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A STUDY OF SUPERINTENDENT TURNOVER IN NORTH CAROLINA (1980-1982)

The University of North Carolina at Greensboro

Ed.D. 1984

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A STUDY OF SUPERINTENDENT
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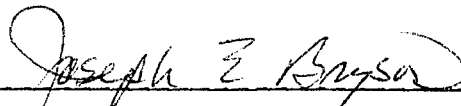
by

Steve Dalton

A Dissertation Submitted to
the Faculty of the Graduate School at
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in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Education

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1984

Approved by



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APPROVAL PAGE

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DALTON, STEVE F. A Study of Superintendent Turnover in North Carolina (1980-1982). (1984)

Directed by: Dr. Joseph E. Bryson. Pp.136.

The purpose of this study was to determine the causes of superintendent turnover in North Carolina during the 1980-1982 school years. An opinionnaire was prepared and distributed to forty-one superintendents, and five of the respondents were selected for interview by telephone for additional data.

Based on the data collected and analyzed, the reasons for superintendent turnover are as follows: 1) eleven, new position is better; 2) ten, early retirement; 3) six, non-renewal of contract; 4) five, retirement on or after the age of 62; 5) three, deceased while under contract; 6) three, dissatisfaction with the position; 7) one, career change; and 8) one, election of a new school board. Seventeen of the respondents reported that the relationship with the school board was a factor affecting turnover, and twelve of the respondents reported that a change in board philosophy was a factor affecting turnover. Ten respondents indicated that a change in the role expectation for the superintendent affected their turnover.

The North Carolina Joint Commission on School Board/Superintendent Relations identified factors that hinder good relations and influence turnover. The factors most often cited were "self-interest," "withholding information," "power," "personality characteristics," and "lack of well-defined role expectations."

School superintendents frequently leave their positions; however, only about one-fourth leave for other superintendent positions. The size of the school district, type of school district, age of the superintendent, and educational level of the superintendent did not influence the turnover rate.

Since the primary cause of superintendent turnover is the relationship between school boards and superintendents, the North Carolina Association of School Administrators and the School Boards Association are encouraged to establish a "permanent joint commission" with the purpose of building positive relationships and solving grievance impasses between school boards and superintendents. The two associations are further encouraged to provide orientation for their members with special emphasis for new superintendents and new board members that incorporates role, duties, and responsibilities for each.

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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Twenty-four school systems in North Carolina began the 1981 school year with new superintendents and in 1982, twenty school systems were beginning the year with a new superintendent. During this two-year period, 1980-82, 44 superintendents from the 144 school units in North Carolina left their jobs, a 30.6% turnover.¹ Many superintendents leave their positions for promotion, career changes, or for retirement. Some, however, leave because they have become disenchanted with the position, are fired, or threatened with dismissal.

Improving the relationship between superintendents and school boards is a very real concern for members of both groups throughout the United States. In 1982 the American Association of School Administrators reported that 48.2% of the superintendents who had held more than one superintendency left for promotion and money. Approximately 24% left for change of location, type of district, or position, and 11% cited "conflict with board" as their reason for leaving. Over 4% said that they were fired or were threatened with

¹Education Directory, 1980-82 (Raleigh, North Carolina: State Department of Public Instruction, 1980, 1982).

being fired.²

In the same 1982 survey, the superintendents were asked whether they would choose to be superintendents if they could arrange their careers again. Only 54.6% said they would make the same career choice. In 1971, 71.4% of the superintendents would have elected to be superintendents if they had the opportunity to choose. The attractiveness of the superintendency appears to have diminished substantially for many superintendents. In fact, the 1982 survey revealed that 25% of the superintendents viewed their status and prestige as decreasing in importance and influence.³

In 1979, the North Carolina School Boards Association and the North Carolina Association of School Administrators created a joint commission to study school board/superintendent relations. The commission was established because there was evidence of an "increasing tenuous nature" in the board/superintendent relationship and a need to make corrective recommendations.⁴

The attractiveness of the position of superintendent has diminished substantially in the past two decades. Many

²American Association of School Administrators, The American School Superintendency 1982 (Washington: American Association of School Administrators, 1982), p. 25.

³Ibid., p. 26

⁴Commission of School Board/Superintendent Relationships, Sponsored by the North Carolina School Board Association, 1980.

educators today are seriously concerned today that the changes in the position, that is, loss of status, power, and job security, have had a damaging effect on public education. Not only can these affect the performance of the leaders, but they also may discourage qualified educators from seeking the superintendency.

As pointed out in the 1982 American Association of School administrators' report, only slightly more than one half of the superintendents are satisfied with their career choice. Possibly this raises the question of the effectiveness of a leader who prefers to work in another profession.

In today's society, it has become popular to question authority, particularly the authority of those holding public office. The school superintendent is no exception. As the chief executive officer of the school system, the superintendent is accountable for the entire educational process. In America, the citizens have remained close to the schools, from the election of lay boards to direct day-to-day input. In the last two decades the citizens have scrutinized the school more closely. The result has been conflict and change: conflict over roles and decision-making responsibilities and change in leadership.

The replacement of the person in the key position of any organization, as Carlson reported, is potentially disruptive and even traumatic in some instances.

Executive succession often disrupts lines of authority and communication, disturbs power and decision-making systems, and generally upsets the organization's normal activities. At the least, executive succession dislocates several persons from their normal relationships with the organization, creating the additional disruption, if not painful, problem of relocating. [Executive succession] deals with change. ...executive succession often precedes further organizational adaptation, development, and change. In fact, this is often the reason for the replacement of executives. The proverb "a new broom sweeps clean" indicates the relationship between executive succession and organizational change.⁵

The opinion polls indicate that the public's confidence in the schools is eroding. Obviously, changing superintendents does not build public confidence in the schools.

Statement of the Problem

The problem of this study was to find the causes of superintendent turnover in North Carolina during the two-year period of 1980-82. This study was specifically concerned with the following questions:

- (1) Why did 44 school superintendents leave their positions during the 1980-82 school years?
- (2) Did the relationship between the school boards and their superintendents affect the superintendents' leaving?
- (3) Did a change in leadership of the board of education influence the superintendent turnover?
- (4) Did the factors identified by the North Carolina Joint Commission on School Board/Superintendent Relationships contribute to school board/superintendent conflict? The identified factors are as follows: 1) self-interest, 2) political aspiration, 3) self-glory, 4) power, 5) lack of job

⁵Richard O. Carlson, School Superintendents: Careers and Performances (Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill, 1972), pp.2-3.

Significance of the Study

The superintendent is the key individual in the school system. Frequent turnover cannot be construed as healthy for the school system. The urban superintendent need not expect more than 18 months in one city, and other superintendents average no more than four years in each position.⁶

Job security is a real concern for many people in public office and is an even greater concern for the superintendents. Because most parents entrust the schools with the education of their children, there is a growing recognition of the value of quality education to which the school superintendent is held accountable. Also, those responsible for the expenditures of tax monies are more closely scrutinized and held accountable to the people.⁷

The superintendent is the chief executive officer to the board of education and must provide leadership for the administrative staff and teaching faculty. To perform the functions the superintendent must develop necessary confidence and bring about an essential understanding to the successful operation of a school system.⁸ A short tenure may seriously impair these objectives. Many superintendents

⁶Charles W. Fowler, "When Superintendents Fail," The American School Board Journal, 164, No. 2 (February 1977), 21.

⁷Natt B. Burbank, The Superintendent of School--His Headaches and Rewards (Danville, Illinois: The Interstate Printers and Publishers, Inc., 1968), p. 105.

⁸B. Anthony Hess, "Establishing a Climate for Good Relationships" in Man in the Middle? The Superintendent of Schools, ed. Lloyd B. Ashby (Danville, Illinois: The Interstate Printers and Publishers, Inc., 1968), p. 26.

leave the superintendency soon after diagnosing the problems of the school system, and before appropriate solutions are discovered or implemented.

Another significant concern of this study is the superintendent as a person. The review of literature indicated the tremendous pressure of the superintendency and the stress felt by the superintendents. Added to the stress of the position is the threat of being removed from office. Krajewski reports that some superintendents are fired in public meetings without previous notice. Moreover, superintendents are often dismissed without being given any reasons.⁹

This study should be especially important to (1) the school superintendent who seeks knowledge that will help establish a successful superintendency and thus lengthen contract tenure and induce a continuous administrative career; (2) school boards in their attempt to establish positive ties with the chief executive officers in order to build stability and public confidence in school systems; and (3) students of educational administration who seek to learn from the mistakes of others.

Definition of Terms

For the purposes of this study, the following terms have

⁹Robert Krajewski, "The Anguish of Losing a Superintendency," The American School Board Journal, 169, No. 2 (February, 1982), 28.

been defined:

Career Change. Move to a career outside the area of superintendency.

Fired. Removed from office before expiration of a contract.

Nonrenewal. Termination of employment at the end of one's contract period; the school board does not offer the superintendent a new contract.

Present district. The position of the superintendent in the 1982-83 school year.

Previous district. A superintendency vacated during the 1980-81 or 1981-82 school years.

School Board (board of education). Legal constituted body created by the State Legislature to govern a school district through policy discretion.¹⁰

Superintendency. Position occupied by the superintendent.

Superintendent. Individual who serves in the system as the chief school advisor, educational leader, secretary, and executive of the school board, who has been given the authority to manage the affairs of the school, and who functions in accordance with appropriate regulations.¹¹

¹⁰Henry Stephen Grill, "A Study of the Evaluation Process of School Superintendents in North Carolina" (Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, University of North Carolina at Greensboro, 1978), p. 12.

¹¹Ibid.

Superintendent turnover. The voluntary or involuntary movement of superintendents from one district to another, or movement from the superintendency to some other position in the field of education, some other field, or retirement.¹²

Assumptions

The study on superintendent turnover is based on the following assumptions:

- (1) Excessive superintendent turnover has a negative effect on the public schools.
- (2) Excessive turnover devalues the desirability of the position of superintendent.
- (3) Excessive turnover is the result of poor superintendent/school board relationships.

Limitation

The population of this study was limited to the superintendents of North Carolina who left their position during, or at the end of, the 1980-82 school years as shown by the Education Directory for North Carolina 1980-81, 1981-82, and 1982-83. A total of forty-four superintendents left the superintendency position during this period.

¹²Edward Roy Thies, "A Study of Superintendent Turnover in Illinois" (Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, 1980), p. 8.

Organization of the Study

Chapter I introduced the problem, stated the problem, and gave four questions to be answered by the study. In Chapter II, related literature is reviewed that focuses on the historical development of the school board and the superintendent, including the role and function of each as well as the relationship between the two.

The legal responsibilities and duties of the school boards and superintendents in North Carolina are developed in Chapter III.

Chapter IV comprises the design of the study, results, and findings of the study. The summary, conclusion, and recommendations are comprised in Chapter V.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The central purpose of this study was to determine the reasons for superintendent turnover in North Carolina during the 1980-82 school years. Since the local boards of education have the sole responsibility for hiring and firing superintendents, the review of literature focuses on the school board, the superintendent, and the school board/superintendent relationship.

The review of literature is presented in the following order: (1) historical development of the school board; (2) role and responsibilities of the school board; (3) historical development of the superintendent; (4) roles and responsibilities of the superintendent; and (5) school board/superintendent relationships. Chapter III is concerned with the legal responsibilities and duties of both the school board and superintendent.

Historical Development of the School Board

The local school board, as a political instrument designed to manage the affairs of education, is uniquely American. Few other countries elect lay citizens to control a political subdivision-- the school system. Americans exhibit great faith in the ability to control and govern

themselves. Moreover, for over the last one hundred years, the American people feel the best way to control the education of children is by electing a local board of education and thereby keeping the public schools close to the people.¹

In a democracy the schools belong to the people. Having local school boards elected by them, the people insure direct influence and control over the schools.

American public education was born and developed close to the people. In homes, churches, and even in the wagon trains traveling westward, anywhere there was a book, a wise parent, and an interested child, schools began to emerge. In the American tradition, there were free schools for free people. As Dykes pointed out, education was "of, by, and for the people."²

As towns began to spring up, so did the need and opportunity for more formal education. Education decisions were made in town meetings. As the towns grew, education decisions became more complex and more time-consuming. In order to solve the twin problems of complexity and time and yet maintain local control of education, the townspeople began to elect representatives, called "selectmen," to handle

¹Archie R. Dykes, School Board and Superintendent: The Effective Working Relationships (Danville, Illinois: The Interstate Printers and Publishers, Inc., 1965), pp. 4-5.

²Ibid.

schooling affairs.³

Towns continued to grow in number and size.⁴ Eastern American became industrialized, with cities springing up along the rivers. From 1840 to 1850, the number of cities with over 8,000 population increased from 44 to 85.⁵ The increase in population caused a natural increase in governmental complexity including education, and thus education became burdensome to the selectmen who were charged with education responsibility. The selectmen began appointing temporary committees to handle specific functions such as appointing a committee to build a school or hire a headmaster. Continued increase in the demands of education eventually led the selectmen to appoint permanent committees to oversee educational matters. This was the birth of the permanent school committee, which later became known as the school board.⁶

The school committees were charged with legislative, administrative, and supervisory responsibilities. They

³Ibid., p. 7.

⁴Ibid., p. 8.

⁵Stuart G. Noble, A History of American Education (New York: Rinehard and Company, Inc., 1954), p. 188.

