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An analysis of board of education/superintendent relationships in the area of public school finance

Renn, Michael Thomas, Ed.D.

The University of North Carolina at Greensboro, 1986

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AN ANALYSIS OF BOARD OF EDUCATION/SUPERINTENDENT RELATIONSHIPS IN THE AREA OF PUBLIC SCHOOL FINANCE

by

Michael T. Renn

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

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1986

Approved by

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APPROVAL PAGE

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

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It was the purpose of this study to examine the relationships between members of boards of education and public school superintendents in the area of school finance. It is our contention that these two sets of actors are at the heart of American public education and that an illumination of the interrelationships surrounding them is significant.

Relationships between boards of education and superintendents were examined in only one area of interest, school finance. This area is identified in the literature and recognized through experience as a facilitator of other educational endeavors.

The basis for the study was data collected through the administration of a questionnaire to all local district school superintendents in the state of North Carolina. The questionnaire involved respondents ranking levels of involvement on 29 areas of financial responsibility. The response rate was in excess of 90%.

We found that superintendents have a different perception of their own responsibility in school finance as opposed to the responsibility of board members. They see themselves as being more actively involved in a broader range of financial areas than board members. Superintendents also delineated multiple areas of responsibility in

school finance rather than creating a simple dichotomous division. In addition, they perceived their own performance as being closer to what it "ought to be" than that of their board members. There were no differences in the perceptions of superintendents in financial matters when considering three selected demographic differences.

Replication of the study in differing geographic areas as well as from different perspectives was suggested for further study.

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I want to begin by expressing my appreciation to the members of my doctoral committee. The committee was chaired by Dr. Dale Brubaker who, for some time, has been a great source of inspiration and understanding--one who knows from whence I have come. Dr. E. Lee Bernick directed the dissertation and led me to add empirical research to my list of ways to attempt to understand the world. Dr. Joe Bryson was always there with his wisdom and his ability to bolster my confidence. Dr. Hal Snyder provided a wealth of knowledge as well as practical experience and always offered encouragement. These professors from the fields of education and political science were at my side and helped me to find meaning in all that I attempted. They have my sincere thanks.

My Mom and Dad, who have always been supportive, deserve far more than my thanks but, as has often been the case, thanks is what I have to offer.

To my wife Sue, who kept me from having to do this alone and who shared my most difficult moments, I offer my appreciation and my apologies for my intensity and my frequent absence. Your concern sustained me.

And to my two lovely daughters, Meagan and Caroline, who were not able to see as much of me as they, or I, would have liked . . . Daddy is home.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Throughout history, America's public schools have been seen as her strength. While the most recent years have brought criticism of public education and even an occasional suggestion that a system of privately funded institutions could better and more efficiently educate America's youth, there is little doubt that the educational system has performed well. However, this is not to imply that there are no weaknesses. It would be reasonable to imagine that even those who level criticism at the schools understand what the "noble experiment" is all about. No other nation has attempted, on such a grand scale, to educate the masses. America is a nation where not just those who were blessed with being financially well-born, not simply those who had elevated intellectual ability and intended to pursue university study, and not just those who, by accident of birth, came to our shores with the "proper" skin color or religious convictions but every child is endowed with the right to a proper education. This goal of creating a literate citizenry was not just a whim or "luck of the draw" but rather an idea straight out of a larger political philosophy and tradition. Schools in America were not founded on a basis that was confined only to intellectual development for development's

sake; they were created with purpose, purpose larger than the schools themselves. That purpose, of course, was focused on what we have come to call a "way of life" but which is, more technically, a political philosophy and system: democracy. The founding fathers were cognizant of the fact that if individual citizens were to express their desires and if these grass root commands were to be used to guide the republic, then the common man must be prepared for such responsibility. America's public schools were created in this democratic tradition and, through a set of goals that were centered on the realization of national literacy, were to perpetuate that tradition.

With this national democratic ideal as a backdrop, the governance of America's schools has often begged the attention of the general public as well as of the country's educational professionals. That "free public schools" are essential to the existence of American democracy has been a given as schools were, and continue to be, used to assimilate and to transfer socializing knowledge to young citzens. However, equally of interest to us and to scholars in many disciplines, is the way that America has chosen to govern the schools themselves and whether the institution that has been given the task of transfering the democratic ideal is actually utilizing that ideal in practice.

The historical fact is clear, America has chosen a cooperative, two-pronged system of school governance.

Interestingly enough, this same idea is akin to that found in the larger governmental arena as one branch of government is asked to "check and balance" another. One "branch" of this dual governance system in schools is the "lay" control provided by boards of education. Such boards were, at the outset of American public education, the only governing bodies, and these boards specified to teachers what they expected in their schools. The whole idea of governance being "close to the people" was realized when the representatives of the people were in direct control of schools. The democratic ideal was totally achieved with popularly elected boards of education. If, on the other hand, boards of education were appointed by other elected officials, then something less than pure representative government resulted. But, as the schools and the nation grew, the operation of the educational process became more complex and time-consuming. Lay boards, whether elected or appointed, were no longer willing or able to be in direct control and felt a need to hire a "professional" to aid in the governance of their schools. The entrance of the professional administrator did relieve boards of the day-to-day operation of schools but it also had a real effect on the "ownership" of those schools. This shared ownership led to the aforementioned second "branch" of the dual governance system. The appearance of the superintendency added an element of governance that was one more

step removed from direct popular control and, as a result, the lay/professional dichotomy that presently draws great attention was established. Superintendents and boards of education were now in positions to compete for influence in educational governance.

Democratic influence does not end with the nature of those who make decisions about the governance of schools; it extends to how those decisions are made. In addition to the electoral process often being used to select those who provide lay control of education, there are those issues that are put directly to the people. Bond issues, referenda, and, in the most extreme examples, even direct approval of school district budgets are a part of school governance. Democratic ideals are evident throughout the processes used in the governance of America's schools; and although partisan politics are largely avoided, the process is a profoundly political one.

Within the political arena surrounding the school governance function, a stumbling block has emerged--one that has its beginnings at the creation of the dual governance system mentioned above. American school districts are governed in concert by lay boards of education that are, in varying degrees, responsible to the people and professional superintendents who depend on their theoretical understanding of what should be done in schools. The potential for

conflict is clear as both struggle to determine their proper roles in the concerted effort. The professional has at the center of his/her interest what he/she sees as what "ought" to be happening in schools and yet is responsible to the board of education as an employee to his/her employer. The lay board member may have a personal opinion on an issue, but--possibly more importantly--he/she has at the center of his/her interest what his/her constituents think "ought" to be happening in schools. Tension between these sometimes competing interests, and therefore between roles, is a reality in most cases and certainly a surprise in none. The political process which involves a contest of interests is the result and is often accompanied by discomfort and insecurity for board members and superintendents alike.

The governance of schools, therefore, is clearly a political undertaking, with conflicting roles existing among those who are to govern as well as among those who are to be governed. However, while the nation has traditionally been willing to admit, has even been boastful of, its national political traditions, it has not been willing to admit the political reality of school governance. Schools have been seen as institutions that need to be "above politics" yet the reality has always been that they are rooted in the democratic/political tradition and, most likely, will remain so.

The role conflict that arises between lay boards and professional administrators has, most often, been denied and replaced instead by a false sense of security based only on a desire to avoid conflict and the creative tensions that it can yield. Avoidance behavior and denial have been the rule as "playing politics" with our children has become a pox to be avoided. It would seem strange that a process revered in the governance of a nation would be so despised and suspect as a process of public school governance.

This study is focused on the political interaction that transpires between the superintendent and the board of education. The relationship between lay boards and their professional administrators is a fragile one that receives a great deal of public and media interest. Board meetings often provide publicized examples of the difficulty of these relationships and the public nature of these meetings adds the tension that comes with the concern of being observed.

There is no single relationship between boards and superintendents; rather, a series of relationships is formed in regard to a great number of issues and interests. While an attempt could be made to study all of the various relationships that exist, we felt that a single area of interest, public school finance, best captures many of the conflicts that surround board/superintendent relationships. School finance is profoundly pervasive in the operation of schools.

Little else seems to yield more vivid opinions than how we distribute scarce financial resources to serve the needs of students. In addition, school finance can be seen as a catalyst for other decision areas such as curriculum, personnel, and administrative organization. Without the channeling of appropriate funds into these other areas, they remain thoughts and ideas unfulfilled, waiting to be activated by dollars spent.

Significance of the Present Study

There is little doubt that boards of education and superintendents are the two key actors in governance and control of public schools. While there is a significant amount of literature in the field of education that comments on board/superintendent relations, it tends to be anecdotal. Moreover, there has been little theoretical analysis or comparison with models of democratic control from outside the field of education. A combination of a lack of creation of models for the board/superintendent relationship within education and the lack of comparison with models from without, leaves the interaction between these key actors to chance. Research that seeks to use proven models in other fields to determine if they apply to education may provide valuable insight into our understanding of board/superintendent relations. We feel that the significance of this relationship deserves additional analysis that can lead to improving the understanding of the interaction that is to serve students.

The use of school finance as an area of focus for the study of board/superintendent relations has been commented on earlier. Although the distribution of scarce financial resource shapes the educational system, there is virtually no literature that examines the board/superintendent relationship in this profoundly important area. This study will provide some basis for beginning to analyze this important element of school operation.

Organization of the Study

Chapter I of the study introduces the topic under consideration providing both purpose and what we see as the significance of the undertaking. Some historical background is also provided.

Chapter II is a review of the related literature on board of education/superintendent relations. An effort is made to summarize what others have said and to relate this to our specific concerns. Although little is available on board/superintendent relationships in the area of school finance, the general area of board/superintendent relations is a fertile one. Effort will be made to critique the literature as it is reviewed. In addition, parallels will be drawn between and among varying positions within the literature and comparisons with models of interaction outside education will be made.

In Chapter III our methodology will be discussed. A definition of critical terms will be offered as well as an examination of research methods. We will discuss how we intend to examine the areas in question and the statistical measures to be employed. Hypotheses will be cast that will be tested as the research methodology is utilized to examine the data gathered.

Analysis of data will be discussed in Chapter IV. Our findings will be outlined in addition to an explanation of how we arrived at those findings. Comparative references will be made to the work of others.

Chapter V will contain summary, conclusions, and recommendations for further study.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

As we begin this study of the relationship between public school superintendents and members of boards of education, it is important that we understand that our examination is one of roles and players and not one of specific persons. Rather, as in all conceptual studies, conclusions reached may be of consequence in developing a general understanding of the interaction between the key actors in America's public schools. Before we begin talking specifically about either of the key actors, it may serve us to examine the theoretical constructs that form the framework for the social interaction between them. These constructs, and the constraints they impose, must be understood in order that the relationships under study can be properly analyzed. In examining social constructs for interaction, we will be drawing on two general areas of sociological research, one is what has been termed "role theory" and the other is the specific work of Erving Goffman in a book entitled The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life. Each has the capacity for increasing our ability to take both superintendents and boards out of a theoretical context and place them, as Goffman might say it, "on life's stage."

Central to the understanding of "role theory" is, of course, some agreement on the definition of the term "role." The term has at its base a theatrical origin and was not commonly used to describe a sociologically technical concept until the 1930's. The concept of "role" is one developed in sociological analysis and has been central in linking the functioning of elements of the social order with the characteristics and behavior of those who make it up. In the 1900's in his work Behind Our Masks, Robert Ezra Park noted that "everyone is always and everywhere more or less consciously playing a role. . . . It is in these roles that we know each other; it is in these roles that we know ourselves" (Park, 1926, p. 58). Our definition of role is, then, a relatively simple one: "a role is those behaviors characteristic of one or more persons in a context" (Biddle, 1979, p. 4 . Roles, then, dictate what we are in the eyes of others; they look at us and they see our roles. The Chinese philosopher Confucius may have sad it more clearly: "the ruler rules, the minister ministers, the father fathers, and the son sons." Given this definition, it is easy enough to at least begin to imagine what is denoted with regard to roles by the terms "superintendent" and "board member."

As sociologists began looking at the methods used by individual members of society to gather clues as to how to behave in varying interactive situations, they also began

developing the concept of role theory. There were three significant theorists who provided the lion's share of the early thought and research in this area: George Herbert Mead, Jacob Moreno, and Ralph Linton. Mead was the real forerunner as he wrote and taught at the University of Chicago from 1911 to 1925. His work, Mind, Self, and Society (1934), was visionary in observing "that in mature social behavior the individual works out his role by imaginatively taking the role of the other" (Encyclopedia of Social Research, p. 552). This idea led to the contention that "articulation between the roles played by partners in interaction determines whether interaction is harmonious and productive" (Encyclopedia of Social Research, p. 552). In the late 1930's Moreno utilized Mead's ideas and became best known for his work in the area of behavior change, speaking often of the differentiation betwen "role-playing" and "role-taking." "Role playing may be considered as an experimental procedure, a method of learning to perform roles more adequately. In contrast with role-playing, role-taking is an attitude already frozen in the behavior of a person" (Biddle & Edwin, 1966, p. 7) Two years later Linton proposd a classic distinction between "status" and "role."

> A status (position) as distinct from the person who may occupy it, is simply a collection of rights and duties . . . a role represents the dynamic aspect of a status. The individual is socially assigned a status and occupies it with relation to other statuses. When he puts the rights and responsibilities which constitute the status into effect, he is performing a role. (Biddle & Edwin, 1966, p. 7)

Clearly, the positions of board member and superintendent carry with them the weight of role expectation, there being generally accepted, although sometimes conflicting, sets of behaviors recognized for each. It is of consequence that we study the relationship between the roles of these key actors by utilizing what began with Mead, Moreno, and Linton and what has, more recently, been called "role theory."

Role Theory

Role theory "is a science concerned with the study of behaviors that are characteristic of persons within contexts and with various processes that presumably produce, explain, or are affected by those behaviors" (Biddle, 1979, p. 4). It is this capacity for affecting behaviors that makes role theory of interest in the study of board of education/superintendent relations. The role and the perception of the role held by others develop simultaneously and, for all practical purposes, reality is re-created. The understanding (or misunderstanding) of role by all of the appropriate organizational actors plays a very real part in that organization's future. "Many organizational studies have demonstrated that lack of clarity and consensus in role conceptions is a factor in reducing organizational effectiveness and morale" (Encyclopedia of Social Research, p. 553).

There are several other concepts within the general area of role theory that have appropriate application to

board of education/superintendent relations. The first of these concepts is termed "role persistence." This is the general tendency of roles to be described as staying the same regardless of changes in actors.

> First, when an actor leaves the group and is replaced by another, there is the tendency to allocate to the new member the role played by the one who leaves. Second, if one actor changes roles, there is a tendency for another actor to make a compensatory change of roles in order to maintain the original role structure. (Encyclopedia of Social Research, p. 554)

Thus roles persist, even though board members and superintendents come and go, and there is much research that documents that this penchant towards mobility creates tendencies that have a powerful effect on those who govern schools. The phenomenon militates against real change in governance in an area of endeavor that is markedly changing. As education has rushed to maintain pace with societal change, role persistence has been a real complicator to the establishment of stable board/superintendent relations and to good governance, if stability is required for that condition.

Role persistence is complicated by a concept called "legitimate expectation." "There is a tendency for stabilized roles to be assigned the character of legitimate expectations, implying that deviation from expectation is a breach of rules or violation of trust" (Encyclopedia of Social Research, p. 554). Enormous bad feeling can arise from such a violation in that all of the actors involved feel that they "know"

what the other is to do. Legitimate expectation can be built by what has come to be a "customary" pattern and yet it can be overturned as this position is denied by other actors. Once a pattern is established, whether positive or negative, the expectation arises and future behavior toward that person will be jaundiced by past behaviors. As is obvious, working to improve negative feelings persisted as the dominant expectation for present and future behaviors.

As if the difficulties that can arise from the concepts already mentioned were not enough, there are other confounding factors. Roles, as we have already seen, do not exist in a vacuum; they exist with regard to other roles. However, the reality of role interaction and of board/superintendent relations goes even further. A third determinant of action is that of the organizational setting. Organizational settings supply both direction and constraint to all of the processes mentioned previously and therefore these processes are brought into even more complex interrelationships. The organization's goals can tend to determine the criteria for role differentiation, legitimacy of expectation, and the like. Concepts such as "status" of roles emerge as the organization assigns "worth" to roles and "to the extent to which roles are incorporated into an organizational setting, their persistence is intensified through tradition and formalization" (Encyclopedia of Social Research, p. 555). The

result is a conflict between informal role expectations and those that have been made formal by the organization's edict. A third party in the person of the organization itself has been established and achieving role congruence is now even more difficult to accomplish.

While it is evident that the processes governing schools are made more difficult by the role expectations and the various conflicts surrounding the theory, it should not be forgotten that the individuals, in playing out their roles, may also suffer. Not unlike the physical desire to survive, sociological actors also strive to avoid personal damage. Alleviation of what is usually called "role strain" is a significant motivation of all social players. "Role strain comes largely from failure of many sociological processes to function adequately, so as to leave unclear, incomplete, and contradictory elements in a role" (Encyclopedia of Social Research, p. 556). Those who experience such strain make alterations in their behaviors so as to lessen or cope with the negative effects that can result. Again, the board member and/or superintendent are prime candidates for the phenomenon,and relations between them can be significantly colored by the strain.

