	21	150	16%
more than 20,000	8	74	6%
TOTAL	133	873	100%

The sample, therefore, included school board members from each of the four categories that designate systems of varying sizes. One hundred forty-five (145) or 54% of the selected participants represented school systems that have a student enrollment of 5,000 or fewer; 65 (24%) were from school systems that have 5,001 - 10,000 students; 43 (16%) school board members represented systems having 10,001 - 20,000 students; and 16 (6%) school board members were chosen from systems that have more than 20,000 students.

The survey instruments were mailed to selected school board members on February 1, 1992. A cover letter (see Appendix A) which explained the study and a letter from the executive director of the North Carolina School Boards Association endorsing the study (see Appendix B) accompanied the questionnaire (see Appendix C). Each survey was coded to identify non-respondents.

Through the survey codes, a record was kept of the school board members responding. A reminder (see Appendix D) and a

second survey were mailed to those not responding on February 19, 1992. Two weeks later, follow-up telephone calls were made to school board members who had not responded to the second written communication. A total of 206 responses (77%) was received. Of these 179 were judged to be usable responses. Survey instruments that contained multiple or omitted responses were not included in the data analysis.

Analysis of the data includes a description of the preferred and actual roles of the principal as identified by the school board members who responded to the survey. The role desired for the principal was compared to the actual role perceived by school board members. The board members' perceptions of the role of principals across North Carolina were also described, and frequencies were determined for each category.

A school board member's perceptions may be influenced by a number of variables. Nine independent variables were examined to see if a relationship exists between each of them and the dependent variable (school board members' perception of the role of the principal). A chi square test was used to compare the frequencies and to determine whether the relationship is significant.

Content analysis of the 3 free response questions provided summary data. Individual responses of the school board members were grouped by related terms and tallied for each question. The duties or qualifications mentioned were ranked, and the top five for each question were used for summary data. These questions were

then compared to the conceptions selected by the school board members to determine if the responses were consistent.

Instrument

The instrument used for the survey was chosen from the work of Brubaker and Simon (1987). This five-conception survey was originally used by Brubaker and Simon in 1985-86 to determine the perceptions principals have of their own role and the role of other principals in North Carolina. Additionally, the instrument was used by Briggs (1986) to study the views of the principalship held by central office curriculum leaders, by McRae (1987) to examine superintendents' perceptions of the role, and by Williams (1987) to study teachers' perceptions of the principalship. Multiple uses of the survey instrument will enable comparisons to be made among these studies in future research.

For this study, the original questionnaire developed by Brubaker and Simon was adapted to fit the perceptions school board members have toward the principalship. In the first part of the survey, respondents were given five conceptions of the role of the principal and were asked to select the one they believe most accurately describes (1) the preferred role of the principal, (2) the actual role assumed by most principals in their system, and (3) the actual role assumed by most principals in North Carolina.

The second part of the survey included personal data questions. Respondents were asked to give information concerning these nine independent variables:

1. length of service as a school board member,
2. educational background (highest grade completed),
3. prior employment in a school setting,
4. reading of current literature on educational leadership,
5. size of school system,
6. gender,
7. age,
8. race,
9. geographic area (rural or urban).

In addition to the personal data, 3 free response questions were included in the survey to provide additional data on each school board member's perceptions of the role of the principal. Participants in the study were asked to respond to the following:

1. What are the three most important duties a principal performs in creating an effective school?
2. What personal qualifications do you consider essential for individuals who apply for the principalship?
3. What professional qualifications do you consider essential for individuals who apply for the principalship?

Validity and Reliability

Both literature and practice support the use of the research instrument which was used in this study. Brubaker and Simon's five-conception framework of the role of the principal is verified in the review of the literature. Historically, principals have assumed distinctive roles, and although the terminology varies among authors, the job descriptions offered by numerous writers correspond well to the model developed by Brubaker and Simon.

The original survey instrument was pilot tested by Brubaker and Simon, and the results allowed the authors to proceed with their research. Other researchers (Briggs, 1986; McRae, 1987; & Williams, 1987) have used the instrument as well which has further established its validity and reliability. Moreover, the adaptation of the instrument used in this study was pilot tested using a small sample (10) of school board members who did not participate in the study. The results of the pilot test confirmed its acceptability for this study.

Description of the Sample

School board members selected for the study were serving on local boards of education during the winter of 1991-92. Of the 179 school board members whose responses were included in the study, 43% had four or fewer years of service as a board member, while 33.5% had 5-8 years of experience. Of the remaining participants,

9.5% had served on the board of education for 9-12 years, and 14% had more than 12 years of experience.

The majority of the participants in the study were males (70.4%), and most were white (78.3%). Females accounted for 29.6% of the respondents, while non-whites accounted for 21.1% of the participants.

Ages of the participants were clustered in the 40-59 range. Most were 40-49 (46.3%), while 24.3% were 50-59 years old. Others were distributed as follows: 9% were 30-39; 12.4% were 60-69; and 7.9% were more than 70 years old.

Almost three-fifths of the respondents (59.6%) lived in a rural area, while 40.4% reported that they lived in an urban or suburban area. Additionally, most of the respondents (65.9%) had not worked in a public school setting, and the majority (87.6%) reported that they regularly read current educational literature.

A review of the educational background (highest grade completed) of the participants revealed that 12.3% had a high school education, and 20.1% had two years of college education. Of the other respondents, 31.8% had a four-year college degree, and 35.8% had graduate degrees.

The sample was stratified according to size of school system, and the number of respondents in each category closely matched the overall distribution of the number of board members serving in LEAs throughout the state. Of the 179 respondents, 50.8% represented school systems having 0-5,000 students; 23.5% were from districts

having a student enrollment of 5,001-10,000; 17.9% represented school systems of 10,001-20,000 students; and 7.8% were from systems that had more than 20,000 students.

Summary

This was a correlational study. A two-page questionnaire adapted from Brubaker and Simon's 1985-86 instrument was mailed to a sample of 269 school board members in North Carolina to determine their views of the principalship. Data from Part I and Part II of the questionnaire were analyzed using appropriate descriptive statistics (frequency and percent) and chi square. Three free-response items were included in the survey as well. Responses on these items were analyzed and used to support the validity of information provided by respondents in the first two parts of the survey instrument. Analysis of all the data collected is reported and interpreted in Chapter Four.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to investigate North Carolina school board members' perceptions of the role of the principal. Selected school board members were asked to respond to a survey of board members' perceptions of the role of the principal by choosing the conception which best described their perception of the preferred and actual roles of the principal. The five conceptions or roles used in the survey were:

Principal Teacher

General Manager

Professional and Scientific Manager

Administrator and Instructional Leader

Curriculum Leader

Independent variables considered were: length of service as a school board member, educational background (highest grade completed), prior employment in a school setting, reading of current literature on educational leadership, size of school system, gender, age, race, and geographic area (rural or urban).

Data were collected from a stratified random sample of 269 school board members in North Carolina. Size of school system was considered in the selection to assure representativeness. Responses

were received from 206 school board members of which 179 were judged to be usable for the purposes of this study.

Questions specifically addressed in the study were:

1. Given five descriptions of the role of the principalship, which do school board members in North Carolina identify as:

- (a) the proper role of the principal,
- (b) the actual role of most principals with whom they work,
- (c) the actual role of most principals in North Carolina?

2. Is there a significant difference between the preferred and the actual role of the principalship as identified by school board members in North Carolina?

3. Do the following factors influence school board members' perceptions of the role of the principal:

- (a) length of service as a school board member,
- (b) educational background (highest grade completed),
- (c) prior employment in a school setting,
- (d) reading of current literature on educational leadership,
- (e) size of school system,
- (f) gender,
- (g) age,
- (h) race,
- (i) geographic area (rural or urban)?

Each of the three questions is addressed further in this chapter. Summary data from the investigation as well as information from the

three free response items is presented to provide insight on the role of the principal.

Discussion of Results

Question 1: Given five descriptions of the role of the principalship, which do school board members identify as the proper role of the principal, the actual role of most principals with whom they work, and the actual role of most principals in North Carolina?

Table 2 reports the frequencies and percentages of each conception for questions one, two, and three of the survey (see Appendix C). Question one asked school board members to select the conception that most accurately describes the preferred (proper) role of the principal. Question two asked them to choose the conception that most accurately describes the actual role of most principals with whom they work, and question three asked school board members to identify the conception that most accurately describes the actual role of most principals in North Carolina.

The majority of school board members (58.9%) within the sample identified the role of Administrator/Instructional Leader as the preferred role for principals. The second choice was Curriculum Leader (22.3%). Each of the remaining three conceptions was represented by considerably smaller percentages: Principal

Teacher - 5.7%; General Manager - 7.4%; and Professional/Scientific Manager - 5.7%.

In contrast to the roles they selected as preferred, the majority of school board members (41.7%) identified the actual role of most principals in their districts as that of General Manager. About a third (36%) of the sample, however, believed that most principals in their LEA were operating in the role of Administrator/Instructional Leader. Only 6.9% reported that principals in their school system were Curriculum Leaders.

Table 2

School Board Members' Perceptions of the Preferred and Actual Role of the Principal

	Question 1 Preferred Role	Question 2 Actual Role LEA	Question 3 Actual Role NC
Principal Teacher	10 (5.7%)	7 (4.0%)	4 (2.3%)
General Manager	13 (7.4%)	73 (41.7%)	81 (47.4%)
Prof/Sci Manager	10 (5.7%)	20 (11.4%)	16 (9.4%)
Adm/Inst Leader	103 (58.9%)	63 (36.0%)	60 (35.1%)
Curriculum Leader	39 (22.3%)	12 (6.9%)	10 (5.8%)
Missing Cases	4	4	8
	179	179	179

School board members identified the actual role of most principals in North Carolina somewhat as they did for principals in their district. The majority of school board members (47.4%) thought most principals in North Carolina served as General Managers, or

they (35.1%) believed principals in the state were primarily Administrator/Instructional Leaders. Again, only a small number of school board members (5.8%) viewed North Carolina principals as Curriculum Leaders.

Question 2: Is there a significant difference between the preferred and actual role of the principalship as identified by school board members in North Carolina?

