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Chad Litz  
*Kansas State University*

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The relationship of the University to the community is that of a "highly specialized industry" to a dependent community.

# The Structure and Influence of University and Non-University Representatives on University Campus Committees

by Dr. Hakim Salah-Din  
Kansas State University

## Introduction

Today's university represents a significant departure from the 12th century university in Bologna, where students controlled the employment of teachers and the place of instruction. If students were not satisfied with their studies, they simply boycotted professors, or, if they did not like the town, they simply moved the university to another town (Haskins, 1957). Students first organized groups or universities "as a means of protection against the townspeople, for the price of rooms and necessities rose rapidly with the crowd of new tenants and customers, and the individual student was helpless against such profiteering" (p. 9). Together, students could bring the town to terms by the threat of departure since the university had no buildings. Many examples of such historic migrations exist. Against "their other enemies," the professors, students would collectively boycott. At times, professors were put under bond to live up to a minute set of regulations that guaranteed students the worth of their money. The subsequent "town-grown" split was inevitable since the concerns of the community and the university were different. Nevertheless, having a university in or near a community would lend prestige and income to a town, and faculty and students would have access to the community's resources, a mutually beneficial exchange.

The land-grant university, first established in 1862 in the United States, has a three-fold mission: instruction, research, and community service. Kansas State University,

one of the first land-grant universities and founded as Kimball College in 1862, exemplifies this mission of educating and keeping farmers and the sons and daughters of farmers in the state. Modifying the Jeffersonian common school principle, the federal government became somewhat of a partner in higher education, which at Kansas State University and other land-grant institutions assumed a different focus from the traditional quadrivium of arithmetic, music, geometry, and astronomy, and the trivium of grammar, logic, and rhetoric found in medieval universities. The important idea is that the university was no longer simply an elitist institution, reserved for the rich and influential; education gained practicality. The land-grant mission attempted to meet the special needs of particular populations, bringing greater income, ability to compete with foreign markets, and civilization to newly settled communities (Litz, 1985). In short, a shift occurred that made the university function for the community rather than in the community. Community control, which had been absent under elitist models of education, was introduced and legitimized.

At the time of this investigation (1986), Kansas State University, the focus of this study, had undergone a number of changes, changes too numerous to investigate in this effort. These changes, more often than not were connected with administrative leadership. Between 1985 and 1986, for example, the University had employed two new vice presidents and a new president, three new deans and a new athletic director, four new head coaches, two of them in major revenue-producing sports, and incurred vacant positions for the director and two associate directors of the Office of Student Financial Assistance (three of the top four positions), one assistant and two associate registrars, a budget director, and a half-time position for assistant director of affirmative action. This list is far from exhaustive.

Located in Manhattan, Kansas, a city of approximately 40,000 people, Kansas State University is a major source of income for the city and its surrounding communities. The University's spring 1985 enrollment was 18,085 students (Final Enrollment Tabulations, 1985). The following indicates the school's potential contributions to the community.

## University Budget

KSU's operating funds for 1985-1986 came from the following sources:

State appropriations	\$ 83.4 million	45.4%
Federal land-grant funds	\$ 7.0 million	3.8%
Student fees	\$ 19.0 million	10.3%
Hospital and diagnostic fees	\$ 1.1 million	0.6%
Auxiliary enterprises (including housing, athletics, and student union)	\$ 33.6 million	18.3%
Gifts, grants, research contracts, and sales	\$ 39.8 million	21.6%
	<b>\$183.9 million</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

## Student Financial Assistance, 1984-1985

Gift Aid to 8,800 students	\$ 6.8 million
Loan programs for 9,000 students	\$18.0 million
Jobs for 5,500 students	\$ 5.4 million
Miscellaneous aid	\$ 0.6 million
	<b>Total \$30.8 million</b>

Dr. Hakim Salah-Din is Assistant Director of Admissions at Kansas State University, Manhattan, Kansas.

**Faculty and Staff**

Instructors .....	1,043
Researchers .....	579
Extension specialists .....	210
County extension agents .....	282
General support personnel (faculty) .....	231
University support personnel (staff) .....	1,857
Total	4,202
(Kansas State University, 1986)	

These figures indicate the importance of the university to the local economy, "especially when one considers student spending for books, beer, and baubles at local businesses" (Flora, 1986).

Observing the many variables affecting a university—leadership and environment, finances and enrollment, quality of education and quality of life—one becomes interested in understanding the role of external agents in the control of the institution, particularly, "How do community elites get control of these institutions, and in what ways?" (Flora, 1986).