Variation on Role Theory

Sociologist Erving Goffman has provided a variation on role theory that can lend a helping hand as we study

relationships between boards of education and their superintendents. In his book The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life he utilizes a perspective that parallels a theatrical performance as he considers

> the way in which the individual in ordinary work situations presents himself and his activity to others, the ways in which he guides and controls the impression they form of him, and the kinds of things he may or may not do while sustaining his performance before them. (Goffman, 1959, p. xi)

Goffman stays away from socio-technical description and explanation and utilizes a more simplistic less jargon-prone (less discipline-centered) analysis. His point is relatively simple: that contextual situations can be more readily controlled if an individual is aware of the social environment and able to present him/herself in the intended light. The idea clarifies and extends that of role theory and suggests that while role is not unimportant, that what is perceived of those in the role is equally as viable as a vehicle for control. Goffman says that "when an individual appears in the presence of others, there will usually be some reason for him to mobilize his activity so that it will convey the impression to others which it is in his interest to convey" (p. 4). Therefore, interactions that take place between board members and superintendents can be defined in part by the way an individual appears during the situation. These situational, contextual clues can convey any number of messages and there are those who seem virtually unable to

lessen their own "presence." These individuals may not be aware of their capacity in creating context but, more likely, they have become expert at calculated unintentionality thereby increasing their ability to manipulate the behavior of others and, therefore, of appropriate situations. These ideas are especially powerful in an interactive situation such as board of education/superintendent relations.

> When we allow that the individual projects a definition of the situation when he appears before others, we must also see that the others, however passive their role may seem to be, will themselves efficiently project a definition of the situation by virtue of any lines of action they initiate to him. (Goffman, 1959, p. 9)

This type of interaction is a variation on give and take where each "actor" is expected to suppress his/her immediate heartfelt feelings, attempting to convey a view of the situation that the other authors will be, at least, temporarily able to accept. Goffman refers to this tendency as "working consensus" and, as we shall demonstrate later in the study, it has direct parallels to what political scientists have termed the "harmony model" of board/superintendent relations. The acceptance of the establishment of a "working consensus" by accepting the definitional claims of others is important in that this initial information is the basis on which the situation is defined and lines of responsive action are first created. Obviously, Goffman's ideas would presuppose that "first impressions" are important, yet they go far

deeper. They imply that seizing and holding the initiative are important and therein lies the competitive struggle between board members and superintendents who often, simultaneously, are attempting to do just that.

Continuing the dramatalurgical parallel, Goffman speaks of additional theatrical elements. He states that "a performance may be defined as all the activity of a given participant on a given occasion which serves to influence, in any way, any of the other participants" (Goffman, 1959, p. 15). "Parts," "routines," "settings," and other stage-related terms are coined as he asks the reader to buy into his analogy. However, he does make clear a point that would not necessarily follow the dramatic route. There might be confusion regarding motivation; an assumption that all performances are cynical and are out for self-interest could be made, but Goffman does not believe that this is true. While the "acting" is most often purposeful, the motivation can be altruistic, like physicians giving placebos to patients who "need" them. So, a player can be "out for himself" but can also gravitate towards being totally taken in by his/her own performance, really believing it as reality.

It is at this point that the connection between Goffman's work and other sociologists such as Park can be detected. Park establishes the connection as he says,

> It is probably no mere historical accident that the word person, in its first meaning, is a mask. . . . In a sense, and in so far as this mask represents the

> conception we have formed of ourselves--the role that we are striving to live up to--this mask is our truer self, the self that we would like to be. In the end our conception of our role becomes second nature and an integral part of our personality. We come into the world as individuals, achieve character, and become persons. (Park, 1950, p. 249)

If we are to place any faith in sociological analysis, we can assume that the dynamics of interaction outlined by Park, Mead, Goffman, and others would be active with regard to the board/superintendent relationship. While this type of analysis has, to this point, assumed a somewhat egocentric stance between actors, in our case board members and superintendents, Goffman does offer another insight into the relationship. He uses the term "performance team" to refer to "any set of individuals who cooperate in staging a single routine" (Goffman, 1959, p. 79). Therefore, there is a possibility that, at least publicly, boards and superintendents could act as a team to come to grips with decisions that are to be made. This "professional" stance is one often espoused by superintendents and will be spoken to later in this study.

Boards and superintendents are actors in a social dynamic and sociological analysis can help to examine that dynamic. Using the sociologists' framework can help to establish the basis for discussion of board/superintendent relations in the process of governing American education.

Historical Context of Board/Superintendent Relations

As our examination of role and role theory has shown us, an individual's position in society is determined, at least in part, by others. The roles one plays are socially defined as one's friends and acquaintances participate in the development of the broad range of social roles, and as those roles change with regard to status and impression. Thus, the definitions of the roles that a superintendent or a board member is to play change as time and public opinion change; in fact, there is significant historical documentation of this expectation. In the area of school board history, significant work has been done by three indivdiuals: Harmon L. Zeigler, Harvey J. Tucker, and Raymond E. Callahan. Zeigler and Tucker, working together, sketch out several "phases" of school board role within the history of American education.

Phase 1 in Zeigler's scheme has the control of nineteenth century American education in the hands of the people with large urban districts having as many as 40 subdistricts. "Each (subdistrict) board possessed authority to levy taxes and to appoint administrative and teaching personnel" (Zeigler, Tucker, & Wilson, 1977, p. 555). While there was an overall "central board," this board was almost without power or impact as all meaningful decisions were made by the subdistrict boards. The democratic ideal was paramount as socio-economic status of the boards was roughly congruent with the general population of the subdistrict. This, of course,

was a result of the fairly compact area covered by the subdistrict itself, and there was little opportunity for direct control by an "anomaly" district from across town. Domination by a district of a more powerful economic status or ethnic make-up was not likely. Personal attention to problems was possible as these subdistricts were manageable with regard to size and as those citizens within the subdistricts were more directly represented by their elected board members. In turn, the elected official was more directly responsible to the local constituents, sometimes only being located, physically and psychologically, a "block away." The system was pure "community control" with a lay board giving very localized, nearly individualized, attention to public education.

But, as might be guessed, such localized control was not altogether without difficulties. Local control had been democratic enough but also shared all the disadvantages that come with the fact that the citizenry could put their hands more directly on school affairs. While the system, in and of itself, was not corrupt, people sometimes are; and, with the opportunity to have direct input with their hands on the strings of the education "puppet," there were those who used the system to personal advantage. "Urban machines, in functioning to integrate millions of immigrants into political life, rewarded votes with jobs. . . . The currency of political

machines was patronage" (Zeigler et al., 1977, p. 555). "Boss Tweed" type machinery was common in the cities while rural equivalents reigned supreme in the countryside. School district affairs were often "tainted" by illicit business dealings where building contracts were "bought" as were jobs and textbook sales opportunities. Teachers' academic and pedagogic qualifications were of little significance as bribes and nepotism were the top qualifiers for future performance.

> A superintendent in one of the Eastern states writes, "nearly all the teachers in our schools get their positions by political pull. If they secure a place and are not backed by political influence, they are likely to be turned out." (Kinst, 1984, p. 31)

Thus,in some communities, machine politics was clearly in control of school operations as buildings, materials, and teachers were selected without regard to students' interests or needs. It is this phase of public education that has helped to lead to a dim view that "politics" be left out of education. School boards may well have deserved the lumps attributed to them upon close examination in this era; many, though not all, were in reality and figuratively, "caught with their fingers in the till."

Even during Phase 1, there were many cries that education begin to divorce itself of politics. As early as 1851, the city of Boston had hired a full-time superintendent to help isolate the board from "the evils of the political arena" and by 1859 19 other cities had followed their lead.

> The trend toward the creation of superintendencies was furthered not only by the cries of reformers who wanted to divorce boards from partisan politics but also by the growing realization that the school board members could not keep up with their jobs. (ERIC Brief, 1981)

The highly politicized governance system of Phase 1 had now been injected with what would later be called the "professional" position. The impetus for the reform movement had begun and the movement would become overt at the turn of the century.

Zeigler pulls no punches in describing what he sees as the reasoning behind the reform movement. He feels that the movement

> can be accurately described as a Wasp elite response to lay control. By fostering major changes in the governing structure of education, the movement consciously reduced lay responsibility for education. It was clearly a class-based movement to shift the response of schools from laymen to experts. (Zeigler et al., 1977, p. 555)

Zeigler's Phase 2 had begun and educational professionalism was coming to the fore. By the end of the first 20 years of the twentieth century the "professionalization" of education was in place and, as Zeigler laments, the accompanying loss of parental control was the rule. As is easily surmised, these basic changes were deep-seated and the roles of boards of education and superintendents began an evolutionary direction that was different from before. Whereas boards had been virtually omnipotent in Phase 1, the "professional" superintendent was gathering influence in Phase 2. These

developments in the early twentieth century were giving rise to the very issues that are the subject of this study as the politicizing of the governance system of schools was changing.

Zeigler lists the major structural modifications of Phase 2 as follows:

1. The centralization of school administration, to be accomplished both by the destruction of the authority of community boards and by the merger of small districts into large ones.

2. The substitution of a smaller central board, elected at large, for a large ward-based central board.

3. The election of board members by non-partisan ballots.

4. The separation of board elections from other municipal and state elections. (Zeigler et al., 1977, p. 555)

There was little doubt that there were those who were giving strong consideration to utilizing the then popular "scientific management" techniques as an element of educational governance as they de-emphasized the political aspects of the endeavor. The professional superintendent was on the road to becoming the "expert" and the nature of the roles of both superintendent and members of the board of education were changing. Politically, a transfer of power took place with the more advantaged taking control. As the composition of boards of education shifted with the structural modifications identified by Zeigler, role change was evident, both in what the "actors" perceived with regard to themselves and with regard to what they were perceived as doing by others. Board

membership drifted away from being available to "the people" as, in 1927, upper class domination of school board membership meant that 90% were male, 96% were white, 70% were college graduates, 36% earned incomes in excess of $30,000.00, 66% were from business and the professions, and 85% were Protestant" (Zeigler et al., 1977, p. 556). "Success" became a prerequisite for board service.

Phase 2 not only changed the direction of school governance in America, it also led to more real role change for board members and superintendents. This was truly the "professionalization" of schools as superintendents rose to a level of dominance in educational decision-making. Phase 2 board members reflected the social biases of the social reformers and adopted the business mentality of the upper classes. This was congruent with the scientific management philosophy of the day and boards of education began leaving governance to the "experts." A new role was defined in public education, professional administrator, and colleges rushed to graduate persons who had specialized in the area. School board/superintendent relations had changed with the changes in role. The superintendent was looked to for direction and the board was most likely to follow the "professional." While real learning in the area of pedagogy may well have made the professionals' opinions of more worth by this time, the process of governance had been altered and the result was

far-reaching. Staffs increased as the "expert" employed more professionals and school superintendents took on a greater significance in their respective communities. Board members, on the other hand, "do not view their role as representing, or speaking for, 'the public'; rather, they view it as speaking for the administration to 'the public'" (Zeigler et al., 1977, p. 556). The process for recruitment of board members changed dramatically as there was no longer a partisan political constituency. Recruitment came through business contacts, and the democratic processes that had forged educational governance at its founding were replaced with social status and a network of business and professional cronyism. Boards, therefore, typically enacted professionally recommended policy and with such action, the goal of educational policy during Phase 2 was stability with an accompanying tendency to withdraw from change. The more conservative political philosophy was at the fore and social change was not a high national priority for those in seats of power.

Zeigler describes Phase 2 as continuing from the 1920's to the early 1950's and what were seen as the new national demands for social change. The nation balked at a conservative acceptance of the status quo with regard to civil rights and, in 1954, Brown vs. Board of Education shook the conservative view at its foundation. Brown was the forerunner of a new era in American domestic policy, in

American educational philosophy, and in Zeigler's scheme for educational governance. Minority populations began demanding "their fair share" of America's bounty and, inadvertently, were requesting that schools be returned to "local control" by the people. As Phase 2 had drawn to a close

> two irreconcilable sets of demands were being placed upon schools: 1) that they serve as agents of social change and 2) that they return the schools to the people. To meet the latter was to deny the former. . . . In both sets of demands, however, the superintendent was threatened. (Zeigler et al., 1977, p. 556)

Again, the pattern of authority over America's schools was changing as were the attendant roles and relationships between boards of education and superintendents.

Zeigler's Phase 3 tells of a totally different pattern of authority in the realm of school governance. In this era the federal government had decided to utilize schools as a vehicle for espousing and implementing a national social policy. Phase 2 had seen people lose control to a professional administrator and Phase 3 saw that administrator lose control to a non-local governmental entity. There was a proliferation of interventions by the federal government as federally-funded programs were created to re-distribute wealth, ameliorate poverty, and guarantee rights to America's minorities. Entitlement programs and court action were the order of the day as neither superintendents nor local boards of education were able to stem the growing tide of federal

intervention. A growing body of educational research and studies such as the first Coleman Report led to the identification of the single most important factor affecting student achievement: family (socioeconomic) background of the learner and his fellow learners. This, in short and in turn, led to federally proposed busing for racial balance and the emotional furor that accompanied it. The result of the federal intrusion has been simple, the superintendent and the local board of education have experienced a loss in authority. In fact, so many areas of interest are decided at the federal or state level, that the range of issues available for discussion by the board and the superintendent has been greatly diminished.

The pattern in Zeigler's analysis is clear; as educational goals have broadened, basis for control has done likewise. In Phase 1 the local community was focusing on locally determined goals for its children; by Phase 3 the schools are somehow being held responsible for a national economic policy and its attendant problems and complications. As this happened, the national legion of educational professionals has grown in size and authority yet the schools have not yet been able to accomplish the Phase 3 goal of equalized economic opportunity (Zeigler maintains that this will never come to pass). The increased centralization of school governance that has resulted has drawn away from local control

as a national emphasis was substituted. Zeigler says that we must return to Phase 1 or Phase 2 or go to an "individual control" that would come with a voucher system or the like. For Zeigler, any other alternative is simply to accept and continue the failure of Phase 3 where stated governmental goals will never be met.

While Zeigler's interpretive analysis is not perfect (when reading Zeigler, one gets the feeling that he has a point to prove), his historical journey is substantiated by Kirst, Callahan, and others. His conclusions, however, are not the same as other authors, especially educational historial Raymond Callahan. As Zeigler sees a consistent rise of the superintendent's dominance and power, Callahan sees an evolution of a system where the superintendent and the board are mediated by "checks and balances" and where the citizen still retains a voice in school governance. Turner and Zeigler, of course, would take serious issue with such a "liberal" view and it is clear that someone must be mistaken in what was, and is, reality.

Analysis of School Board/Superintendent Relations

Zeigler and his co-author M. Kent Jennings, in the book Governing America's Schools, set out to provide substantiation for what they feel has become of American public school governance. Zeigler states with regard to his hope for the book that

> Agreement on dominance by the superintendent may be high among scholars, but the bases upon which the conclusions are drawn suffer from a lack of systematic observation. One of our objectives, therefore, is to assess the extent to which school boards are dominated by their superintendents and to explore the factors which lead to variations. (Zeigler & Jennings, 1974, p. 14)

In this study, Zeigler and Jennings surveyed school board members and superintendents in 82 urban and rural school districts. "Democratic theory" was the test used to assess school governance as board responsiveness to the public's desires was measured. The standard of how democratic the school governance system is was based on two indicators: how partisan were the board elections and how much opposition was provided the superintendent by the board. William L. Boyd (1976), an educational researcher, challenges Zeigler's and Jennings' interpretation of data and maintains that there is an

> Interplay of a welter of fators that include the degree of urbaneness of the district, the district's size, the heterogeneity or homogeneity of the district's population, the socioeconomic status of the district, and the nature of the particular issue in question. (Boyd, 1976, p. 539)

Boyd sees Zeigler and Jennings' analysis as too simplistic and maintains that there is a "situational theory" of conflict between superintendents and boards of education.

> I have proposed that while educators tend to dominate local educational policy making, they usually operate within significant and generally neglected or underestimated constraints imposed by the local community and the school board. (Boyd, 1976, p. 53

Varying factors that are situationally present then, determine, in Boyd's analysis, the temporary dominance of the actors involved. "Boyd argues that if most of the time the superintendents seem to be running the schools, it is because they have the consent of the board and the public (ERIC Action Brief, 1981). While the classic statement made by Zeigler and Jennings, "school boards should govern or be abolished," is an indicator of a powerful case resting within their analysis, there is also a substantial degree of doubt cast by the interpretations offered by other scholars including Callahan and Boyd.