⁶Dykes, p. 8.

oversaw the operation of the schools to the smallest detail. The headmaster, however, began to gradually assume the administrative responsibilities for the operation of the school as the school's operation became more complex. As cities continue to grow and the number of schools within the cities increased, superintendents were employed. They were employees of the board, hired to handle specific administrative duties. By the early 1900's, school boards emerged as a policy-making legislative body and the school superintendent emerged as the executive officer.⁷

Also in the early 1900's, the states' legislative assemblies delegated powers and responsibilities to local school districts for the purpose of education: the county, New England town, the township, the city, and the district.⁸ In many Southern and Western states county boards of education were elected by the people or appointed by another body. The superintendent, with supervisory and/or administrative authority, was either elected by the citizens or appointed by the school board to serve the schools outside the independent cities.⁹

⁷Ibid., pp. 7-8.

⁸Edgar W. Knight, Education In the United States (Boston: Ginn and Company, 1951), p. 8.

⁹Ibid.

Some New England states have town units for educational administration. This town system, which originated in Massachusetts and is primarily limited to the New England states, manages schools under one taxation unit. The district may be a small town, rural area, or small town including a rural area. The town school committee is elected by citizens to manage educational affairs. The town school committee may employ one or more superintendents, or two or more town school committees may employ a superintendent to serve in a supervisory capacity and as an executive officer of the town school committee. The New England town system relies heavily on the state department of education for direct contact.¹⁰

The township, favored by the North-Central states, is generally comprised of a larger geographical area than the New England town. Moreover, the township educational district is usually an area congruent with governmental units. Knight stated that it is a less effective educational division than the New England town system. Yet, the system does focus effort on systematic organization for education.¹¹

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹Ibid.

The city unit has enjoyed popularity throughout the United States. Although under direct legislative mandate by the state, the city unit promised flexibility for the school board to provide educational opportunities for students. Knight reported in 1951 that much of the rapid progress in American education had been largely due to the improvement of the city system in organization, administration, and direction. City school boards were either elected by citizens or directly appointed by another governmental authority such as the city council.¹²

The city school unit had its beginning in Massachusetts in 1789, when the law recognized it as a school unit of organization. Most units were very small. As cities grew, the need for additional schools increased, and new school districts were formed inside the city. The largest cities ended up with 20 or more school districts inside the city. Each district had its own tax base and administration. The question of uniform opportunities led to city-wide controls. The eventual solution was to centralize the control under one school board, one superintendent, and one tax base. In 1826, New Orleans centralized three schools under the direction of a board of regents and one director. Other cities followed: Buffalo, New York, 1837; Louisville,

¹²Ibid.

Lexington, and Maysville, Kentucky, and Providence, Rhode Island, 1838; St. Louis, Missouri, 1839; and Springfield, Massachusetts, 1840. By 1885 practically every large city had centralized control.¹³

The small district is the oldest unit of school administration in the United States. As previously stated, it originated in New England and gave the citizens a feeling of closeness and a feeling of control over the educational destiny of their children. The board was generally elected by the people and served under the control of another board in a larger district. Knight suggested it has outlived its period of usefulness.¹⁴

The Role and Function of the School Board

Much is written about the role and function of the school board. The primary emphasis of the literature focuses on the school board as a policy-making body. Presently, the generally accepted role of the school board is that of a policy-making board only. Yet, Dykes has pointed out that the "identification of appropriate responsibilities and function of lay school boards is far from settled, and many boards today have not given up their administrative and executive functions."¹⁵

¹³Noble, p. 188.

¹⁴Knight, p. 11.

¹⁵Dykes, p. 8.

The board of education is charged with the duty of establishing and operating a school system. This duty is assigned by the general assembly; each of the 50 states' general assemblies designates the school board to oversee the states' compelling interest in education. Most modern writers adhere to the belief that the most effective school systems have boards of education adopt broad, basic policies and hire competent educational specialists to administer the schools. School boards are composed of lay leaders in the communities who are in close contact with the local citizens and can shape the general direction of the schools and oversee the education of the youth.¹⁶

Morphet, Johns, and Reller have outlined the important duties of the school board as follows:

1. Selection of the chief administrator, the superintendent of schools
2. Establishment of policies and procedures in accord with which the educational services are administered and a range of programs are developed
3. Establishment of policies relating to planning improvements and to accountability
4. Adoption of the budget and the enactment of provisions for the financing of the schools
5. Acquisition and development of necessary property and the provision of supplies
6. Adoption of policies regarding personnel including the establishment of essential policies and procedures for collective negotiations and the approval of agreements relating thereto

¹⁶Ibid., p. 8.

7. Appraisal of the work of the schools and adoption of plans for development¹⁷

The National School Boards Association published a book in 1982 titled Becoming a Better Board Member. The book stated that:

While many important tasks and decisions in every school district are delegated to the superintendent and the district staff, your board is ultimately responsible for all district concerns. Some of these it cannot delegate; others it must delegate to the school administrator.¹⁸

School board members have complete legal authority and power only when the board is legally convened. When individual members are speaking to a citizen on the street, the board member can only speak as another citizen. School board members cannot make decisions or take action independently on behalf of the board; one member cannot speak for the entire board. All legal action by the board must transpire in an announced, public meeting. Personnel matters

¹⁷Edgar L. Morphet, Roe L. Johns, and Theodore L. Reller, Educational Organizations and Administration Concept, Practices, and Issues (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1982), pp. 248-249.

¹⁸National School Boards Association, Becoming a Better Board Member, National School Boards Association, ERIC Document ED 218797, 1982, p. 6.

may be discussed in executive session, but formal action must be made in the legal meeting.¹⁹

Decisions made by the board of education are binding to all members of the board. Individual board members who were absent for the vote, abstained, or voted against the issue are bound to the majority decision--a 4-3 board vote is just as binding as a 7-0 vote.²⁰

Therefore, a board of education must be a unified body. The board should value high standards in education and work cooperatively with parents, teachers, administrators, and other groups for the most beneficial development of children.²¹

Historical Development of the Superintendent

The position of local school superintendent originated in the United States approximately 150 years ago. The literature is inconsistent as to the city that first employed a superintendent and which year it was.

Stuart G. Noble credited the city of New Orleans as the first city to employ a superintendent. In 1826 "New Orleans

¹⁹Pennsylvania School Boards Association, Inc., PSBA Commission to Strengthen the Working Relationships of School Boards and Superintendents, Pennsylvania School Boards Association, Inc., ERIC Document ED 148013, October 1977, p. 6.

²⁰Ibid, p. 7.

²¹Morphet, et al., p. 249.

organized three schools under the administration of a director."²² According to Dykes,²³ and Campbell,²⁴ Buffalo, New York and Louisville, Kentucky were the first cities to hire superintendents. Edgar W. Knight, reported that Nathan Bishop, a tutor at Brown University, probably was the first full-time professional superintendent when the school committee of Providence, Rhode Island employed him on August 1, 1839. Knight also noted that other cities had "agents of the public schools" who performed some of the duties of the superintendent. In 1838 the Kentucky legislature enacted a law for that state that established a system of common schools. Louisville, Lexington, and Maysville appointed agents to perform some of the duties of a superintendent. The salary for the Louisville agent in 1840 was \$800. A grammar school principal in Louisville that same year was paid \$900, one hundred dollars more than the superintendent.²⁵

The trend toward central administration spread rapidly to the larger cities throughout the country, and by the turn

²²Noble, p. 189.

²³Dykes, p. 68.

²⁴Ronald F. Campbell, Edwin M. Bridges and Raphael O. Nystrand, Introduction to Educational Administration (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1977), p. 232.

²⁵Knight, p. 304.

of the century, the superintendency was an almost universally accepted position in the organization of school administration.²⁶

The superintendency was developed to satisfy the need for administrative authority over the schools. As the schools increased in number and grew in size, selectmen and committeemen could not provide adequate supervision, and since the subcommittees' plan proved unsuccessful, the superintendency position developed. However, this evolution did not come easily.²⁷

City officials often viewed the expenditure of funds for a chief executive officer as wasteful. Moreover, school boards were often hesitant to relinquish authority and questioned themselves for their failure to execute their elected duties. Even the teachers and principals resisted the superintendency's development, and were opposed to direct, full-time supervision and control.²⁸ Even as late as 1952 this same skepticism remained pervasive for school administrators:

Having found the job of school supervision impossible through their own combined efforts, boards expressed doubt that any single person could perform all the duties even if he did nothing else. Sometimes they resented, as a reflection upon themselves, the proposal for an executive officer.

²⁶Noble, p. 189.

²⁷Dykes, p. 68.

²⁸Campbell, et al., p. 232.

Board members tried vainly in various other ways to meet their expanding responsibilities, hesitantly appointed an executive officer, often abandoned the the experiment, always returned to it.²⁹

As America continued to grow and develop, so did the educational system. Schools grew in size and complexity. The number of superintendents increased with additional duties and responsibilities.

Wilson reported the development of the superintendency as follows:

The position of school superintendent is a product of growth and necessity. It was fashioned; it was not born. It unraveled; it was not conceived. No great architect envisioned a problem and designed a quick solution. Rather, the problem of administering in an organized manner the new, ambitious, and growing dream of educating all youth was attacked on many fronts by many citizens. As a model began to take shape in large cities concurrent of the Civil War era, it was copied indiscriminately by smaller communities in succeeding decades. By the turn of the twentieth century, the superintendency enjoyed almost universal acceptance. Not until this century has serious attention been given to its rational direction.³⁰

The number of superintendents continued to increase until the 1930's. Wilson documented a dramatic turnaround beginning in the early 1930's. The number of school systems in the United States began to decrease due to the consolidations of smaller systems to the extent that there were only about one-tenth of the number that existed in the

²⁹American Association of School Administrators, The American School Superintendency, Thirtieth Yearbook (Washington: The Association of School Administrators, 1952), pp. 49-52.

³⁰Robert E. Wilson, The Modern School Superintendent (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1960), p. 2.

peak years of the 1920's.³¹

According to the literature, the typical characteristics of superintendents changed little from the position's inception. Most superintendents are married, white males who strive for upward mobility. Superintendents are generally native-born Protestants from rural, farming areas.³²

Tyack described additional characteristics of the superintendents applicable to 1976 as follows:

Typically, they had long experience in education, beginning their careers as young teachers, going on to principalships, and then becoming superintendents (in larger communities they often became assistant superintendents along the way). In disproportionate percentages they have been older sons in larger than average families. Mostly they remained in the same states for their entire careers as superintendents. They have been joiners, participating actively in civic and professional groups. Most of them picked up their advanced education while they practiced their profession, with long gaps of time between their academic degrees. They have been disproportionately Republican and have generally been moderate to conservative in their social philosophies.³³

Superintendents have historically been the most educated members of the communities. Except for a period during World

³¹Ibid.

³²H. Thomas James, "Educational Administration and Organization: A 40-Year Perspective," Educational Researcher, 11 (February, 1982), p. 14.

³³D. B. Tyack, "Pilgrims Progress: Toward a Social History of School Superintendency 1860-1960," History of Education Quarterly, 16, (1976), 264.

War II, qualified administrators have been available for employment. The G. I. Bill caused large college enrollment in the 50's which produced an overabundant supply of certified candidates for superintendent positions in the 60's. Superintendents with more specialized training were employed for positions with less pay and status.³⁴

Wilson labeled the successful superintendent in 1960 as the "new brand", a person who is professionally prepared for the superintendency. The trend here is away from advancing people through the system. Rather, boards have tended to discard the practice of promoting the best teacher to the superintendency. The boards discovered that good teachers do not necessarily become good administrators. The most desirable superintendent, however, is first a person with successful teaching experience, who developed leadership skills in a subordinate administrative post, and acquired specialized instruction in public school administration on the university graduate level.³⁵

Second, the new superintendent is dynamic, aggressive, and a strong leader. "He has discarded the blue serge, severe demeanor, and professional reserve in favor of

³⁴James, p. 15.

³⁵Wilson, pp. xii-xiii.

contemporary raiment, friendly helpfulness, and congeniality."³⁶ Also, he places trust in people and their ideas. He must be a salesman, a diplomat, a trial lawyer, and a gracious host.

Third, the new brand of superintendent is a utilitarian psychologist with the ability to understand human nature and to manage people. He is capable of sympathy and empathy but must guard himself against personal attacks.

Fourth, the superintendent is a well-educated person who has sufficient knowledge and experience to deal comfortably with the business executive, elected official, sports enthusiast, blue-collar worker, and the ladies' garden club. Finally, the new brand of superintendent is career oriented and quickly passes from one superintendency to another more prestigious one.³⁷

Carlson referred to the new superintendent as "career-bound" as opposed to the more traditional "place-bound" superintendent. The place-bound superintendents are persons promoted from within. The career-bound person usually serves administrative positions in two or more districts and is

³⁶Ibid.

³⁷Ibid.

available to move to areas where superintendent vacancies occur. Also, the career-bound superintendent seeks out new superintendencies in larger and more prestigious districts, and serves as superintendent in many districts.³⁸

The persons charged with supervising the school systems have held the titles "Visitor," "Treasurer," "Managers" and "Headmaster". Finally, the title "Superintendent" emerged.³⁹ In Latin, the word "super" means over and "intendo" means direct. The selectmen hired superintendents to oversee and direct the schools. Unfortunately, some school superintendents and boards, Wilson reported, still view the responsibilities of superintendents in the same light with little emphasis on the important function of leadership.⁴⁰

Roles and Responsibilities of the Superintendent

The school superintendent is the administrative head of the school system. Dykes reported that superintendents should be appointed by and accountable to the school board, and administer to the school as directed by the board. Dykes

³⁸Richard O. Carlson, School Superintendents: Careers and Performance (Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Company, 1972), pp. 39-40.

³⁹Ibid.