Colleges and universities have significant relationships with their environments, particularly in resource transactions. If their environments change, then the objectives of the university must also change (Tonn, 1978). Considering this and the maxim that "the institution that does not demonstrate that it has definite goals will find others rushing to supply them" (Dressel, 1981, p. 281), one finds a study of external agents and their connections to the university useful. By identifying members of the policy-making bodies of the university, we can then determine how broadly or how narrowly community boundaries can be drawn, and discover there are opportunities for narrowly and locally defined interest groups to become "the community" controlling the university (Flora, 1986).

**Methodology**

While not a part of Troustine and Christensen's (1982) research method in their study of San Jose, an effective way of capturing and understanding patterns of interlocking institutions in a community is network analysis (an essential element in the study of power). In the past several decades, many community power studies have appeared: "often the research pits sociologists against political scientists who debate whether local power is hierarchial ('elitist') or segmented ('pluralist')" (Wirt and Kirst, 1982, p. 109). Partly theoretical, partly methodological, and partly normative, the distinctions in the literature have not always been clear. Still, the point of agreement about power is that the capacity to cause or inhibit change in behavior is impossible to effect without power. Power is the ability of individuals or groups to control the policy-making processes in the academic community (Hodgkinson and Meeth, 1971).

According to Killacky (1973), the major economic activities in Manhattan over the two decades prior to 1973 were land development and construction, brought on by increased enrollment at the University and the growth of a nearby military installation. In his study of community power, Killacky's "modified positional methodology" analyzed organizations within the voluntary sectors, rather than just individuals in key positions. As in Killacky's study, the data used in this study are obtained from representatives of various concerns with the understanding that information that is not a matter of public record would not be used. Data were collected for the 1985-86 school year.

**University Committees**

This study examined boards of directors, trustees, planning and search committees, and other joint decision-making bodies, involving persons internal and/or external to Kansas State University. By examining university committees, this study focused on decision-making bodies influencing the leadership and direction of the University. Of 85 committees listed in the Kansas State University's listing of Student Senate, Faculty Senate, and Administrative Committees (Kansas State University, 1985), only the President's Administrative Council and the Advisory Committee on Campus Development are included in this study. This research focused on committees that would influence the resolution or non-resolution of major issues concerning the University and its relations with the public. A summary of the function of each committee follows:

**The Alumni Association Board of Directors (KAA).** Since its founding in 1874, the University's Alumni Association has grown as a non-profit organization, serving Kansas State University and its alumni. The staff has five primary goals: student recruitment, "friend-raising," financial maintenance, communications and record keeping.

The Alumni Association's board of directors is made up of 24 members—18 elected to three-year terms and four appointed. The president and president-elect are elected by the board. New members are elected each spring by association members. (Annual Report, 1984-85)

**The Kansas State University Foundation Executive Committee (FEC).** The organization encourages, receives, and holds in trust any real and personal property given for the use of the University, its faculty, or students. The Foundation invests or disburses, manages, administers, and controls all such gifts to provide services which cannot be provided through student fees (Trustee Handbook, 1986). The Foundation is governed by a Board of Trustees, consisting of 175 members, representing educational and geographic constituencies. Fifteen members make up the Executive Committee. "The Foundation is a nonprofit educational corporation chartered by the State of Kansas" (p. 1). It has complete autonomy and flexibility in handling gifts to benefit the University.

**State of Kansas Board of Regents (BRS).** The ten members of the Regents are appointed by the Governor of the State of Kansas to govern six state universities.

**University's Presidential Search Committee (PSC).** A 15-member committee was appointed by the Board of Regents in 1985 to review candidates for president of Kansas State University and recommend finalists for the position to the Board of Regents. [A president was selected by The Board of Regents on March 22, 1986.]

**Athletic Director's Search Committee (UAD).** This 11-member group was appointed by the president of the University to receive and screen candidates for the position of athletic director, then make recommendations to him. [An athletic director was selected in the spring of 1985.]

**Coliseum Program Committee (CPC).** This committee is responsible for the planning and construction of an estimated 14 to 17 million dollar sports coliseum for the University.

**Advisory Committee on Campus Development (ACD).**

"Advises the Vice President for Administration and Finance concerning the physical development of the campus on matters of planning, design, and layout of new construction and alterations" (Kansas State University Student Senate, Faculty Senate, and Administrative Committee Listing, 1985).