To further analyze the data presented in question one, a chi square test was used first to determine whether there was a significant difference between school board members' perceptions of the preferred role of the principal and the role they identified as the actual role assumed by most principals in their school district. Table 3 reports the results of this test. Calculation of the chi square indicates that there was a significant difference between the expected and the observed frequencies for the preferred and the actual LEA role of principals as perceived by school board members.

Table 3

Comparison of the Preferred and Actual LEA Role of Principals

Preferred	Actual LEA Role				
	Prin/Tea	Gen Mgr	Prof/Sci	Adm/Inst	Curr Lead
Prin/Teacher	1 (0.6%)	2 (1.2%)	0 (0.0%)	5 (2.9%)	0 (0.0%)
Gen Mgr	4 (2.3%)	4 (2.3%)	0 (0.0%)	2 (1.2%)	3 (1.8%)
Prof/Sci	0 (0.0%)	6 (3.5%)	3 (1.8%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (0.6%)
Adm/Inst	2 (1.2%)	47 (27.5%)	9 (5.3%)	41 (24.0%)	3 (1.8%)
Curr Leader	0 (0.0%)	11 (6.4%)	8 (4.7%)	14 (8.2%)	5 (2.9%)
	7	70	20	62	12

$$\chi^2 = 56.7378$$

$$df = 16$$

$$p \leq .05$$

Secondly, a chi square test was used to determine whether there was a significant difference between school board members' perceptions of the preferred role of the principal and the role they selected as the actual role assumed by most principals in North Carolina. Table 4 reports the results of this test. Calculation of the chi square indicates that there was not a significant difference between the expected and observed frequencies for the preferred and the actual North Carolina role of principals as perceived by school board members.

Table 4

Comparison of the Preferred and Actual NC Role of Principals

Preferred	Actual NC Role				
	Prin/Tea	Gen Mgr	Prof/Sci	Adm/Inst	Curr Lead
Prin/Teacher	0 (0.0%)	1 (0.6%)	1 (0.6%)	5 (3.0%)	2 (1.2%)
Gen Mgr	1 (0.6%)	6 (3.6%)	2 (1.2%)	4 (2.4%)	0 (0.0%)
Prof/Sci	0 (0.0%)	6 (3.6%)	0 (0.0%)	2 (1.2%)	1 (0.6%)
Adm/Inst	1 (0.6%)	53 (31.7%)	6 (3.6%)	34 (20.4%)	4 (2.4%)
Curr Leader	1 (0.6%)	14 (8.4%)	6 (3.6%)	15 (9.0%)	2 (1.2%)
	3	80	15	60	9

$$\chi^2 = 20.577$$

$$df = 16$$

$$p \leq .05$$

- Question 3: Do the following factors influence school board members' perceptions of the role of the principal:
- (a) length of service as a school board member,
 - (b) educational background (highest grade completed),
 - (c) prior employment in a school setting,
 - (d) reading of current literature on educational leadership,
 - (e) size of school system,
 - (f) gender,
 - (g) age,

(h) race,

(i) geographic area (rural or urban)?

Independent variables, such as those listed above, often contribute to the the prediction of the dependent variable. In this study, each of the nine independent variables was compared to the roles school board members identified as the preferred role of the principal, the role assumed by most principals with whom they work, and the role assumed by most principals in North Carolina. A chi square test was used to determine whether there were any significant differences in the roles school board members selected based on each of the independent variables.

Length of Service as a School Board Member

The majority of school board members who participated in this study had served on the board of education from 0-4 years (43%) or from 5-8 years (33%). In the other two categories, 9.5% of the board members had served 9-12 years, and 14% had more than 12 years of experience as a school board member. In every category, the majority of the school board members identified the preferred role of the principal as either Administrator/Instructional Leader or Curriculum Leader.

A chi square test was used to determine whether there was a significant difference between the role school board members identified as the preferred role of the principal compared to the

length of time they had served as a board member. Table 5 reports the results of this test.

Table 5

Comparison of the Preferred Role of the Principal and Length of Service as a School Board Member

Preferred Role	Length of Service as a School Board Member			
	0-4 yrs.	5-8 yrs.	9-12 yrs.	>12 yrs.
Prin/Teacher	6 (3.4%)	2 (1.1%)	2 (1.1%)	0 (0.0%)
Gen Mgr	5 (2.9%)	5 (2.9%)	1 (0.6%)	2 (1.1%)
Prof/Sci Mgr	8 (4.6%)	2 (1.1%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Adm/Inst Leader	45 (25.7%)	34 (19.4%)	10 (5.7%)	14 (8.0%)
Curr Leader	11 (6.3%)	15 (8.6%)	4 (2.3%)	9 (5.1%)
	75	58	17	25

$$\chi^2 = 14.5601$$

$$df = 12$$

$$p \leq .05$$

Calculation of the chi square indicates that there was not a significant difference between the expected and the observed frequencies for the preferred role of the principal as compared to school board members' length of service.

Next the data were analyzed to compare the role school board members selected as the actual role of most principals in their LEA compared to board members' length of service. Again, in all

categories, school board members identified the actual role of principals in their LEA as either General Manager or Administrator/ Instructional Leader. A greater percentage of school board members who had served 0-4 years or 5-8 years identified the actual role of principals in their district as General Manager. Those who had served 9-12 years or more than 12 years more often selected the role of Administrator/Instructional Leader as the actual role of principals in their LEA.

A chi square test was done to determine whether there was a significant difference between the role school board members chose as the actual role of most principals with whom they work compared to the length of time they had served on the board of education. Table 6 reports the results of this test. Calculation of the chi square indicates there was not a significant difference between the expected and the observed frequencies for the actual LEA role of the principal identified by school board members compared to the length of time board members had served on the board of education.

Table 6

Comparison of the Actual LEA Role of the Principal and Length of Service as a School Board Member

Length of Service as a School Board Member				
Actual LEA Role	0-4 yrs.	5-8 yrs.	9-12 yrs.	>12 yrs.
Prin/Teacher	4 (2.3%)	1 (0.6%)	1 (0.6%)	1 (0.6%)
Gen Mgr	30 (17.1%)	28 (16.0%)	6 (3.4%)	9 (5.1%)
Prof/Sci Mgr	11 (6.3%)	5 (2.9%)	2 (1.1%)	2 (1.1%)
Adm/Inst Leader	25 (14.3%)	19 (10.9%)	7 (4.0%)	12 (6.9%)
Curr Leader	4 (2.3%)	6 (3.4%)	1 (0.6%)	1 (0.6%)
	74	59	17	25

$$\chi^2 = 6.5846$$

$$df = 12$$

$$p \leq .05$$

Finally, a chi square test was used to determine whether there was a significant difference between the role school board members identified as the actual role of principals in North Carolina compared to the length of time board members had served on the board of education. Table 7 reports the results of this test. Calculation of the chi square indicates that there was not a significant difference between the expected and the observed frequencies for the actual NC role of the principal as compared to school board members' length of service.

Table 7

Comparison of the Actual NC Role of the Principal and Length of Service as a School Board Member

Actual NC Role	Length of Service as a School Board Member			
	0-4 yrs.	5-8 yrs.	9-12 yrs.	>12 yrs.
Prin/Teacher	2 (1.2%)	2 (1.2%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Gen Mgr	35 (20.5%)	29 (17.0%)	8 (4.7%)	9 (5.3%)
Prof/Sci Mgr	9 (5.3%)	5 (2.9%)	0 (0.0%)	2 (1.2%)
Adm/Inst Leader	22 (12.9%)	18 (10.5%)	9 (5.3%)	11 (6.4%)
Curr Leader	7 (4.1%)	3 (1.8%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
	75	57	17	22

$$\chi^2 = 11.5217$$

$$df = 12$$

$$p \leq .05$$

School board members' length of service was compared to each of the dependent variables (the preferred role of the principal, the actual LEA role, and the role of most principals in North Carolina). Based on the results of the chi square tests, length of service as a board member was not significantly related to the preferred or actual roles of principals identified by school board members.

Educational Background

Most of the school board members who participated in this study had a college education with 31.8% having a four-year college

education and 35.8% having earned a graduate degree. Of the others, 20.1% had two years of college training, and 12.3% had a high school education. A chi square test was used to determine whether there was a significant difference between the role school board members identified as the preferred role of the principal compared to the educational background of board members who were included in the study. Table 8 reports the results of this test.

Table 8

Comparison of the Preferred Role of the Principal and School Board Members' Educational Background

Preferred Role	Educational Background			
	High Sch	College (2)	College (4)	Grad
Prin/Teacher	0 (0.0%)	4 (2.3%)	4 (2.3%)	2 (1.1%)
Gen Mgr	5 (2.9%)	1 (0.6%)	4 (2.3%)	3 (1.7%)
Prof/Sci Mgr	2 (1.1%)	3 (1.7%)	2 (1.1%)	3 (1.7%)
Adm/Inst Leader	8 (4.6%)	20 (11.4%)	33 (18.9%)	42 (24.0%)
Curr Leader	6 (3.4%)	6 (3.4%)	13 (7.4%)	14 (8.0%)
	21	34	56	64

$$\chi^2 = 17.9296$$

$$df = 12$$

$$p \leq .05$$

Calculation of the chi square indicates that there was not a significant difference between the expected and the observed

frequencies for the preferred role of the principal when compared to school board members' educational background. Regardless of their education, most of the school board members in this study identified the preferred role of the principal as Administrator/Instructional Leader.

Next a chi square test was used to determine whether there was a significant difference between the role school board members selected as the actual role of most principals with whom they work compared to board members' educational background. Table 9 reports the results of this test.

Table 9

Comparison of the Actual LEA Role of the Principal and School Board Members' Educational Background

Actual LEA Role	Educational Background			
	High Sch	College (2)	College (4)	Grad
Prin/Teacher	3 (1.7%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (0.6%)	3 (1.7%)
Gen Mgr	8 (4.6%)	12 (6.9%)	23 (13.1%)	30 (17.1%)
Prof/Sci Mgr	1 (0.6%)	2 (1.1%)	9 (5.1%)	8 (4.6%)
Adm/Inst Leader	6 (3.4%)	18 (10.3%)	20 (11.4%)	19 (10.9%)
Curr Leader	3 (1.7%)	1 (0.6%)	4 (2.3%)	4 (2.3%)
	21	33	57	64

$$\chi^2 = 17.684$$

$$df = 12$$

$$p \leq .05$$

Calculation of the chi square indicates that there was not a significant difference between the expected and the observed frequencies for the actual LEA role of the principal identified by school board members when compared to board members' educational background. Most school board members viewed principals in their LEA as General Managers. Only those with two years of college education identified principals in their district as Administrator/Instructional Leaders, and they chose General Manager as a close second.