⁴⁰Wilson, pp. 9-10.

quotes the National Education Association as follows:

It should be made clear in the law that the board of education is the representative of the people for the establishment of educational policies for the schools, but that the superintendent is the executive officer of the board and its professional advisor. The superintendent should have enforceable right to make recommendations to the board on educational matters such as the selection of personnel, courses of study, and textbooks and instructional materials. The board should be restricted to the superintendent's recommendations in many phases of the instructional program of the schools, although reserving the right to the board to reject his first proposals and to ask for alternative recommendations.⁴¹

Final responsibility for the operation of the school must be accepted by the superintendent of schools. While authority may be delegated to subordinates, the superintendent is held accountable to the public for the performance of the total staff.⁴²

Monahan reported that men pursue administration for the same reasons they pursue other careers. By circumstance or accident, candidates fit into channels leading to the same end. In some instances, superintendents have a talent for management, are ambitious, enjoy power, need conflict, or believe the work is important. In any case, administration is an essential activity. The solution to every societal

⁴¹Dykes, pp. 73-74.

⁴²Campbell, et al., p. 232.

problem--crime, hunger, illness, economy, and educating the young--is a function of administration.⁴³

Nearly every state requires that superintendents have experience as classroom teachers. The most common course leading to a superintendency is through teacher and principal positions. In some of the larger systems the track may be teacher, principal, assistant superintendent or director, then superintendent.⁴⁴

Carlson reported that most school boards generally prefer superintendents in the age range of 40-49 years. While most superintendents enter the superintendency during their forties, the average age of incumbent superintendents is 50.⁴⁵

According to Wilson, school boards do not use consistent patterns to hire superintendents. Much literature is available to assist the boards with this important task; however, evidence indicates available advice is not followed.

⁴³William G. Monahan. Theoretical Dimensions of Educational Administration (New York: Macmillan Co., 1975). p. 14.

⁴⁴Carlson, p. 9.

⁴⁵Ibid., p. 10.

Some school boards let their present superintendents hire a replacement. Others use an extensive search process or hire consultants for this important function.⁴⁶

The interviewing process is equally inconsistent. Some superintendents are hired without meeting the present superintendents or even the school board. One superintendent reportedly was interviewed in a cocktail lounge and got the job. Other boards arrange for the prospective superintendent to meet almost the entire community.⁴⁷

Wilson's studies reported that the decision to hire a particular candidate may be based on unconnected or conflicting reasons, for example, the following: smoking habits, age (actual or appearance), military experience, business experience, doctoral degree, alluring wife, unmarried status, few school-age children (system was overcrowded), grades (Phi Beta Kappa or conversely, didn't have straight A's), affiliation with P.T.A., and experience in many or few superintendent positions.⁴⁸

⁴⁶Wilson, p. 16.

⁴⁷Ibid.

⁴⁸Ibid, p. 168.

In recent decades professional organizations and universities have focused much attention on the training of educational administrators. Morphet et al. stated that the need is growing for action in the training process and for increased inservice training. New knowledge has been developed in the educational administration field, but concerted effort should focus on the development of new theory, knowledge, and cooperation between the school systems, universities, and professionals. A key to the future success of education, according to Morphet et al., may be the careful selection and controlled development of administrators.⁴⁹

Administrators are involved with the changing society's shifting of values and power centers which affect problems within the schools. Changes in attitudes toward authority and an incredible increase in the complexity of the decision-making process have occurred. The superintendent, as the district administrator, has an extremely critical position.

A primary question, according to Morphet, focuses on whether or not a superintendent should be an educator. The term educator in this context means a person who understands the educational processes and can lead the staffs in shaping

⁴⁹Morphet, et al., p.16.

the curricula and instruction. As the superintendent position began to develop in the nineteenth century, superintendents emphasized their skills as managers--those who deal with finances and facilities. Others were mostly concerned with matters of curricula and instruction. A third group, who were competent in the educational process, provided the necessary leadership to give services and programs based on educational needs.⁵⁰

Today, the administrator is pushed by many forces into becoming a manager with little time or energy to devote to child development or the learning process.⁵¹ Superintendents were asked in a survey by the 1982 American Association of School Administrators what new skills or information they needed to be most effective, and they responded as follows in descending rank:

- (1) General management skills
- (2) Human relations skills
- (3) Data management/technology
- (4) Financial skills
- (5) Knowledge of social and education change process
- (6) Other conflict resolution skills
- (7) Political skills

⁵⁰Ibid.

⁵¹Ibid.

(8) Research skills.⁵²

Robert Katz reported, that the three basic skills needed by administrators are technical, human, and conceptual. The technical skill requires an understanding of educational methods, processes, procedures, and techniques. It also requires a knowledge of finance, accounting, scheduling, purchasing, construction, and maintenance.⁵³

Sergiovanni described the human skill as the "ability to work effectively and efficiently with other people on a one-to-one basis or in a group setting."⁵⁴ This requires an understanding of oneself and an appreciation for others.

Conceptual skills, according to Sergiovanni, require the school executive to view the school, the district, and the total educational program as a unit.⁵⁵ Sergiovanni stated that "This skill includes the effective mapping of

⁵²American Association of School Administrators, The American School Superintendency 1982: Summary Report (Arlington, Va: AASA, 1982), p. 41.

⁵³Cited in Thomas J. Sergiovanni and Fred D. Carver, The New School Executive: A Theory of Administration (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1980), p. 13.

⁵⁴Ibid.

⁵⁵Ibid.

interdependence for each of the components of the school as an organization, the educational program as an instructional system, and the functioning of the human organization."⁵⁶ The conceptual skill requires a balance of administrative theory, educational philosophy, and organizational and human behavior.

Katz recommended that administrators develop these skills as they advance through the levels of administration. The technical skills are most important at the lower levels, the conceptual skills are more helpful at the upper level including the position of superintendent.⁵⁷

Due to conflicting expectations of various publics, the superintendent must sort out discordant goals and reconcile values, skills, and abilities in terms of his own knowledge. Hack et al. reported that the superintendent faces several challenges:

1. He must recognize the reality and function of self as well as the three components of lay and professional expectations and situational factors.
2. He must be wary of oversimplification--the determination of his concept of job by the dictates of one element alone.
3. He must recognize that tasks are affected or determined by the interaction of all three and that in the interaction conflict is almost inevitable.

⁵⁶Ibid.

⁵⁷Ibid.

4. He must look to himself--his own values and perceptions, skills and abilities--to find the common demoninator which puts the components into perspective and determines what his job is to be in the given setting.⁵⁸

As a leader of the staff and a partner to the board of education, the superintendent is truly a man in the middle. A successful superintendent finds it difficult to operate in this middle position for long. He must work to reduce the gap between the two opposing factions, the board and the staff, to prevent a perceived alignment with either group. A total alignment with the board would cause him to lose the confidence of the teachers. A total alignment with the teachers would cause him to lose the confidence of the board, and he would be of little value to the teacher. Ideally an effective superintendent should remain in the middle and stand for quality education, creating a climate for good relationships.⁵⁹

Wilson pointed out the common characteristics of the superintendent by reporting on a study of sixteen Ohio school chiefs who were judged most successful by the state's educational administration professors. The superintendent is

⁵⁸Walter G. Hack, John A. Ramseyer, William J. Gephart and James B. Hack, eds., Educational Administration: Selected Readings. (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1971), pp. 202-203.

⁵⁹B. Anton Hess, Man in the Middle? The Superintendent of Schools, ed. Lloyd W. Ashby (Danville, Illinois: The Interstate Printers and Publishers, Inc., 1968), p. 26.

male, middle aged, Anglo-Saxon, intelligent--but not gifted--Republican, and has earned a doctorate in educational administration. Superintendents are friendly individuals who adhere to high moral standards. Superintendents have good health and can control stress. Strong-willed but flexible and patient, superintendents are self-confident and highly results-oriented. Success is measured in student achievement--not the job done by the superintendent staff. The most successful superintendent is conscious of public relations. He lives in his school community and participates in school, church, and club activities, thus capitalizing on face-to-face contact. The superintendent fosters wholesome board/superintendent relations by understanding the role of each. Most successful Ohio superintendents like their job and the people they work with. "They made the job that is often described as a snake pit seem rather like a walk in the sun."⁶⁰

To a large measure, the way a person performs his job depends on the orientation that he brings to that job. Since

⁶⁰Robert E. Wilson, "The Anatomy of Success in the Superintendency," Phi Delta Kappan, 62, No. 1 (September, 1980), 20-21.

educational administration involves a "complexity of activities and relationships," it may be viewed from many directions. Some workers view their job as fulfilling the purposes of the institution. Others look at the tasks that need to be completed. A third group may view educational administration as a process and concentrate on making arrangements for the implementation of the processes. A fourth group may focus on leadership and see their primary purpose as management and control, or cost effectiveness.⁶¹

Each group may be partially right, but to be successful in educational administration, an administrator cannot afford to have a limited view of his role. He must be aware of the conflicts of interest of the various publics with which he must work. He should take into account those things that make sense to him and conform to his own beliefs. Hack and others stated that "A man can perform only within the realm of his understanding, his values, and his skills."⁶² This does, however, impose on any administrator the responsibility of broadening his understanding, appraising broadening his understanding, appraising his values, and improving his skills. He does this in the setting of the expectations of his reference groups and the realities of the

⁶¹Hack, et al., p. 201.

⁶²Ibid.

situation in which he works.⁶³

School Board/Superintendent Relationships

Only by developing an effective school board/superintendent relationship can the school system work most efficiently. By recognizing the areas most likely to contribute to a breakdown in relations, the board and the superintendent may avoid some conflicts. One of the prime areas for potential breakdown is a misunderstanding or failure to follow the policy-making and administrative role model.

In a democratic society education must provide for public control of the educational process and at the same time, provide the best available technical expertise. The American concept provides for a lay school board and a superintendent. Both perform important functions.

The board sets the general direction and the superintendent steers the ship. The superintendent uses his professional and technical competency to manage the schools and implement board directions. An effective school program results when both superintendent and school board properly execute their roles and respect each other's duties. The board and superintendent must continually assess their

⁶³Ibid.

working relationship, focusing on proper division of responsibilities.⁶⁴

Hess reported superintendents and school board members should clearly understand their areas of responsibility; that is, "the school board members should stick to policy matters and render administrative matters unto the board's executive agent, the superintendent."⁶⁵

Citing the National Education Association, Hess stated the following:

The distinction between lay control of school policies determined by the board of education and implementation of these policies by the professional staff, with the leadership of the local superintendent, should be dedicated, understood and respected.⁶⁶

Schmidt and Voss referred to this traditional school board/ superintendent role-relationship as a harmony model. Policy-setting is a prerogative of the school board,

⁶⁴Pennsylvania School Board Association, Commission to Strengthen the Working Relationships of School Boards and Superintendents: A Special Report, (ERIC Document ED 148 013, 1977), p. 5.

⁶⁵B. Anton Hess, School Executive's Guide, (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1965), p. 642.

⁶⁶Ibid., p. 643.

but policy should originate with the professional staff. The superintendent has the responsibility for the interpretation and administration of adopted policy.⁶⁷

Graves reported that "the functions of the board of education and the superintendent of schools dovetail into each other and should as far as possible be considered as a unitary procedure in the administration of schools."⁶⁸ The Pennsylvania School Board Association commission believes that the role and function of each should not only be understood, but written policy should be developed regarding the role of the superintendent and school board. Included in such policy should be the expectation of both parties, goals by both, and an evaluation procedure mutually agreed upon.⁶⁹

Hess reported that:

The best one-gauge appraisal of a community's school system, so the American Association of School Administrators (AASA) suggested recently, is a barometric reading of its school board-superintendent relationship. In creating the mutual trust, confidence, and understanding essential to operating a successful

⁶⁷Paul C. Schmidt and Fred Voss, "Schoolboards and Superintendents: Modernizing the Model," Teacher's College Record, 77, (May 1976), 518.

⁶⁸Frank Pierrepont Graves, The Administration of American Education (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1932), p. 442.

⁶⁹PSBA, pp. 2-3.

educational program, the superintendent, who occupies the dual position of leader to staff and partner to a lay board, plays a pivotal role.⁷⁰

Paschal and Pittillo suggested that the perception that teachers have of a unified establishment between the superintendent and the school board is not necessarily true. Conflict frequently occurs at the top level. In a survey of superintendents and board chairmen in North Carolina, only about 10% reported conflict arising from the discussion of personnel. Little conflict was noted on issues of school finance or even community pressure groups. The greatest conflict reported by superintendents was caused by school boards' assumption of administrative functions. Conversely, the school board chairmen perceived the greatest conflict as caused by superintendents assuming the role of policy making. Forty-one per cent of the city superintendents, 25% of the county superintendents, 35% of the city board chairmen, and 15% of the county board chairmen reported role conflict.⁷¹

Authority conflict in organizations, according to Anderson, results when two or more bases of authority contradict each other, creating anxiety. Formal authority is

⁷⁰Hess, School Executive's Guide, p. 640.

⁷¹Jerry D. Paschal, and Robert A. Pittillo, "The Superintendent and His Board," North Carolina Education, 3, No. 37, (December, 1972), 16-17.

derived from the position through the rules and procedure. Functional authority grows out of technical skills, expertise, and experience.⁷²

School boards and superintendents are forced into conflict situations today because of "irrational demands, emotional reactions, vested interest forces, legal mandates, political pressures, and harsh criticism."⁷³ The pressure created from these conditions causes strained relations for the superintendent. To deal with this stress, the chief executive must have "continuous strategic activity."⁷⁴

Educational administrators increasingly expect to cope with conflict resolution. Increasingly, they find attitudes of dissent and militancy. They must deal effectively with groups and individuals in conflict situations.

The lay citizens affect the superintendent's decisions. In our country, the schools belong to the people who pay for them with their taxes. According to Hack, the people want to decide how the schools are run and set limits on the

⁷²James G. Anderson, Bureaucracy in Education, (Baltimore: The John Hopkins Press, 1968), p. 112.