These varying analyses by Zeigler, Callahan, Boyd, Kirst, and others focus on a gencralized question that is a vital part of our own study: in the examination of board/superintendent relations, how is it that each is really "supposed" to behave? Just as we have already seen that there are many who are offering opinions and analysis of the positions of superintendent, there are also those who are offering generic models of the responsibilities of boards of education. James A. Mecklenberger (1977) feels that there are two views about the role of boards of education widely shared by board members and superintendents alike. One says that a school board should operate like a corporation's board of directors; the other says that a school board should operate as a legislative body. The distinction of the two types of boards is

important because it implies corresponding behavior from superintendents. These are generally termed "corporate boards" and "legislative boards."

In beginning to look at these models, it is of consequence that we return to some previously mentioned understandings and terminology. Role theory can be of assistance as we examine how boards behave.

> Better than any alternative concept in social science, the notion of role yields a model of the legislator as an acting human individual which is consistent with the basic understandings of individual and group psychology. . . . Role, for any individual legislator, refers to a coherent set of "norms" of behavior which are thought by those involved in the interactions being viewed, to apply to all persons who occupy the position of legislator. (Wahlke, 1962, p. 61)

Mecklenberger sees a clear delineation between the legislative role and the corporate role and offers that

> a school board that operates in the manner of a legislative body behaves more aggressively than its corporate model counterpart--it creates policy through open debate, watches vigorously the progress of its policies, and each of its members regards himself as a representative or "ombudsman" for a constituency. (Mecklenberger, 1977, p. 39)

The general role of the corporate board is viewed differently with that board setting only general goals, holding periodic reviews of the status of goal achievement, and working as a team to provide institutional support. Much to Mecklenberger's lament, he states that in the 1970's at a National School Boards Association convention, just under 50% of the members felt that they should function as a corporate board

rather than a legislative one and a full two-thirds of the superintendents felt the same way.

> But now, that model may well be changing. A majority of the school board members and a full third of the superintendents interviewed no longer value the model of the corporation type board in public education. Instead, they see the school board members' task akin to that of a legislator. (Mecklenberger, 1977, p. 39)

Another parallel exists in a model that has received considerable treatment in the literature. This model is termed the "harmony model" and in many ways parallels the corporate model discussed earlier. The harmony model is, as Schmidt and Voss (1976) put it, "based upon the conventional wisdom and reformist rhetoric common to writings in political science and public administration of nearly 50 years ago" (p. 517). The model suggests that while the board has the policy-making prerogative, the origination and preparation of policy should come from the superintendent and his/her staff. The only major responsibility granted the board in the model is the selection of the superintendent. The superintendent is to be sure that the board retains its "proper place" and its members are continuously reminded that there is great danger in "meddling" in administrative matters. Many writers in the area of administrative theory encourage superintendents to "properly educate" their boards and to advise board members to see that the schools are properly administered but not to administer them. Some authors such as Archie R. Dykes actually encourage changes in the legal authority

granted boards and superintendents, lessening the former and increasing the latter. School board manuals throughout the country encourage the essentially passive harmony model advocating total acquiescence rather than any hint of conflict. The policy vs. administration governance dichotomy grew out of this phenomenon.

Many authors chronicle what they see as superintendents' purposeful attempts to increase their own authority while decreasing that of the board. Focused complexity is seen as a way to confound board members leaving them dependent on the "experts." Board agendas are controlled by the superintendent as are the suggestions for long and laborious policy analysis tasks that can be used to tie the boards' hands and keep them occupied and out of the everyday affairs of the schools. Treating the board as a "whole" can also be a way of avoiding "educating" individual board members and, behind all of the above behaviors, is the stringent suggestion that the board never appear at odds with the superintendent, hence the "harmony model" terminology. Even more controlling is the suggestion that all members of the board agree with one another and that this, somehow, is some sort of "moral obligation." Disapproval of split votes and any other sign of factionalism is to be avoided and seen as damaging. Said simply, such moral obligation would render the superintendent "in control" in all situations outside meetings of the board

and in most situations within those meetings. The harmony model is clear on its primary assumption "that board effectiveness can only be achieved as a result of board harmony and that conflict cannot be equated with effectiveness" (Schmidt & Voss, 1976, p. 522). Writers such as Donald R. Magruder (1984) encourage such harmony as he advises readers that the best school systems are characterized by boards and superintendents who "work well" together. While there is little doubt that this credo is true, we might be quick to point out that in its typical usage this means no conflict rather than a rational exchange of differing opinions followed by a real effort to seek resolution. Magruder's admission that "It's easy to see how policy problems arise between superintendents and school boards; sometimes it's difficult to tell the difference between making and regulating school policy" (p. 18) is simply a restatement of the age old policy vs. administration paradox and his suggestion for resolving it is that the superintendent simply decides.

Verna M. Fletcher (1980) has also identified this same policy vs. administration dichotomy and her comments are revealing as to the effects it has on school board/superintendent relations:

> the power struggle over who controls schools has created a disillusioned public, a frustrated group of citizens called board members, and job-hopping educators called superintendents. The dissillusioned public is questioning how well we are educating today's children. Board

> members are caught between the angry public's cries for a responsive educational system and educators who firmly state: "Keep out of administration. We experts know what is best!" (Fletcher, 1980, p. 2)

This dichotomy is parallel to the previously mentioned ways of expressing this source of conflict in the governance of America's public schools. The "phases" of development as described by Zeigler, the high degree of board involvement in administrative matters during the early years and the decline later on as chronicled by Fletcher, and the corporate vs. legislative board conflict described by Mecklenberger are all indicators of a need to speak to the relationship between boards and superintendents. Resolution of and/or coping with the fact of the dichotomy will be a measure of the success in school governance.

The quintessential disagreement, at present, over board and superintendent roles can be found between two individuals who have vastly differing perspectives. One is a past president of the American School Boards Association, Winfield Smih, and the other is the Executive Director of the American Association of School Administrators, Paul Salmon. These two individuals demonstrate the real variance of opinion with regard to proper role differentiation between superintendents and boards of education. Winfield Smith is a proponent of Harmon Zeigler and begins his comments by stating, "Superintendents run schools but school boards should" (1982, p. 27). He laments what he sees as a rise in technical judgments and

their taking precedence over political responsiveness. He observes that superintendents now initiate policy which is clearly board of education responsibility and that, beginning with curriculum and instruction, they have expanded to control budget preparation, fiscal matters, purchasing, site selection, and all other areas of school operations. The superintendent has come to be in charge of everything, communication and data processing equipment, public relations avenues and the like and, therefore, board members feel inadequate in the face of such advantageous resources.

> Result: Board members see and discuss only what the superintendent leads them to deal with. The superintendent can act on his own. The board, a multimember body, must reach consensus to act. . . . Individual board members must be less decisive than the superintendent, so the superintendent can more readily attain the support of a majority of the board. (Smith, 1982, p. 28)

The superintendent, then, gets to come across as the single expert and board members are advised that they need to support his/her program or to fire him/her. Smith asserts that the board's responsibility to the people is far stronger than what he might call the technical opinion of a professional vagabond. He lists the "myths" that he says cloud our thinking with regard to school governance. They are:

--Educational decisions are technical and should be left to the superintendent.

--The board should be a buffer between the community and the superintendent.

--Teachers should never meet directly with the board of education.

Smith feels that boards have become more remote from the people and that they must return to the ascendancy of democratic theory over technical decision-making.

Paul Salmon, echoing Boyd's "situational theory," responds to the comments of Winfield Smith by saying that the whole issue is a situational one, that there is great variance from school system to school system and from time to time. Salmon warns that relying too heavily on personal experience is dangerous and touts that he has gone further and has done genuine research on the issue. He challenges Smith's use of the term "run" in describing what boards should do in schools and substitutes the term "govern." Smith maintains that the dominant person in the board member/superintendent relationship varies with a wide range of circumstances. For instance, "when the school board and the superintendent accurately reflect the values and expectations of the community, the superintendent is often dominant" (Smith, 1982, p. 30). However, "if the superintendent begins to vary from the community's values and expectations, research indicates that controversy will arise and the board will become dominant" (Smith, 1982, p. 30). As would seem obvious, superintendents would be dominant in internal issues with boards often stepping to the fore when external forces are brought to bear. Salmon utilizes the research of Donald J. McCarty and Charles E. Ramsey and identifies four generalized "types" of boards of education with a disclaimer

that has all boards acting out all four "types" at varying times. The "power-structure-oriented board" is most influenced by members of the local power structure. This narrow base of power is very restrictive and a superintendent serving such a board will be a servant of that board. This can become very comfortable if the superintendent's values closely approximate that of the power structure. The "factionated board" has strong and conflicting factions among its members and a superintendent who serves this board must be very politically astute. Four/three votes will be the rule and the superintendent must manage to feel secure in a one vote win. Mediation becomes an important skill as positive action is pursued. "Status-congruent boards" are internally motivated to make their district a better district. Constituencies are considered as they attempt to arrive at the synthesis of community opinion that can result in a better education for students. This district's superintendent has a chance to become an "educational leader." Lastly, there is the "sanctioning board." The board "trusts" the superintendent as the "best" and feels comfortable interpreting the superintendent to the community.

While Salmon describes all four boards as being properly applicable to specific situations that arise, he does admit that change is evident in general; that sanctioning boards are disappearing and that factionated boards are on the

increase. Although Salmon proposes that theory, he does not provide empirical analysis to determine if these types actually exist. However, unlike Smith, who says that "school board authority remains available . . . it awaits only board members bold enough to grasp it" (Smith, 1982, p. 28), Salmon holds that "boards and superintendents can work together with mutual respect to improve public schools for everyone" (Smith, 1982, p. 30). Though neither has provided direct tests of their theories, Smith's position certainly sounds more extreme while Salmon's sounds menacingly innocuous. We suspect that both lack the capacity to explain all cases.

With historical role development and a discussion of the sociological aspects of role theory already covered in our study, we want to look at more recent ideas centered on board/superintendent relations. While the dichotomy outlined by Smith and Salmon is generally applicable, others have studied the role conflict phenomenon, many trying to resolve it. Two authors, Carl Hoover and Jim Slezak, have readily admitted that "it's too simple to say the board sets the policy and the superintendent implements it" (Slezak & Hoover, 1978, p. 38), and have described what the Mt. Diablo Unified School District in northern California has done to define respective responsibilities. The district has created what they call a Decision Analysis Chart that lists

approximately 100 decision situations. These situations are categorized into five "distinct" levels ranging from the superintendent having complete authority to the superintendent being totally excluded with inverse levels of authority available for the board of education in each case. The chart is re-created when the board members or the superintendent changes and the system, so says its authors, helps to build board/superintendent consensus by giving proper consideration to resolution of conflict before the emotion of the actual conflict arises. While there is virtual certainty that the 100 situations listed are not always sufficient, the intent behind the model makes sense, that is, to make board/superintendent relations more harmonious. No evidence is offered, however, to substantiate that "more harmonious" is "more effective."

Mt. Diablo is not the only district to have attempted to simplify role/relationship behavior through a system of situations arrived at by board/superintendent consensus. Don E. Halverson describes a role/relationship grid created by the San Mateo County Office of Education that is astonishingly similar to that developed by Mt. Diablo. The same five level range is utilized and the attendant problems surrounding blurred lines of authority for unlisted situations are present.

Although no one seems particularly able to make the board/superintendent relationship one that is easily managed,

there are several authors who are quick to point up what can exacerbate negative feeling. Carolyn Mullins (1974) discusses a national survey of superintendents and augments this data with superintendent interviews. The overall result is clearly one that is heartfelt by those surveyed and reveals the superintendent as

> a man who is not always blameless himself, but nonetheless often takes the blame for developments over which he has little control. . . . A man who could use more understanding, if not support, from his board than he seems to be getting. (Mullins, 1974, p. 17)

She also intimates the opinions of superintendents that most board members are not profoundly well-intentioned and, in fact, many have selfish, self-centered motivations. In view of what has been said earlier, such feeling from superintendents should not be surprising. Stating the same intentions for board/superintendent relations in a more positive fashion, Ben Brodinsky says that the following behaviors can create a "win-win" situation for the board members and superintendents. "Each protects the image of the other, no one puts down or disparages another, no one claims that what he wants is the greatest, the best, the only and everyone listens" (Brodinsky, 1983, p. 5). In the same vein, Dorothy Kearns, a North Carolina school board member, advocates "a positive posture of give and take and mutual trust" (Kearns, 1982, p. 25) between superintendents and boards of education couching her ideas in terms that are approachable and resolution-oriented.

Other research speaks to how board members and superintendents view themselves and their working cohorts. Although so much of what we have seen suggests that there are irreconcilable differences between boards and superintendents, Gordon Cawelti, the Executive Director of the Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development, surveyed urban superintendents in all American cities of more than 300,000 population and sampled those cities between 100,000 and 300,000 population and found a surprisingly positive bent. In a "report card" for their boards created by the superintendent, 26% received "A's," 53% received "B's," 15% netted "C's," 6% earned "D's," and no board was given a failing grade. While there were negatives identified, this overall result was pleasantly positive and the prediction for the future was upbeat. Cawelti makes mention of a very important factor that could explain the more positive result in this study, that "big city" superintendents see a need for the role of the superintendent to change to accommodate boards that are becoming more involved in administrative and management matters. These superintendents were aware that leadership style is a crucial factor and that a need for a more "political" stance is arising. Although Cawelti's research results are surprising, his recommendations are not. He suggests that superintendents "make a greater effort to orient new board members; insure good planning and leadership for board

meetings, encourage community leaders to run for the board and jointly develop a decision matrix on board/superintendent roles" (Cawelti, 1982, p. 35).

A state-specific study of the perceptions of members of boards of education was done in the state of Texas. In this study board members were asked both how they feel about their own role and that of the superintendent. When responding to questions regarding what their own role should be, a very broad range of answers were evident.

> Only 6 percent thought their primary responsibility was to formulate policy. Forty percent felt that the board should be concerned primarily with finance. One board member even states that he does not know what the primary responsibility of the board is. (Studies in Education, 1970, p. 11)

When asked about the role of the superintendent "the author felt that the typical board member could not verbalize the role of the superintendent and would generally state that it is to 'run the schools'" ((p. 15). One interesting tendency did result, that board members tend to feel that the superintendent is responsible for suggesting policy change to the board rather than the opposite. This, of course, flies full in the face of the typical dichotomy of policy vs. administration discussed earlier in this study and demonstrates the complexity of the whole issue of board/superintendent roles and relations.

Another Texas study done by Mark Littleton and Lynn Turner revealed widespread disagreement over the role of

superintendents. The researchers surveyed 251 board members to gather a broad range of responses as they attempted to illuminate the board/superintendent relationship. Like in nearly all other studies, Littleton and Turner found "a general lack of understanding of each other's role is the major stumbling block to effective board/administrator relationships that affect the entire educational process of the schools" (Littleton & Turner, 1984, p. 32). They also note that the superintendent is dominant and that superintendents feel that this is true. The major result of the study is simply that board members are not in agreement with regard to what the superintendent should be and do and this, in turn, makes it very difficult for the superintendent to arrive at a set of behaviors that will satisfy the total board membership. Likewise, a Georgia study done by Sidney E. Brown mirrors somewhat the same attitude but focuses on the board president (chairman) role. Brown says that

> an association exists between the job satisfaction of Georgia school superintendents and the leader behavior of the school board president. Apparently superintendents will have higher job satisfaction when they have an opportunity to work with board presidents who exhibit a high degree of supportive behavior and who display concern for achievement of the organizational objectives. (Brown, 1978, p. 68)

Politicization: The Present Reality

To this point, we have taken an extensive look at how roles of board members and superintendents are defined by a broad range of people: board members themselves,

superintendents, and citizens at large. We have examined how scholars in the field see the roles in question and how they feel that boards and superintendents can manage to work together effectively, yet there has been less than sufficient treatment of an overall construct that is important as an organizing framework for our analysis. Two major questions seem to arise from this broad examination of the literature on board/superintendent roles and relationships and they are, simply, just how politicized is the system of governance of America's public schools and how politicized should it be? We intimated, in Chapter I, that we feel that public education is, whether we like it or not, a profoundly political activity. The fact is that the effort cannot transcend the political, it is by definition, political because it is "public." The idea of public education was forged in a political process to perform as a political process; and although the endeavor may have drifted away from this at times (Zeigler's Phase 1), as long as it stays politicized the people can "bring it back" to where they can feel most comfortable. To be directly opposed to at least a mildly politicized process of decision-making in public education is somewhat akin to doubting the founding fathers: difficult without considerable rationalizing. There is, therefore, little need to deny that school business is political business; it was political even in the days of "professionalization"

in the 1960's. There is also little need to deny that it is becoming more political, whether or not one can agree that we are "returning" to something or "progressing" to something. A group of Canadian researchers surveyed all of the CEO's (chief executive officers, i.e., superintendents) in Canada and "the vast majority of CEO's (82%) agreed that they work in a political environment and that their setting is becoming more political each year" (Isherwood, Falconer, Lavery, McConaghy, & Clotz, 1977, p. 17). There are many school superintendents who have not yet come to this realization or, worse yet, are still trying to hold back a public and a board of education that is acting politically. The tide cannot be stemmed and it is simply going to be up to superintendents to create and to utilize their own political savvy. The evidence is more than clear; Zeigler's "phases," Mecklenberger's corporate vs. legislative board paradox, and nearly all the areas suspect of causing board/superintendent conflict can be said to be, in varying ways, a question of admitting the politicization of public school governance. The new role of the superintendent can be, in many ways, more exciting than the old, releasing the creative tensions on behalf of children. In this fashion, the superintendent becomes responsible for the efficient and effective functioning of the board's "political system" as he/she helps to shape educational policy.