Thirdly, a chi square test was used to determine whether there was a significant difference between the role school board members chose as the actual role of principals in North Carolina compared to board members' educational background. Table 10 reports the results of this test. Calculation of the chi square indicates that there was not a significant difference between the expected and the observed frequencies for the actual NC role of the principal when compared to school board members' educational background. However, the majority of school board members who had high school and two-year college educations, identified most principals in North Carolina as Administrator/Instructional Leaders, while those with four years of college and those with graduate degrees chose General Manager as the role that most accurately describes principals in North Carolina.

Table 10

Comparison of the Actual NC Role of the Principal and School Board Members' Educational Background

Actual NC Role	Educational Background			
	High Sch	College (2)	College (4)	Grad
Prin/Teacher	1 (0.6%)	2 (1.2%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (0.6%)
Gen Mgr	7 (4.1%)	12 (7.0%)	29 (17.0%)	33 (19.3%)
Prof/Sci Mgr	2 (1.2%)	3 (1.8%)	5 (2.9%)	6 (3.5%)
Adm/Inst Leader	9 (5.3%)	14 (8.2%)	19 (11.1%)	18 (10.5%)
Curr Leader	2 (1.2%)	1 (0.6%)	4 (2.3%)	3 (1.8%)
	21	32	57	61

$$\chi^2 = 9.1306$$

$$df = 12$$

$$p \leq .05$$

School board members' educational background was compared to each of the dependent variables (the preferred role of the principal, the actual LEA role, and the role of most principals in North Carolina). Based on the results of the chi square tests, educational background was not significantly related to the preferred or actual roles of principals identified by school board members.

Prior Employment in a School Setting

Of the 179 school board members included in this study, approximately one-third (34.1%) had previously been employed in a

public school setting. A chi square test was used to determine whether there was a significant difference between the role school board members identified as the preferred role of the principal compared to the fact that the school board members had or had not ever been employed in a school setting. Table 11 reports the results of this test.

Table 11

Comparison of the Preferred Role of the Principal and School Board Members' Prior Employment in a School Setting

Preferred Role	Prior Employment in a School Setting	
	Yes	No
Prin/Teacher	6 (3.4%)	4 (2.3%)
Gen Mgr	3 (1.7%)	10 (5.7%)
Prof/Sci Mgr	2 (1.1%)	8 (4.6%)
Adm/Inst Leader	32 (18.3%)	71 (40.6%)
Curr Leader	17 (9.7%)	22 (12.6%)
	60	115

$$\chi^2 = 6.5373$$

$$df = 4$$

$$p \leq .05$$

Calculation of the chi square indicates that there was not a significant difference between the expected and the observed frequencies for the preferred role of the principal when compared to school board members' prior employment in a school setting. The

majority of all school board members in the study preferred the role of Administrator/Instructional Leader.

Next a chi square test was used to determine whether there was a significant difference between the role school board members identified as the actual role of most principals with whom they work compared to the fact that the board members had or had not ever been employed in a school setting. Table 12 reports the results of this test.

Table 12

Comparison of the Actual LEA Role of the Principal and School Board Members' Prior Employment in a School Setting

Actual LEA Role	Prior Employment in a School Setting	
	Yes	No
Prin/Teacher	4 (2.3%)	3 (1.7%)
Gen Mgr	21 (12.0%)	52 (29.7%)
Prof/Sci Mgr	10 (5.7%)	10 (5.7%)
Adm/Inst Leader	19 (10.9%)	44 (25.1%)
Curr Leader	4 (2.3%)	8 (4.6%)
	58	117

$$\chi^2 = 5.2686$$

$$df = 4$$

$$p \leq .05$$

Calculation of the chi square indicates that there was not a significant difference between the expected and the observed

frequencies for the actual LEA role of the principal identified by school board members when compared to board members' prior employment in a school setting. School board members in both groups (those who had been employed in a school setting and those who had not) identified the actual role of most principals in their district as either General Manager or Administrator/Instructional Leader.

Finally, a chi square test was used to determine whether there was a significant difference between the role board members selected as the actual role of principals in North Carolina compared to whether school board members had previously been employed in a school setting. Table 13 reports the results of this test.

Table 13

Comparison of the Actual NC Role of the Principal and School Board Members' Prior Employment in a School Setting

Actual NC Role	Prior Employment in a School Setting	
	Yes	No
Prin/Teacher	1 (0.6%)	3 (1.8%)
Gen Mgr	25 (14.6%)	56 (32.7%)
Prof/Sci Mgr	9 (5.3%)	7 (4.1%)
Adm/Inst Leader	21 (12.3%)	39 (22.8%)
Curr Leader	4 (2.3%)	6 (3.5%)
	60	111

$$\chi^2 = 4.0653$$

$$df = 4$$

$$p \leq .05$$

Calculation of the chi square indicates that there was not a significant difference between the expected and the observed frequencies for the actual NC role of the principal when compared to school board members' prior employment in a school setting. Most school board members in both groups (those who had been employed in a school setting and those who had not) chose General Manager as the actual role of most North Carolina principals.

The independent variable of whether school board members had ever been employed in a school setting was compared to each of the dependent variables (the preferred role of the principal, the actual LEA role, and the role of most principals in North Carolina).

Based on the results of the chi square tests, prior employment in a school setting was not significantly related to the preferred or actual roles of principals identified by school board members.

Reading of Current Literature on Educational Leadership

School board members were asked if they regularly (two or more times per month) read current literature on educational leadership. A large majority (87.6%) reported that they did, and only 12.4% of the respondents said they did not regularly read educational literature. A chi square test was used to determine whether there was a significant difference between the role school board members identified as the preferred role of the principal when compared to whether they read current educational literature. Table 14 reports the results of this test.

Table 14

Comparison of the Preferred Role of the Principal and School Board Members' Reading of Current Educational Literature

Preferred Role	Read Current Educational Literature	
	Yes	No
Prin/Teacher	8 (4.6%)	2 (1.2%)
Gen Mgr	11 (6.4%)	2 (1.2%)
Prof/Sci Mgr	9 (5.2%)	1 (0.6%)
Adm/Inst Leader	88 (50.9%)	14 (8.1%)
Curr Leader	36 (20.8%)	2 (1.2%)
	152	21

$$\chi^2 = 2.6759$$

$$df = 4$$

$$p \leq .05$$

Calculation of the chi square indicates that there was not a significant difference between the expected and the observed frequencies for the preferred role of the principal when compared to whether board members regularly read educational literature. The majority of school board members in both groups (those who regularly read current educational literature and those who did not) chose Administrator/Instructional Leader as the preferred role of the principal.

Secondly, a chi square test was used to determine whether there was a significant difference between the role school board

members selected as the actual role of most principals with whom they work compared to whether they read current educational literature. Table 15 reports the results of this test.

Table 15

Comparison of the Actual LEA Role of the Principal and School Board Members' Reading of Current Educational Literature

Actual LEA Role	Read Current Educational Literature	
	Yes	No
Prin/Teacher	6 (3.4%)	1 (0.6%)
Gen Mgr	64 (36.8%)	8 (4.6%)
Prof/Sci Mgr	18 (10.3%)	2 (1.1%)
Adm/Inst Leader	54 (31.0%)	9 (5.2%)
Curr Leader	11 (6.3%)	1 (0.6%)
	153	21

$$\chi^2 = .6248$$

$$df = 4$$

$$p \leq .05$$

Calculation of the chi square indicates that there was not a significant difference between the expected and the observed frequencies for the actual LEA role of the principal identified by school board members when compared to school board members' reading of current educational literature.

School board members who regularly read current educational literature most often identified General Manager as the actual role of most principals in their district. Those who reported that they did not read educational literature selected Administrator/Instructional leader as the actual LEA role of the principal with General Manager as a very close second choice.

Finally, a chi square test was used to determine whether there was a significant difference between the role school board members chose as the actual role of principals in North Carolina compared to whether they regularly read current educational literature. Table 16 reports the results of this test.

Table 16

Comparison of the Actual NC Role of the Principal and School Board Members' Reading of Current Educational Literature

Actual NC Role	Read Current Educational Literature	
	Yes	No
Prin/Teacher	2 (1.2%)	1 (0.6%)
Gen Mgr	73 (43.2%)	7 (4.1%)
Prof/Sci Mgr	16 (9.5%)	0 (0.0%)
Adm/Inst Leader	49 (29.0%)	11 (6.5%)
Curr Leader	8 (4.7%)	2 (1.2%)
	148	21

$$\chi^2 = 6.92$$

$$df = 4$$

$$p \leq .05$$

Calculation of the chi square indicates that there was not a significant difference between the expected and the observed frequencies for the actual NC role of the principal when compared to school board members' reading of educational literature. The majority of school board members who regularly read current educational literature identified General Manager as the actual role of most principals in North Carolina. Those who reported that they did not read educational literature tended to choose Administrator/ Instructional Leader as the actual NC role of the principal, but their close second choice was General Manager.

School board members' reading of current educational literature was compared to each of the dependent variables (the preferred role of the principal, the actual LEA role, and the role of most principals in North Carolina). Based on the results of the chi square tests, reading of current educational literature was not significantly related to the preferred or actual roles of principals identified by school board members.

Size of School System

The sample selected for this study was stratified to assure representation from school systems of varying sizes. Responses to the survey very closely matched the distribution of school board members according to size of school system. For example, 54% of the school systems in North Carolina have an enrollment of 0-5,000 students. In this study, 50.8% of the responses were from school board members representing systems with fewer than 5,000 students. School systems with 5,001-10,000 students represent 24% of all school systems in North Carolina. In this study, 23.5% of the responses came from school board members who served in systems where the student enrollment was between 5,001 and 10,000 students. Sixteen percent (16%) of the school systems in the state have 10,001-20,000 students; and for this study, 17.9% of the responses to the survey were from school board members in these districts. The largest school systems (>20,000 students) comprise 8%

of the systems in the state. In this study, 7.8% of the responses were from school board members in these districts.