⁷³Norbert J. Nelson, Administrative Strategies Used and Their Effective-nesses in Tension Situation, (Eric Document ED 184 238, February, 1980), p. 1.

⁷⁴Ibid.

administrator's decision-making power.⁷⁵ The school board member spends many long hours on school matters, and is subject to the same pressure as the superintendent, but usually without pay or glory.⁷⁶

The legal authority and power of a school board member is in full force only when the board is legally convened in a public meeting. A citizen may view a board member as a decision-maker or policy setter during a private hearing or public appearance; however, school board members should realize that their comments are not official until matters are acted upon by the board or in a legal meeting.⁷⁷

School board members need to recognize that the board decisions do not always reflect the opinions of individual members as indicated by 5-4 votes. However, for the smooth operation of the board and future effectiveness, there needs to be respect for the board's decision as a whole. "Further, the community's assessment of how the board is able to function will also be influenced by the manner in which consensus or disagreement is in evidence."⁷⁸

⁷⁵Hack, et al., p. 202.

⁷⁶Hess, School Executive Guide, p. 641.

⁷⁷PSBA, p. 6.

⁷⁸Ibid., p. 7.

A newly elected school board member may find that he doesn't have autonomous power and cannot speak his mind as he could before he was elected. He must learn to play the games of politics now if he wants to stay on the board. Evelyn Clark, in her article "Board Power," gave the following advice to board members: "As an individual board member, you must learn to deal with another one, the superintendent. Remember: The superintendent is the professional in your school system, and you must help and work with him."⁷⁹ School board members should give support to their superintendent, but they should also maintain their right to fulfill their duties. A board may become the dominant force when the superintendent lets a major issue drag on, when there exists widespread dissatisfaction, or when the board loses confidence in the superintendent.⁸⁰ Lack of leadership by the superintendent may cause the board to assume administrative responsibility. The superintendent should demonstrate leadership by actively planning, advising, directing, and implementing board policy.⁸¹

⁷⁹Evelyn Clark, "Board Power: A Game of Numbers," The American School Board Journal, 168, No. 1 (January 1981), 27.

⁸⁰Sergiovanni, p. 134.

⁸¹PSBA, p. 8.

When the board and superintendent disagree and the superintendent believes that the board is acting unwisely, the superintendent then has three choices: (1) he may yield to the wishes of the board; (2) he may remain neutral; or (3) he may hold on to his position and disregard the board pressure. Kutkat stated that the third choice is the correct action since superintendents are paid to be the leader of their school system; good leaders understand that they must sometimes make unpopular decisions.⁸²

Many school boards today choose to involve the community closely in the decision-making process. Open meetings are held where community input is sought. In heterogeneous school districts the parents value "arena behavior" by their school boards, although it may cause conflict and a high rate of board turnover. Superintendents may survive such board conflict and turnover by

- .being supportive of the concept of arena behavior for the board and recognizing that public debate enhances the public nature of policy making
- .remaining inactive in the policy making process
- .separating the policy making process from the administrative process
- .leading in the execution of policy enacted by the board

⁸²James H. Kutkat, "Superintendents Opposes Boards," The American School Board Journal, 168, No. 5 (May 1981), 37.

.preventing personal identification with any board
faction.⁸³

School board members must listen to the voices of the voters who put them in office. Superintendents do not depend on the voters directly for their job, but they normally serve at the pleasure of the school board. Even though the board and superintendent usually agree on what is best for the school system, there will be times that the two will not agree and will clash.⁸⁴ It is important for the school board to know all available options and the implications of each before the best decision can be made. Clark recommended that the superintendent make available the following data:

1. A complete identification of the problem
2. All supportive data concerning his recommendation
3. Alternative suggestions
4. A list of pros and cons concerning the alternatives
5. A rationale for the final recommendation.⁸⁵

When a superintendent sees that his board is acting unwisely, he must assert himself. Those times will be for example,

1. When the board wants to spend too much money

⁸³Frank W. Lutz, Community Conflict and School Board Response: A Study of Superintendent Survival, (Eric Document ED 165 327, November, 1978), pp. 16-17.

⁸⁴Kutkat, p. 37.

⁸⁵Clark, p. 27.

2. When the board wants to give in to the wishes of a uninformed public (e.g., to fire a coach)
3. When the board wants to go along with trends of other school systems
4. When the board wants to ignore the interests of students, particularly in planning course offerings
5. When the board's action would be illegal
6. When personal interests of a board member could cause a conflict of interest
7. When the board blames the superintendent for problems beyond his control.⁸⁶

Poor planning may cause the board to become involved with day-to-day administration, thereby creating conflict in board/superintendent relationships. A board that does not have a clear policy direction may find itself having to react to crisis situations. This makes decision making much more difficult for the board and creates greater resistance toward the superintendent's implementation.⁸⁷

The superintendent should provide the board with all information possible including all available options for each decision to be made by the board. A major responsibility of the superintendent is to keep the board informed of matters relating to school operation, and in particular any area

⁸⁶Clark, pp. 37, 44.

⁸⁷PSBA, p. 9.

where there is possible conflict. Generally when the board lacks pertinent information, the blame must be shouldered by the superintendent. When poor decisions are made based on incomplete information, the school system, board, and superintendent suffer. "The consequences of half-truth, or half-facts, can be disastrous whether they come from the board or from the superintendent."⁸⁸

A board chairman needs to exercise leadership to prevent situations that split the board and the superintendent. Meetings can be kept on target with proper planning and efficient direction. Board meetings should be geared to the development of policy, planning, and evaluation. The chairman can avoid many serious problems by preventing personal confrontation on issue-oriented decisions.⁸⁹

Not all writers today support the harmony model of superintendent/school board relationships. Many social scientists urge the development of a pluralist model which focuses on a more political form of administration. The role of the superintendency would become more that of an appointed

⁸⁸Ibid.

⁸⁹Ibid., p. 6.

politician or an elected official. This movement calls for a partisan election of the school board that functions under a department of general city government. The supporters of this plan assume that "educational policymaking would improve its responsiveness to the diverse needs of the citizens, and thereby, the administration of schools would become more innovative, socially sensitive, and educationally effective."⁹⁰ This pluralist model seems to be supported by only a few social scientists. The literature by educational administrators seems to solidly support the harmony model.

The Pennsylvania School Board Association determined that the greatest conflicts in the harmony model was caused by failure to put student needs first in decision-making, withholding information by either party, closedmindedness, failure to seek all available information, poor leadership, and indecisiveness.⁹¹

Paschal and Pittillo make the following recommendation to the North Carolina schools:

1. Plan cooperatively a role analysis of what is expected of the educational leaders in your community...
2. Develop and implement procedures to enhance the process of communication between the school board, school officials, and the general public...

⁹⁰Schmidt, p. 517.

⁹¹PSBA, pp. 11-12.

3. Seek and initiate contact and communication with professional teacher groups by providing opportunities for interaction among administrators, school board members and teachers...
4. Encourage intensive study at all levels to see if more satisfying relationships can be developed concerning the methods by which local school districts are interdigitated with other related state and local agencies...
5. Provide for a careful and detailed study of the financial commitment of the local school district that would be based upon effort and ability...
6. Employ a person to work in the area of public relations...
7. Develop systematic and long-range measures to inform the general public as to the ever-changing role of public education in a community...
8. Make concerted efforts at the local level to find more adequate ways to express understanding and appreciation for the work and efforts of all the people in education...
9. Emphasize the full utilization of the many outstanding resources of the State Department of Instruction...
10. Seek closer communications with institutions of higher learning...⁹²

In summary, the superintendent must have faith in the democratic process and have confidence that the board members have good intentions. The school board is the agent for "grass roots" input into the control of the schools. The superintendency was a position that evolved much later--

⁹²Paschal and Pittillo, p. 17.

only after the school boards began to realize that school matters required too much of their personal time.

Second, the superintendent needs to realize his duty to establish unity and develop a functional organization. A superintendent/school board team can work much more successfully than an individual can.

A third point, the roles of the superintendent and the board of education must be clearly understood, i.e., the school board makes policies and the superintendent handles administrative matters.

CHAPTER III
THE LEGAL ASPECTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF
SCHOOL BOARDS AND SUPERINTENDENTS OF
SCHOOLS IN NORTH CAROLINA

Public education is a primary concern of America. The education of every child in the United States is a national goal.¹ However, the Constitution of the United States makes no specific reference to or provision for education. The Tenth Amendment to the Federal Constitution, which was ratified in 1791, mandates that "the powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people." Thus, the Constitution and Bill of Rights default the authority, responsibility, control, and operation of the public education to the states. The reason education was omitted from the Federal Constitution in 1787 is a historical mystery. Bolmeier suggested several possible explanations: (1) education was potentially an explosive issue and its inclusion may have jeopardized the Constitution's ratification, (2) the cultural background of

¹E. Edmund Reutter, Jr. and Robert R. Hamilton, The Law of Public Education (Mineola, New York: The Foundation Press, Inc. 1976), p. 1.

the constitution's framers would suggest that education was a private arrangement rather than a public one, and (3) at the time the Constitution was adopted, few educational theories had been developed.²

Cubberley stated:

It is not surprising, however, when we consider the time, the men, and the existing conditions, that the founders of our Republic did not deem the subject of public education important enough to warrant consideration in the Constitution or inclusion in the document. . . . Were the Constitution to be reframed today there is little doubt but that education would occupy a prominent place in it.³

From the omission of education in the Constitution, it should never be inferred that the Constitution neither affects nor relates to the schools. The tremendous increase in the number of Supreme Court decisions related to education dispel such a notion. The Supreme Court decisions focus primarily on the inherent rights of individuals as prescribed by Article I, Section 10 of the Constitution, and the First, Fourth, Fifth, Sixth, Eighth, and Fourteenth Amendments.⁵

²Edward C. Bolmeier, School In The Legal Structure (Cincinnati: W. H. Anderson Company, 1973), pp. 3, 4.

³Ellwood P. Cubberley, Public Education In The United States, Chicago: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1934), pp. 84-85.

⁴Reutter and Hamilton, p. 2.

Relating directly to the school boards and superintendents is Article I, Section 10 which establishes the laws of contracts. Reutter reported that "Unless contractual agreements between parties may be relied upon without possible subsequent modification or abrogation by the law of the states, the economy of the country could not progress and develop." Article I, Section 10 provides that "No state shall. . . pass any. . . law impairing the obligation of contracts."⁵

Bolmeier described the early control and support of our schools by the states as follows:

In the early stages of our national development little attention was given to the now trite phrase that "education is the function of the state." In fact, the original schools of America represented individual or local enterprises with parental and parochial, but not public support. Decentralized control of education therefore became firmly entrenched, and it was not until the broader scope of state government was realized that any successful attempt was made to place the control of education under state government. State concern for education followed the general movement toward a social conception of government. Even then the state concern was manifested principally by aid and encouragement to the local schools rather than by an exercise of authority over them."⁶

The Bill of Rights

The common law of England greatly influenced the framers

⁵Reutter, p. 3.

⁶Bolmeier, p. 85.

of the American Constitution, which initially reserved enormous power for the federal government over the citizens of the United States. With the completion of the Constitution, however, the Founding Fathers recognized the predicament and fought to balance the power by adopting the first ten admendments to the Constitution, known as the Bill of Rights.⁷

The First Admendment guarantees basic personal freedoms and states that:

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech or of the press; or of the right to the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievences.

The fundamental right to worship as one pleases is guaranteed by the First Admendment. Moreover, school boards and superintendents must protect this basic right and not develop policies and administrative practices that affect the establishment of religion. Freedom of speech also has generated many judicial decisions detailing approved school board policies and administrative practices. Indeed, First Amendment "freedoms" have catapulted students and teachers into influential positions for emerging policy development and administrative practices.⁸

⁷Reutter, p. 3.

⁸Ibid.

The Fifth Amendment guarantees fundamental protection to persons accused of crimes -- no self incrimination -- and provides just compensation if personal property is taken for public use. The provisions are as follows:

No person shall be held to answer for a capital, or otherwise infamous crime, unless on a presentment or indictment of a grand jury, except in cases arising in the land or naval forces, or in the military, when in an actual service in time of war or public danger; nor shall any jeopardy of life or limb; nor shall be compelled in any criminal case to be a witness against himself, nor be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor shall private property be taken for public use, without just compensation.

The last clause is especially important to school boards who often exercise the "power of eminent domain" in order to secure property to build schools. This amendment also guarantees teachers, students, and public officials fair treatment when accused of crimes.⁹

The Fourteenth Admendment provides for the due process of the citizens of the United States:

All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside. No State shall make or enforce any law which

⁹Ibid., p. 4.

shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.¹⁰

The "due process" and "equal protection" clauses have made a tremendous impact on school board policy and administration practice. The "due process" clause includes both substantive and procedural due process. Reutter said, "substantive due process relates to the legislation. Procedural due process focuses on the process in which decisions are made regarding the person who has violated the law. Procedural due process requires basic or fundamental fairness in the adjudication process."