Edward Banfield, in a book entitled Political Influence: A New Theory of Urban Politics, has defined politics as acts of influence and a political environment would be one in which individuals and groups seek to influence each other in a series of issues over a period of time. Using his terminology, there are key individuals and groups in the board of education's "environment." Internal "influencers" would be board members, superintendents, principals, teachers, and the like. External "influencers" would include parents and other community members. Special interest groups, the media, and others would also be external "influencers." The new superintendent must be able to wield influence and manage decision-making through political strategies designed specifically for the appropriate individuals or groups. To do less is to leave the real power to others and the superintendent who believes that his/her opinion is of consequence must, both ethically and professionally, be sure that the opinion is heard, accepted, and implemented. The board of education/superintendent environment is politicized and requires political expertise if children are to be effectively served.

As we have examined board of education/superintendent relations through a survey of the attendant literature, we can summarize the generalities that emerge. They are as follows:

- The terms "board of education member" and "superintendent" designate roles and these roles follow the

basic patterns for analysis set forth in what is called "role theory."

- School governance occurs within a political environment and has been through periods of greater and lesser overt politicization.
- There has been, and continues to be, great uncertainty with regard to what are the proper roles for both members of boards of education and public school superintendents both between those in the roles and those outside those roles.

These generalities are important as we enter our own analysis of board/superintendent relations. As mentioned earlier, we will be looking at these fragile relationships as they are focused in one area, public school finance. While the literature seldom speaks directly to this area, there is one factor that continuously emerged as important when finance was mentioned. Fiscal matters represent an area where board members tend to feel most responsible. In a previously cited study, research done in Texas revealed that 40% of the board members of that state felt that their primary function was to deal with the financial matters in their district. Moreover, all of the role identification schemes for boards discussed earlier cite the area of finance as one where board members see their responsibility as a "key" responsibility. Recognizing school finance as important, Halverson

created his role/relationship grid for the San Mateo School District and included financial elements.

School districts accomplish the gathering of revenues through taxation, bond issues, and other public avenues. Each of these revenue sources is a result of citizen action and there is little surprise in the fact that board members have great interest in these areas. The public is always most protective of its purse and the public is, of course, the board's constituency. Tax revolts are now legendary and the popular view is that the public will vote out of office anyone favoring tax increases. When issues of finance are evident, in many ways, the board's future is at stake. The public may well not understand the jargoned nuances of the educational endeavor but it is a sure thing that they understand the meaning of "tax increase" or "bond issue." It goes nearly without saying, then, that finance looms significant in the eyes of board members. One purpose of our study is to offer a greater degree of systematic analysis to the area of school finance as it affects school board/superintendent relations.

A New Perspective

There is one more area of interest in the literature with regard to the way boards of education and superintendents operate. James H. Svara, a professor of political science, has reconceptualized the relationship between policy and

administration, utilizing the city council/city manager as the example. Svara makes mention of the well-worn policy/administration dichotomy as having been identified by Woodrow Wilson in the larger political arena but this dichotomy is, for our own purposes, the same that is infamous in the literature on board of education/superintendent relations. The dichotomy model has met several challenges and it has persevered for what Svara believes to be two reasons.

> First, it is partially accurate in describing the relationship between elected officials and administrators. Second, the model provides a normative base, rooted in democratic theory, for assessing the appropriateness of behavior. (Svara, 1985, p. 221)

In his research, Svara interviewed both elected and administrative officials and citizen leaders in five North Carolina cities with populations over 100,000. In attempting to descibe both city council and administrative roles, the participants presumed a dichotomy of functions.

> A majority perceived separation and asserted its value to the operation of the system, yet they frequently referred to instances that deviated from that division, and 41% of the respondents indicated that there was some form of "mixture", either staff in policy or councilors in administration. (Svara, 1985, p. 221)

This "fence sitting" was to lead Svara to suggest another model of behavior that he would call the "dichotomy-duality model."

Before detailing his own model, Svara describes other generalized models that have historically been offered. The first, of course, is the "Policy-Administration Dichotomy Model"

that is at the heart of the issue (see Figure 1). This model simply purports that the two functions are separate, and by implication assumes that they can be kept so. The second model is called the "Mixture in Policy Model" (see Figure 1). This model, in short, accepts the fact that there may be some sharing of responsibilities in policy areas where both administrators and elected officials will, from time to time, make decisions. Model number three is termed the "Mixture in Administration Model" and is the antithesis of the previously mentioned model (see Figure 1). This model chronicles recent tendencies for legislative prerogatives to overcome barriers to administrative action. The final model is the "Elected Official-Administrator As Co-Equals in Policy Model" (see Figure 1) and "asserts the ethical obligation of administrators to promote values of equity and participation and to oppose actions by elected officials which would be adverse to the interests of the politically powerless" (Svara, 1985, p. 224). This, of course, is a break from democratic theory and demonstrates administrative intrusion into policy but no intrusion into administration by elected officials.

Based upon our review of literature, in the field of education, we can conclude that the policy vs. administration dichotomy appears clean and neat but simply does not mirror reality. The reality is that policy and administration are intertwined and the various models described above offer

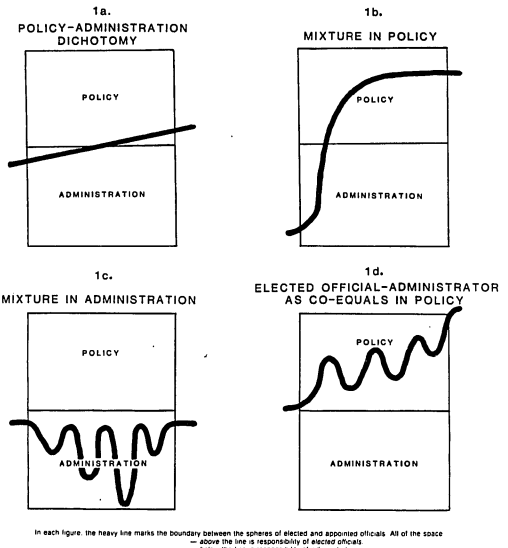


Figure 1. Existing models of relationship between elected officials and administrators in governmental process.

Source: Public Administration Review, January/February 1985, p. 223.

several versions of that melding. Svara discovers the same phenomena and concludes that none of the models he reviewed are sufficient to describe what he sees as the real world. He suggests that

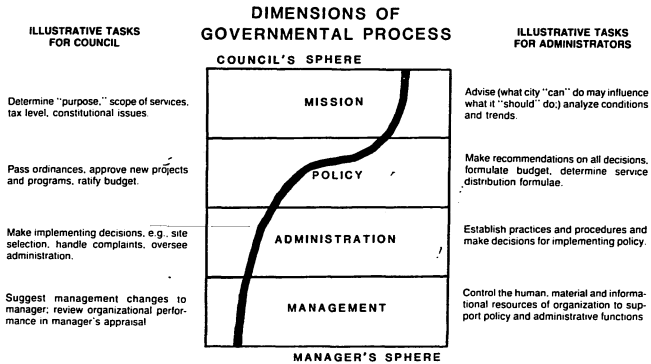
> the concepts "policy" and "administration" are each broken down into two component functions, and data are presented to show how councilors and managers are both involved in some functions and largely excluded from others. The new model simultaneously accommodates division and sharing of responsibilitiy in the governmental process. (p. 222)

Svara's model has four distinct areas of action. The first is "mission" which refers to the organization's philosophy, its broadest goals in the broadest terms. This area is solely the responsibility of elected officials and totally fulfills any requirements of democratic theory. The second area is policy but in a more middle-range sense. This, for example, would involve decisions on whether to begin a new program, redistribute duties, or the like and would involve interaction between elected officials and administrators. A majority of North Carolina councilors and city managers felt that this "shared response" was a fact in their situations. In the area of budgeting, councils set budget limits and performed other control functions while staff accomplished the actual budgeting process. The area of policy emerges as an area of mixed responsibility involving general limits set by council and specific policy content set by the manager and staff. "Conclusions that stress either council or staff dominance or exclusion are not supportable in these cities" (Svara, 1985, p. 226).

Administration is the third area and it "refers to the specific decisions, regulations, and practices employed to achieve policy objectives" (Svara, 1985, p. 226). Svara cites administration largely as the domain of bureaucracy but also identifies four legislative aspects of the area: specification of techniques to be employed, implementing decisions, intervention in delivery, and legislative oversight. There are, therefore, strong policy implications in administration and elected officials; in this case councilors and in our case board members are involved.

Management is the last area and refers to action taken to support both policy and administrative functions. Specific methods and techniques of managers are the stuff of this area. While councilors do get involved on occasion in changes in management areas such as staff reorganizations, grievance procedures, etc., for the most part boundaries between elected officials and administrators tend to be clear.

In Svara's model, each of the four functions blends into the next to form a continuum from "pure policy" to "pure management" (see Figure 2). However, the problems that have accompanied what has been the two pole dichotomy that has existed in the past have been moderated by a more realistic evolution by degree from one pole to the other. The mission/policy end of the continuum is more heavily dominated by the elected official while the management/administration end is



The curved line suggests the division between the Council's and the Manager's spheres of activity, with the Council to the *left* and the manager to the *right* of the line.

The division presented is intended to roughly approximate a "proper" degree of separation and sharing. Shifts to either the left or right would indicate improper incursions.

Figure 2. Mission-management separation with shared responsibility for policy and the administration.

Source: Public Administration Review, January/February 1985, p. 228.

equally dominated by the administrator. Towards the point where the two inward pointing vectors meet, the dichotomy becomes less a dichotomy and more a situation where shared responsibility is the rule; they become, in effect, what Svara terms a "duality." Svara does not present the model as a way to deal with all of the uncertainties of the relationships; rather, he says that "the size of the spheres (of influence) is not based on absolute values at this stage in the development of the model, but it is intended to be suggestive of the tendencies in council/manager relations" (p. 228). He then extracts four generalized "types" that he says can be abstracted by the research in North Carolina cities. The "types" are "strong manager," "council-dominant," "council incursion," and "council manager standoff" (see Figure 3). Svara also suggests that further research could more precisely delineate the division of each function in the council-manager form of government.

William P. Browne at Central Michigan University has done further study testing Svara's model. Browne was concerned with Svara's results because of what he felt was a limited data base and, possibly, a set of varying geographic and contextual circumstances. Browne utilized data gathered in the state of Michigan in testing Svara's model. As a result of his research, Browne offered two important conclusions: first, that there may very well be regional differences in

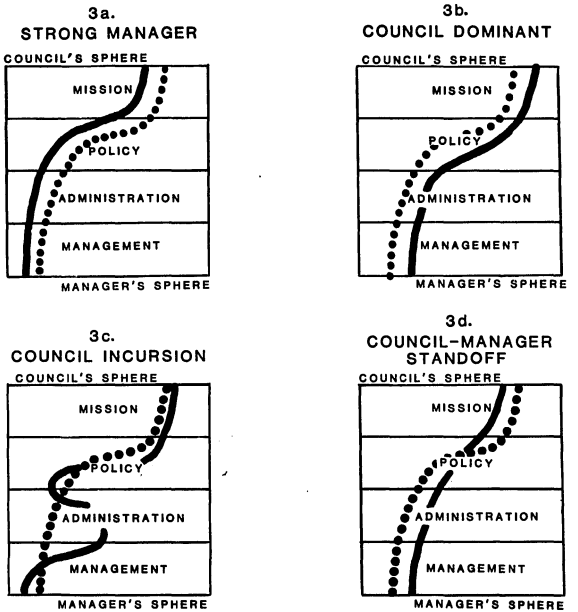


Figure 3. Deviations from typical division.

Source: Public Administration Review, January/February 1985, p. 229.

reactions by both elected officials and administrators. Second, and more importantly, he concluded that "the Svara model provides the best available framework for such analysis; its availability should awaken what has become a dormant, although still inadequately understood, research area" (Browne, 1985, p. 621). Browne's findings further enhance the utility of the Svara model and its potential to explain relationships between elected officials and appointed administrators.

Svara suggests that his model identifies a condition that gives credence to a system of city government that is not necessarily dichotomous and conflict-bound. The importance of the model lies in the fact that effective interaction can take place in an environment that effectively balances discretion and control. The model discredits the complete separation of policy and administration that has already been discredited by actual practice, while at the same time avoiding the trap of developing a model that would suggest some sort of magical and unrealistic intermingling of the two areas. The key is joint concern, and therefore joint action in encouraging a full contribution from both administrative staff and elected officials. While the model is focused on city council members and city managers, it is obvious that there may be important parallels for members of boards of education and public school superintendents. Our research will provide further insight into that possibility.

Harmon Zeigler, Ellen Kehoe, and Jane Reisman have recently published a work that is helpful as we look at school board/superintendent relations. They compare city managers, who were the topic of Svara's model, and public school superintendents, and the study is of special importance as it provides an added dimension to Svara's work as well as being particularly illuminating as to how superintendents operate. The authors are particularly pleased to be able to provide a comparative study, "a comparison that may appear odd, especially to educationists accustomed to years of political and institutional isolation" (Zeigler, Kehoe, & Reisman, 1985, p. xiii). In their comparison of superintendents and city managers a stratified probability sample of Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas in and around two major metropolitan areas--San Francisco and Chicago--was used. In each area both superintendents and city managers were interviewed and surveyed.

The city managers' lot is seen by nearly everyone as profoundly political and, unlike the cries that emanate from educational circles, there is little denial of this fact among managers. Zeigler, likewise, is a proponent of viewing the governance of public schools as a political process. The researchers begin by stating that "although their differences are substantial, superintendents and city managers have one essential characteristic in common: They are professionally trained experts held accountable to lay legislatures"

(Zeigler et al., 1985, p. 1), hence Zeigler's comment that both tasks are political in nature. The authors identify the greatest differences between superintendents and city managers is in the area of dealing with conflict. They see the differences being based on the following characteristics of the two endeavors:

1. Superintendents' stronger sense of professional identification is a disadvantage in handling expanded conflicts, where expertise is not as relevant a resource as in intraorganizational disputes.
2. The difference in the scope and nature of the "public goods" superintendents and city managers administer implies that the two groups will need different skills to deal with conflict. The mix of technical and ideological conflict is characteristically different for each group, and so the most effective mix of skills will also vary.
3. Managers and superintendents have different roles as policy initiators, and have different relationships with their elected councils/boards. Conflict management styles will vary according to the parties to the conflict.
4. Municipal government is functionally decentralized, and the school system is geographically decentralized. Consequently, managers and superintendents

> confront different kinds of alliances between subordinates and clientele groups. Heads of municipal departments develop strong relations with functional interest groups, and principals develop geographic bases of influence.

Conflict resolution is a major focus of the Zeigler study, and he and his fellow authors feel that many superintendents view this "natural" phenomenon in an unrealistic fashion. The study, like others, points up the differences between resolution based on technical knowledge and that coming out of an ability to manage political factors and situations. Implicit in the authors' findings is the assumption that avoidance of political vehicles for resolution is actually the avoidance of conflict which, in their view, is totally unrealistic. These authors feel that "not only is conflict normal, it is, according to the political view, healthy rather than pathological" (Zeigler et al., 1985, p. 19). An additional differentiating factor is identified when the authors point out the fact that many superintendents subscribe to the idea that conflict can be dealt with in a "win-win" manner. They maintain that the traditional political philosophy of "win-lose" more closely approximates reality. Brodinsky's view of board/superintendent relations closely parallels this "win-win" philosophy, and Zeigler maintains that such a view hampers superintendents' abilitiy to get on with the business of education as his/her constituents prescribe it.

As stated before, Zeigler and his co-authors utilized a comparative method to attempt to shed light on the specified administrative roles. Several things emerge from the data collected. Superintendents, sometimes spoken of as being "beleaguered" and attacked from all sides, are not as "beleaguered" as often thought. A comparison with city managers reveals that superintendents, in fact, spend less time managing conflict with their legislative bodies than city managers. Likewise, lower levels of conflict with the members of the public are recorded by the superintendents. While the enormously emotional task of dealing with citizens' children can help to explain some of the differential, it does still seem that superintendents are no worse off than city managers. In addition, superintendents were identified as being less willing to enter into opposition of their legislative bodies and the public, an indicator of the aforementioned conflict avoidance rather than conflict resolution (i.e., the "harmony model"). Interestingly, and parallel to our previous comments on the work of Erving Goffman regarding "presentation of self," mention is made of Kenneth Duckworth's comments at a 1981 conference regarding "heroes" vs. "heralds." Duckworth's definition of "hero" summons up a vision of a mythical figure endowed with superhuman strength and power and it is this definition that might encourage educators to enter the area of public school administration.