**Presidential Administrative Council (PAC).**

"For discussion and review of University-wide policy issues and information of significance to University operations" (Kansas State University Student Senate, Faculty Senate, and Administrative Committee Listing, 1985). Persons become members of the council by virtue of their positions as executives/administrators, i.e., provost, vice presidents, deans, directors. . . .

**University for Man's Board of Directors (UFM).**

Started in the late 1960s, University for Man began as a reform organization, primarily interested in causes, not in the mainstream of conservative ideology. The organization's focus has shifted to self-interest, energy conservation, demonstration projects, and grants. University for Man is an incorporated, nonprofit part of Kansas State University (MAES, 1986). Twelve members serve on the board. University for Man is a semi-autonomous entity nominally under the supervision of the Division of Continuing Education at Kansas State University.

**McCain Advisory Committee (McA).**

A board of 21 adults and 4 students serve voluntarily and without compensation. People in the community that are interested in the performing arts may serve (Lowman, 1986).

**Chairman of Series and Chief of Patrons for the Landon Lecture Series (LL).** Two persons, a faculty member and the publisher of the local newspaper, receive suggestions as to who should be invited to participate in the Landon Lecture series, and they arrange for these speakers to participate in the series. "Leading personalities" are drawn from the public arena of world-renowned politicians, journalists, cabinet members, and other prominent figures involved in current public issues (Landon Lecture Series, 1985).

Dimensions of cultural values and political orientation are considered as well as its corporate influence. The Landon Lecture series, for instance, billed as one of the most prestigious series in America, has an image-making aspect. President Ronald Reagan, President Jose N. Duarte, House Speaker Thomas P. O'Neill, Congresswoman Patricia Schroeder, and Mayor Tom Bradley have participated in the series. The McCain series could influence which cultural values would be reinforced through entertainment at McCain Auditorium. Classical ballet, contemporary jazz, or a Broadway play are examples of kinds of entertainment. Of course, these committees may be only peripheral to the Foundation, the Alumni Association, the Presidential Search Committee, the Athletic Director's Search Committee, and the Coliseum Program Committee; still, such peripheral entities perform a socializing function. A discussion of cultural implication is given later in this paper.

After determining the committees to be included in this research, this study identified the membership of those committees. The important questions were: Which committees are central to the University? Which corporations have members serving on two or more committees? What do these corporations have in common?

**Analysis**

To refine the analysis of the power structure, interconnections among key institutions in the community were traced through their linkages with other key committee members. This is a modification of Troustine and Christensen's (1982) methodology, mapping institutional interlocks: sociometric or network analysis. Since each community is different and has its own constellation of interlocking institutions, network analysis is an effective way of capturing and understanding these patterns. An examination of the membership of the committees and identifying key corporate representation yielded the pattern shown in Figure 1 ("Contacts and Interlocks on University Committees"). Each line on the diagram represents a structured opportunity for a committee member to interact with a representative from another key corporation. Ray Enterprises, for example, had membership on four University committees and decision-making opportunities with eight corporate representatives, not including University representatives serving on four committees. For example, the number "12" represents structured opportunities for Ray Enterprises to influence university policy.

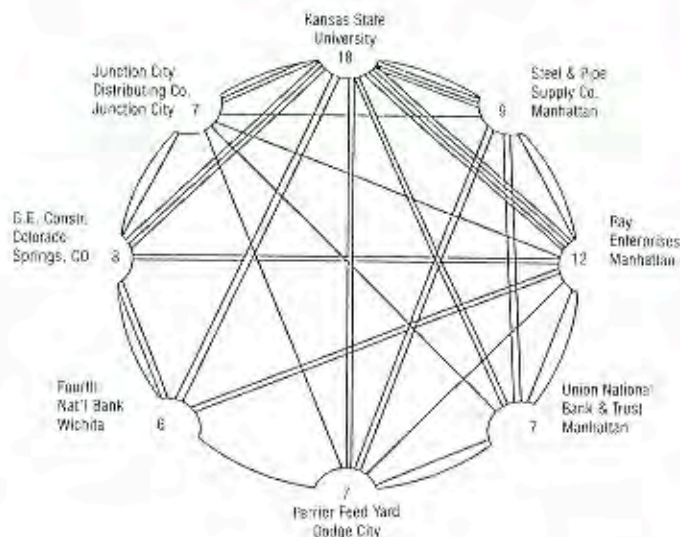
**Figure #1****Contacts and Interlocks on University Committees**

Table 1, another way of showing interlocks, highlights direct connections and corporate membership of each committee. A representative from G.E. Construction Company, for example, shared membership with the University's faculty and administration, representatives from the Fourth National Bank, and Ray Enterprises on the University's Athletic Director's Search and Screening Committee.