The Constitution of the United States as interpreted by the Supreme Court became the supreme law of America. Even though the Tenth Amendment to the Constitution relegates education as a function of the state, yet, no state statute and no school board policy or administrative practice can be in conflict with federal statutes or with the Constitution or constitutional imperative as determined by the Supreme Court. As a plaintiff moves up the judicial hierarchy of

¹⁰Ibid., p. 5.

the federal court system, greater freedoms and rights may be provided to the individual.¹¹

North Carolina State Constitution

In the early history of American education, most educational support and control came from local enterprises. Resources were generated from the parents, communities, and churches. As a "social conception of government" progressed, states began to develop interest in education. By this time, however, America had developed a philosophy of decentralized controls for education. Many states' early interest in education focused on financial aid and encouragement.¹²

The North Carolina State Constitution (Art. IX, 2) stated that:

The General Assembly. . . shall provide by taxation and otherwise for a general and uniform system of public schools, wherein tuition shall be free of charge to all children of the State between the ages of six and twenty-one years."¹³

North Carolina State Board of Education

In order to insure that the state's compelling interest in education was fulfilled, the State of North Carolina

¹¹Ibid., p. 2.

¹²Bolmeier, p. 85.

¹³Ibid., p. 94.

established the State Board of Education. The State Board consists of the Lieutenant Governor, the State Treasurer, and eleven members appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the General Assembly. The purpose of the State Board of Education is to supervise and administer the free public school system in North Carolina, and has the responsibility and power to fulfill the following duties:

1. Allocate funds to the local school districts
2. Create a convenient number of school districts based on the recommendations of the local school boards
3. Separate the duties of the controller from those of State Superintendent of Public Instruction
4. Appoint a controller with the approval of the Governor.
5. Apportion and equalize state and federal funds throughout the local school systems.
6. Recall funds from the local units when accurate attendance records have submitted.
7. Change boundaries of individual school administrative units when supported by those local units.
8. Set regulations for sick leave.
9. Regulate the grade and salary of employees, provide approved textbooks, adopt course curricula, regulate compulsory attendance, and develop a policy for the insurance for school property.
10. Promote programs in cultural and fine arts.
11. Sponsor or conduct educational research.

12. Establish and regulate a sports medicine program for the schools.
13. Purchase liability insurance for the members of the board.
14. Supply local boards with personnel information
15. Develop description evaluation for noncertified personnel.
16. Develop salary schedule in terms of a uniform pay grade.¹⁴

North Carolina State Superintendent

The voters of North Carolina elect every four years a state superintendent who serves as the chief executive officer and secretary of the State Board of Education. This "Superintendent of Public Instruction," who is paid the same salary as the Court of Appeals Judges, has the following powers and assigned duties:

1. To organize the Department of Public Instruction so that it may effectively supervise the public school system of North Carolina.
2. To inform the public of the needs and the problems of public education.
3. To keep the governor properly informed about the public schools.
4. To print material that will help teachers improve instruction and "cultivate public sentiment" for public education.
5. To direct and administer to the public schools.

¹⁴North Carolina, Public School Laws, Sec. 115-10 (1981), pp. 18-21.

6. To administer the instructional policies of the Board of Education.
7. To inform the Board of development in education.
8. To recommend to the Board solutions to problems.
9. To provide comprehensive supervisory services.
10. To provide the Board with statistics on the public schools.
11. To inform the public school administrators of State Board policy.
12. To assume custody of the official seal and certify all legal documents.
13. To serve as secretary to the Board.
14. To perform other duties assigned by the State Board of Education.¹⁵

Local Boards of Education

Because education is a function of the state, all states have created school boards to carry out the state's compelling interest in education. School boards are policy-making governmental entities and are responsible for the operation of a school system under constitutional and statutory mandates.¹⁶

In North Carolina the voters elect five citizens to serve on the county board of education. If other administrative units exist within a county such as a city

¹⁵Ibid., pp. 22-24.

¹⁶Bolmeier, p. 129.

school system, then school boards may be appointed by the county board or elected by the citizens within that administrative unit. Local enabling legislators become the controlling element concerning the composition of the school board. School board members must reside within the attendance zone of the administrative unit which they serve.¹⁷

Sec. 115-36 of Public School Laws of North Carolina reads as follows:

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.¹⁸

The duties and powers of the local boards of education are as follows:

1. Purchase liability insurance that will waive its governmental immunity and thereby subject them to tort claims in amounts up to the limit of the coverage.
2. Provide for any member or employee defense in civil or criminal action, and budget funds to pay claims.
3. Bring necessary action or suits against any persons to secure any money or property duly belonging to the board.
4. Issue subpoenas for any witness to attend a board meeting and the power to punish for contempt for disorderly conduct.

¹⁷North Carolina, Public School Laws, Sec. 115-36, p. 26.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 27.

5. Regulate the parking of motor vehicles on school grounds.
6. Provide an adequate school system.
7. Set attendance zones for the individual schools within the district lines.
8. Make rules and regulations regarding extracurricular activities.
9. Regulate school hours.
10. Regulate fees charged to the students and control school fundraising.
11. Regulate the spending of federal funds.
12. Conduct or sponsor educational research.
13. Monitor attendance records to insure accuracy.
14. Validate class size, remedy the class size that exceeds the maximum, and report deviation to the State Board of Education.
15. Set the length of the school day, months and term.
16. Develop a course of study and course outlines.
17. Select a superintendent.
18. Supply the superintendent with an office, clerical staff, and necessary equipment.
19. Develop a job description for the superintendent.
20. With just cause, remove a superintendent or committeeman.
21. Employ assistant superintendents and supervisors.
22. Develop job descriptions and rules of conduct for all employees.
23. Set duties for assistant principals.
24. Provide in-service for teachers.

25. Pay employees and bill of operating expenses.
26. Provide cafeterias.
27. Purchase necessary equipment and materials.
28. Purchase and service activity buses.
29. Provide the same access to military personnel as provided other persons interested occupational and educational option for the students.¹⁹

Local Superintendents of Schools

The school boards elect superintendents of schools to administer to the school systems. Superintendents may be signed to a two-year or four-year written contract. During the last year of the contract period the board may choose to renew the contract provided that the new members of the board of education have been sworn into office at the time of the election.

To be eligible for superintendent, a candidate must hold a superintendent certificate, have completed three years of school work during the past ten years, and provide a doctor's certificate verifying that the candidate is free of all communicable or contagious disease. A superintendent must reside in the county with which he is under contract and is prohibited from any employment that will interfere with his duties to that school system.²⁰

¹⁹Ibid., pp. 33-40.

²⁰Ibid., pp. 122-123.

The duties of a superintendent of schools are as follows:

1. To carry out all rules and regulations of the local boards of education that are not in conflict with state law.
2. To keep a record of all board meetings and send all notices directed by the board because he is ex-officio secretary of the board of education.
3. To visit all schools, notify the board of the conditions of all school facilities, and correct any unsanitary or unsafe conditions.
4. To keep abreast of educational matters.
5. To supply all requested information to the Superintendent of Public Instruction.
6. To administer oaths to school officials as needed.
7. To be knowledgeable of state policy and rules and inform the board and school personnel of such policy and rules.
8. To improve the efficiency of instruction by holding necessary staff meetings and study groups.
9. To provide necessary forms to school personnel and instruction for proper use including required state reports.
10. To provide the board with assistance in the election of school personnel.
11. To provide the state department of public instruction with school organizational charts.
12. To maintain a personnel file on each teacher and participate in the termination, including demotion, of all staff members.

13. To furnish tax listers with school system boundaries for tax purposes.
14. To issue salary vouchers to all employees who have completed all required reports.
15. To prepare a budget.
16. To require personnel to make complete and accurate reports.²¹

²¹Ibid., pp. 125-127.

CHAPTER IV

METHODOLOGY AND ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

Superintendents leave their positions for both positive and negative reasons. Some leave after being promoted to larger or more prestigious positions, and some retire, but others leave because they cannot cope with the pressure of the position, become disenchanted with the office, are terminated, or are fearful of being terminated. The 15% to 25% annual turnover rate as reported by most studies has generated concern by both board members and superintendents.

Fowler quoted Cleveland's superintendent Paul Briggs, who has twelve years in that position, as follows:

[Superintendents] bear many resemblances to endangered wildlife. The breeding grounds have been fouled up, those selected for survival are the least likely to survive, and it is open season all year around... when he is bagged, the superintendent isn't even considered a prize.¹

The decision for continued employment of a superintendent rests in the hands of a relatively small number of citizens, a board of education that is usually composed of five to seven members. Whenever a majority of the board becomes dissatisfied with the superintendent, the

¹Charles W. Fowler, "When Superintendents Fail," The American School Board Journal, 164, No. 2, (February, 1977), p. 21.

superintendent can expect that his contract will not be renewed. Community pressure will often provide the superintendent with temporary protection. Most boards, however, will find a way to dismiss a superintendent with whom they have become disenchanted.²

The superintendent often has the undivided support of virtually the entire community when assuming a new post. As political, social, philosophical, and educational incidents occur that bring the superintendent into conflict with individuals or groups, public confidence begins to erode. Too often the superintendent is in a position to make more enemies than friends, and as time passes, his position within the community and board is weakened.³ Clark reported, "when a superintendent assumes his position, he knows that identifying and maintaining support will help determine how long he keeps his job."⁴

When the superintendent loses support, his effectiveness is reduced. Krajewski suggested the superintendent should move on before the superintendency becomes useless. "They should look upon the superintendency as similar to the role of a baseball manager: Neither

²Natt B. Burbank, Superintendent of Schools: His Headaches and Rewards, (Danville, Ill.: The Interstate Printers and Publishers, Inc., 1965), p. 105.

³Richard O. Carlson, School Superintendents: Careers and Performance (Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Company, 1972), p. 138.

⁴Evelyn Clark, "Board Power: A Game of Numbers," The American School Board Journal, 168, (January, 1981), 27.

expects his appointment to last forever."⁵

Fifteen of the nation's most prominent school board members surveyed by Mullins in 1975 told how superintendents lose the support of their boards. Superintendents embarrass and embattle school boards when they do not tell the board everything the board wants to know. When a school board suspects the superintendent of circumspection, or when the superintendent covers up information or the lack thereof, conflict and mistrust develop.⁶

Heller suggested that the rapid turnover in the superintendency is due to unrealistic expectations by the school board. School boards tend to do the following:

1. Require the superintendent to represent the school board at all community meetings.
2. Demand irrefutable proof for every administrative recommendation.
3. Put embarrassing questions to their superintendent in public.
4. Agree with the shrieking critics who pounce on the superintendent with both feet.
5. Hold unofficial board meetings without the superintendent present.

⁵Robert Krajewski, "The Anguish of Losing a Superintendency," in "The American School Board Journal, 169, No. 2 (February 1982), p. 30.

⁶Carolyn Mullins, "Board Members Pinpoint the Kinds of Superintendents Who Embarrass Their Peers and Embattle Their Boards," "The American School Board Journal, 162, No. 2 (February 1972), p. 27.

6. Reject the superintendent's request for administrative assistants.
7. Demand V.I.P. treatment from the superintendents at conventions.
8. Gossip about the superintendent's faults.
9. Ignore the distinction between policy making and management.
10. Evaluate superintendent's compensation by comparing school administration with their occupation.⁷

Fowler suggested that some superintendents are predestined for short stays in some superintendencies. That is, they are hired as a change agent or as a hatchet man. The conflict develops when changes occur, and the board begins to long for the former stability. The board then sends the change agent superintendent on his way.⁸

Hanson advised superintendents to hold the role of change agent in eschew. "The big city superintendent is caught in an urban nut cracker, and only a drastic change in his role will save him."⁹

The tension and demanding schedule of the superintendent

⁷Mel Heller, "Ten Sure-Fire Ways to Kill a Superintendent," The American School Board Journal, 165, No. 5. (May, 1978), pp. 25-27.

⁸Fowler, p. 21.

⁹Carroll Hanson, "In the Eye of the City," Phi Delta Kappan, 52, No. 2, (October 1970), p. 116.

position make it difficult for the board to retain a superintendent. The superintendent is apt to retire or look for a better position. Hanson reported:

The superintendent's role has gradually evolved to that of a change agent, or as legions of citizens now fear, the leader of a revolution that will destroy their neighborhood schools. He is squarely out in front, associated in the public mind with such high octane programs as integration and mandatory busing, retention of dropouts, teacher pay increases, education centers, sex and drug education, and non-religious Christmas programs. He has become the symbol of the new and the strange, looming over the most sensitive subjects in the Western world-- the child and the pocketbook.¹⁰

An added pressure felt by the superintendent is the national sentiment toward schools. The National Commission on Excellence was created by the Secretary of Education, T. H. Bell, on August 26, 1981. This commission was established because of national concern over the quality of teaching and learning in American schools. The report stated that "Our nation is at risk because the educational foundations of our society are being eroded by a rising tide of mediocrity that threatens our very future as a nation and a people."¹¹ This report helps to substantiate what many critics of education have previously been reporting.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 117.

¹¹"A Nation At Risk," Voice of North Carolina School Boards Association, 1, No. 7, (May, 1983), p. 20.

In April of 1975, Winfred Smith, past president of the National School Boards Association, accused school superintendents of being "poor administrators." Smith blamed superintendents for the low public opinion of education by stating that, "School administrators have not, as a group, done an adequate job of setting the tone as heads of this institution."¹²

The Gallop poll also reports a decline in public confidence in the schools. Nevertheless, the superintendent cannot be held totally responsible for the image of American education. As chief executive officer, the superintendent must assume responsibility for the success of the individual school system.

Methodology

General Concept

The purpose of this study was to determine the reasons for superintendent turnover in North Carolina during the 1980-82 school years. This study focused on the forty-four superintendents who left their positions during this two year period. Opinionnaires were used to collect data on all superintendents and to identify those superintendents whose

¹²Former NSBA President Calls Superintendents 'Inadequate', The School Administrator, May, 1975, p. 4.

contracts were either not renewed or were terminated by their boards of education. A telephone interview was conducted by the writer to provide additional information from selected participants who were forced from their positions or left under unpleasant circumstances.