As behaviors reminiscent of the "harmony model" lessen and political pressures increase, the probability that the superintendent can be a "hero" diminishes. The "herald" is "an official at a tournament of arms with duties including making announcements and the marshalling of the combatants" (Zeigler et al., 1985, p. 159), and it is this role that the present day superintendent is most likely to play. While the data do not support the fact that superintendents are any more "put upon" than city managers or other such officials, the expectation of being a "hero" might well explain the claim of "beleaguerment."

In the final analysis Zeigler, Kehoe, and Reisman have concluded that, like it or not, superintendents are involved in an increasingly political arena. Their advice for superintendents is the same as it would be for city managers: if you want to win, you must learn and be willing to play the political game.

Summary

There exists a rather substantial body of literature on board of education/superintendent relations. Much of this literature focuses on the conflict inherent in the interrelationship between the two and, unfortunately, does not offer solutions for achieving a conflict-free vehicle for problem resolution, rather asking that educators become more comfortable with the reality of conflict. Many authors

provide techniques, such as decision-making grids and the like, for reducing conflict; however, none are able to accomplish a conflict-free environment. While conflict resolution techniques may reduce the tension that exists between the two sets of actors, some conflict will remain inevitable. The requirements of democratic theory and, thus, the expectations upon the actors suggest that the resolutions sought must be attempted in a political context. The early literature says that the dichotomy model of interrelationships would provide the answer to working in a political world. Experience amply demonstrates that these models were insufficient. Non-dichotomous models such as that provided by Svara are a step towards a realistic treatment of the conflict that has become a reality in the governance of America's public schools. Non-dichotomous models have not been tested in education and our research seeks to determine, in part, if models outside education are applicable.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

There is ample evidence, both in the literature and in real experience, to document the concern over board of education/superintendent relations. The conflict that exists grows out of a democratic tradition that asks that "the people" have some voice in what is to take place in public institutions through representatives chosen by the people themselves. This "lay" control element is a source of tension as board members voice the public's opinion to professional educational administrators. The administrator relies on a base in knowledge and training while the board member is to do "the public's will." Although both are very often operating from a base of good intention, intense emotion and conflict usually follow.

Our research is guided by an understanding, both in the literature and in practice, of the democratic tradition that is the backdrop for action in public education and the reality of conflict reported by the actors involved as well as, publicly, by the media. The emotion generated in and over schools is apparent and the resulting actions need to be, and everyone seems to agree on this point, advantageous for America's young people.

As we sought to examine board of education/superintendent relations, we were confronted with the magnitude of the possible avenues for conflict. Public education is a complex endeavor requiring that many elements be intertwined to produce the educational process. To attempt to analyze all of these elements and their potential for conflict would result in the analysis of a morass of complex interrelationships and would, most likely, yield no real definitive result. Rather than to attempt such a risky proposition, we have chosen to narrow the focus and concern ourselves with board of education/superintendent relationships only in the area of school finance. We have chosen school finance due to its role as a facilitator of much of the activity that takes place in public education; without funding, little else can become an educational reality. In addition, school finance is reported in the literature as important to both superintendents and members of boards of education, in fact, with research placing it at the top of the public's concern (Zeigler, Tucker, & Wilson, 1976). The public's purse never fails to engender great interest. We see, then, school finance as an area that has a high potential for conflict between board members and superintendents. How boards and superintendents deal with these potential conflict areas should serve as a means of looking at the perceptions that exist in how board of education/superintendent relationships work.

In addition to utilizing public school finance as our area of concern in examining board/superintendent relationships, we chose to confine our study to a single state. While our own interest was focused on North Carolina, we also wanted to be certain that we were able to ascertain a broad perspective within the state, thus we sought the opinions of all superintendents in North Carolina rather than relying on a sampling procedure that would narrow the scope of the study. Moreover, North Carolina has such a wide variation in demographic characteristics among school districts that this would allow us to comment on differences, if any, that resulted from school district size, regional geographic location, or the rural or urban nature of the population. We did find, in the literature, that demographics explained variations in relationships between elected boards and professional administrators (Browne, 1985). Testing for these differences in board of education/superintendent relations was an effort deemed important.

As we sought to examine board of education/superintendent relationships, we realized that the analysis could be approached from different perspectives. We could look at relationships from the perspective of members of the board of education or from the viewpoint of the professional administrator or even from the public's eye. We chose to utilize the superintendent's perspective for several reasons. Public school superintendents have at least some common background

in their training to become school administrators. A large variety of factors enter into the creation of the superintendent's role and such a role has impact as actors enter into relationships (Park, 1976). Schools of education utilize, as a basis for study, a fairly common body of educational research and literature that implies certain behaviors for professionals in schools. This set of factors yields a more homogeneous background among school administrators as opposed to a more varied set of formative conditions having had an impact on lay board members. This difference in level of common experience between superintendents and members of the board of education as groups results in the likelihood of information from the superintendents' perspective being more generalizable. Data gathered from this more homogeneous population may well be more substantive than the more idiosyncratic information yielded by the questioning of lay board members from a broad variety of backgrounds. Another consideration that dictated our selection of the superintendents' perspective was a statistical/practical one. The number of superintendents that were to be surveyed was manageable, while the total number would have been increased by 5 to 9 times were members of boards of education utilized. This large population of board members would have led us to sample only a selected group of board members. The theoretical concern with a sample of board members was whether a random

sample would accurately elicit the views of the total population; sampling error would exist. Having a purposive sample raised the question of which board members would be appropriate to sample. To avoid this concern, we used all superintendents as our data base.

Definition of Terms

As we began our study with a review of the literature, many terms were defined in the context of the writings of scholars in the fields involved. We will formalize many of the aforementioned meanings in this section so that our use of these important terms will be clear.

Public school finance. The process of providing for the assessed needs of public schools by the purposeful distribution of scarce resources. Two main elements exist in the process, with the first providing a procedure for developing school budgets. The second provides a system of fiscal control and accounting to protect board of education resources from misuse. In addition, it provides accounting information for measuring the effectiveness of the budget (Blake, 1980).

Board of education. A corporate body and a legal entity. Members may possess independent thought and action but the board must act as a whole. Boards are given power by the political authority established under state constitutions and can govern only people put under their political control by the political parent. Members may be appointed or elected, and boards may be a combination of both (Blake, 1980).

Superintendent. The chief executive officer of a public school district. The superintendent is legally responsible to the board of education.

Role. Behaviors exhibited when an individual puts the rights and responsibilities constituting status into effect. "Role" as a concept has been central to linking the functioning of elements of the social order with the characteristics and behavior of those who make it up (Park, 1976).

Relationship. Persons or groups of persons being mutually or reciprocally interested or connected.

Perception. Awareness or understanding attained by direct or intuitive cognition.

Mission. The organization's philosophy, its thrust, the broad goals it sets for itself, and the things it chooses not to do (Svara, 1985).

Policy. Middle range policy decisions, e.g., how to spend government revenues, whether to initiate new programs or create new offices, and how to distribute services at what levels within the existing range of services provided (Svara, 1985).

Administration. Specific decisions, regulations, and practices employed to achieve policy objectives (Svara, 1985).

Management. Actions taken to support the policy and administrative functions; includes controlling and utilizing the human, material, and informational services of the organization to best advantage (Svara, 1985).

Hypotheses

As we began our examination of board of education/ superintendent relationships, we had several notions regarding expected results. These expectations were guided by the literature, especially that found in political science and educational administration, and by our experience and the experiences of others. These notions or expectations became our hypotheses.

We felt that superintendents could be expected to have a different perception toward the responsibility of board members as opposed to their own responsibility in public school finance. The feeling was that superintendents would claim that they should have a greater number of responsibilities, be more active, than should members of the board of education. Moreover, they would feel that these areas of activity should be arrayed across a broader number of dimensions than should those of members of the board of education. The superintendents would believe that board members should have more general responsibility (policy) while they, the superintendents, would possess a far greater share of the specific (administration) duties surrounding the operation of the schools. The general result of this division of responsibility would yield board members with a diminished role in the decision-making process involved in public school finance.

Next, we believe that, based on the Svara model and the work of Zeigler, superintendents would recognize and delineate

multiple areas of responsibility that closely correspond to those identified in research on city manager/city council relationships. Rather than identifying a dichotomous relationship as was described in the early literature in the field, we expect to find that superintendents would see the relationship as less dichotomous and a more intertwined affair. Svara in examining city council/city manager relations identified four areas of action (mission, policy, administration, and management) rather than the traditional two (policy and administration), and we felt that there would be at least four in our study involving members of boards of education and superintendents.

We also expected to find that the superintendents who were surveyed would feel that their own performance was very close to what it "ought to be" (Mead, 1934). Likewise, it was felt that the same superintendents would also feel that there was a gap between the performance of members of the board of education and what should be happening. The superintendent has a perception of the role of board members and that role differs from the board member's perception. It may well be that the difference is due to the board member not having a clear understanding of his/her role in public education. This, in fact, seems to be a relatively rational assumption given the human condition, most persons feeling that they know what is appropriate while others remain

"wrongminded" with regard to their ideas and actions. In our minds, superintendents would not be spared that human failing. There was nothing in the literature that suggested that superintendents would behave any differently than other individuals in this regard.

While Browne was able to point up some regional differences when comparing data gathered in Michigan with data gathered by Svara in North Carolina, we felt that there would be little or no difference in superintendents' perceptions across regions within our target state. In addition, we maintain that whether the school district is considered urban or rural and whether it is small or large in size will have no appreciable effect on the perceptions held by its superintendent with regard to school finance and board of education/superintendent relations.

Data Source

The instrument utilized in gathering data was a written survey (see Appendix B). The survey was designed to be distributed by mail to all school district superintendents in North Carolina. The questionnaire contained 29 items that were created to solicit responses in the area of public school finance. The items were derived in two general ways. Some items were gleaned from the literature surrounding the area under study. Thus, some items were developed as a

result of ideas offered in general writings in school finance while others were taken directly from already existing surveys. The second source of statements was Svara's research on city manager/city council relationships. Specific items from Svara's work were used as they appeared, while others were altered to more closely resemble terminology used in public school environments. These 29 items on public school finance were used with the expectation that they would tap the four dimensions in the Svara model. The specific activity and the appropriate dimensions are shown in Table 1.

The focus of the instrument was to have the superintendent identify levels of involvement on the 29 types of activity for both boards and themselves. Thus, each single activity was put to the respondent in four perspectives. The superintendent was asked to respond to the same item from the vantage point of what he/she felt was actually being done in practice by him/her as well as what level of involvement he/she felt "should" be taken. Again, with the same item, the superintendent was asked what level of involvement his/her board of education was taking on a specific activity and then what level they "should" be taking. On each item and for each perspective the respondent was instructed to rank "level of involvement" on a 5-point Likert scale. The following categories of levels of involvement were utilized:

Table 1
Questionnaire Items Categorized Using Svara's

Four Dimensions

Mission
Deciding whether to spend local monies on class size reduction.
Deciding to participate in federal programs.
Making decisions regarding the seeking of corporate funding for special projects.
Initiating or cancelling programs.
Determining the purpose and scope of the system services provided.
Developing annual programs, goals, and objectives.

Policy
Formulating the systemwide budget.
Determining spending priorities.
Making recommendations for target budget figures.
Budget review and approval.
Creation of a district-wide capital outlay plan.
Determining the level of fees.
Increasing salaries from local monies.
Deciding to hire outside consultants for curriculum development.
Assessing organizational performance.
Deciding to undertake new or eliminate old services.

Administration
Advocating the approval of the annual budget before the county commissioners.
Establishing procedures for the investment of cash reserves.
Allocating funds for the maintenance of facilities.
Allocation of capital funds.
Awarding lage contracts.
Determining formulas for the allocation of resources and services.
Deciding to purchase district cars for particular personnel.
Evaluating programs.
Proposing changes in management practices or organization.
Identifying problems, analyzing future trends for the district.

Management
Making the recommendation for budget change from one hour to the next.
Routine contracting and purchasing.
Developing applications for federal funding.

VERY LOW: NOT INVOLVED
Handled entirely by someone else

LOW: MINIMUM REVIEW OR REACTION APPROPRIATE TO THE SITUATION
Giving a routine OK to someone else's recommendations, providing an opportunity to react as a courtesy.

MODERATE: ADVISING OR REVIEWING
Making suggestions, reviewing recommendations, seeking information or clarification, ratifying proposals.

HIGH: LEADING, GUIDING, OR PRESSURING
Initiating, making proposals, advocating, promotion or opposing, intensely reviewing and revising a proposal.

VERY HIGH: HANDLE ENTIRELY
No one else directly involved.

In addition to the ranking mentioned above, a section was included on the survey that was designed to gather demographic information. School district size, geographic location, designation of responsibilities in the area of finance, and the like were asked.

The questionnaire was mailed to all 141 public school district superintendents in North Carolina. The first mailing contained a letter of explanation (see Appendix A) and a copy of the questionnaire. In 4 weeks, a follow-up letter (see Appendix A) was sent to the same superintendents asking that they return the survey if they had not already done so. In approximately 3 additional weeks, if the superintendent had not responded, a certified leter (see Appendix A), was mailed, along with another copy of the questionnaire, asking that he/she respond as soon as possible. After the total process of seeking information ws completed, the number

of questionnaires returned was 131 for a total return rate of 92%. Given the high response rate, it should not be surprising that the respondents represent a broad cross section of the state (see Table 2). Confidentiality of information was guaranteed to each respondent.

Data Analysis

As mentioned earlier, superintendents in the study were to respond to the 29 items from four perspectives: what the superintendent feels that he/she is actually doing, what he/she feels that he/she "ought" to do under the optimum conditions with no restraints, what he/she feels their own board of education is doing, and what he/she feels his/her board "ought" to be doing. These four perspectives form four subsets of data to be analyzed. For each of the four subsets, we wanted to test the data to determine if the four dimensions in the Svara model were present. To do this we employed a multivariate analysis procedure known as factor analysis.

Factor analysis is a statistical procedure that permits us to reduce a large body of data, which might be too complex to effectively study, into a more manageable form. At the same time, factor analysis permits us to uncover interrelationships between variables that might have escaped a less thorough examination. Thus, the 29 items on our questonnaire will be statistically grouped into a smaller set of dimensions

Table 2

Demographic Characteristics of Responding Superintendents' School Districts

Geographic Region	Percentage	
Western North Carolina	21.5%	
Piedmont North Carolina	40.0%	
Eastern North Carolina	38.5%	
	100.0%	N = 130[a]
Overall Nature of Population		
Urban	27.6%	
Rural	72.4%	
	100.0%	N = 127
School District Size		
0-1,499	8.4%	
1,500-4,999	43.5%	
5,000-9,999	26.7%	
10,000-14,999	12.2%	
15,000-24,999	5.3%	
25,000-49,999	1.5%	
50,000 and over	2.3%	
	99.9%	N = 131

[a]N does not always equal 131 due to missing data.

[b]Rounding error responsible for total not equaling 100%.

known as factors. These factors are assumed to be theoretically linked as well as statistically related. If our hypothesis is correct, the 29 items should be grouped into four or more dimensions or factors.

Once the factors have been determined one can create new variables. These new variables, or factor scores, are the result of weights being assigned to the variables loading on the factors. These factor scores are analogous to scale scores for each respondent on each dimension. Thus, if four factors were delineated from the data, one would have four new variables for each respondent.

Although there are many ways to use the factor analysis technique, the present research factors a data matrix consisting of items across respondents (superintendents), so that factors will be groupings of items. After a principal component solution is computed for the data (which tells us the number of factors), the configuration from this stage is then further analyzed by an orthogonal rotation of the factors. Many statistical options are available in factor analysis to determine the number of factors. Principal component analysis is the most commonly used procedure. A theoretical discussion of principal components analysis and the attendant procedures that result from the analysis is too complex to be covered in this paper. For an excellent explanation of factor analysis and the various options

available see Rummel (1970). The factor matrix is then examined to characterize the factors on the basis of how each of the different items "load" or relate to it. This task assists in determining the substantive meaning of the factors. The factor meanings are important in telling the researcher how and why the items were important to the respondent.

In order to test the proximity of superintendents' perspectives on their own actual and preferred behavior as well as that of their boards, we ran a simple correlation between factor scores. A high correlation between two factors signifies a close relationship between the preferred and actual behavior.

Finally, our analysis concludes with our comparing superintendent responses based upon a series of independent variables. In order for us to do this we used analysis of variance. The dependent variables were our factor scores, while the independent variables were the demographic characteristics collected in our questionnaire: school district size, geographic region, and the urban or rural nature of the population.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

In order to begin to examine board of education/superintendent relationships, we looked at superintendents' perceptions of their own involvement and at the involvement of board members in the financial matters of their school districts. The 29 items on the questionnaire were subjectively grouped into four categories approximating those created by Svara in his work with city manager/city council relationships. In order to make comparisons, we calculated the mean for each of the 29 items across the four subgroups (see Table 3). In addition, differences of means were calculated between actual and preferred performance for both superintendent and board of education member involvement.