A chi square test was used to determine whether there was a significant difference between the role school board members identified as the preferred role of the principal compared to the size of the school system they represented. Table 17 reports the results of this test.

Table 17

Comparison of the Preferred Role of the Principal and Size of School System

Preferred Role	Size of School System			
	0-5,000	5,001 - 10,000	10,001 - 20,000	>20,000
Prin/Teacher	5 (2.9%)	3 (1.7%)	2 (1.1%)	0 (0.0%)
Gen Mgr	5 (2.9%)	3 (1.7%)	2 (1.1%)	3 (1.7%)
Prof/Sci Mgr	7 (4.0%)	2 (1.1%)	1 (0.6%)	0 (0.0%)
Adm/Inst	50 (28.6%)	27 (15.4%)	21 (12.0%)	5 (2.9%)
Curr Leader	22 (12.6%)	6 (3.4%)	6 (3.4%)	5 (2.9%)
	89	41	32	13

$$\chi^2 = 12.2089$$

$$df = 12$$

$$p \leq .05$$

Calculation of the chi square indicates that there was not a significant difference between the expected and the observed frequencies for the preferred role of the principal when compared to the size of school system represented by board members who participated in the study. Regardless of the size of their school system, the majority of school board members preferred the role of Administrator/Instructional Leader.

Next a chi square test was used to determine whether there was a significant difference between the role school board members selected as the actual role of most principals with whom they work compared to the size of school system they represented. Table 18 reports the results of this test.

Table 18

Comparison of the Actual LEA Role of the Principal and Size of School System

Actual LEA Role	Size of School System			
	0-5,000	5,001 - 10,000	10,001 - 20,000	>20,000
Prin/Teacher	2 (1.1%)	1 (0.6%)	4 (2.3%)	0 (0.0%)
Gen Mgr	36 (20.6%)	19 (10.9%)	13 (7.4%)	5 (2.9%)
Prof/Sci Mgr	6 (3.4%)	6 (3.4%)	4 (2.3%)	4 (2.3%)
Adm/Inst	38 (21.7%)	12 (6.9%)	10 (5.7%)	3 (1.7%)
Curr Leader	7 (4.0%)	2 (1.1%)	1 (0.6%)	2 (1.1%)
	89	40	32	14

$$\chi^2 = 18.1677$$

$$df = 12$$

$$p \leq .05$$

Calculation of the chi square indicates that there was not a significant difference between the expected and the observed frequencies for the actual LEA role of the principal identified by school board members when compared to the size of the school system the board members represented. The majority of school board members representing school systems that have more than 5,000 students identified the actual role of most principals in their district as General Manager. Board members in systems with fewer than 5,000 students were almost evenly divided in their choice of

the actual LEA role of the principal They either chose General Manager or Administrator/Instructional Leader.

Finally, a chi square test was used to determine whether there was a significant difference between the role school board members chose as the actual role of principals in North Carolina compared to the size of school system the board members represented. Table 19 reports the results of this test.

Table 19

Comparison of the Actual NC Role of the Principal and Size of School System

Actual NC Role	Size of School System			
	0-5,000	5,001 - 10,000	10,001 - 20,000	>20,000
Prin/Teacher	2 (1.2%)	2 (1.2%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Gen Mgr	39 (22.8%)	22 (12.9%)	12 (7.0%)	8 (4.7%)
Prof/Sci Mgr	8 (4.7%)	3 (1.8%)	4 (2.3%)	1 (0.6%)
Adm/Inst	32 (18.7%)	11 (6.4%)	14 (8.2%)	3 (1.8%)
Curr Leader	5 (2.9%)	3 (1.8%)	1 (0.6%)	1 (0.6%)
	86	41	31	13

$$\chi^2 = 7.185$$

$$df = 12$$

$$p \leq .05$$

Calculation of the chi square indicates that there was not a significant difference between the expected and the observed frequencies for the actual NC role of the principal when compared to the size of school system board members represented. School board members in three of the four categories of school system size identified General Manager as the role of most principals in North Carolina. School board members representing systems of 10,001-20,000 students chose Administrator/Instructional Leader as the role of most North Carolina principals with General Manager as a close second choice.

The size of school system represented by school board members was compared to each of the dependent variables (the preferred role of the principal, the actual LEA role, and the role of most principals in North Carolina). Based on the results of the chi square tests, size of school system was not significantly related to the preferred or actual roles of principals identified by school board members.

Gender

Seven out of ten (70.4%) of the school board members who participated in this study were males. A chi square test was used to determine whether there was a significant difference between the role school board members identified as the preferred role of the principal compared to their gender. Table 20 reports the results of this test.

Table 20

Comparison of the Preferred Role of the Principal and Gender

Preferred Role	Gender	
	Male	Female
Prin/Teacher	9 (5.1%)	1 (0.6%)
Gen Mgr	6 (3.4%)	7 (4.0%)
Prof/Sci Mgr	9 (5.1%)	1 (0.6%)
Adm/Inst Leader	76 (43.4%)	27 (15.4%)
Curr Leader	24 (13.7%)	15 (8.6%)
	124	51

$$\chi^2 = 9.459$$

$$df = 4$$

$$p \leq .05$$

Calculation of the chi square indicates that there was a significant difference between the expected and the observed frequencies for the preferred role of the principal when compared to school board members' gender. Analysis of the data in Table 20 reveals that both male and female school board members prefer the role of Administrator/Instructional Leader or Curriculum Leader for the principal. However, significantly more males than females prefer these two roles.

Next a chi square test was used to determine whether there was a significant difference between the role school board members identified as the actual role of most principals with whom they work

compared to school board members' gender. Table 21 reports the results of this test.

Table 21

Comparison of the Actual LEA Role of the Principal and Gender

Actual LEA Role	Gender	
	Male	Female
Prin/Teacher	5 (2.9%)	2 (1.1%)
Gen Mgr	54 (30.9%)	19 (10.9%)
Prof/Sci Mgr	11 (6.3%)	9 (5.1%)
Adm/Inst Leader	47 (26.9%)	16 (9.1%)
Curr Leader	7 (4.0%)	5 (2.9%)
	124	51

$$\chi^2 = 4.1192$$

$$df = 4$$

$$p \leq .05$$

Calculation of the chi square indicates that there was not a significant difference between the expected and the observed frequencies for the actual LEA role of the principal identified by school board members when compared to the gender of school board members participating in the study. The majority of both males and females selected General Manager as the role of most principals in their district.

Lastly, a chi square test was used to determine whether there was a significant difference between the role school board members chose as the actual role of principals in North Carolina compared to the gender of the board members in the sample. Table 22 reports the results of this test.

Table 22

Comparison of the Actual NC Role of the Principal and Gender

Actual NC Role	Gender	
	Male	Female
Prin/Teacher	1 (0.6%)	3 (1.8%)
Gen Mgr	60 (35.1%)	21 (12.3%)
Prof/Sci Mgr	9 (5.3%)	7 (4.1%)
Adm/Inst Leader	43 (25.1%)	17 (9.9%)
Curr Leader	7 (4.1%)	3 (1.8%)
	120	51

$$\chi^2 = 6.0349$$

$$df = 4$$

$$p \leq .05$$

Calculation of the chi square indicates that there was not a significant difference between the expected and the observed frequencies for the actual NC role of the principal when compared to the gender of school board members in the study. The majority of

both males and females viewed the role of most principals in North Carolina as General Manager.

The gender of school board members in this study was compared to each of the dependent variables (the preferred role of the principal, the actual LEA role, and the role of most principals in North Carolina). Results of the chi square tests indicate that there was a significant difference in the choices males and females made in identifying the preferred role of the principal. More males chose Administrator/Instructional Leader or Curriculum Leader as the preferred role of the principal. However, there was no significant difference in the role male and female school board members selected as the actual role of most principals in their district and that of most principals in North Carolina. In both instances, they said the actual role of most principals is General Manager.

Age

Almost half (46.3%) of the school board members who participated in this study were 40-49 years old. Approximately one-fourth (24.3%) were 50-59 years old, and the remaining board members were rather evenly distributed in three other age categories. Nine percent (9%) were 30-39, twelve percent (12.4%) were 60-69, and almost eight percent (7.9%) were more than 70 years old. A chi square test was used to determine whether there was a significant difference between the role school board members

selected as the preferred role of the principal compared to their age.

Table 23 reports the results of this test.

Table 23

Comparison of the Preferred Role of the Principal and Age

Preferred Role	Age				
	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	>70
Prin/Teacher	0 (0.0%)	5 (2.9%)	3 (1.7%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (0.6%)
Gen Mgr	1 (0.6%)	6 (3.5%)	3 (1.7%)	2 (1.2%)	1 (0.6%)
Prof/Sci Mgr	2 (1.2%)	3 (1.7%)	1 (0.6%)	4 (2.3%)	0 (0.0%)
Adm/Inst Leader	11 (6.4%)	53 (30.6%)	23 (13.3%)	9 (5.2%)	6 (3.5%)
Curr Leader	1 (0.6%)	14 (8.1%)	12 (6.9%)	6 (3.5%)	6 (3.5%)
	15	81	42	21	14

$$\chi^2 = 21.7072$$

$$df = 16$$

$$p \leq .05$$

Calculation of the chi square indicates that there was not a significant difference between the expected and the observed frequencies for the preferred role of the principal when compared to school board members' age. The majority of board members in every age category identified the preferred role of the principal as Administrator/Instructional Leader. A very small but equal percent (3.5%) of board members who were more than 70 years old also selected Curriculum Leader as the preferred role of the principal.

Next a chi square test was used to determine whether there was a significant difference between the role school board members identified as the actual role of most principals with whom they work compared to school board members' age. Table 24 reports the results of this test.