**TABLE 1**  
**MATRIX SHOWING LINKAGES TO THE**  
**UNIVERSITY'S COMMITTEES AND CONTACTS, 1986**

ORGANIZATIONS	UAD	UFM	LL	CPC	PSC	KAA	FEC	MCA
Kansas State University	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Fourth National Bank	*				*			
G.E. Construction Co.	*			*	*			
Perrier Feed						*	*	
Ray Enterprises	*				*		*	*
Steel & Pipe Supply		*				*	*	
Union National Bank		*					*	
Junction City Dist. Co.				*			*	

(Identify the committee; then read down to find the corporate linkages.)

Flora and Killacky's modification of Bavela's (1950) sociometric method was used in Tables 2 and 3 in the analysis of corporate and committee centrality:

We simply counted the number of links [on sociometric chart] from individual "A" committee or corporation to all other individual [committee or corporations] in the network using the shortest route to each individual [committees or corporation]. Each direct link received a score of 1, a secondary link a score of 2, and so on. The sum of the distance from "A" to all people [committees or corporations] was "A's" centrality score (Flora and Killacky, p. 11).

**TABLE 2**  
**CORPORATE CENTRALITY MATRIX**

	Steel and Pipe	Ray Enterprises	Union Nat'l Bank	Perrier Feed	4th Nat'l Bank	G.E. Const. Co.	J.C. Dist.	CENTRALITY SCORES
Steel & Pipe	0	1	1	1	2	2	1	8
Ray Enterprises	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	6
Union National Bank	1	1	0	1	2	2	1	8
Perrier Feed	1	1	1	0	2	2	1	8
4th Nat'l Bank	2	1	2	2	0	2	3	10
G.E. Const. Co.	2	1	2	2	1	0	1	9
J.C. Distrib.	1	1	1	1	2	1	0	7
CENTRALITY SCORES	8	6	8	8	10	9	7	

(Identify the committee; then read down to find the corporate linkages.)

Table 2, a Corporate Centrality Matrix, shows that Fourth National Bank, having a centrality score of 10, is less central to university decision-making opportunities than Ray Enterprises, which shows a score of 6. The lower the score the more central the corporation.

**TABLE 3**  
**COMMITTEE CENTRALITY MATRIX**

	KAA	FEC	BRS	PSC	UAD	CPC	ACD	PAC	UFM	McA	LL	CENTRALITY SCORES
KAA	0	1	2	1	1	2	2	1	2	2	2	16
FEC	1	0	2	1	1	1	2	1	2	2	2	15
BRS	2	2	0	1	2	2	2	2	3	2	2	20
PSC	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	11
UAD	1	1	2	1	0	1	2	1	2	2	2	15
CPC	2	1	2	1	1	0	1	1	2	2	1	14
ACD	2	2	2	1	2	1	0	1	1	2	2	16
PAC	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	0	1	2	1	12
UFM	2	2	3	2	2	2	1	1	0	3	2	20
McA	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	3	0	2	20
LL	2	2	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	2	0	17
CENTRALITY SCORES	16	15	20	11	15	14	16	12	20	20	17	

Direct Links = 1

Secondary Links = 2

Tertiary Links = 3

In Table 3, a Committee Centrality Matrix, the same principle of centrality used in the examination of Table 2 is used. Thus, the President's Administrative Council (PAC) and the Presidential Search Committee (PSC) were the central committees at the University and potentially the most influential. The more important committees, the PAC, an ongoing committee and the PSC, a temporary committee, were within one point of each other totaling: 11 for the PSC and 12 for the PAC. The Foundation Executive Committee (FEC), scoring 15, the Athletic Director's Search Committee, scoring 14, were within two to three points of the first group's centrality of influence opportunities and importance. Thus, opportunities for community representatives to influence decisions at the University become apparent.

To complement their sociometric network analysis, Troustine and Christensen (1982) prepared a questionnaire, and then interviewed people "close to the exercise of power—people who have to know about power in order to do their job or simply because of who they are, near the locus of power but not at its center" (p. 61). In this study, three interviews were held with senior key university administrators, researchers, and professors that have observed, studied, and worked with powerful committees at the University and in the community. Respondents ranked the importance of the University's committees in Table 4.