Population Design for the Study

The population for this study was all forty-four superintendents who left their positions during the 1980-82 school years. The Education Directory for 1980-81¹³, 1981-82¹⁴, and 1982-83¹⁵ confirmed the names of the forty-four subjects. The names of superintendents of schools who were so designated in either the 1980-1981 directory or the 1981-82 directory and not designated in the 1982-83 directory were selected for the study.

Preparation of the Opinionnaire

An opinionnaire was developed from a review of related literature that focused on a questionnaire used by Thies in

¹³Educational Directory, 1980-81 (Raleigh, North Carolina: State Department of Public Instruction, 1979).

¹⁴Educational Directory, 1981-82 (Raleigh, North Carolina: State Department of Public Instruction, 1980).

¹⁵Educational Directory, 1982-83 (Raleigh, North Carolina: State Department of Public Instruction, 1981).

"A Study of Superintendent Turnover in Illinois (1978-1979)".¹⁶ The questionnaire used by Dr. Theis was developed with the assistance of the Illinois School Board Association staff, consultants, and others.

The initial opinionnaire was formulated by the writer, relying significantly on the questionnaire used by Theis. The opinionnaire was then reviewed by a specialist in education research for improvement. The opinionnaire was then presented to the writer's dissertation committee for further refinement and approval. After appropriate changes had been made the instrument was then field tested. With no additional corrections made, the opinionnaire was printed (see Appendix A).

Administration of the Opinionnaire

The personnel directors of each school system whose superintendents left during the 1980-82 school years were mailed a letter (Appendix B) requesting information (Appendix C) concerning the present location of the population. Thirty-eight of the forty-four personnel directors completed the forms and returned them in the self-addressed stamped

¹⁶Edward Roy Thies, "A Study of Superintendent Turnover in Illinois (1978-1979)" (unpublished Doctoral dissertation, Southern Illinois University, 1980), pp. 114-120.

envelope provided for them. The addresses of the six remaining subjects were secured by telephone from the North Carolina Association of School Administrators in Raleigh, North Carolina.

The opinionnaire, a letter of introduction (see Appendix D), a copy of a support letter from Dr. Raymond Sarbough, Executive Director of the North Carolina Association of School Administrators (see Appendix E), and a stamped, self-addressed envelope were mailed to forty-one of the forty-four selected superintendents. Three of the superintendents who were selected for the study died while under contact and obviously were not included in the mailing.

The introduction letter requested that individuals complete the opinionnaire and return it to the researcher in the self-addressed, stamped envelope at their earliest convenience.

A second letter, including a second copy of the opinionnaire and a self-addressed, stamped envelope, was mailed approximately one month later to the subjects who had not returned the first opinionnaire. The follow-up letter noted that it was the second request and a post script was added by hand urging them to respond. Finally, telephone calls were made to those who had not responded to the second letter to encourage them to participate in the study.

A selected number of the respondents who reported that they were dissatisfied with their position were interviewed by telephone to give more specific reasons for the termination or non-renewal of their contracts (see Appendix F).

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

The primary data were collected by the opinionnaire (Appendix A) developed for this study. Secondary data were collected by telephone interviews with six selected respondents to the opinionnaire (see Appendix F).

In North Carolina during the school years 1980-82, forty-four superintendents left their positions. Three of these died while under contract leaving forty-one included in this study. Thirty-seven, or 90.2%, of the forty-one superintendents studied, completed, and returned the opinionnaire that was mailed to them (see Table I).

Analysis of the Data

Table I indicates that thirty-seven superintendents responded to the opinionnaire. The data collected for this study represent the opinions of thirty-seven superintendents who left their positions during the 1980-82 school years in thirty-five North Carolina school systems. Two school systems had two different superintendents leave during the two-year period.

TABLE I

Number and Percentage of Opinionnaires Returned

	Number	Percentage
Number mailed opinionnaires	41*	100.0%
Number of responses returned from first mailing	33	80.5%
Number of responses returned after second mailing	4	9.8%
TOTAL Responses Returned	37	90.2%

*Three superintendents died while under contract and therefore were not considered for this study.

Background Data of the Superintendents

The first five items on the opinionnaire were related to background data for the superintendents who vacated their positions during the 1980-82 school years. Table II indicates the age of the superintendents at the time of turnover. Seven superintendents were 40 years old or younger when they vacated their positions, six were 41-45, five were 46-50, eight were 51-55, seven were 56-60, and four were 61 years or over.

Table III regards the educational background of the superintendents. All respondents reported held at least a Master's degree. Additionally, eleven (29.7%) reported having earned a sixth-year degree, and fourteen (37.8%) reported holding a doctorate.

Table IV indicates that the superintendents spent from one year to twenty-six years in the positions they vacated; moreover, they averaged 8.6 years in their positions. Approximately 25% of the superintendents left after three or less years in office, 40% spent five years or less, and 66% stayed less than ten years.

Table V maintains that the superintendents had from one to twenty-six total years of experience as superintendents, with an averaged 9.2 years. Three had only one year of experience, one had two years, three had three years, and

TABLE II

Age at the Time of Turnover

Age in Years	Age Frequency	Age Cum Freq	Percentage	Cum Frequency
40 and under	7	7	18.9	18.9
41-45 years	6	13	16.2	35.1
46-50 years	5	18	13.5	48.6
51-55 years	8	26	21.6	70.2
56-60 years	7	33	18.9	89.2
61 and over	4	37	10.8	100.0

TABLE III

Highest Degree Earned

Highest Degree	Frequency	Cum Frequency	Percentage	Cum Percentage
Bachelors Degree	0	0	0.0	0.0
Masters Degree	12	12	32.4	32.4
Specialist 6th Year Degree	11	23	29.7	62.2
Doctorate	14	37	37.8	100.0

TABLE IV

Total Years in the Superintendency Vacated

Number of Years	Frequency	Cum Frequency	Percentage	Cum Percentage
1	3	3	8.1	8.1
2	1	4	2.7	10.8
3	5	9	13.5	24.3
4	4	13	10.8	35.1
5	2	15	5.4	40.5
7	3	18	8.1	48.6
8	5	23	13.5	62.2
9	1	24	2.7	64.9
10	2	26	5.4	70.3
11	1	27	2.7	73.0
12	2	29	5.4	78.4
13	1	30	2.7	81.1
14	1	31	2.7	83.8
15	1	32	2.7	86.5
16	1	33	2.7	89.2
17	1	34	2.7	91.9
20	1	35	2.7	94.6
25	1	36	2.7	97.8
26	1	37	2.7	100.0

TABLE V

Total Years Experience as a Superintendent

Number of Years	Frequency	Cum Frequency	Percentage	Cum Percentage
1	3	3	8.108	8.108
2	1	4	2.703	10.811
3	3	7	8.108	18.919
4	4	11	10.811	29.730
5	2	13	5.405	35.135
6	1	14	2.703	37.838
7	3	17	8.108	45.946
8	4	21	10.811	56.757
9	1	22	2.703	59.459
10	3	25	8.108	67.568
11	1	26	2.703	70.270
12	2	28	5.405	75.676
13	1	29	2.703	78.378
14	1	30	2.703	81.081
15	1	31	2.703	83.784
16	1	32	2.703	86.486
17	1	33	2.703	89.189
20	1	34	2.703	91.892
23	1	35	2.703	94.595
25	1	36	2.703	97.297
26	1	37	2.703	100.000

four had four years of experience. Thirteen superintendents (35.1%) had five years or less, and twenty-five (67.6%) had ten or less years of experience as a superintendent.

Table VI reveals the total number of superintendencies held by each respondent. Thirty-three (89.2%) had turned over from their first superintendency, and the other four (10.8%) had vacated their second superintendency.

Demographic Data of Present Positions

Tables VII through IX relate to demographic data of the new positions held by the superintendents. Table VII identifies the type of district. Twenty-six (70.3%) of those who vacated their position from 1980-82 indicated that they were not presently superintendents. Three (8.1%) indicated they are presently superintendents of city schools, five (13.5%) superintendents of county schools, and three (8.1%) were superintendents of consolidated city-county schools.

Table VIII establishes the number of teachers in the present district: 200-299 teachers, four; 300-499 teachers, three; and over 499 teachers, four.

Table IX establishes that the number of students in the present district was as follows: less than 3,000, none; 3,000-5,000, three; 5,000-10,000, four; and more than 10,000, four.

TABLE VI

Total Different Superintendent Positions Held for the
Superintendents Who Turned Over

Number of Position	Frequency	Cum Frequency	Percentage	Cum Percentage
1	33	33	89.189	89.189
2	4	37	10.811	100.000

TABLE VII

Type of New District

Type of District	Frequency	Cum Frequency	Percentage	Cum Percentage
Presently not a Superintendent	26	26	70.270	70.270
City	3	29	8.108	78.378
County	5	34	13.514	91.892
Consolidated City/County	3	37	8.108	100.000

TABLE VIII

Number of Teachers in Present District

Number of Teacher	Frequency	Cum Frequency	Percentage	Cum Percentage
(Presently not a Superintendent)	26	26	70.270	70.270
Less than 200	0	26	0.000	70.270
200-299	4	30	10.811	81.081
300-499	3	33	8.108	89.189
More than 499	4	37	10.811	100.000

TABLE IX

Number of Students in Present District

Number of Students	Frequency	Cum Frequency	Percentage	Cum Percentage
0 (Presently not a Superintendent)	26	26	70.270	70.270
Less than 3,000	0	26	0.000	70.270
3,000 - 4,999	3	29	8.108	78.378
5,000 - 10,000	4	33	10.811	89.189
More than 10,000	4	37	10.811	100.000

Demographic Data of Previous District (1980-82)

Tables X through XII relate to the demographic data of the position that was vacated during the 1980-82 school years, the years considered in this study. Table X identifies the type of district vacated. Twelve superintendents left city school districts, twenty-one left county school districts, and four left consolidated city-county districts.

Table XI establishes the number of teachers in the previous district. Nine superintendents served school systems with less than 200 teachers, ten with 200-299 teachers, nine with 300-499 teachers, and nine with more than 499 teachers.

Table XII reports the number of students in the previous district. Six of the superintendents vacated positions that served less than 3,000 students, eight served 3,000-4,999 students, seventeen served 5,000-10,000 students, and six served more than 10,000 students.

Primary Reasons for Superintendents Leaving Their Positions

Table XIII indicates that the most frequent reason superintendents gave for leaving their position was retirement. Fifteen (40.5%) superintendents reported retirement as their primary reason for leaving their positions. Eleven (29.7%) said their new position was better and one (2.7%) left for a career change.

TABLE X

Type of District Vacated

Types of Districts	Frequency	Cum Frequency	Percentage	Cum Percentage
City	12	12	32.432	32.432
County	21	33	56.757	89.189
Consolidated City-County	4	37	10.811	100.000

TABLE XI

Number of Teachers in Previous District (1980-82)

Number of Teachers	Frequency	Cum Frequency	Percentage	Cum Percentage
Less than 200	9	9	24.324	24.324
200-299	10	19	27.027	51.351
300-499	9	28	24.324	75.676
More than 499	9	37	24.324	100.000

TABLE XII

Number of Students in Previous District (1980-82)

Number of Students	Frequency	Cum Frequency	Percentage	Cum Percentage
Less than 3,000	6	6	16.216	16.216
3,000 - 4,999	8	14	21.622	37.838
5,000 - 10,000	17	31	45.946	83.784
More than 10,000	6	37	16.216	100.000

TABLE XIII

Primary Reason(s) for Leaving Previous Position

Reason	<u>First Choice</u>		<u>Second Choice</u>	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
New position is better	11	29.730	0	0.000
Disatisfaction with previous position	3	8.108	1	2.703
Retirement	15	40.541	0	0.000
Career Change	1	2.703	3	8.108
Threat or fear of nonrenewal of contract	0	0.000	0	0.000
Nonrenewal of contract	6	16.216	0	0.000
Dismissal	0	0.000	0	0.000
*Election of new board	1	2.703	0	0.000
Did not respond	0	0.000	33	89.189
TOTAL	37	100.000	37	100.000

*Added response by one superintendent.

Six (16.2%) of the respondents reported that their contracts were not renewed, three reported dissatisfaction with their previous positions, and one (2.7%) stated that the election of a new board was the primary reason he left his position.

Four respondents supplied a second primary reason for leaving their position. Three (8.1%) had left for a career change, and one (2.7%) stated his dissatisfaction with the position.

Instrumental Factors for Relocation

Table XIV established the instrumental factors for relocation. Twenty superintendents identified at least one factor that was instrumental in relocating, five identified at least two factors, and two identified three factors. Of those respondents who listed one or more factors, five chose a job that would provide a greater challenge, five a possibility of better working conditions, and four a better salary. Four respondents reported that the philosophy of the new board of education was a determining factor in their decision to relocate. One respondent selected a position that would provide greater prestige and recognition, and another chose a position for advancement or the possibility for advancement. Seventeen superintendents either are not presently employed or elected not to answer item number thirteen.

Of those respondents who selected two or more factors

TABLE XIV

Instrumental Factors for Relocation

<u>First Factor Listed</u>		
	Frequency	Percentage
Greater Challenge in New District	5	13.514
Prestige and Recognition	1	2.703
Better Salary	4	10.811
Possibility of Better Working Conditions	5	13.514
Advancement or Possibility for Advancement	1	2.703
Philosophy of New Board of Education	4	10.811
No Factor Listed	17	45.946
TOTAL	37	100.000

<u>Second Factor Listed</u>		
	Frequency	Percentage
Greater Challenge in New District	0	0.000
Prestige and Recognition	0	0.000
Better Salary	1	2.703
Possibility of Better Working Conditions	2	5.405
Advancement or Possibility for Advancement	0	0.000
Philosophy of New Board of Education	3	8.108
No Factor Listed	31	83.784
TOTAL	37	100.000

<u>Third Factor Listed</u>		
	Frequency	Percentage
Greater Challenge in New District	0	0.000
Prestige and Recognition	0	0.000
Better Salary	0	0.000
Possibility of Better Working Conditions	0	0.000
Advancement or Possibility for Advancement	1	2.703
Philosophy of New Board of Education	1	2.703
No Factor Listed	35	94.595
TOTAL	37	100.000

instrumental in relocation, three reported the philosophy of the new board of education, two the possibility of better working conditions, and one a better salary.