Table 24

Comparison of the Actual LEA Role of the Principal and Age

Actual LEA Role	Age				
	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	>70
Prin/Teacher	1 (0.6%)	1 (0.6%)	2 (1.2%)	1 (0.6%)	2 (1.2%)
Gen Mgr	8 (4.6%)	38 (22.0%)	14 (8.1%)	8 (4.6%)	3 (1.7%)
Prof/Sci Mgr	2 (1.2%)	7 (4.0%)	6 (3.5%)	3 (1.7%)	2 (1.2%)
Adm/Inst	3 (1.7%)	28 (16.2%)	18 (10.4%)	8 (4.6%)	6 (3.5%)
Curr Leader	2 (1.2%)	5 (2.9%)	3 (1.7%)	1 (0.6%)	1 (0.6%)
	16	79	43	21	14

$$\chi^2 = 12.5433$$

$$df = 16$$

$$p \leq .05$$

Calculation of the chi square indicates that there was not a significant difference between the expected and the observed frequencies for the actual LEA role of the principal identified by school board members when compared to the age of school board members participating in the study. Overall most school board

members said principals in their districts were General Managers. However, slight differences were noted in the actual LEA role identified by board members among some age groups. Those in the age ranges of 50-59, 60-69, and >70 chose Administrator/ Instructional Leader to describe principals in their school system as often or more often than they chose General Manager.

Thirdly, a chi square test was used to determine whether there was a significant difference between the role school board members selected as the actual role of principals in North Carolina compared to the age of the board members in the sample. Table 25 reports the results of this test.

Table 25

Comparison of the Actual NC Role of the Principal and Age

Actual NC Role	Age				
	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	>70
Prin/Teacher	1 (0.6%)	1 (0.6%)	1 (0.6%)	1 (0.6%)	0 (0.0%)
Gen Mgr	9 (5.3%)	40 (23.5%)	18 (10.6%)	8 (4.7%)	6 (3.5%)
Prof/Sci Mgr	0 (0.0%)	9 (5.3%)	2 (1.2%)	2 (1.2%)	2 (1.2%)
Adm/Inst	5 (2.9%)	25 (14.7%)	16 (9.4%)	9 (5.3%)	5 (2.9%)
Curr Leader	1 (0.6%)	6 (3.5%)	1 (0.6%)	2 (1.2%)	0 (0.0%)
	16	81	38	22	13

$$\chi^2 = 9.6134$$

$$df = 16$$

$$p \leq .05$$

Calculation of the chi square indicates that there was not a significant difference between the expected and the observed frequencies for the actual NC role of the principal when compared to the age of school board members in the study. In every age category except one, the majority of school board members chose the role of General Manager to describe most principals in North Carolina. In the age range of 60-69, school board members selected either General Manager or Administrator/Instructional Leader in about an equal number of cases.

The age of school board members in this study was compared to each of the dependent variables (the preferred role of the principal, the actual LEA role, and the role of most principals in North Carolina). Based on the results of the chi square tests, the age of school board members was not significantly related to the preferred or actual roles of principals identified by school board members.

Race

Of the 179 school board members included in this study, 27 declined to give their race on the survey instrument. From those who did provide their race, 78.3% were white, and 21.2% were black. One American Indian participated in the study. A chi square test was used to determine whether there was a significant difference between the role school board members selected as the preferred role of the principal compared to their race. Table 26 reports the results of this test.

Table 26

Comparison of the Preferred Role of the Principal and Race

Preferred Role	Race		
	Black	White	Am. Indian
Prin/Teacher	3 (2.0%)	5 (3.3%)	0 (0.0%)
Gen Mgr	1 (0.7%)	12 (7.9%)	0 (0.0%)
Prof/Sci Mgr	0 (0.0%)	10 (6.6%)	0 (0.0%)
Adm/Inst Leader	21 (13.9%)	65 (43.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Curr Leader	7 (4.6%)	26 (17.2%)	1 (0.7%)
	32	118	1

$$\chi^2 = 9.3906$$

$$df = 8$$

$$p \leq .05$$

Calculation of the chi square indicates that there was not a significant difference between the expected and the observed frequencies for the preferred role of the principal when compared to school board members' race. Regardless of race, most school board members identified the preferred role of the principal as Administrator/Instructional Leader.

Next a chi square test was used to determine whether there was a significant difference between the role school board members identified as the actual role of most principals with whom they work compared to school board members' race. Table 27 reports the results of this test.

Table 27

Comparison of the Actual LEA Role of the Principal and Race

Actual LEA Role	Race		
	Black	White	Am. Indian
Prin/Teacher	2 (1.3%)	5 (3.3%)	0 (0.0%)
Gen Mgr	9 (6.0%)	46 (30.7%)	1 (0.7%)
Prof/Sci Mgr	4 (2.7%)	12 (8.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Adm/Inst Leader	17 (11.3%)	44 (29.3%)	0 (0.0%)
Curr Leader	0 (0.0%)	10 (6.7%)	0 (0.0%)
	32	117	1

$$\chi^2 = 7.1031$$

$$df = 8$$

$$p \leq .05$$

Calculation of the chi square indicates that there was not a significant difference between the expected and the observed frequencies for the actual LEA role of the principal identified by school board members when compared to the race of school board members participating in the study. Both black and white school board members selected either General Manager or Administrator/ Instructional Leader as the role of most principals in their district. However, more white school board members chose General Manager as the actual role of most principals in their district, while more

black school board members chose Administrator/Instructional Leader as the actual role of the principals with whom they work.

Finally, a chi square test was used to determine whether there was a significant difference between the role school board members selected as the actual role of principals in North Carolina compared to the race of the board members in the sample. Table 28 reports the results of this test.

Table 28

Comparison of the Actual NC Role of the Principal and Race

Actual NC Role	Race		
	Black	White	Am. Indian
Prin/Teacher	1 (0.7%)	2 (1.4%)	0 (0.0%)
Gen Mgr	8 (5.5%)	56 (38.6%)	0 (0.0%)
Prof/Sci Mgr	2 (1.4%)	11 (7.6%)	0 (0.0%)
Adm/Inst Leader	17 (11.7%)	40 (27.6%)	1 (0.7%)
Curr Leader	3 (2.1%)	4 (2.8%)	0 (0.0%)
	31	113	1

$$\chi^2 = 9.3578$$

$$df = 8$$

$$p \leq .05$$

Calculation of the chi square indicates that there was not a significant difference between the expected and the observed frequencies for the actual NC role of the principal when compared to

the race of school board members in the study. Again, both black and white school board members chose either General Manager or Administrator/Instructional Leader as the role of most principals in North Carolina. More white school board members selected General Manager as the actual role of principals in the state, while more black school board members identified Administrator/Instructional Leader as the actual role of principals in North Carolina.

The race of school board members in this study was compared to each of the dependent variables (the preferred role of the principal, the actual LEA role, and the role of most principals in North Carolina). Based on the results of the chi square tests, the race of school board members was not significantly related to the preferred or actual roles of principals identified by school board members.

Geographic Area

More than half of the school board members (59.6%) who participated in this study reported that they live in a rural area. About one-fourth (23%) live in an urban area, and 17.4% said they live in a suburban area. A chi square test was used to determine whether there was a significant difference between the role school board members identified as the preferred role of the principal compared to the geographic area in which they live. Table 29 reports the results of this test.

Table 29

Comparison of the Preferred Role of the Principal and Geographic Area

Preferred Role	Geographic Area		
	Rural	Urban	Suburban
Prin/Teacher	4 (2.3%)	4 (2.3%)	2 (1.1%)
Gen Mgr	6 (3.4%)	3 (1.7%)	4 (2.3%)
Prof/Sci Mgr	9 (5.2%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (0.6%)
Adm/Inst Leader	58 (33.3%)	28 (16.1%)	16 (9.2%)
Curr Leader	27 (15.5%)	6 (3.4%)	6 (3.4%)
	104	41	29

$$\chi^2 = 10.5619$$

$$df = 8$$

$$p \leq .05$$

Calculation of the chi square indicates that there was not a significant difference between the expected and the observed frequencies for the preferred role of the principal when compared to the geographic area in which school board members live. Regardless of where they live, most school board members identified the preferred role of the principal as Administrator/Instructional Leader.

Next a chi square test was used to determine whether there was a significant difference between the role school board members identified as the actual role of most principals with whom they work

compared to the geographic area in which school board members live. Table 30 reports the results of this test.

Table 30

Comparison of the Actual LEA Role of the Principal and Geographic Area

Preferred Role	Geographic Area		
	Rural	Urban	Suburban
Prin/Teacher	2 (1.1%)	3 (1.7%)	2 (1.1%)
Gen Mgr	43 (24.7%)	13 (7.5%)	17 (9.8%)
Prof/Sci Mgr	12 (6.9%)	5 (2.9%)	2 (1.1%)
Adm/Inst Leader	39 (22.4%)	16 (9.2%)	8 (4.6%)
Curr Leader	7 (4.0%)	3 (1.7%)	2 (1.1%)
	103	40	31

$$\chi^2 = 6.7488$$

$$df = 8$$

$$p \leq .05$$

Calculation of the chi square indicates that there was not a significant difference between the expected and the observed frequencies for the actual LEA role of the principal identified by school board members when compared to the geographic area in which school board members live. The majority of school board members who live in rural and suburban areas chose the role of General Manager as the role of most principals in their district. Those who live in urban areas chose either General Manager or

Administrator/Instructional Leader as the role that most accurately describes the principals in their LEAs.

Thirdly, a chi square test was used to determine whether there was a significant difference between the role school board members selected as the actual role of principals in North Carolina compared to the geographic area in which school board members live. Table 31 reports the results of this test.

Table 31

Comparison of the Actual NC Role of the Principal and Geographic Area

Actual NC Role	Geographic Area		
	Rural	Urban	Suburban
Prin/Teacher	3 (1.8%)	1 (0.6%)	0 (0.0%)
Gen Mgr	47 (27.5%)	18 (10.5%)	16 (9.4%)
Prof/Sci Mgr	10 (5.8%)	2 (1.2%)	4 (2.3%)
Adm/Inst Leader	37 (21.6%)	15 (8.8%)	8 (4.7%)
Curr Leader	5 (2.9%)	3 (1.8%)	2 (1.2%)
	102	39	30

$$\chi^2 = 3.6067$$

$$df = 8$$

$$p \leq .05$$

Calculation of the chi square indicates that there was not a significant difference between the expected and the observed

frequencies for the actual NC role of the principal when compared to the geographic area in which school board members live. Regardless of where they live, the majority of school board members in this study identified the role of most principals in North Carolina as General Manager.