"The President's Administrative Council has some very important people, but they don't do anything," Respondent X explains. "It's [PAC] a show and tell production. People in that setting do not exercise power." Yet the PAC has potential to influence. "When you break these people into components . . . the Dean's Council, for example, you have power. The most important committee on this campus is the Dean's Council. Nothing on this campus would fly if there were a unified effort by the Council of Academic Deans to stop it."

**TABLE 4**  
**RANKING OF COMMITTEE'S INFLUENCE BY**  
**PEOPLE IN THE KNOW**

Name of Committee	Respondents		
	X	Y	Z
Board of Regents	1	1	1
Foundation Executive Committee	2	3	4
Presidential Administrative Council	2	11	2
Presidential Search Committee	2	2	3
Athletic Director's Search Committee	3	6	6
Coliseum Program Committee	3	8	7
Alumni Association's Board of Directors	3	4	5
McCain Advisory Committee	4	7	8
Landon Lecture's Chair & Chief of Patrons	5	10	9
Advisory Committee on Campus Development	*	5	11
University for Man's Board of Directors	*	9	10

\*Committees were perceived as relatively unimportant.

The spheres of influence are different, and none of the committees in the study has anything to do with academics, Respondent X says. The Vice President for Administration and Finance has power because he has resources—but he has none [power] in academics. Non-University members of these committees and boards influence the university's priorities by contacting the president and trying to influence him, according to Respondent X. "They would say that the [the President] better fire the football coach. . . . I believe that outside groups had more influence than anybody else in getting those positions in Admissions!" (The incoming president has created nine additional "admissions counselor" positions in his efforts to increase enrollment at the University.) Members of the business community are concerned about the University's direction because "when enrollment goes up, townspeople profit. The downtown crowd gets upset when enrollment goes down because they lose business." For graduates of the University, success—a winning football team or prestigious academic program—helps the alumni's prestige. "It helps to define them. Much like graduates of West Point or Harvard, they (alumni) define themselves through the University that they have gone through." According to Respondent X, important committees that were not included in this study are college and departmental advisory committees. "Advisory committees in the College of Engineering will raise money for scholarships, equipment, or development. The Advisory Committee for Journalism and Mass Communications will call the president and let him know its' [the committee's] concerns!"

Respondent Y summarized that the Board of Regents is influential because it is a policy-making body. "Control. . . . When they mandated periodic program reviews and when they recently mandated mission studies, we had to comply." On the other hand, at the university the president is the central figure. "The President's Search Committee's meetings were confidential so it's hard to say. This committee (PSC) has enormous control over who would fill the key role." The Foundation is important because of resources and independence, he says. "Largely, because they have money and enough autonomy to determine how it's going to be spent, they have options because they control their own operations. The Alumni Association's Board members

haven't got themselves organized to where they can feel their own muscle as much as the other committees [BRS and PSC]."

Concerning involvement of non-university members on these committees, Respondent Y points to the PSC. "Off-campus people were the largest group of the constituency forming the search committee and their appointments were seen as an attempt to grab power from campus members. The fact that the Foundation is excused from reporting to the new vice president [a newly established position by the incoming president] is an indication that the president is afraid of the downtown representatives," he says. "They are largely responsible for the dwindling support that the last president received. They control a lot of the money decisions that will determine whether we will go with the coliseum or offer a scholarship to a student or attract faculty members by offering them incentives. Control is largely left to those people off campus."

According to Respondent Z, since the Alumni Association is "controlled by a group that has no official ties to the University, their ability to coordinate University activities is eliminated by the University's structure that keeps them (non-university committee members) outside the structure. We [administrators and faculty] don't have any real control over what they do." To people "downtown" the University is important on an economic basis. "When the image suffers and enrollments decline, it's bad for business. Economically, there is a lot at stake. People who are here only for the University [parents visiting students, attending sport events] spend a lot of money and don't demand a lot of services. When we have a winning football team, students bring their parents up and spend a lot of money. Image and reputation contribute to the economic well-being of the state. There is also the emotional appeal . . . the desire to identify with a winner and avoid being identified with a loser, Respondent Z says. Athletic rah-rahs are the best examples. But there is pride in the high rating of the accounting program and pride in the citation of vet med as a leading program in the nation. The two basic interests are economic and ego.

"Obviously, the Board of Regents is important because it makes financial decisions. Of course, the Legislature makes critical decisions, giving us only part of what the Regents recommend. But the Regents request the budget," he says. "The Regents is more of a conduit in terms of ultimate power. They make only one choice, the president. Depending on their choice of president, the university becomes more intellectual, more sport conscientious, or research oriented.