Levels of Involvement

An examination of the data yielded several interesting findings. As one might expect, superintendents expressed a desire to have more involvement in 13 of 29 activities. On the other hand, Table 3 shows that superintendents preferred to have less involvement than they felt they actually have at present on 11 of the 29 activities. This was an unexpected finding. Interestingly enough, and contrary to what one might expect, in 22 of 29 activities the superintendents

Table 3

Respondents' Perception of Board and Superintendent Involvement in Financial Activities (Mean Scores)

	Superintendent			Board		
	Actual	Preferred	Diff.	Actual	Preferred	Diff.
Mission						
Spend local money for class size reduction*	3.96	4.05	.09	3.38	3.46	.08
Participate in federal programs	4.06	4.00	-.06**	3.26	3.35	.09
Seek corporate funds	4.12	4.11	-.01	2.69	3.01	.32
Initiate/cancel programs	4.16	4.14	0.02	2.93	3.12	.19
Purpose and scope of services	4.05	4.08	.03	2.89	3.15	.26
Develop annual goals and objectives	4.28	4.27	-.01	2.80	3.13	.33
Policy						
Formulate systemwide budget	4.13	4.13	0	3.16	3.20	.04
Determine spending priorities	4.10	4.15	.05	3.28	3.28	0
Determine target budget figures	4.17	4.20	.03	2.99	3.00	.01
Budget review and approval	3.85	3.85	0	3.95	3.98	.03
Distribution of capital outlay	4.08	4.12	.04	3.56	3.67	.11
Determine fee levels	3.82	3.78	-.04	3.59	3.64	.05
Local salary increase from local money	3.89	3.95	.06	3.77	3.82	.05
Hire outside curriculum consultant	4.25	4.29	.04	2.41	2.49	.08
Assess organizational performance	4.20	4.16	-.04	3.19	3.45	.26
Eliminate old/undertake new services	4.12	4.06	-.06	2.98	3.22	.24
Administration						
Advocate budget of county commissioners	4.01	3.95	-.06	3.50	3.82	.32
Invest cash reserves	4.44	4.39	-.05	2.07	2.21	.14
Allocate funds for maintaining facilities	4.12	4.15	.03	3.02	2.92	-.10
Allocate capital funds	4.01	4.09	.08	3.47	3.40	-.07
Award large contracts	3.81	3.81	0	3.98	3.92	-.01
Determine formulas for resource allocation	4.25	4.25	0	2.39	2.52	.13
Purchase district cars	3.59	3.64	.05	3.59	3.54	.05
Evaluate programs	4.31	4.31	0	2.60	2.95	.35
Recommend changes in management	4.28	4.29	.01	2.71	2.72	.01
Identify problems/analyze future trends	4.18	4.19	.01	2.89	3.23	.34
Management						
Make hour to hour budget changes	4.42	4.39	-.03	1.78	1.70	-.08
Routine contracting/puchasing	4.48	4.49	.01	1.84	1.77	-.07
Deciding to apply for federal funds	4.52	4.47	-.05	1.65	1.72	.05

*See questionnaire in Appendix B for total wording of items.
**Negative sign means less involvement preferred.

desired somewhat greater involvement by board members and in only 6 of 29 activities did they want less involvement. This tendency toward desiring a decreased involvement may well be indicative of the contention that school finance is a volatile, pressure-prone area of public school manaagement. Care should be taken in making too much of this finding in that the differences involved were below the .25 level and considered insignificant.

Interestingly, in only one activity, making hour to hour changes in the budget, did the superintendent prefer both lessened involvement for the board members and for him/herself. This would make sense in that in every case excluding the aforementioned one, the superintendent preferred a lessening of involvement on his/her part and a contrasting increase on the part of board members. There was, however, no indication in the data that the sizes of the contrasting increases and decreases were equal or even near equal. If board members actually agreed with the superintendents' desires to increase the boards' involvement as the superintendents' was decreased, the situation might well result in little or no conflict. Since the data was collected from the superintendents' perspective, there is no evidence that this would be the case in reality. On 27 of the 29 activities, the superintendent perceived that his/her involvement was actually greater than board members' involvement. In two

areas, budget review and approval and the awarding of large contracts, this was not the case. In both cases, however, the gap was very small (.10 and .12 respectively) and relatively insignificant. Superintendents, then, perceive themselves as being more involved in the districts' financial matters than their boards of education. Likewise, only in the same two cases did superintendents express a perception that board members' involvement was preferred to be greater than their own. Again, superintendents obviously feel that they should be the leaders in the financial affairs of the district. However, in budget review and approval and in the awarding of large contracts, the superintendents would like to see greater involvement by boards of education.

The superintendents' seeming desire to be more involved in the district's financial matters than their boards is also indicated by generally higher mean scores for both the superintendent's actual and preferred levels of involvement as opposed to the mean scores indicating the actual and preferred levels of involvement for board members. For board members who want a greater degree of control over the district's "purse strings," this could easily be a serious point of conflict.

One additional tendency is indicated in the data. There is a greater consistency in superintendents' perceptions of their own actual and preferred levels of involvement

than that of board members. As mentioned earlier, in the case of superintendents, no differences between actual and preferred levels of involvement, as perceived by superintendents, were greater than .25. For board members, 7 of the 29 activities had differences of .25 or greater perceived by the superintendent. Our data points to the contention that superintendents are simply more certain regarding their own roles as compared to the roles of their board members.

While it is safe to say that our hypotheses that superintendents would perceive themselves as being more active in a greater number of financial activities is supported, another finding was revealed. Superintendents perceived board members as being far less involved, actual and preferred, on Svara's categories "Management" and "Administration" than on the categories of "Mission" and "Policy." While the categories of activities were not empirically tested, the finding does seem to lend credence to the appropriateness of Svara's model. The very lowest levels of desired involvement for board members were in the "Management" area, exactly where the model would predict. However, the inverse is not so clear. If the same rationale is followed and the model is an accurate representation of reality, levels of superintendent involvement should be lowest in the "Mission" area. This did not materialize as superintendents did not perceive themselves as either actually or preferring a decrease in involvement in this category. In other words, superintendents want high levels of involvement in all areas.

The findings support the hypothesis that superintendents would perceive that they would have higher levels of involvement than board members in financial areas. Although the superintendents' perception of their own involvement is greater than that of board members, the data provides evidence that superintendents seek increased involvement on the part of boards. Finally, the data support the hypothesis that there would be greater congruence between superintendents' actual and preferred behavior and less congruence for boards.

Dimensions of Financial Responsibility

Our next set of findings involved a test of our hypothesis maintaining that the 29 financially related activities would be recognized by superintendents as being delineated into multiple areas of responsibility, rather than the traditional dichotomous policy versus administration division. We utilized the statistical procedure known as factor analysis to extract related areas or factors from the 29 financial activities.

In order to verify the utility of factor analysis in this research application, we applied the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy as an index for comparing the magnitudes of the observed correlation coefficients to the magnitude of the partial correlation coefficients. Small KMO values would indicate that a factor analysis of the variables would not be a good idea, since correlations

between pairs of variables cannot be explained by the other variables. KMO values at or near .80 are seen as meritorious (Norusis, 1958) and, as can be seen in Table 4, such a value was achieved for each of our four data subsets. Factor analysis, then, was deemed a proper procedure for examination and analysis of the data collected. With such KMO values, we felt that we could comfortably proceed with the factor analysis.

As we performed the factor analysis procedures, some variables did not "load" on any factor and, therefore, were deemed insignificant and were eliminated. In no case did the elimination of variables alter the number of factors or cause any significant change in the percentage of variance explained by the factors. Factors were extracted from each of the four dimensions (subgroups), actual involvement of the board, preferred involvement for the board, actual involvement for the superintendent, and preferred involvement for the superintendent. Instead of the four areas of action described by Svara, seven factors were extracted in three separate analyses and six were extracted in another analysis. The number of variables involved in the factor analysis in each case ranged from 24 to the total complement of 29 (see Table 4). While the number of factors identified through the factor analysis was not identical to the four identified by Svara in city council/city manager relations, our contention that a multiple, rather than dichotomous, relationship

Table 4

Evaluative Information on Factor Analyses

	Factors Extracted	Variables in Factors	Percentage Variance Explained	KMO Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin
Board Actual	7 factors	29 variables	64%	.844
Board Preferred	7 factors	24 variables	67%	.790
Superintendent Actual	6 factors	27 variables	65%	.831
Superintendent Preferred	7 factors	26 variables	68%	.790

between factors would result was upheld. Superintendents did, in fact, perceive the relationship between activities as being more intertwined than a simple "policy versus administration" dichotomy. The clear-cut lines of the traditional dichotomy were not present in what superintendents saw as actual nor in what was preferred.

An additional tool for testing the adequacy of the factor analysis to explain interrelationships between variables is to determine the percentage of variance explained by the factors. This is a measure of the extent to which the factors capture the variation in the way superintendents responded across the 29 items used. In all four subsets, the respective number of factors found were able to explain in excess of 60% of the variance. The range was 64% to 68% and such levels are considered substantial. Often, the remaining variance is considered the result of sampling or measurement error (Bailey, 1970). In sum, we feel comfortable that the factors uncovered capture the essence of the relationships in the superintendents' perceptions.

Our attention turns now to understanding the various factors that were developed across each of the subgroups. Before we begin to interpret the meaning of the factors, we must make preliminary comments regarding how this will be done. In our study, the variables were considered to be loading on factors if they met a loading level criteria for significance of .40 or greater (Rummel, 1970). Variables

that did not meet this requirement for significance were considered to have failed to load on a factor. Those variables not having a loading of .40 or greater on any factor were omitted. The remaining variables were subjected to an additional factor analysis to assure that the interpretations were not prone to influence from extraneous variables. The next step in our analysis was, perhaps, the most important phase. It was during this phase that we were attempting to give meaning to the statistical analysis. For our purposes, we were attempting to simplify complex interrelationships in the data; thus, the meaning we give to the factors was more descriptive than causal. The labeling of the factors involves the creation of a name that best reflects the substance of variables having high loadings on the factor (Rummel, 1970). If all variables load similarly across the four subsets of data, labeling would be simple. However, the factor matrices for the four subsets were not exact and variables loaded differently on factors. Some factors that have similar names did not have identical variables but the essence of the factor was maintained. Some factors were discovered to exist in only one subset of data. This resulted from the variables loading differently in the four subsets and the different loadings implied different meaning.

The factor analysis of superintendents' perceptions of the board's actual involvement in our 29 financial activities

permits us to delineate areas of responsibility on the part of boards. In Table 5, seven factors are identified and given substantive labels. Those labels are goal setting, budget preparation, planning and evaluation, routine fiscal management, operations and management, external fiscal matters, and budgetary decision-making.

In Factor 1 several key activities, including "determining the scope and purpose of services," "formulation of the systemwide budget," "undertaking new and eliminating old services," and "developing annual program goals and objectives" led us to conclude that "goal-setting" was the focus of this factor. While some activities did not provide as appropriate a "fit," we felt that the general focus of the factor was centered on "goal-setting" and related activities.

A second factor, "budget preparation," consists of activities that have at their heart the construction of a budget. Activities that exemplify this are the "allocation of funds" and the "determination of spending priorities."

The third factor, "planning and evaluation," emphasizes analysis of current ativities and a future direction that is central to the process of planning. We label Factor 4 "routine fiscal management" due to the day-to-day nature of the financial activities identified. Repetitive activities lacking in complexity form the basis of this factor.

Table 5

Orthogonally Rotated Factors for Perceived Actual Board Involvement

	Goal-Setting	Budget Preparation	Planning and Evaluation	Routine Fiscal Management	Operations and Management	External Fical Matters	Budgetary Decision-Making
	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Factor 5	Factor 6	Factor 7
Undertake new/eliminate old services	.74296						
Evaluate programs	.70262						
Determine scope and purpose of services	.65912						
Develop annual program goals/objectives	.65548						
Approval of budget of commissioners	.62715						
Formulate systemwide budget	.44449						
Create district capital outlay plan	.40661						
Allocation of capital funds		.80812					
Allocation of maintenance funds		.68282					
Determine spending priorities		.59630					
Determine formulas for allocation of resources		.45284					
Establish procedures investing cash reserves		.40633					
Assess organizational performance			.74217				
Deciding to seek corporate funds			.63561				
Analyzing future trends			.61505				
Initiating/cancelling programs			.52421				
Developing applications for federal funding				.80703			
Recommending hour/hour budget changes				.77260			
Routine contracting/purchasing				.75887			
Purchase district cars					.70310		
Budget review and approval					.65690		
Propose change in management and organization					.53144		
Determine fee levels						.79351	
Deciding federal program participation						.60643	
Deciding to hire outside curriculum consultant						.51880	
Deciding to spend local money reducing class size							.70247
Deciding to spend local money to increase salaries							.54805
Award large contracts							.43493
Recommend target budget figures							.41469

The highest loading for each variable is presented and only variables with .40 or greater are used in the factor matrix.

Factor 5, "operations and management," is composed of a diverse set of activities that range in scope from budget review to the purchasing of district cars. We feel that the label is descriptive of the diverse activities it represents but, admittedly, the "fit" on this factor is not as tight as in some other factors. In contrast, Factor 6, "external fiscal matters," contained activities that the label more closely describes. "Deciding on federal program participation," "the determination of fee levels," and "the hiring of outside curriculum consultants" are obviously external fiscal matters. Our final factor, Factor 7, was "budgetary decision-making" and, like Factor 6, the activities that loaded on the factor were quite similar in focus and emphasized decision-making.

In sum, areas where the board is actually involved span a variety of activities. In like manner, board preferred activities and actual and preferred activities for superintendents encompass a broad range of activity. In Tables 6, 7, and 8 we present the rotated factor matrices for the other three subsets. An examination across Tables 5 through 8 reveals the fact that some labeled categories are in all four tables. The categories that run throughout are Planning and Evaluation, Budget Preparation, and Routine Fiscal Management. While not all variables in each table in the aforementioned categories are the same, many are; and again we

Table 6

Orthogonally Rotated Factors for Perceived Preferred Board Involvement

	Planning and Evaluation	External Fiscal Matters	Routine Fiscal Management	Budget Preparation	Policy Development	Long-term Goal-setting	Fiscal Planning
	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Factor 5	Factor 6	Factor 7
Evaluate programs	.81412						
Deciding to seek corporate funds	.61184						
Deciding to spend local money reducing class size	.59347						
Undertake new/eliminate old services	.57599						
Budget review and approval	.55528						
Assess organizational performance	.52719						
Determine fee levels		.85871					
Deciding to spend local money to increase salaries		.73248					
Deciding federal program participation		.65182					
Developing applications for federal funding			.79179				
Routine contracting/purchasing			.75536				
Recommending hour/hour budget changes			.69087				
Allocation of capital funds				.81691			
Allocation of maintenance funds				.80549			
Determine spending priorities				.59473			
Award large contracts				.48860			
Propose changes in management and organization					.69519		
Determine formulas for allocation of resources					.58222		
Recommend target budget figures					.57013		
Determine scope and purpose of services					.56756		
Analyzing future trends						.80331	
Develop annual program goals/objectives						.65979	
Establish procedures investing cash reserves							.64404
Create district capital outlay plan							.54299

The highest loading for each variale is presented and only variables with .40 or greater are used in the factor matrix.

Table 7

Orthogonally Rotated Factors for Perceived Actual Superintendent Involvement

	Planning and Evaluation Factor 1	Budgetary Decision-Making Factor 2	Budget Preparation Factor 3	Routine Fiscal Management Factor 4	Fiscal Matters Factor 5	Resource Allocation Factor 6
Analyzing future trends	.78089					
Evaluate programs	.77978					
Assess organizational performance	.69026					
Determine scope and purpose of services	.65166					
Develop annual program goals/objectives	.64365					
Undertake new/eliminate old services	.60857					
Propose changes in management and organization	.58036					
Initiating/cancelling programs	.50692					
Award large contracts		.70840				
Deciding to spend local money reducing class size		.70045				
Budget review and approval		.64889				
Deciding to spend local money to increase salaries		163832				
Determine fee levels		.61290				
Determine spending priorities			.78205			
Formulate systemwide annual budget			.63544			
Allocation of capital funds			.61330			
Approval of budget at commissioners			.61287			
Allocation of maintenance funds			.60605			
Recommend target budget figures			.60398			
Routine contracting/purchasing				.89409		
Developing applications for federal funding				.83080		
Deciding to hire outside curriculum consultant					.65186	
Deciding to seek corporate funds					.60303	
Deciding federal program participation					.53414	
Create district capital outlay plan						.72607
Purchase district cars						.72329
Determine formulas for allocation of resources						.71035

The highest loading for each variable is presented and only variables with .40 are used in the factor matrix.