The geographic area in which school board members live was compared to each of the dependent variables (the preferred role of the principal, the actual LEA role, and the role of most principals in North Carolina). Based on the results of the chi square tests, the geographic area in which school board members live was not significantly related to the preferred or actual roles of principals identified by school board members.

Summary of Free Response Data

In addition to the structured survey instrument that asked school board members to identify one of the five conceptions of the role of the principal, participants in the study were also asked to provide supplemental information regarding the principalship through three free response questions. These allowed school board members an opportunity to express their individual views concerning the duties and qualifications of principals.

Almost all of the respondents (99.9%) answered at least one of the free response questions. School board members listed a total of 1,060 comments about the duties or qualifications of principals. Through content analysis, the comments on each question were

grouped, tallied, and placed in rank order to indicate the duties and qualifications of principals mentioned most often by school board members.

The Three Most Important Duties a Principal Performs

Question eight (see Appendix C) asked school board members to list the three most important duties a principal performs in creating an effective school. The five duties cited most often in descending order were oversight for curriculum/instruction, organization/management, working with the staff, leadership, and discipline.

The most frequently cited duty of the principal was providing leadership and supervision for the instructional programs in the school. Of the 166 school board members who responded to this question, 80 suggested that one of the most important duties a principal performs in creating an effective school is to provide instructional leadership. One board member used the phrase "creative instructional leadership." Another said the principal should make "sure (the) curriculum continues to challenge," and one listed "curriculum development and implementation" as a primary duty of the principal. One board member specified that the principal "must be a good instructional leader," and another called the principal the "instructional leader in the school."

Forty-nine (49) school board members mentioned organization/management as a important duty of the principal

making it the second most frequently mentioned duty. One board member said the principal should be able to "manage (the) staff," and another said he/she should "have an organized process." "Having a smooth operation" was important to one board member, and one wrote that an important duty of the principal was to manage the "personal, financial, and material resources of the school."

The third most frequently mentioned duty of the principal, working with the staff, was noted by 47 school board members. Comments referred to fostering good staff relationships, motivating teachers, and providing supervision and evaluation of the staff. Board members said the principal should promote "teamwork among the staff" and "establish trust" with them. They felt the principal should "support teachers" and "inspire and motivate the teaching staff." Furthermore, the principal should be "consistent and fair" in evaluating the staff and should encourage the "development of teachers."

Leadership was the next most often mentioned duty of the principal with 43 school board members specifically citing it as opposed to the instructional leadership noted above. School board members either listed leadership per se as a duty of the principal, or they clarified it by comments such as "leadership and motivation of students and faculty" or "leadership and guidance for (the) professional staff."

Discipline was the fifth-ranked duty school board members cited as an important duty of the principal. Thirty-nine (39) school

board members placed it among the three most important duties a principal performs. They said the principal "maintains discipline" and should be "open and fair in administering discipline." School board members wanted a principal who could "maintain order and discipline within the school."

The majority of school board members who participated in this study preferred the Administrator/Instructional Leader role for the principal. Comments on the free response question concerning the most important duties the principal performs supported this view. According to school board members, it is important for the principal to be a leader and to provide instructional leadership in the school. It is also necessary and desirable for the principal to manage and organize, to work well with the staff, and to maintain order and discipline.

Personal Qualifications of the Principal

Question nine asked school board members to identify the personal qualifications they considered essential for individuals who apply for the principalship. The five most frequently mentioned in order of preference were integrity, leadership ability, interpersonal skills, concern for others, and communication skills.

The most frequently mentioned personal qualification for principals was integrity. Forty-seven (47) school board members said "honesty," "integrity," and "character" were important traits for

the principal. They felt it was desirable for the principal to be "fair and honest."

Leadership ability was the second most often noted qualification. Thirty-four (34) school board members referred to leadership or leadership ability as an essential qualification for principals. One school board member felt the principal should demonstrate a "leadership style that encourages others," and another said the principal should have the "ability to lead and motivate others."

Almost as many school board members cited interpersonal skills as a desirable qualification for principals. Thirty-two (32) of the respondents felt it was important for the principal to be a "people person," one who exhibits "skill in working with students, faculty, and the public." One board member said it was important for the principal to be able to "relate to constituents," and another said the principal should have the "ability to listen to others and consider their point of view."

The fourth personal qualification school board members noted was concern for others. This qualification was mentioned by 29 board members who said that it was essential for the principal to have a "love and concern for children," to "truly care for others," and to be "compassionate." They said the principal should be "understanding" and "student sensitive."

The need for good communication skills was mentioned by 26 school board members making it the fifth most frequently mentioned

personal qualification necessary for the principal to have. School board members specifically referred to listening and speaking skills in contrast to writing skills. One school board member said the principal should be an "effective listener," and another said he/she should have the "ability to communicate with staff, students, and parents."

Professional Qualifications of the Principal

Question 10 asked school board members to identify the professional qualifications they considered essential for individuals who apply for the principalship. The five most frequently mentioned in descending order were educational background (training, degree, or certification), experience, knowledge of curriculum and instruction, administrative skill, and professional development.

The most frequently mentioned professional qualification for principals was educational background. One hundred eight (108) school board members made reference to a requirement for "training," "a master's degree," or "proper certification."

Experience was the second most often noted professional qualification with 66 school board members mentioning that it was essential for principals. They insisted that principals needed to have "classroom teaching experience," "administrative experience," or "experience in a leadership role." One board member suggested that the principal should have "wide and sufficient experience," while

another said the principal should have experience that was "proven, positive, and excellent."

For 23 board members, knowledge of curriculum and instruction was an essential professional qualification for principals. They felt the principal should have a "broad curriculum understanding" and that it was important for the principal to "know the curriculum and how it should be administered." Knowledge of teaching methodology and "sound teaching practices" were also considered to be important.

The fourth professional qualification school board members mentioned was administrative skill. Twenty-two (22) board members referred to this as an essential qualification for principals. They noted that it was important for the principal to be "a good manager" or to have "administrative skill or ability." They said he/she should be able to "supervise personnel" and to "supervise the total school program."

Professional development was the fifth-ranked professional qualification cited by school board members as essential for the principal. Fourteen (14) board members made reference to providing staff development for teachers and to the need for continuing education on the part of the principal. One board member said the principal should be "willing to continue to learn," and another said the principal should demonstrate a "commitment to continuing professional development." One board member suggested that the principal participate in "continuing education in

community/business relations" and that he/she acquire a knowledge of "the basics in adult education."

Asking school board members to respond to these three free response items provided a vehicle for them to share personal views on the nature of the principalship. It further served to support, strengthen, and enrich the information provided in the structured component of the survey.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to investigate North Carolina school board members' views of the role of the principal. In addition to a summary of the frequencies for each conception selected by school board members, the selected roles were compared to nine independent variables - length of service as a school board member, educational background (highest grade completed), prior employment in a school setting, reading of current literature on educational leadership, size of school system, gender, age, race, and geographic area (rural or urban).

School board members reported that principals in their district operate primarily as General Managers or Administrator/Instructional Leaders. While school board members viewed the actual role of principals in their LEA as either General Manager or Administrator/Instructional Leader, the preferred role for their principals was Administrator/Instructional Leader.

Principals across North Carolina were viewed by school board members primarily as General Managers. The role desired by school board members for principals was Administrator/Instructional Leader.

There was a significant difference between the role school board members preferred for the principal and their perception of the actual role of most principals in their district. The difference, however, was not significant when comparing the role school board members preferred for the principal and that which they viewed as the actual role of most principals in North Carolina.

Length of service as a school board member was not significantly related to the preferred or actual roles of principals identified by school board members. Findings were consistent throughout all categories of years of service.

The educational background of school board members was not significantly related to the preferred or actual roles of principals identified by school board members. Results were consistent throughout all categories of educational background.

Prior employment in a school setting was not significantly related to the preferred or actual roles of principals identified by school board members. Findings were consistent for those who had been employed in a school setting and those who had not.

The reading of current literature on educational leadership was not significantly related to the preferred or actual roles of principals

identified by school board members. Results were similar for those who do read current educational literature and for those who do not.

Size of school system was not significantly related to the preferred or actual roles of principals identified by school board members. Findings were consistent in all categories of school system size.

Gender was significantly related to the preferred role of the principal identified by school board members. More males chose Administrator/Instructional Leader or Curriculum Leader as the preferred role of the principal. Gender was not significantly related to the actual roles of the principal as viewed by school board members.

The age of school board members was not significantly related to the preferred or actual roles of principals identified by school board members. Findings in all age categories were similar.

There were no significant differences noted when race was compared to the preferred and actual roles of the principal as viewed by school board members. Findings were similar for both black and white school board members.

The geographic area in which school board members live was not significantly related to the preferred or actual roles of the principal as viewed by school board members. Results were consistent throughout all categories of geographic area.

In responding to three free response questions, school board members noted that the most important duties the principal

performs include oversight for curriculum and instruction, organization/management, working with the staff, leadership, and discipline. School board members cited the following personal qualifications as essential for the principal: integrity, leadership ability, interpersonal skills, concern for others, and communication skills. The professional qualifications school board members viewed as essential for the principal were: strong educational background, experience, knowledge of curriculum and instruction, administrative skill, and professional development.

CHAPTER V
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS
FOR FURTHER STUDY

Introduction

This study focused on North Carolina school board members' perceptions of the role of the principal. Surveys were mailed to a sample of 269 school board members in the state to determine their perceptions of the preferred (proper) role of the principal, the actual role of most principals in their district, and the actual role of most principals in North Carolina. Independent variables (length of service as a school board member, educational background, prior employment in a school setting, reading of current literature on educational leadership, size of school system, gender, age, race, and geographic area) were examined to see if they made a difference in the views expressed by the respondents.

The importance of the principal in creating an effective school is well documented and widely accepted. Knowing how significant groups of individuals, such as school board members, view the role of the principal is important to understanding the nature of the role itself and how it can be enhanced.

In this chapter, a summary of the study, conclusions, and implications for further study will be presented. The insights gained

can be a useful resource for principals, school board members, superintendents, and other practicing administrators.