Of the respondents who gave three factors for selecting their new positions, one identified the philosophy of the new board and the other advancement or possibility for advancement as instrumental reasons for relocation.

Table XV indicates that thirteen (35.1%) of the thirty-seven respondents reported a salary increase over their previous position. This increase for two people (5.4%) was less than \$1,000, for two others \$1,000 to 3,000. Four people (10.8%) received an increase from \$3,001-\$5,000, and five (13.5%) received an increase of over \$5,000.

Eight of the respondents (21.6%) reported incomes equal to or less than their previous position. Sixteen superintendents (43.2%) are not presently employed.

Length of Stay in the Superintendent Position Vacated

Table XVI maintained that fifteen (40.5%) of the superintendents who left their positions during the 1980-82 school years reported that they had stayed in that position about the length of time that they expected. Ten respondents (27.0%) reported having spent less time than they had anticipated. The tenure for twelve (32.4%) of the superintendent was longer than they had anticipated.

TABLE XV

Salary Differential Between Previous and New Position

	Frequency	Cum Frequency	Percentage	Cum Percentage
Not Employed	16	16	43.243	43.243
Same As or Less Than Previous Position	8	24	21.622	64.865
Less Than \$1,000 increase	2	26	5.405	70.270
\$1,000-\$3,000 increase	2	28	5.405	75.676
\$3,001-\$5,000 increase	4	32	10.811	86.486
Over \$5,000 increase	5	37	13.514	100.000

TABLE XVI

Length of Stay in the Superintendent Position Vacated
(1980-82)

	Frequency	Cum Frequency	Percentage	Cum Percentage
Shorter than Expected	10	10	27.027	27.027
Same as Expected	15	25	40.541	67.568
Longer than Expected	12	37	32.432	100.000

Factors Affecting Turnover

Table XVII identified factors affecting superintendent turnover. Respondents were asked to report all factors that affected their decision to vacate their positions. The most frequently identified factor was the relationship with the school board, which was checked by seventeen (47.2%) of the superintendents. Twelve (33.3%) of the respondents reported that change in board philosophy affected their decision to vacate their positions. Ten (27.8%) respondents designated early retirement (prior to age sixty-two) and change in the role expectation for the superintendents as factors affecting their decision to leave their superintendencies.

The frequency and percentage of other factors that affected their decision to vacate their positions are as follows: career change, eight (22.2%); salary, seven (19.4%); planned retirement (age 62 or older), five (13.9%); dissatisfaction with the position, four (11.1%); and relationship with the community, one (2.7%).

No superintendent identified the relationship with his staff as a factor in leaving. Some, however, listed location, challenge, and new school boards with different racial composition or political ties.

TABLE XVII

Factors Affecting Superintendent Turnover

Factor	<u>Did it affect turnover?</u>			
	<u>Yes</u>	<u>Percentage</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Dissatisfaction with Positions	4	11.111	32	88.889
Salary	7	19.444	29	80.556
Relationship with School Board	17	47.222	19	52.778
Relationship with Staff	0	0.000	36	100.000
Relationship with Community	1	2.778	35	97.222
Planned Retirement (Age 62 or older)	5	13.889	31	86.111
Early Retirement (before age 62)	10	27.778	26	72.222
Career Change	8	22.222	28	77.778
Change in Role Expectation for the Superintendent	10	27.778	26	72.222
Change in Board Philosophy	12	33.333	24	66.667
OTHERS	10	27.778	26	72.222

Table XVIII requested that the respondents list by priority factors in Item 16 that had the greatest influence, second greatest influence, and third greatest influence on their turnover. The most frequently cited greatest influence for turnover was the relationship with the board, which appeared on seven (18.8%) of the responses. The most frequently cited second greatest influence was the relationship with the board and change in board philosophy each appearing five (13.5%) times. The third greatest influence was role expectation change which appeared four (10.8%) times.

Collectively, the three greatest influences for turnover are the following: relationship with the board, fourteen responses; change in board philosophy, twelve responses; career change, nine responses; early retirement, nine responses; change in the role expectation for the superintendent, eight responses; salary, six responses; dissatisfaction with the position, four responses; planned retirement, four responses; and, relationship with the community, one response.

Some respondents elected to add additional factors that influenced their turnover such as a change in the political affiliation of the board of education, challenge, an overt attempt by the board chairman to dismiss the superintendent, not being chosen for the position, the location of the

TABLE XVIII

Factors of Greatest Influence on Turnover

Factors	<u>First Greatest Influence</u>		<u>Second Greatest Influence</u>		<u>Third Greatest Influence</u>	
		<u>Per- Frequency centage</u>		<u>Per- Frequency centage</u>		<u>Per- Frequency centage</u>
Did not respond	3	8.108	10	27.027	22	59.459
Dissatisfaction with position	2	5.405	1	2.703	1	2.703
Salary	3	8.108	3	8.108	0	0.000
Relationship with school board	7	18.919	5	13.514	2	5.404
Relationship with staff	0	0.000	0	0.000	0	0.000
Relationship with community	0	0.000	1	2.703	0	0.000
Planned retirement age 62 or older	4	10.811	0	0.000	0	0.000
Early retirement before age 62	3	8.108	3	8.108	3	8.108
Career change	2	5.405	3	8.108	4	10.811
Change in Role Expectation for the Superintendent	2	5.405	4	10.811	2	5.405
Change in Board Philosophy	4	10.811	5	13.514	3	8.108
OTHER	7	18.919	2	5.405	0	0.000
TOTAL	37	100.000	37	100.000	37	100.000

the school system, salary increase, and increased conflict between the city and county units.

Item 18 asked the question, "Did you leave your position in 1980-82 due to less than desirable conditions?" Table XIX established that all but one of the superintendents answered the question. Fourteen (37.8%) responded yes. Twenty-two (59.6%) responded no--they did not leave under less than desirable conditions.

TABLE XIX

Desirability of Conditions at the Time
of the Superintendent Turnover

Did you leave your position in 1980-82 due to less than
desirable conditions?

Answer	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	14	37.838
No	22	59.459
No Response	1	2.703
TOTAL	37	100.000

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The position of local school superintendent originated in the United States approximately 150 years ago and became an almost universally accepted concept by the turn of the century. The position originated from a need for day-to-day supervision and a desire for centralization of the schools within each school district.

The school superintendent position did not develop easily. School boards were reluctant to delegate authority for school administration to superintendents and to focus efforts solely on policy development. In reality some school boards never relinquished complete administrative authority to the superintendent over the school districts. Today, many school boards are returning to a greater direct or indirect involvement in the administration of the school system.

The superintendent is the key individual in the school system, and frequent turnover cannot be construed as healthy for the school system. The superintendent can expect to average no more than four years in any one position, and the urban superintendent can expect only eighteen months in one

setting.

The purpose of this study was to determine the causes of public school superintendent turnover in North Carolina during the 1980-82 school years. During this two-year period, forty-four of the 144 superintendents in North Carolina left their jobs, a 30.6% turnover. This study was specifically concerned with the following questions:

- 1) Why did forty-four school superintendents leave their positions during the 1980-1982 school years?
- 2) Did the relationship between the school boards and the superintendents affect the turnover?
- 3) Did a change in the leadership of the school board influence the superintendent turnover?
- 4) Did the factors identified by the North Carolina Joint Commission on School Board/Superintendent Relationships contribute to school board/superintendent conflict?

The data for this study were obtained by an opinionnaire and by telephone interviews. Forty-one opinionnaires were mailed to the population (forty-four superintendent turnovers but three deceased while under contract) and thirty-seven, or 92.2%, were returned. Five selected respondents from the group who reported dissatisfaction with their positions were interviewed by telephone for additional data (see Appendix F).

The demographic data were collected and analyzed to identify the characteristics of the superintendents who left their position during the 1980-82 school years and characteristics of the school district.

Personal Data

Approximately ten percent of the superintendents who left superintendencies were over sixty years of age. A fairly equal distribution was found in the other five year age spans with a range from approximately fourteen to twenty-two percent in each age group.

All respondents reported that they held at least a master's degree. Thirty percent of the respondents had earned the Sixth-Year Degree and thirty-eight percent held a doctoral degree.

Superintendents were employed for an average of 8.6 years in the vacated positions. The respondents averaged 9.2 years in all superintendent positions held. Only four superintendents in this study had had previous experience as superintendent, which for each consisted of experience in only one other school district.

There was no indication that the size of the school district, as reflected by the number of teachers and the number of students, was a factor in the rate of superintendent turnover, nor was the type of district a factor. The respondents represented both large and small

districts, city, county and consolidated school units.

Research Question Number One

Research question number one was "Why did forty-four superintendents leave their positions during the 1980-1982 school years?" Three superintendents died during this two year period. Four superintendents elected not to participate in this study. The remaining superintendents gave their primary reason for leaving as follows: 1) fifteen, retirement; 2) eleven, new position is better; 3) six, non-renewal of contract; 4) three, dissatisfaction with position; 5) one, career change; and 6) one, election of a new board. Of the fifteen who selected retirement as the primary reason for leaving the superintendency during this period, only five exercised planned retirement on or after the age of sixty-two years.

Research Question Number Two

Research Question Number Two was "Did the relationship between the school board and the superintendent affect turnover?" Seventeen of the respondents reported that their relationship with the school board was a factor affecting turnover, and nineteen reported it was not a factor. Thus, relationship between the school board and the superintendent was a factor for 47.2 percent of the respondents.

Research Question Number Three

Research question number three was "Did a change in the leadership of the school board influence the superintendent turnover?" Twelve of the respondents reported that a change in board philosophy did affect turnover, and twenty-four respondents reported it did not.

Ten respondents indicated that a change in the role expectation for the superintendent affected their turnover and twenty-six respondents indicated that this was not a factor. For 33.3 percent of the superintendents, a change in board philosophy influenced their leaving the position, and for 27.8 percent, a change in the role expectation for the superintendent influenced the turnover.

Research Question Number Four

Research Question Number Four was "Did the factors identified by the North Carolina Joint Commission on School Board/Superintendent Relationships contribute to school board/superintendent conflict?" To secure data for research question number four, the researcher conducted a telephone interview with five opinionnaire respondents. The superintendents interviewed were selected from the respondents who indicated dissatisfaction with the previous

superintendency (see Appendix F).

Each identified conflict factor affected the turnover of at least one superintendent (see Table 20). Only one superintendent reported "lack of team approach to problem solving" as a conflict factor. Two of the superintendents identified "political aspirations," "self-glory," and "lack of a job description for the superintendent," as conflict factors. Three of the superintendents stated that "self-interest and "withholding information" were conflict factors. Four of the superintendents identified "power," "personality characteristics," and "lack of well-defined role expectation" as conflict factors.

One superintendent stated that none of the conflict factors influenced the turnover, and one superintendent stated that all nine conflict factors contributed to the turnover. The other three participants identified four to six of the nine conflict factors as contributing to the specific turnover.

Conclusions

Based on the findings of this study the following conclusions are made:

1. There was a general balance in the age grouping for superintendents vacating positions. Younger

superintendents left more frequently for new positions and older superintendents left more frequently for retirement.

2. Fifteen superintendents retired from superintendencies; however, only three of the fifteen were over sixty-one years of age.
3. Slightly more school superintendents held doctorates than specialist or master's degrees.
4. The superintendents averaged 8.6 years employment in the positions vacated and averaged 9.2 total years of employment as a superintendent. Only four superintendents had previous employment as superintendents.
5. Eleven of the superintendents who had left their positions were presently employed as superintendents, generally in larger districts.
6. The primary reasons for superintendent turnover in North Carolina were retirement (40.5%), better position (29.7%) and nonrenewal of contract (16.2%).
7. The majority of school superintendents had exceeded their expectation in duration of employment. Twenty-seven percent of the superintendents had left sooner than they expected to.
8. The most often selected factors affecting turnover were relationship with school board (47.2%), change in board philosophy (33.3%), change in role expectation for the

superintendent (27.8%), early retirement (27.8%), career change (22.2%), salary (19.4%), planned retirement (13.9%) and dissatisfaction with position (11.1%).

9. The greatest influences on turnover were the relationship with school board, change in board philosophy, and planned retirement.
10. Nearly forty percent (38.9) of the superintendents vacating positions during the 1980-82 school years reported leaving with less than desirable conditions.
11. The conflict factors identified by the joint commission hinder good relations between school boards and superintendents. Those factors are self-interest, political aspirations, self-glory, power, and lack of job descriptions and well-defined role expectations.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Since poor relationships existed between many superintendents and school boards in North Carolina, the North Carolina Association of School Administrators and the North Carolina School Boards Association are encouraged to establish a "permanent joint commission" with the purpose of building positive relationships and solving grievance impasses between school boards and superintendents.

2. The North Carolina School Boards Association is encouraged to provide continuous orientation that incorporates roles, duties, and responsibilities for school board members with special emphasis on new boards.
3. The North Carolina Association of School Administrators is encouraged to provide continuous orientation that incorporates roles, duties, and responsibilities for superintendents with special emphasis on new superintendents.
4. The school boards and superintendents are encouraged to utilize the materials, services, and workshops that are available.
5. The North Carolina State Legislature and local school boards are encouraged to increase the salaries and benefits for superintendents.
6. Since excessive turnover was found for school superintendents in North Carolina, further research is recommended, especially on the effects of the superintendent's relationships with the various school publics.