Table 8

Orthogonally Rotated Factors for Perceived Preferred Superintendent Involvement

	Planning and Evaluation Factor 1	Budget Preparation Factor 2	Routine Fiscal Management Factor 3	Budgetary Decision-Making Factor 4	Local Resource Distribution Factor 5	Resource Allocation Factor 6	Budget Recommendations Factor 7
Analyzing future trends	.85538						
Evaluate programs	.74589						
Develop annual program goals/objectives	.73772						
Assess organizational performance	.73196						
Initiating/cancelling programs	.70884						
Propose changes in management and organization	.67718						
Undertake new/eliminate old services	.67580						
Deciding to hire outside curriculum consultant	.61288						
Determine scope and purpose of services	.60376						
Allocation of capital funds		.82871					
Allocaon of maintenance funds		.76823					
Formulate systemwide annual budget		.66173					
Determine spending priorities		.65139					
Routine contracting/purchasing			.85150				
Develop applications for federal funding			.83555				
Establish procedures investing cash reserves			.69115				
Award large contracts				.74189			
Budget review and approval				.70114			
Determine fee levels				.51440			
Deciding to spend local money reducing class size					.63513		
Deciding to spend local money to increase salaries					.60660		
Deciding to seek corporate funds					.41054		
Purchase district cars						.81015	
Determine formulas for allocation of resources						.53540	
Recommending hour/hour budget changes							.74648
Approval of budget at commissioners							.43253

The highest loading for each variable is presented and only variables with .40 are used in the factor matrix.

have determined that the focus or essence of the category is intact. While this is a subjective judgment, it is based on the fact that the factor analysis has verified the majority of the factors being the same in each case. Two of the categories, External Fiscal Matters and Budgetary Decision-Making, are present in three of the four subsets. As was the case with the examples discussed above, the essence of the categories is maintained although exact replication of variables does not result.

While there are factors that run across the four subsets of data, there are also other factors that are unique within and among the four subsets. These unique factors are exemplified by Operations and Management in Table 5, Fiscal Planning in Table 6, and Local Resource Distribution in Table 7. These factors may have been the result of superintendents' perceptions of the activities being peculiar to the respective subsets. While the accomplishment of these activities is no less important to the organization, there is considerable indecision in the perceptions of superintendents with regard to who should carry the responsibility of the activities.

Factor Congruence

In Table 9, we compute the simple Pearson's "r" for both the superintendent's actual and preferred dimensions using factor scores. When high correlations between two

Table 9

Correlations (Pearson "r") Between Factors in Both Actual and Preferred Dimensions of Superintendent Involvement

Superintendent Actual Involvement	Superintendent Preferred Involvement						
	Planning and Evaluation	Budget Preparation	Routine Fiscal Management	Budgetary Decision-Making	Local Resource Distribution	Resource Allocation	Budgetary Recommendations
Planning and Evaluation	.828						
Budgetary Decision-Making				.843			
Budget Preparation		.720					
Routine Fiscal Management			.897				
External Fiscal Matters					.379		.417
Resource Allocation						.749	

Only correlations at the .001 level are reported.

factors are the result, this is indicative of the superintendent viewing the activities in like manner. Thus, in Table 9, the area of Planning and Evaluation shows a high correlation between the superintendent's actual and preferred involvement and one can conclude that there is a high level of congruence between their actual and preferred behaviors on this factor. Likewise, low correlations would indicate low levels of congruence. Only significant correlations at the .001 level are reported in Table 9. The five factors that are common to the two subsets have high correlations on the respective factors. The factor entitled External Fiscal Matters, unique to the superintendents' actual involvement, correlates highly with the two factors unique to the superintendents' preferred behavior. As one can see in Table 9, we can conclude that superintendents "map" their actual and preferred actions in the same manner.

In Table 10 the aforementioned process is followed for both the boards' actual and preferred involvement in financial matters. Again, high correlations are indicative of congruence between actual and preferred behaviors. In contrast to the correlations for the superintendents' involvement, which exhibited a simple predictable pattern of like factors being correlated highly, the correlations for board involvement form a more complex pattern. The area of responsibility "goal-setting" for the actual involvement of boards did not

Table 10

Correlations (Pearson "r") Between Factors in Both Actual and Preferred Dimensions of Board Involvement

Board Actual Involvement	Board Preferred Involvement: Planning and Evaluation	External Fiscal Management	Routine Fiscal Management	Budget Preparation	Policy Development	Long-term Goal Setting	Fiscal Planning
Goal Setting							
Budget Preparation				.510			.404
Planning and Evaluation						.497	
Routine Fiscal Management			.869				
Operations and Management	.441				.346	-.303	
External Fiscal Matters		.803					
Budgetary Decision-Making	.436	.328		.351			

Only correlations at the .001 level are reported.

correlate with any board preferred factors. This was a unique occurrence across all factors. Three other factors involving board actual activity are correlated with two or more board preferred factors. This may be the result of superintendents not having a clear conception of how to delineate board responsibility. For example, the area of responsibility entitled Operation and Management was positively correlated with Planning and Evaluation and Policy Development and yet negatively correlated with Long-Term Goal-Setting. These high positive correlations are the result of the variables loading on the Operation and Management factor for board actual involvement and also loading on the board preferred factors, Planning and Evaluation and Policy Development. We are at a loss with regard to understanding the negative correlation between Operations and Management and Long-Term Goal-Setting. We are equally puzzled with regard to the unexpected positive loading of Planning and Evaluation with Long-Term Goal-Setting rather than with its respective board preferred factor. As one might expect, the two factors that are common to both subsets have high correlations.

A comparison of the correlations across Tables 9 and 10 reveals an interesting, yet not surprising, result. The generally higher correlations indicated between superintendents' actual and preferred involvement as opposed to

those of the boards, indicates the superintendents perceiving a greater consistency in their own behaviors than those of the board. The fact that there is a gap in what superintendents perceive the board is doing, and what they feel that they should be doing, is indicative of a situation that could lead to conflict.

Determinants of Superintendents' Perceptions

It was our contention that the perceptions of superintendents would not differ across the state of North Carolina. Professional training, we felt, would create common value systems that would prevent variation among the state's chief school officers. We selected three characteristics in order to test our belief that socialization towards roles exists. Two of the variables, the urban/rural nature of the population and geographic region, could be considered to capture the basis of cultural differences in the state. If these major culture-creating characteristics do not elicit variance in superintendents' perceptions, then that enhances our contention that roles are well established. Our third variable, student population (district size) might be expected to result in varying demands upon both superintendents and boards. In other words, superintendents in large districts might be expected to feel very differently about many things than those in small districts. If this were the case, there would be variance in the

superintendents' perceptions of the proper roles of both board members and themselves in financial activities. Again, we believe that the socialization process is so influential that potential variance would be overcome.

In Tables 11 and 12, we report the finding from a series of applications of analysis of variance procedures. The dependent variables were the computed factor scores for each superintendent across the 27 factors that were determined to exist. The independent variables were geographic region (East, Piedmont, and West), school district size (student populations of 0 to 1,499; 1,500 to 4,999; 5,000 to 9,999; 10,000 and over), and the urban/rural nature of the population (as perccived by the superintendent).

There is significant support in the data for our hypothesis that superintendents' perceptions would not vary across demographic differences. In only 6 of the 81 instances were the F ratios found to be significant. District size was found to be important only for the superintendents' preference for increased board involvement in Fiscal Planning. Superintendents from school districts of 1,500 to 4,999 students wanted more involvement by boards than did superintendents from districts of both smaller and larger districts. Geographic region also had little explanatory power. Superintendents in the eastern part of the state perceived the board to be more involved in the Operations and Management

Table 11

Superintendents' Perceptions of Boards' Involvement in Financial Matters by Selected Demographic Characteristics (F Ratio)

	District Size	Geographic Region	Urban Rural
Board Actual			
Goal-Setting	1.013	2.126	6.894*
Budget Preparation	.512	.846	7.927*
Planning and Evaluation	1.473	.645	1.458
Routine Fiscal Management	.402	.117	1.879
Operations and Management	2.118	3.326*	.019
External Fiscal Matters	1.731	1.149	.188
Budgetary Decision-Making	.568	2.585	.003
Board Preferred			
Planning and Evaluation	.828	.848	2.317
External Fiscal Matters	1.875	2.297	.135
Routine Fiscal Management	.428	.167	1.512
Budget Preparation	.659	.278	3.755
Policy Development	.235	2.169	.462
Long-Term Goal-Setting	.315	.055	.114
Fiscal Planning	3.249*	.366	1.375

*Indicates an F ratio significant at the .05 level or greater.

Table 12

Superintendents' Perceptions of Superintendents' Involvement in Financial Matters by Selected Demographic Characteristics (F Ratio)

	District Size	Geographic Region	Urban Rural
Superintendent Actual			
Planning and Evaluation	.780	2.572	.528
Budgetary Decision-Making	1.286	.830	.333
Budget Preparation	.891	2.013	.131
Routine Fiscal Management	.256	1.166	.452
Fiscal Matters	1.509	1.058	.398
Resource Allocation	2.101	.916	2.001
Superintendent Preferred			
Planning and Evaluation	.596	3.579*	.284
Budget Preparation	.210	1.096	.073
Routine Fiscal Management	1.255	.627	.056
Budgetary Decision-Making	.564	1.616	.303
Local Resource Distribution	.176	.778	.767
Resource Allocation	2.569	1.778	4.816*
Budget Recommendation	.529	.789	.551

*Indicates an F ratio significant at the .05 level or greater.

area than did other superintendents. Interestingly enough, the superintendents in the western part of the state actually wanted less involvement for themselves in Planning and Evaluation. Urban/rural differences explained variation in perceptions in three areas of responsibility. Superintendents from urban districts perceived boards as being more involved in Goal-Setting and less involved in Budget Preparation than their rural counterparts. Urban superintendents wanted more involvement in Resource Allocation. We are cautious to make too much of these, possibly idiosyncratic, findings. The paucity of significant differences is indicative of the common perceptions held by superintendents towards their involvement in financial matters as well as that of boards.

A Test of the Svara Model

Our attention now turns to understanding the multiple areas of responsibility that we have determined to exist for boards and superintendents in light of the Svara model. In Figures 4, 5, 6, and 7, we depict the set of factors for each of the respective subsets across the categories of the Svara model. The horizontal bars represent the number of variables ascribed to the Svara category that load on a factor. The broken lines indicate an absence of a variable or a number of variables loading on that factor and serve to link variables spanning categories.

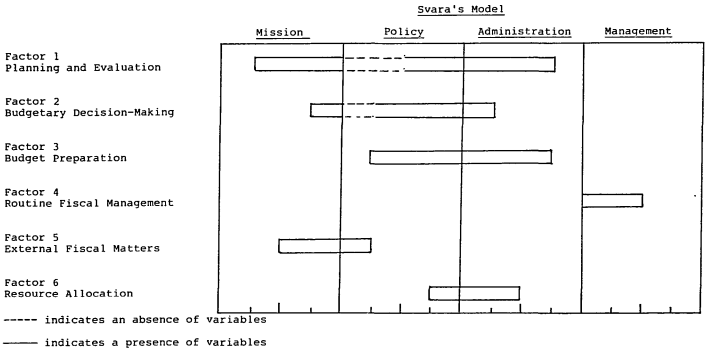


Figure 4. Comparison of financial activities for each factor with Svara's model for superintendents' actual involvement.

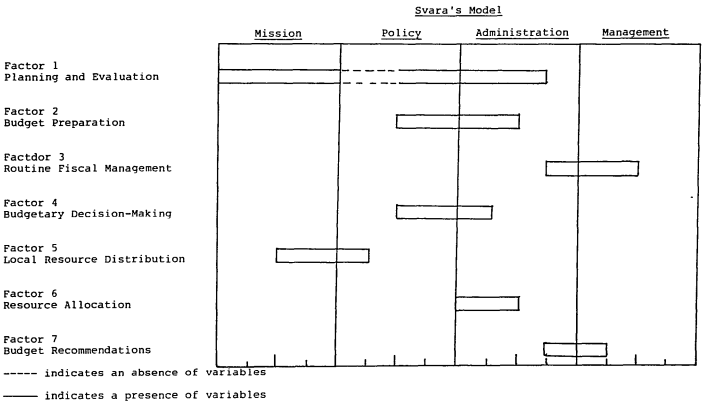


Figure 5. Comparison of financial activities for each factor with Svara's model for superintendents' preferred involvement.

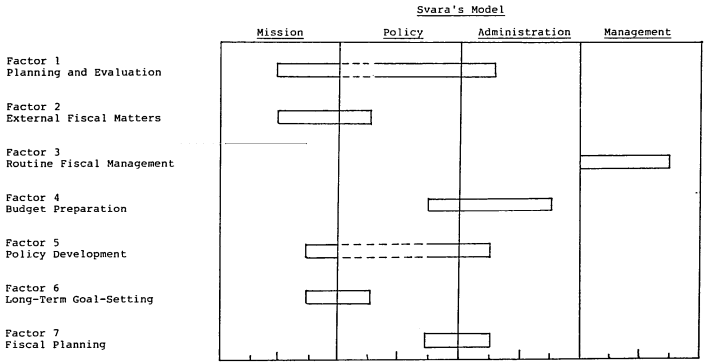


Figure 6. Comparison of financial activities for each factor with Svara's model for boards' preferred involvement.

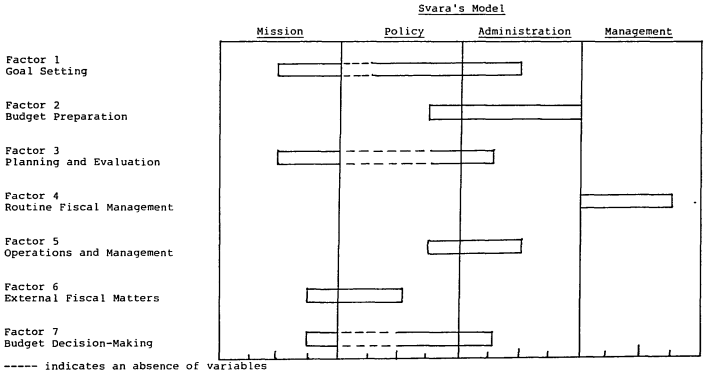


Figure 7. Comparison of financial activities for each factor with Svara's model for boards' actual involvement.

Inspection of the four figures lends some credence to the applicability of the Svara model in public school financial activities. As one might expect, there are only very few factors which fall within a single Svara category. Equally as important is the fact that three of the four single category factors are in the "Management" area (the fourth is in "Administration") as Svara's model would predict. On the other hand, the expectation does not hold at the opposite extreme of Svara's model. There is no area of responsibility that falls solely in the "Mission" category.

As can be seen in Figures 4, 5, 6, and 7, the roles of the superintendent and of the board in financial matters are not neatly delineated. For 23 of the 27 areas of responsibility, across all four subsets of data, the factors span two or more Svara categories, in eight instances spanning three. The spanning of categories by factors graphically portrays a meshing of board and superintendent responsibilities as would be predicted from the model. Thus, the superintendents' perceptions of their role and those of board members are intertwined into complex relationships rather than into distinct dichotomous functions. Moreover, with this mixing of functions, the potential for conflict increases. As a result, it should be no surprise that the literature is replete with discussions of conflict between superintendents and their boards of education.

Summary

In this chapter we set out to test four hypotheses using a variety of statistical procedures. The data supported our contention of greater involvement by superintendents as opposed to boards. The analysis also uncovered multiple factors across the four subsets of data. Substantive meaning was given to these factors and they provided a better understanding of board and superintendent roles in financial activities. There was greater congruence in superintendents' dimensions than for boards. There were little to no differences uncovered among superintendents' perceptions when applying the three demographic independent variables. Finally, the data seem to support the applicability of the Svara model to board/superintendent relations.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

Summary

We began our study with comments regarding the basis for the primary goal of American public schools. The American desire to offer an appropriate public education to all its children is at the center of the national conscience as well as being at the center of its own interest. In order to administer the requirements of the national democratic tradition, America must have a literate, politically socialized citizenry, and schools have been the target institution for its creation. In short, America's schools are the major purveyor of its political ideals and those ideals are central to what we described earlier as the American "way of life." Out of democratic ideals came the goal of representative democracy, and out of representative democracy came the lay/professional partnership that symbolizes American public education. Simply put, the people wanted influence over their children's education; thus the nation's schools began with direct control by the people. However, as the educational endeavor became more complex, both in the numbers of children being served and in the responsibilities being given the schools by the people, there

was a need for a professional educator, an administrator who could direct the operation of the schools. The basis for our study was set; boards and superintendents are the "key actors" in public education.

The history of public education has been a chronicle of issues surrounding the control of schools and what they impart to students. The seat of that control has changed over the years and, in many ways, the competition for control of influence has passed through "phases" (Zeigler, 1974). This desire to control has created the issue that we have attempted to study. We elected to study the relationships of boards of education and superintendents in the area of school finance. School finance was chosen due to its important role as a facilitator of much of what happens in schools and because of its relative importance in the educational literature. We found, quickly, that little theoretical analysis has been attempted in school finance although the literature was replete with the varying opinions on the topic.