Summary

Two hundred sixty-nine (269) school board members in North Carolina were surveyed to determine their perceptions of the preferred role of the principal and the actual role being assumed both by principals in their own school system and across the state. School board members were also asked to respond to three free response questions concerning the most important duties a principal performs and the personal and professional qualifications essential for individuals who apply for the principalship.

The validity of the instrument was supported by the literature and by the work of Brubaker and Simon (1987), Briggs (1986), McRae (1987), and Williams (1987). These researchers each used a similar survey instrument based upon the same five-conception framework of the role of the principal.

The data collected offer insights into how school board members view the role of the principal in general and how they view principals in their district and other principals in North Carolina. Analysis of the data also determined whether any of the nine independent variables made a difference in the conception selected by school board members.

The findings of the study based upon the analysis of data are:

1. The majority of school board members preferred that principals operate as Administrator/Instructional Leaders. However,

most school board members perceived that principals in their district operate either as General Managers or Administrator/Instructional Leaders. The role of General Manager was among the least preferred by school board members, but more than 40% of the school board members viewed most principals in their LEA in that role.

2. Although they preferred the role of Administrator/Instructional Leader, the majority of school board members perceived North Carolina principals as either General Managers or Administrator/Instructional Leaders.

3. The role of Curriculum Leader was the second most preferred role of the principal according to school board members. However, very few perceived it as the actual role of principals in their district or in North Carolina.

4. There was a significant difference between the preferred role of the principal and the actual role school board members perceived for principals with whom they work. However, there was not a significant difference when the preferred role of the principal was compared to the role school board members perceived as the role of most principals in North Carolina.

5. There was not a significant difference in school board members' perceptions of the preferred or actual roles of the principal when the length of service as a school board member was considered. In every category, the majority of school board members identified the preferred role of the principal as Administrator/Instructional Leader. School board members'

perceptions of the actual role of the principal, however, revealed that a majority of those with 0-4 or 5-8 years of service viewed the actual role of the principal as General Manager, while those with 9 or more years of service perceived the actual role as that of Administrator/Instructional Leader.

6. There was no significant difference in school board members' perceptions of the preferred or actual roles of the principal when the educational background (highest grade completed) of school board members was considered. Regardless of their education, school board members preferred the role of Administrator/Instructional Leader. Except for those with a two-year college education, school board members viewed the actual role of the principal as General Manager. School board members who had two years of college perceived the actual role of the principal as Administrator/Instructional Leader slightly more often than General Manager.

7. There was no significant difference in school board members' views of the preferred or actual roles of the principal when prior employment in a school setting was considered. Regardless of whether they had ever been employed in a public school setting, school board members preferred the role of Administrator/Instructional Leader, but they viewed the actual role of most principals as General Manager.

8. Whether school board members regularly read current educational literature was not significantly related to their

perceptions of the preferred or actual roles of the principal. The majority of school board members preferred the role of Administrator/Instructional Leader. In considering the actual role of the principal, however, school board members who reported that they read current educational literature perceived the actual role of the principal as General Manager, while those who did not read educational literature viewed the actual role of the principal as Administrator/Instructional Leader slightly more often than General Manager.

9. The size of the school system represented by school board members was not significantly related to school board members' views of the preferred or actual roles of the principal. Regardless of the size of their school system, school board members preferred the role of Administrator/Instructional Leader. The majority of school board members viewed the actual role of the principal as General Manager. The only exceptions were board members in systems with fewer than 5,000 students who viewed the actual role of principals in their district as either Administrator/ Instructional Leader or General Manager and those in systems of 10,001-20,000 students who perceived the actual role of North Carolina principals as either Administrator/Instructional Leader or General Manager.

10. Gender was related to school board members' perceptions of the preferred role of the principal. Significantly more males chose Administrator/Instructional Leader as the preferred role of the principal. In considering the actual role of the principal, however,

both males and females viewed General Manager as the actual role of principals in their LEA and in the state.

11. There was no significant difference in school board members' perceptions of the preferred or actual roles of the principal when the age of school board members was considered. The majority of board members in every age category preferred the role of Administrator/Instructional Leader. School board members generally viewed the actual role of principals as General Manager, except the majority of those over 50 who perceived most principals in their district as Administrator/Instructional Leaders and those in the 60-69 age range who viewed North Carolina principals as either Administrator/Instructional Leaders or General Managers.

12. There were no significant differences in school board members' views of the preferred or actual roles of principals based on school board members' race. The majority of all school board members, regardless of race, preferred the role of Administrator/Instructional Leader. Both black and white school board members viewed the actual role of the principal as either General Manager or Administrator/Instructional Leader. More white school board members perceived the actual role of most principals as General Manager, while more black school board members viewed the actual role of most principals as Administrator/Instructional Leader.

13. The geographic area in which school board members reside was not significantly related to their perceptions of the preferred or actual roles of principals. Regardless of where they live, the majority

of school board members preferred the role of Administrator/Instructional Leader. School board members perceived the actual role of the principal as General Manager, except the majority of school board members who live in urban areas who viewed the actual role of principals in their LEA as either General Manager or Administrator/Instructional Leader.

When asked to identify the three most important duties a principal performs in creating an effective school, most school board members mentioned providing oversight for curriculum and instruction, organization/management, working with the staff, leadership, and discipline. These comments were consistent with the views school board members expressed regarding the preferred role of the principal.

When asked to identify the personal qualifications essential for the principal, school board members cited integrity, leadership ability, interpersonal skills, concern for others, and communication skills. Professional qualifications school board members viewed as necessary for the principal were a strong educational background, experience, knowledge of curriculum and instruction, administrative skill, and professional development.

Conclusions

Current literature supports the belief that strong leadership on the part of the principal is essential in creating an effective school. The role of the principal, however, has changed considerably

throughout history, and it continues to evolve today. At the same time, individuals like school board members constantly influence the role of the principal through the personnel and curriculum decisions they make. Therefore, an examination of school board members' perceptions of the role of the principal is useful in understanding and refining the nature of the principalship.

This study was based on North Carolina school board members' views of the principalship. Those views could be influenced by any number of factors, each of which probably relates to school board members' past experiences and present circumstances. The purpose of the study was to determine what school board members' perceptions were concerning the preferred and actual roles of principals and to determine if those perceptions were related to any of the nine independent variables that were selected.

Analysis of the data collected led to the following conclusions:

1. School board members in North Carolina prefer the role of Administrator/Instructional Leader for principals.
2. School board members in North Carolina view the actual role of principals in their district as either General Manager or Administrator/Instructional Leader.
3. School board members view principals in North Carolina as either General Managers or Administrator/Instructional Leaders.
4. The role of Curriculum Leader is the second most preferred role, but few school board members view it as the actual role of principals.

5. School board members perceive the preferred role and the actual LEA role of principals as being different.

6. The preferred and actual roles of principals are viewed the same regardless of the number of years school board members have served on the board of education.

7. The preferred and actual roles of principals are viewed the same regardless of the educational background (highest grade completed) of school board members.

8. The preferred and actual roles of principals are viewed the same regardless of whether school board members have ever been employed in a public school setting.

9. The preferred and actual roles of principals are viewed the same regardless of whether school board members regularly read current literature on educational leadership.

10. The preferred and actual roles of principals are viewed the same regardless of the size of the school system school board members represent.

11. Males and females view the preferred role of the principal differently, but their perceptions of the actual role of principals are the same.

12. The preferred and actual roles of principals are viewed the same regardless of the age of school board members.

13. The preferred and actual roles of principals are viewed the same by black and white school board members.

14. The preferred and actual roles of principals are viewed the same by school board members who live in rural, urban, and suburban areas.

In conclusion, school board members in North Carolina perceive the actual role of the principal as either General Manager or Administrator/Instructional Leader, but they clearly prefer the role of Administrator/Instructional Leader or Curriculum Leader. Their views of the most important duties a principal performs in creating an effective school are consistent with their perceptions of the preferred role of the principal.

Eight of the nine independent variables investigated in this study did not make a difference in the perceptions school board members have of the preferred and actual roles of the principal. Gender was significantly related to school board members' perceptions of the preferred role of the principal, but it was not related to their perceptions of the actual role of principals. None of the other variables (length of service as a school board member, educational background, prior employment in a school setting, reading of current literature on educational leadership, size of school system, age, race, or geographic area) was related to school board members' perceptions of the principalship.

School board members felt individuals who serve as principals should have certain personal qualifications including integrity, leadership ability, interpersonal skills, concern for others, and communication skills. Professionally, school board members

expressed the view that principals should have a strong educational background and experience as a teacher and/or administrator. Furthermore, they said principals must understand curriculum and instruction, demonstrate administrative skill, and have a commitment to professional growth.

Implications for Further Study

There currently exists a growing demand for school improvement in this country. In response to the call for reform, the effective schools movement has come to the forefront of the educational scene. Much research has been conducted in an effort to identify the characteristics or correlates of effective schools. One correlate associated with creating an effective school is the strong instructional leadership of the principal.

Recognition of the importance of the role of the principal in creating an effective school has served to rekindle an interest in the nature of the principalship. Recent authors and researchers have examined the role of the principal from various perspectives. Brubaker and Simon (1986), for example, have examined the principalship from a historical point of view. Others (e.g., Blumberg, Greenfield, Vaill, Manasse) have given particular attention to the attributes effective principals have in common, and some researchers (e.g., DeBevoise, Cawelti) have concentrated on the role of the principal as an instructional leader.

Viewing the role of the principal from different perspectives is a useful paradigm. Further study should be done involving additional stakeholder groups; i.e., groups of people who have a stake in school improvement. These include but are not limited to: (1) community leaders; (2) non-certified school personnel; (3) public school students; (4) school advisory groups; (5) business/industry leaders; and (6) elected officials. Knowing how members of each of these groups perceive the role of the principal will lead to a more definitive understanding of this complex and important role.

Because the role of the principal is complex, further study needs to be done particularly on the two roles of Administrator/ Instructional Leader and Curriculum Leader. It is important, for example, to determine factors which influence principals to assume one of these roles rather than some other role. One might also question how and to what extent principals can be trained to perform more effectively and appropriately as an Administrator/ Instructional Leader.