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APPENDIX A

A STUDY OF SUPERINTENDENT TURNOVER
IN NORTH CAROLINA (1980-82)

A Study of Superintendent Turnover
In North Carolina (1980-82)

Directions: Please select the best answer for each question.
USE MORE THAN ONE ANSWER WHERE APPLICABLE.

BACKGROUND

- ___ 1. Your age (at the time you left your last superintendency): 1) 40 and under; 2) 41-45; 3) 46-50; 4) 51-55; 5) 56-60; 6) 61 and over.
- ___ 2. Highest degree earned: 1) B.S.; 2) M.D. or M.S.; 3) Ed.S. or 4) Ed.D. or Ph.D.
- ___ 3. Total years in the superintendency which you left during 1980-82.
- ___ 4. Total years as a superintendent excluding present position. Do not include assistant superintendent positions.
- ___ 5. Total number of superintendent positions you have held excluding present position.

PRESENT DISTRICT - 1982-83 (Omit #6-8 if you are not currently in a superintendency.)

- ___ 6. Type of district: 1) city; 2) county; 3) consolidated city-county.
- ___ 7. Number of teachers in present district: 1) less than 200; 2) 200-299; 3) 300-499; 4) more than 499
- ___ 8. Number of students in present district: 1) less than 3000; 2) 3000-4999; 3) 5000-10,000; 4) more than 10,000.

PREVIOUS DISTRICT (1980-82)

- ___ 9. Type of district: 1) city; 2) county; 3) consolidated city-county.
- ___ 10. Number of teachers: 1) less than 200; 2) 200-299; 3) 300-499; 4) more than 499.
- ___ 11. Number of students: 1) less than 3000; 2) 3000-4999; 3) 5000-10,000; 4) more than 10,000.

- ___12. List the primary reason(s) for leaving previous position: 1) new position is better; 2) dissatisfaction with previous position; 3) retirement; 4) career change; 5) threat or fear of non-renewal of contract; 6) non-renewal of contract; 7) dismissal.
- ___13. Which of the following were instrumental in your decision to relocate: 1) greater challenge in new district; 2) prestige and recognition; 3) better salary; 4) possibility of better working conditions; 5) advancement or possibility for advancement; 6) philosophy of new board of education.
- ___14. Salary difference between present position and previous position: 1) same as or less than previous position; 2) less than \$1,000 increase; 3) \$1,000 to \$3,000 increase; 4) \$3,001 to \$5,000 increase; 5) over \$5,000.
- ___15. How long did you stay in the superintendency position vacated in 1980-82? 1) shorter than you expected; 2) same as expected; 3) longer than you expected.
16. Please check all factors that affected your decision to leave the vacated position in 1980-82.
- ___ a. dissatisfaction with previous position
 - ___ b. salary
 - ___ c. relationship with school board
 - ___ d. relationship with staff
 - ___ e. relationship with community
 - ___ f. planned retirement on or after age 62
 - ___ g. decided to take early retirement before age 62
 - ___ h. career change
 - ___ i. change in role expectations for the superintendent
 - ___ j. change in board philosophy
 - other(s) k. _____
 - l. _____
17. Please prioritize the above factors in the degree of influence. List the letter for the factor under item number 16.
- ___ greatest influence
 - ___ second greatest influence
 - ___ third greatest influence
- ___18. Did you leave your position in 1980-82 due to less than desirable conditions? 1) yes; 2) no.

APPENDIX B

Dear Sir:

As part of a research project necessary for my dissertation, I need the following information: The current mailing address of one of your former superintendents, and the chairman of the Board of Education at the time the named superintendent left your school unit.

Thank you for your help in supplying me with this information. Please complete the form enclosed and return it to me in the self-addressed envelope.

Thank you again for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Steve Dalton

SD/gl

PLEASE CHECK WHERE APPLICABLE AND COMPLETE WHERE APPROPRIATE IF INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE.

Name Of Former Superintendent: _____

Present Data Regarding the Superintendent Named Above:

Presently employed in education
 (If checked) Place of Employment _____
 Title _____
 Address _____

Retired

Deceased while under contract

Deceased after leaving position

Other _____

Home Address _____

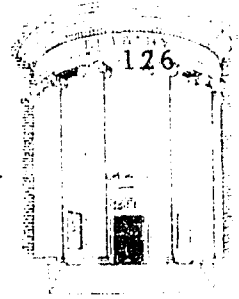
Name and address of Board Chairman at the time the above named superintendent left his position: _____

Presently chairman of your Board of Education

Presently member of your Board of Education

No longer serving on the Board of Education
 If checked, please give approximately date last served on the board: _____

APPENDIX D
THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA
AT GREENSBORO



September 27, 1983

As a doctoral candidate in Educational Administration at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, Dr. Joseph Bryson advisor, I am studying superintendent turnover in North Carolina 1980-82. I feel this study will give a realistic picture of why 44 of the 144 superintendents left their position during this two year period and will be of interest and importance to people concerned with public education in North Carolina.

In order to collect this data, I would appreciate your completing the enclosed opinionnaire and returning it to me in the stamped, self-addressed envelope at your earliest convenience. No one will be identified by name or local school system. I have numbered the data sheets so that I will be able to identify returned responses.

Your cooperation and assistance will be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Steve Dalton
Principal

north carolina association of school administrators

P.O. Box 1629, Raleigh, North Carolina 27602

919-828-1426

Roger H. Jackson, President

Raymond L. Sarbaugh, Executive Director

September 23, 1983

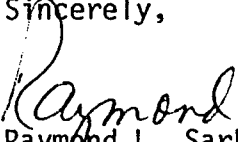
Mr. Steve Dalton
Ragsdale High School
602 High Point Road
Jamestown, NC 27282

Dear Steve:

The North Carolina Association of School Administrators is most interested in the findings and conclusions of your dissertation study. Our Association obviously has concerns about the tenure of superintendents and the dramatic increase in superintendent turnover within the past five years.

NCASA is pleased to lend its endorsement and support to your study. We look forward to your sharing the results of your work with us.

Sincerely,


Raymond L. Sarbaugh
Executive Director

S

APPENDIX F

INTERVIEW NUMBER ONE

1. Will you tell me in your own words why you left your superintendency (1980-82) and if any unusual circumstances existed?

I had been a superintendent for (over 10 years) in _____ unit. We were having racial riots when I took over the superintendency and that was one major obstacle we had to deal with. Then we merged the city-county units and I was made superintendent of the merged district. It was a shot-gun situation in that neither unit wanted it, but it was forced on them by the "commissioners." That was a very hectic time. Then we consolidated all the high schools into one high school and did a massive building program. And after (over 10 years) I felt my agenda was finished--I felt I had probably made enough progress and enough enemies over a period of time that it was just time for a change. Since I took a job and moved, that has turned out to be true. I enjoyed my (over 10) years there, but I am glad that I am in a new situation, and I am enjoying it very much.

2. The Joint Commission on School Board/Superintendent Relationships identified nine characteristics that

hindered good relations. Were any of the following conditions relevant for you or your board?

Self-interest--Well, no, because my leaving had nothing to do with the school board. In fact, the board was getting ready to offer me a new contract. At that time I told them I would not stay after my contract ran out. While I was there I must have had forty or more different school board members. I had a lot of good ones, some fair ones, and a couple poor ones. But, I couldn't say that that was a factor in my leaving.

Political aspirations--No, no.

Self-glory--No

Power--No

Lack of job description for the superintendent--No, I didn't have one. They (the school board) wanted it that way.

Lack of well defined role expectation--No

Personality characteristics--No

Lack of team approach to problem solving--No

Withholding information--No

INTERVIEW NUMBER TWO

1. Will you tell me in your own words why you left your superintendency (1980-82) and if any unusual circumstances existed?

Well, a number of factors. One was a better opportunity

here. But in terms of working conditions in (previous superintendency), I had a board that was greatly immersed in the personnel function. I had a principal who by his own admission had falsified registers in order to maintain teacher allotment. The (school) board would not support a dismissal of that principal based on the political climate in the county. That was perhaps the primary reason I sought another position.

2. The joint commission on School Board/Superintendent Relationships identified nine characteristics that hindered good relations. Were any of the following conditions relevant for you or your board?

Self-interest--I think self-interest would be appropriate in that future political aspiration for higher officer. But as far as board members concerned about their own interest, I don't think so in my case.

Political aspiration--Very definitely, generally when the (board member) is inclined to seek higher office or even re-election, I find it (affects) the tough decision and in fact controversy.

Self-glory--I never had any problem with that at all.

Power--To a minor degree. Power is perceived by the member away from the table. I am a board member and you will make that change in the classroom.

Lack of a job description for superintendent--No, I start with a decision-making chart.

Lack of well-defined role expectation--Somewhat.

Personality characteristics--I think that is one of the key factors. When there are personality clashes.

Lack of effective team approach to problem solving--No

Withholding information--No, I really didn't have a problem with that.

INTERVIEW NUMBER THREE

1. Will you tell me in your own words why you left your superintendency (1980-82) and if any unusual circumstances existed?

The philosophy of the board of education changed from the time I took office to the time I left. There was a strong difference in the board make-up. After the election of the new board in 1980, 4-3 voting became 3-4 voting. Beginning with budget hearings, the new majority began to flex its strength.

2. The joint commission on School Board/superintendent Relationships identified nine characteristics that hindered good relations. Were any of the following conditions relevant for you or your board?

Self-interest--Yes, for some of its functions. The power structure on the board is such that once they get to know the superintendent and accept him, then let him make the administrative decisions. Some individuals on the board felt that as elected officials they should be involved in administration. Females felt excluded from

the decisions made by the "good old boys" in the back room.

Political aspiration--Yes, for two members.

Lack of job description of superintendent--Yes, I had a job description. But I think as time went on, what was expected was a strong manager.

Lack of well defined role expectation--Yes, here again the board was not content to set policy, they wanted to make administrative decisions.

Personality characteristics--I have never known a superintendent who didn't have a strong ego. Many school board members tend to have strong personal characteristics that bring the board into conflict with the superintendent. Petty problems create conflict due to personality differences.

Lack of effective team approach to problem-solving--Some board factions never saw themselves as a part of the board. The board chairman could not even communicate with some of them.

Withholding information--Yes, to some degree. The board chairman could not communicate with half the board. Therefore, important information could not be communicated. You get to the point where everytime you share information with (some) board member, they use the information to try to hurt you. You get to the point you must be careful with what information you share.

Well defined role expectations--New board not content with role expectations of previous board.

INTERVIEW NUMBER FOUR

1. Will you tell me in your own words why you left your superintendency (1980-82) and if any unusual circumstances existed?

The main reason I left was a conflict between the board chairman and the superintendent. There was this personality conflict. With over thirty years in, I just didn't have to put up with it. The board chairman just got to meddling in administration. He even asked one of the principals how he felt about getting rid of the superintendent. The principal felt awkward and came to me.

I decided to take early retirement because of poor relationship with the school board. Due to my bitter experience, I had no desire to seek another position in education... Needless to say, I am still fuming, still bitter, still upset at what I considered to be interference on the part of the board in the administration of the school system. When a superintendent has to deal with a weak, incompetent, hesitant board chairman, the situation is complicated even further.

2. The Joint Commission on School Board/Superintendent Relationships identified nine characteristics that

hindered good relations. Were any of the following conditions relevant for you or your board?

Self-interest--Yes, there was self-interest on the part of the board, especially with the chairman.

Political aspiration--No, it was not a factor.

Self-glory--Yes, it was a factor. The chairman met with teachers about an issue, then hit me cold with it in an open meeting.

Power--Yes, with the board.

Lack of a job description for the superintendent--I had a job description and it was not a factor in the problem.

Lack of well-defined role expectation--The board or some members wanted to meddle in administration.

Personality characteristics--There were personality differences.

Lack of effective team approach to problem--solving--No, it didn't seem to be a problem.

Withholding information--Yes. That was a real problem.

INTERVIEW NUMBER FIVE

1. Will you tell me in your own words why you left your superintendency (1980-82) and if any unusual circumstances existed?

I left mainly because of a difference of philosophy between myself and the board chairman.

2. The Joint Commission of School Board/Superintendent

relationships identified nine characteristics that hindered good relations. Were any of the following conditions relevant for you or your board?

Self-interest--Yes, that was a factor. As a person, I would not sacrifice in order to maintain a job. The board chairman had an interest in maintaining her own profile more important than doing a good job.

Political aspiration--No.

Self-glory--No

Power--Not personal power, but power of the board chairman.

Lack of job description for superintendent--I had a job description. The board did not always follow its own policy.

Lack of well defined role expectation--That was definitely a real factor.

Personality characteristics--Yes, that was a factor.

Lack of effective team approach to problem-solving--No.

Withholding information--Yes, that did cause a problem. The board chairman was not always truthful in regards to advising properly and making sure that I was aware of all circumstances.

TABLE 20

A Summary of Interview Responses for the Conflict Factors
Identified by the Joint Commission

CONFLICT FACTORS	FACTOR FOR RESPONSE					<u>TOTAL</u>	
	1	2	3	4	5	YES	NO
Self-interest	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	3	2
Political Aspiration	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	2	3
Self-glory	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	2	3
Power	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	4	1
Lack of job description for the superintendent	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	2	3
Lack of well- defined role expectation	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	4	1
Personality characteristics	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	4	1
Lack of effective team approach to problem-solving	No	Yes	No	No	No	1	4
Withholding information	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	3	2
					TOTAL	25	20