Relationships were the focus of our study, and it was necessary to develop ways to understand them. This led to our analysis of roles and role theory as a basis for explaining the dynamics involved in the interaciton between boards and superintendents. The views of sociologists such as Park, Mead, Moreno, and Linton were examined as we sought to gain understanding of the interaction between elected (also

appointed) officials and administrators. The work of Goffman on "presentation of self" was utilized as a way to look at how each of us is perceived by others, this being importanat due to the fact that our study is based on the perceptions of public school superintendents. Goffman provides aid in understanding how others relate to us and it is his contention that it has little to do with what we think we are but what others perceive us to be.

The literature also offered theoretical understandings of how boards of education and superintendents interacted over the years. While the "harmony model" is not the creation of any one individual, it is a widely discussed idea. According to this model, boards and superintendents should, at all costs, try to "get along." Proponents of the model agree on its existence, but not on the reasons for its development. Many saw the goal of the harmony model as simply an attempt to do the best for children by avoiding tension and high levels of emotion; other authors saw the model as a way for superintendents to "get their way" by pressuring the board into acquiescence. This variance in interpretation could, obviously, result in considerable disagreement and conflict. Another prevalent theory on how boards and superintendents should interact is the policy/administration dichotomy model. This model would have boards sticking to the formation of policy, while allowing the administration to "run the schools." Failure to do this

is generally seen, by the administration, as a board mistake that can be corrected simply by advising boards of their appropriate task. This clear delineation of responsibility was, of course, unrealistic. We found it doubtful that such a division of responsibilities could be achieved. Svara provided an alternate model that became a focus for a good deal of our research. He suggested a meshing of responsibility across four categories that extended from defining the mission of the organization to day-to-day operations of a school system.

Our research was accomplished through the distribution of a questionnaire to all local school district superintendents throughout the state of North Carolina. The questionnaire contained 29 items that were focused on financial responsibilities in school districts. Superintendents were asked to rank perceived level of involvement (actual and preferred) in financial activities for both themselves and boards. The return rate for the survey was in excess of 90% and, we feel, indicates a real interest in such matters by superintendents. The high response rate permits us to have confidence in the data collected.

The data collected were utilized to test four hypotheses. These were:

--Superintendents will have a different perception towards their own responsibility in public school

finance than towards that of board members. They will see themselves as more active in more areas of financial responsibility.

--Superintendents will perceive their own performance as being closer to what it "ought to be" than the performance of board members.

--Superintendents will delineate multiple areas of responsibility in school finance rather than creating a dichotomous division.

--There will be no difference in the perceptions of superintendents in financial matters when considering three selected demographic characteristics.

The data were analyzed using a variety of statistical procedures including factor analysis, analysis of variance, and the computation of both correlation coefficients and measures of sampling adequacy.

Our analysis revealed that superintendents do, in fact, perceive greater, as well as broader, involvement on their part as opposed to that of board members. The superintendents' levels of involvement were substantially higher, both actual and preferred, across 27 of 29 activities than those of board members. It is evident that superintendents feel that the leadership of financial matters within the school district should remain largely in their hands.

In our analysis, the policy/administration dichotomy was not evident; rather, multiple areas of responsibility

were identified in public school financial matters. While Svara's model suggested four areas, our research identified seven areas in three analyses and six in another. Thus, the hypothesis regarding superintendents' delineating multiple areas of responsibility was supported.

Two different approaches were used to explore our hypotheses that superintendents would have a clearer perception of their role than that of board members. First, we looked at differences in mean scores for actual and preferred involvement. There were fewer differences of any magnitude with regard to superintendent involvement compared to that of boards. In addition, correlation coefficients computed for both the boards' and the superintendents' involvement showed that superintendents perceive themselves being closer to doing what "ought to be done" than their board members. This identifies a significant possibility for board/superintendent conflict.

Finally, we maintained that little or no difference would be identified in superintendents' perceptions across three selected demographic characteristics. This hypothesis was supported by our analysis. In only 6 of 81 cases were any statistically significant differences indicated.

While our four hypotheses were supported, our research revealed another interesting result. Utilizing factor scores, we constructed a test of Svara's model. We found that there

was credibility in the Svara model for superintendents and boards of education as well as for city managers and city councils. The test showed a meshing of board and superintendent responsibilities as does the Svara model. This meshing, or lack of distinct delineation in role, could, of course, be a real source of conflict.

Conclusions

This study was undertaken because of the vital roles of both boards and superintendents with regard to what takes place in America's schools. The tension and conflict that take place between superintendents and boards must be properly channeled if America's children are to benefit. In order to resolve conflict or to channel it in a positive direction, we must arrive at an increased understanding of the way boards and superintendents view themselves and each other, in that these perceptions will determine whether these "key actors" can work together for the benefit of the nation's students. In addition, board members and superintendents must learn to work within the political context that is the reality of today's educational process. To assume that this can be avoided is simply to be ineffective for the young people that are to be served.

The literature and experience tell us that conflict is present, and we have concluded that the varying expectations

of role and behaviors held between boards and superintendents could be a primary source of dissension and conflict. We have found that the responsibilities of board members and superintendents are not clearly delineated, as if one's responsibility simply stops where the other's begins. We have seen that the perceptions of one group will not, most likely, be the same as that of another, yielding still another source of conflict.

However, in addition to what we have seen that stands in the way of good board/superintendent relationships, we have also found that sense can be made of what boards and superintendents do and why they do it. This understanding through effort and awareness of the limitations of the processes involved, rather than a denial of the realities, can lead to improved relationships. Improved relationships, in turn, can lead to an educational process that will be the very best for America's students.

Recommendations for Further Study

As we attempt to provide links to the research that remains yet undone on the relationships between boards of education and public school superintendents, we readily admit that our study has been subject to limitations. Our limited time and our ability have left important stones unturned, and we hope that there will be those who come after us to continue to explore what we see as an extremely important

aspect of public school education. We chose an element that we felt would be an important beginning in the search for greater understanding of the profoundly political process that has such great bearing on the lives of our children. We approached that element for study with methods that were also limited, researchers never being able to explore every blind alley that may lead to the very best discovery. We have simply been explorers and we hope that other explorers will follow.

The board of education/superintendent relationship is complex and cannot be fully understood from any single study. We would like to suggest several aspects of such relationships that deserve further study.

Due to the fact that Browne found variance in Svara's model involving city manager/city council relationships, a similar replication should take place in our study of boards and superintendents. Such replication from another area of the nation might well provide valuable information regarding the transferability of the findings revealed in our study.

We utilized superintendents' perceptions in looking at board/superintendent relationships. While we are convinced that there were adequate reasons for limiting our study to superintendents' perceptions, it would be interesting to determine if board members, with their different perspective,

would yield results that vary significantly in the support of our hypotheses and resulting claims. The study should, then, be replicated from the board members' viewpoint. Consideration should even be given for a replication from the viewpoint of members of the community. Each of these attempts would have its attendant disadvantages, both in research methodology as well as in practical considerations.

School board/superintendent relationships should also be examined in some area in addition to that of school finance. While finance is an important aspect of school operation, other areas might well produce varying opinions from the respondents. For example, in the area of curriculum which is traditionally reserved for the professional, would board members have a very different perspective? Research in additional areas could very well broaden the work that we have been able to do in this study.

Our study involved an investigation based on the perceptions of superintendents. Further study on board/superintendent relationships could be based in a totally different direction. Relationships could be studied in a more investigative fashion with observations being made when board members and the superintendent meet to carry on the business of the school district. Analysis could be done on the types of interactions that take place between the "key actors" and might result in the discovery of flaws in communications that result in poor relationships.

Our study has been empirical in nature, but there are many types of analysis that are more qualitative which could be utilized in studying the relationships between boards and superintendents. Lightfoot used a qualitative, interpretive approach to looking at educational environments entitled "portraiture" (Lightfoot, 1983). Lightfoot studied American high schools by visiting schools for a 3- to 4-day period and collecting data through observation. The descriptive data was used to capture the lives, rhythms, and rituals of those observed. These techniques of observation, interviewing, and ethnographic description were used to create the "portraits" that were the result of the research. Goodlad combined the less empirical observation with a collection of accompanying statistical data to accomplish his study of public schools (Goodlad, 1984). The appropriate methodologies are legion and the possibilities seemingly endless.

Both boards of education and superintendents are important. In order for children to be best served, levels of effectiveness must be maximized. Understanding is the answer; we must seek it.

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APPENDIX A

LETTERS TO SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS

THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA
AT GREENSBORO

Center for Social Research and Human Services

December 9, 1985

Dear _____:

Public school budgeting and finance has always been a powerful issue in the United States. In recent years, as the economy has fluctuated and as funding for education has decreased while demands for services have increased, the issue of how to properly finance the public education endeavor has often been a popular topic of discussion. As a public school superintendent, you are in a unique position to comment on the status of public school finance and the issues surrounding the budgeting process. I am hoping that, as an element of my doctoral studies and in cooperation with the Center for Social Research at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, you will complete the enclosed questionnaire. We feel that your responses will help to clarify various issues surrounding the financing of public schools.

Please be assured that all individual responses will be held confidential. Results will only be reported in such a way as to avoid the identification of individual superintendents or school districts. If you desire a copy of the results, please put your name and address on the back of the return envelope; not on the questionnaire. The envelope enclosed for the return of the questionnaire is addressed and stamped for your convenience and ease of return.

If you have any questions or concerns please call collect (919) 274-9610 between the hours of 5:00 p.m. and 11:00 p.m.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Michael T. Renn

MTR:md
Encls.

THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA
AT GREENSBORO

Center for Social Research and Human Services

January 13, 1986

Dear _____:

Before the holidays, I wrote to you seeking your opinion on public school finance in our state. If you have already completed and returned the questionnaire, please accept my sincere thanks. If not, I ask that you please do so at your earliest convenience.

This study has been undertaken because we believe that the effective financing of public education is extremely important for the children of North Carolina. We feel that when all the questionnaires are in and the data is analyzed we will be able to better understand the funding process. In order for the study to accurately reflect the broadest possible range of superintendents' opinions, it is very important that we receive your responses.

Your assistance is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

MTR/an

Michael T. Renn

THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA
AT GREENSBORO

Center for Social Research and Human Services

February 11, 1986

Dear _____:

Several weeks ago, we wrote to you seeking your opinion on public school finance issues. To date, we have received a significant number of surveys; in fact, over 60 percent of the questionnaires have been returned. However, our goal is a response rate of 100 percent. Because the issues discussed are so very important to public education, we want to have all the Superintendents return the survey.

We know that you, as a Superintendent, help shape the state's policy toward education. Thus, your current views on public school finances are extremely important. This is especially true this next year with Federal budget cuts and other significant cross-pressures on the state budget.

Our research is designed to help understand how Boards and Superintendents work together in the budget process; therefore, your assessment of this process is very important. If you have a good working relationship, then our research will help you understand why. If you feel that the relationship between Board and Superintendent could be better, then our results should provide you with some immediate benefits on how to better work with the Board. In either case, your opinions are extremely important.

We feel so strongly in seeking each Superintendent's opinions on the issues discussed in the survey that we sent this reminder to you by certified mail--we wanted to ensure its delivery. In case your earlier copy of the questionnaire has been misplaced, we have enclosed a replacement.

May I also remind you that you can receive a copy of the results by simply writing, "copy of results requested," on the back of the return envelope, along with your name and address.

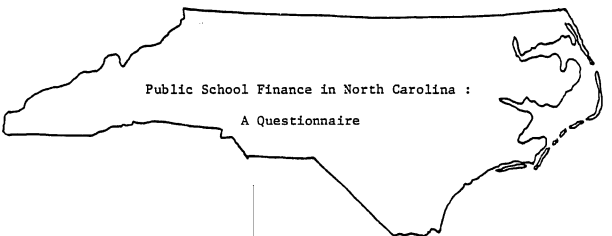
Sincerely,

Michael T. Renn

MTR:md
Enclosures

APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE



Public School Finance in North Carolina : A Questionnaire

Michael T. Renn

As the superintendent of a public school district you work with a Board of Education to provide for the financing of public instruction. Below, we have listed various activities that are often associated with school and program planning and assessment. For each activity listed, please indicate the actual and preferred level of Board involvement, either as a whole or as individual members, and the actual and preferred level of superintendent/staff involvement. It is possible that both the Board and the superintendent will be very involved or have little involvement in the same activity. An explanation of the categories is offered below.

Categories of Levels of Involvement

1. VERY LOW: NOT INVOLVED
   Handled entirely by someone else
2. LOW: MINIMUM REVIEW OR REACTION APPROPRIATE TO THE SITUATION
   Giving a routine OK to someone else's recommendation, providing an opportunity to react as a courtesy
3. MODERATE: ADVISING OR REVIEWING
   Making suggestions, reviewing recommendations, seeking information or clarification, ratifying proposals
4. HIGH: LEADING, GUIDING, OR PRESSURING
   Initiating, making proposals, advocating, promotion or opposing, intensely reviewing and revising a proposal
5. VERY HIGH: HANDLE ENTIRELY
   No one else directly involved

Preferred Level of Involvement

Whatever the level of involvement, there may be a differing degree of satisfaction with that level. For example, one person may be pleased to not be involved in an activity and another person displeased. Therefore, choose the appropriate number for the actual level of involvement, and then circle the same or a different number on the scale that reflects the level of involvement you prefer for either the Board or Superintendent/Staff.

Circle the number for "actual"involvement and the number for "preferred" involvement for both the Board and the Superintendent/Staff.

		INVOLVEMENT									
		Board					Supt/Staff				
1. Formulating the system wide annual budget	Actual	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
	Prefer	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
2. Advocating the approval of the annual budget before the county commissioners	Actual	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
	Prefer	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
3. Determing spending priorities	Actual	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
	Prefer	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
4. Establishing procedures for the investment of cash reserves	Actual	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
	Prefer	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
5. Making the recommendation for budget change from one hour to the next	Actual	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
	Prefer	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
6. Allocating funds for maintenance of facilities	Actual	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
	Prefer	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
7. Allocation of capital funds	Actual	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
	Prefer	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
8. Awarding large contracts	Actual	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
	Prefer	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
9. Routine contracting and purchasing	Actual	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
	Prefer	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
10. Making recommendations for target budget figures	Actual	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
	Prefer	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5

			INVOLVEMENT									
			Board					Supt/Staff				
11.	Budget review and approval	Actual	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
		Prefer	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
12.	Deciding whether to spend local monies on class size reduction	Actual	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
		Prefer	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
13.	Creation of a district-wide capital outlay plan	Actual	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
		Prefer	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
14.	Determining formulas for the allocation of resources and services	Actual	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
		Prefer	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
15.	Deciding to participate in federal programs	Actual	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
		Prefer	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
16.	Developing applications for federal funding	Actual	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
		Prefer	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
17.	Making decisions regarding the seeking of corporate funding for special projects	Actual	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
		Prefer	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
18.	Determining the level of fees	Actual	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
		Prefer	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
19.	Increasing salaries from local monies	Actual	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
		Prefer	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
20.	Deciding to hire outside consultants for curriculum development	Actual	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
		Prefer	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
21.	Deciding to purchase district cars for particular personnel	Actual	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
		Prefer	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
22.	Assessing organization performance	Actual	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
		Prefer	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
23.	Initiating or cancelling programs	Actual	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
		Prefer	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
24.	Evaluating programs	Actual	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
		Prefer	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
25.	Determining the purpose and scope of the system services provided	Actual	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
		Prefer	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
26.	Proposing changes in management practices or organization	Actual	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
		Prefer	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
27.	Identifying problems, analyzing future trends for the district	Actual	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
		Prefer	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
28.	Developing annual program goals and objectives	Actual	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
		Prefer	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
29.	Deciding to undertake new or eliminate old services (not simple change in level)	Actual	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
		Prefer	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5

Section II

Please provide the requested information with regard to your individual situation by circling the appropriate answer or filling in the blanks below.

I. I feel that the overall nature of my school district is
1. Urban
2. Rural

2. Geographically, my school district is located in
1. Western N.C.
2. Piedmont N.C.
3. Eastern N.C.

3. The population of the largest municipality in my school district is
1. 0 - 5,000
2. 5,000 - 10,000
3. 10,000 - 50,000
4. 50,000 - 100,000
5. Over 100,000

4. The Board of Education in my school district is
1. Appointed
2. Elected

If appointed, by whom?

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5. The number of students in my district is:
1. 0 - 1,499
2. 2,500 - 4,999
3. 5,000 - 9,999
4. 10,000 - 14,999
5. 15,000 - 24,999
6. 25,000 - 49,000
7. 50,000 and over

6. Do you feel that you are responsible for the budgeting and fiscal matters for the school district
1. Yes
2. No

If not, where does this responsibility lie?

7. Do you employ someone who directs the day-to-day financial matters of the school district

1. Yes
2. No

If yes, who is that person?

1. Associate Superintendent
2. Assistant Superintendent level position
3. Director level position
4. Finance Officer
5. Other _____

8. The person who directs the day-to-day financial matters of the district is

1. A professional educator
2. A person trained in business, accounting, finance, etc. rather than an educator
3. Other

Thank you for your cooperation. We would appreciate any additional comments you may have on the financing of public school education or in how school districts in North Carolina budget. Please use the space below?