"The Foundation is entirely non-university. [The president is a member of the Foundation's Executive Committee.] These people have money to give and brains. Almost all of the Manhattanites who belong to the Foundation are multimillionaires or half-millionaires. Some are not even college graduates. They have become successful without a degree. Some get on the board of the Foundation to get prestige." The direction of the University is a concern to members of the business community. Respondent Z says, "Enrollment is the critical, number one fact of life, for the people downtown. When the University had 3,000 students, the town had 5,000 to 6,000 people. With 16,000 to 17,000 students the town has 25,000 people." Respondent Z believes that the community's growth is in proportion to the University's enrollment: "one and one-half residents for each student," he says. "People need houses, buy groceries. . . . Everything depends on a population that is dominated by this one institution. Anybody who runs a business makes less money if there are fewer students. Simply, the



number of students determines the number of townspeople which determines the number of dollars. The number of professionals . . . the number of patients of a doctor is always reflective of the number of students [at the University]."

### Discussion

Table 5 is a comparison of findings showing the four most influential committees revealed through the Corporate Centrality Matrix and interviews with key sources.

TABLE 5  
FOUR MOST INFLUENTIAL UNIVERSITY COMMITTEES

	Centrality Maxtrix	Resp. X	Resp. Y	Resp. Z
#1	PSC	BRS	BRS	BRS
#2	PAC	FEC/PAC/PSC	PSC	PAC
#3	CPC	UAD/CPC/KAA	FEC	PSC
#4	FEC/UAD	McA	KAA	FEC

[Although Respondent X ranked three committees for the second and third most influential committees and scored influence on a scale of 1 to 5 rather than 1 to 11, Respondent X's replies are mixtures of the centrality matrix's scores and the answers of respondent Y and Respondent Z.]

The consensus was that the four most powerful committees influencing the University were: the Board of Regents (BRS), the Presidential Search Committee (PSC), the Foundation Executive Committee (FEC), and the Presidential Administrative Council (PAC). The second most influential committees were the University's Athletic Director Search Committee (UAD), the University's Alumni Association Board of Directors (KAA), and the Coliseum Program Committee (CPC).

Perhaps what is not seen and, equally, what is important is the composition of these committees. Interesting gatherings of powerful business representatives are found on certain committees. The most influential ad hoc committee, the Presidential Search Committee, conducted its business behind closed doors, according to Respondent Y, who quipped, "We are being run by beer barons." The most cohesive grouping and a very influential body, the Presidential Administrative Council, was called a do-nothing committee by two of the three respondents, one of whom was a member of the PAC. Yet, all respondents recognized the PAC's potential influence in decision making.

The relationship of the University to the community is that of a "highly specialized industry" to a dependent community. The dependency of the community has been explained by the respondents. Still, unlike major industries in small towns, no evidence was found that indicated the University directs the town; although there are indications that business leaders influence the University's direction. Although the Board of Regents is of primary importance, even though its members are appointed by the Governor, rather than elected. Yet, the Regents' relationship with the University is formally routinized and necessarily more structured than the influence of community elites who could telephone the Regents or governor or president about an issue.

Without question, such pressure can affect the Regents. The respondents seemed to appreciate the makeup of university committees, their potential, their impact, and their "lethargy." Implications are that University committee members do *not* effectively exercise their influence in determining the priorities of the institution; whereas, non-University committee members do exercise their power. These conclusions are drawn from noting the composition of the committees deemed important in this study.

For the purpose of this project, the distinctions made as to the longevity and composition of the respective committees are sufficient to distinguish the players and their arenas. Perhaps categorizing these committees would lead to different but not more interesting findings. The interesting questions explore the exercises of power by the various players. Who has it? Who uses it? Nevertheless, the information gained and lessons learned from this study would be useful in studies of educational administration.

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If the early warning signs of the potential dropout can be identified, perhaps services designed for these students can be provided.

# School Dropouts: The Need for Early Identification

by Artis J. Palmo and David S. Honeyman  
Lehigh University

The Year of the Dropout is over. While the nation has spent millions of dollars and tried hundreds of intervention programs, the conclusion remains—while the situation has not worsened neither has it improved. Somewhere between 13 percent and 14 percent of high school age students continue to “drop-out” (Hahn, 1987, p. 257).

The dropout places a tremendous burden on society. First, once the student leaves school, the financial burden placed upon society is immense. Dropouts are more difficult to employ, have poor work habits, and generally do not relate effectively with their peers and superiors (Palmo, Beuchle, & Osswald, 1980). If the social welfare system does not pay for the dropout, they become a financial burden on their families. Second, many dropouts come from family situations that do not support education; therefore, the dropout is continuing a tradition that may be several generations in duration (Palmo, 1978).