The role of Curriculum Leader is an emerging one; and therefore, much remains to be learned about it. The role itself needs to be clearly delineated, and practical guidelines for implementation should be offered. Additionally, important implications for adult learning are associated with this role, and they require further exploration.

Based on information about school board members' perceptions of the principalship, further study should be done to determine how

and to what extent these views influence curriculum and personnel decisions in the local school district. It would also be useful to study how school board members' perceptions of the principalship influence principals' decisions and actions after they are employed.

In this study, eight of the independent variables were not significantly related to school board members' views of the principalship. Such homogeneity of responses suggests a need for further research to determine characteristics or factors that are significantly related to perceptions of the role of the principal.

The research on the role of the principal using Brubaker and Simon's five-conception framework has so far been limited to groups of individuals in North Carolina. This makes it difficult to generalize findings to principals in other locations. Therefore, it would be advantageous to conduct similar studies in other geographic areas of the country.

The body of research on perceptions of the role of the principal is growing. At least four studies have been completed, and several more are in progress. At some point in time, the research needs to be synthesized which should produce some rather broad conclusions regarding the role of the principal. This should also provide directions for future investigations and for policy decisions.

Most of the research that has been conducted on the role of the principal has been quantitative. Such methodology should continue to be used; and, as appropriate, both descriptive and inferential data analyses should be presented.

Additionally, some studies of the principalship should be designed to provide qualitative data. The use of interviews, observations, case studies, and portraiture, for instance, would be appropriate methodology. Quantitative and qualitative approaches should also be utilized in combination to further study the principalship.

The role of the principal is crucial to school improvement. Therefore, research in this area should undoubtedly continue. Researchers should readily use the varied quantitative and qualitative methods at their disposal to establish a reliable and comprehensive understanding of the principalship.

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APPENDIX A

**Letter to Selected School Board Members
in North Carolina**

SURRY COUNTY SCHOOLS
 OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT
 POST OFFICE BOX 364
 DOBSON, NORTH CAROLINA 27017

GLENN E. COOK
 SUPERINTENDENT
 MARSHA E. BLEDSOE
 ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT
 PHILIP D. COOK
 ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT

BOARD OF EDUCATION
 CHARLES C. GRAHAM
 CHAIRMAN
 PENNY P. SIMMONS
 VICE CHAIRMAN
 MARVIN E. BEASLEY
 CALLIE H. SMITH
 SUE W. STONE

TO: North Carolina School Board Members

FROM: Marsha E. Bledsoe
 Assistant Superintendent

DATE: February 1, 1992

RE: Study of the Role of the Principal as Viewed by North Carolina School Board Members

The current educational reform movement in the United States focuses on creating effective schools, and research in this area recognizes the critical role of the principal in school improvement. Throughout North Carolina, school systems have joined the Effective Schools movement, and studies in school improvement continue as educational leaders strive to provide quality programs for the children in our schools.

As a board member, you make important personnel and curriculum decisions, and it is likely that you have definite views regarding the role of the principal. As researchers study the role of the principal in creating effective schools, it is useful to know how key leaders such as yourself view the principalship.

I am conducting a study of North Carolina school board members' perceptions of the role of the principal. Recently I contacted Dr. Gene Causby, Executive Director of the North Carolina School Boards Association, and discussed this study with him. Attached is a letter of endorsement from Dr. Causby.

Will you please assist me in this study by completing the enclosed questionnaire and returning it in the stamped, self-addressed envelope before February 15, 1992? Your participation in this study will provide valuable information and will be greatly appreciated. Your name and the name of your school system will not be used in the study, and the data will not be cited in such a way as to imply either name.

Thank you for your time and assistance.

APPENDIX B

**Letter of Endorsement from the
North Carolina School Boards Association**



"PUBLIC EDUCATION: NORTH CAROLINA'S BEST INVESTMENT"

OFFICERS
PRESIDENT
 Bobby Rex Komegay
Wayne
1ST VICE PRESIDENT
 Nehemiah Smith
Rocky Mount
2ND VICE PRESIDENT
 Culver Dale
Haywood
TREASURER
 Barbara Harrell
Elkin
DIRECTORS
Joy Baldwin
Durham County
Lucy Bolden
Reidsville City
Alex Booth, Jr.
Hendersun
John Crowder
Murree City
David Dalton
Cumberland
Jean Dellinger
Lincoln
Marylin Fowler
Asheboro
Jane Fulcher
Carteret
Thos Greene
Gaston
Carlene Gragan
Winston-Salem/Forsyth
Fred Hargett
Onslow
Gary Lail
Alexander
Donovan Phillips, Jr.
Pin
LaDeen Powell
Whiteville
Jean Schilawski
Wata
Raymond Shaw
Columbus
Virginia Tillet
Dare
NCSB/T TRUSTEES
Jack Briggs
Davidson
David Greene, Supt.
Watauga
Jeanne Melggs
Northeast Tech. Assist. Cir.
Robert Young
Mitchell
PAST PRESIDENTS'
COUNCIL
Mary Ellen Maxwell, 1990-91
Bob Cabanix, 1988-89
Pennie Battle, 1986-87
Oliver Smith, 1984-85
Janel Wilson, 1982-83
Clifford Winslow, 1979-80
NC COUNCIL
OF ATTORNEYS
Koy Dawkins, Montic
NC ASSOC. OF SCHOOL
ADMINISTRATORS
Jerry Paschal, Whiteville City

January 8, 1992

Dr. Gene Causby
 Executive Director

Mrs. Marsha E. Bledsoe, Assistant Superintendent
 Surry County Schools
 209 North Crutchfield Street
 Dobson, North Carolina 27017

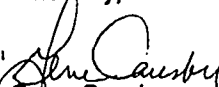
Dear Mrs. Bledsoe:

It was a pleasure to talk with you recently regarding your doctoral research project which will focus on North Carolina school board members' perceptions of the principalship. I understand you will be surveying a random sample of current school board members in the state in an effort to determine their views on the role of the principal.

Research indicates that the leadership of the principal is a key factor in creating an effective school; and because school board members make such important curriculum and personnel decisions, it would be useful to determine their perceptions of the role principals assume or should assume in the schools throughout North Carolina. I believe your findings may prove helpful to administrators, aspiring principals, and North Carolina school board members. Therefore, I am pleased to endorse your study, and I wish you every success in your efforts.

Because research of this type has not previously been done in North Carolina, I hope you will share your findings with the North Carolina School Boards Association. I believe our members will be interested in the results of the study and will want to access the information you collect in this project. If I or my staff can be of assistance to you, I encourage you to contact us. Best wishes as you proceed with your research.

Sincerely,


 Gene Causby
 Executive Director

GC:cs

APPENDIX C
Survey Instrument

**SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER
PERCEPTIONS OF THE PRINCIPALSHIP**

Purpose:

The purpose of this study is to investigate North Carolina school board members' perceptions of the role of the principal.

Instructions:

1. In column A, please place a check mark beside the conception that most accurately describes the preferred (proper) role of the principal.
2. In column B, please place a check mark beside the conception that most accurately describes the actual role of most principals with whom you work.
3. In column C, please place a check mark beside the conception that you feel most accurately describes the actual role of most principals in North Carolina.

*Select only one in each column.

CONCEPTIONS	A Preferred Role	B Actual Role (Your LEA)	C Actual Role (NC)
Principal Teacher Routinely engages in classroom teaching for a portion of each school day; also responsible for daily school routines and clerical duties; does not believe special training is needed to be an effective principal.			
General Manager Is the official liaison between the school and the central office; spends the majority of time on clerical duties; relies upon common sense and reacts to problems as they arise; has the right to give and enforce orders to teachers; implements the curriculum as mandated by the state and local school board.			
Professional and Scientific Manager Spends more time in classroom supervision than routine administrative duties; uses test data as a basis for planning, implementing, and evaluating instruction; is accustomed to the bureaucratic command-compliance organizational system; is interested in efficiency and the use of time to meet management goals and objectives.			
Administrator and Instructional Leader Recognizes that his/her role encompasses both governance functions and instructional leadership functions; handles governance functions through the bureaucratic organizational structure; handles instructional leadership functions through a collegial organizational structure; expects and accepts some friction between governance/instructional leadership functions; treats teachers as professionals, giving them significant input into staff hiring, scheduling, evaluation, procurement of materials, selection of objectives, methods, etc.			
Curriculum Leader Views the curriculum in very broad terms (more than a course of study) to mean: what each person experiences in cooperatively creative learning settings; believes that the role of principal is too complex to reduce to simple technical procedures; does not attempt to dichotomize administrative and instructional functions, realizing that all tasks have an impact on what is learned; believes that the learning of adult educators is as important as the learning of children and youth.			

(OVER)

APPENDIX D

Follow-up Letter to School Board Members

SURRY COUNTY SCHOOLS
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT
POST OFFICE BOX 364
DOBSON, NORTH CAROLINA 27017

GLENN E. COOK
SUPERINTENDENT
MARSHA E. BLEDSOE
ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT
PHILIP D. COOK
ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT

BOARD OF EDUCATION
CHARLES C. GRAHAM
CHAIRMAN
PENNY P. SIMMONS
VICE CHAIRMAN
MARVIN E. BEASLEY
CALLIE H. SMITH
SUE W. STONE

TO: Selected North Carolina School Board Members

FROM: Marsha E. Bledsoe, *ms*
Assistant Superintendent

DATE: February 19, 1992

RE: Study of the Role of the Principal as Viewed by North Carolina School Board Members

Approximately two weeks ago I sent you a questionnaire, the results of which are to be used in a study I am presently doing. The study deals with the role of the principal as viewed by school board members in North Carolina.

I notice that you have not returned the questionnaire. I realize this is a busy time for you, but if you have a few minutes I would appreciate your completing the survey and returning it to me by February 29, 1992. For your convenience, I have enclosed another copy of the survey and a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

You may also recall from my first letter that this study has been endorsed by Dr. Gene Causby of the North Carolina School Boards Association. Results of the study will be of interest to the NCSBA, so I certainly hope you will be able to participate. Thank you in advance for your attention to this request. Your assistance will be very beneficial.

If you have mailed the first survey within the last few days, please disregard this communication and accept my appreciation. If you have questions or need further information about this study, you may contact me at (919) 386-8211 (office) or (919) 874-7228 (home).

Best wishes to you and your school system.