Third, if the several hundred dropouts with whom we have had contact are an adequate sample to make a generalization, the dropouts add significantly to the drug and alcohol abuse problem prevalent today in adolescent society. Most of the dropouts treated through out programs had involvement with drugs and alcohol. Fourth, many of the dropouts were involved in criminal activities of various levels. Some of the criminal activity was related to the drug abuse problem, while some related to the boredom of not being in school.

Finally, dropouts as a group represent a large segment of our unemployed society because they are ill-prepared vocationally and basically unskilled. In 1985, almost one-half of all unemployed youth age 16–24 were not in school (Hahn, p. 260). Our increasing technological society cannot support the unskilled dropout, which means the dropout will most likely remain a burden on society. Therefore, whatever the school system or various social programs can do to assist the potential dropout in obtaining a viable occupational skill is of paramount importance. However, those pro-

fessionals responsible for this programming should understand that they are faced with a very difficult population to train, educate, counsel, and understand.

## The Seven Warning Signals

One of the ways to attempt to solve the dropout problem is for the educational system to recognize the problem and identify as early as possible those individual students who are potential dropouts (Honeyman, 1984; Larson & Shertzer, 1987). Listed below are seven warning signals for educational personnel and parents to utilize in the identification of potential dropouts. These warning signals were developed with the help of many dropouts who assisted by identifying the various important moments in their school careers that attributed to their leaving school prematurely.

**Alienation.** Because of low self-esteem (Honeyman, 1984; Sewell, Palmo, & Manni, 1981), the dropouts frequently mask their thoughts and feelings with a phony self-confidence that is viewed by adults around them as “cockiness.” Subsequently, this attitude causes them to become alienated from parents, teachers, and certain peer groups. The important point to remember is that the potential dropout becomes more and more alienated from school and finds that life away from school is better than life at school. The alienated youth is relatively easy to identify in school. This is the student with few friends, frequently absent, poor grades, problems with authority, and a general lackadaisical attitude. Any student who shows these signs is a potential dropout. It should be remembered that the alienation does not only affect those students from low socioeconomic groups, but students from all socioeconomic levels.

**Absenteeism.** The most readily identifiable characteristic of the potential dropout is frequent absenteeism. Absenteeism, however, is not the real problem, but only a symptom of a much larger problem(s). Students are absent for numerous reasons, including: poor academic record, problems with family, drug abuse, delinquency, or general personality instability. Students who begin to demonstrate any signs of a pattern of absenteeism should be immediately referred for assistance. The error most frequently made by school personnel is waiting until the absenteeism is at a crisis stage. Once a student has missed a month or two months of classes, the likelihood of that student returning to school is remote.

Students missing school completely, cutting classes on a regular basis, or not being in school for medical reasons are potential dropouts. Once students become comfortable with being away from school, it is almost impossible to make them return. The problem with many dropouts is the home situation. Some parents do not care if their children fail to attend school, while other parents hide or cover up the fact that their child is cutting school. Either way, the parents support the non-attendance.

One point needs to be stressed, of all of the high school dropouts treated in our program, none of the dropouts ever went back to the traditional high school setting. Some chose to enter night programs for GED preparation, but none of the dropouts ever went back to the traditional school. Early intervention may have helped.

**Addiction.** One of the most serious problems exhibited by dropouts, although not unique to dropouts, is drug and alcohol abuse. Over the ten years of treating dropouts in therapy or training programs, it is the exception to find a dropout who has not been involved to a significant level with drugs or alcohol or both. The very frightening aspect of the abuse problem is that most report that their experimentation began as a child of 11, 12, or 13! Most school person-

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Dr. Artis J. Palmo is Professor of Counseling Psychology and Dr. David Honeyman is Assistant Professor of Educational Administration at Lehigh University in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania.

nel are aware of the drug abuse problems in their school, but many are unaware of the extent of the problem.

Since many of the potential dropouts seen in therapy are from rather affluent families, it is very difficult to simply condemn the lower class families for not "making" their children go to school. The pattern in middle and upper-middle class families is to ignore the drug problems and support the non-attendance through providing excuses for why the student is not in school. Issue avoidance is a common suit! While the family is trying to determine if their child has a medical problem that prohibits attendance, often the child is using these free days at home to experiment with drugs.

School personnel at the lower grades need to be more effectively trained in the signs for identification of students who are drug and alcohol abusers. Many of the students who are about to leave school are more likely to be involved in some form of drug/alcohol abuse. The education of school personnel must be followed by special awareness programs for parents. Most parents will deny that their child is drug involved and assume that observed inappropriate behaviors are simply caused by the "raging hormones" of adolescence.

**Antagonism.** The problem most frequently reported by our dropout group as the primary reason for leaving school was the conflict with authority figures that occurred at school. In fact, these students were not only in conflict at school but at home and in the community as well. The potential dropout and the dropout possess one common trait—difficulty with rules. These students are in constant power struggles with teachers or principals at school and have running battles with their parents at home. They will not follow the guidelines established by their teachers or parents.

When searching for the potential dropout, look for those students who seem to antagonize most adults around them. This is the student who does not complete assignments, makes promises that are never kept, and generally manages to disappoint any adult who attempts to rectify the problems that the student is facing. As you work with the antagonist, remember to remain somewhat unattached, because their goal in life is to frustrate and antagonize those adults trying to help. They constantly attempt to prove that they are not worthy of the assistance and caring of the adults around them.

**Anti-Establishment.** As the dropout "progresses" through school, he/she develops an atypical value system. Regardless of the student's social class or family situation, the potential dropout seems different, feels different, and subsequently becomes different in comparison to the norm of the school. This abnormal set of values is manifested in an acting-out adolescent who never completes assignments, is frequently absent, often exhibits open hostility toward teachers, and is relatively uncommunicative with peers. This type of activity is a manifestation of the perception that no one in the school or at home really cares about them. In fact, they generally feel inadequate in the school setting, and reverse their feeling of defensiveness to become the attacker in any threatening situation.

**Avoidance of Responsibility.** As a result of these factors mentioned, the potential dropout does not complete assignments, breaks the rules, rebels against those who attempt to help, and takes no responsibility for the consequences of these actions. A student who is unwilling to accept the significance of such behavior should be considered a potential dropout. The student who transfers blame to everyone else may ultimately face the choice of staying or leaving school.

**Academia-Phobia.** Last, and most important, the dropout and potential dropout can be easily classified as being anti-education! The dropout has an abbreviated attention span and lower academic skills (Sewell, Palmo, & Manni, 1981). Therefore, those individuals having academic difficulties must be considered as potential dropouts. Limited reading and math abilities are predictive factors that can be easily monitored and utilized in identifying the potential dropout.

### No Quick Panacea

It is important that educators understand that there are no easy or uncomplicated answers to the problem of saving students from dropping out of school. Throughout the literature, various suggestions and ideas have been presented for resolving the problem; however, many of the suggestions are too simplistic. Although a variety of authors can list various aspects that are common to most dropouts, this listing often masks the complexity of treating the dropout or identifying the potential dropout. The reasons for leaving school are very individualistic and every professional in the school must realize this fact. Too many times the student thinking about leaving school is told by some professional, "Other's have left school, and it has proven to be an awful decision." The potential dropout does not want to be parented, given a pep talk, and most of all, lectured on the benefits of school. What they want is to be heard and treated as a unique individual, not one of the many.

The other important point to be remembered is that some potential dropouts cannot be helped. No matter what is offered to help the potential dropouts it may not be sufficient to keep them in school. Once the student has left school, it is almost impossible to get them to return to finish. Educators need to show continued concern for the student and encourage them to contact the school should they decide to return at a future time. Leaving a door open for the returning dropout may be all you can do.

Educational personnel must realize that alternative forms of education must be developed, within the school district, to accommodate this "different" student. Instituting alternative educational programs does not imply the compromising of the education offered to students, but rather, increasing the options available to all students.

### Recommendations

The following is a list of suggestions and recommendations that has been developed over the period of the last ten years. Remember, some of the dropouts will not respond to any of the alternatives provided.

**Early identification.** School and community personnel at the upper elementary, middle, and junior high school levels must begin to identify those individuals who seem to be potential dropouts as early as possible. Observable patterns begin to emerge very early in the school career for most dropouts (Honeyman, 1984). Parent involvement and counseling should be initiated at the earliest possible moment. There have been numerous reports from teachers, "I knew that kid would never get through school. He was a problem in elementary school." There is sufficient research that provides screening devices for most schools to initiate an early identification program. For school officials, early recognition of the Seven Warning Signals, acceptance of the responsibility that the signals are there, and the willingness to do something about it is a start.

**Alternative credit programs.** If the schools are to maintain the potential dropout's interest, then alternative forms of education must be developed. Expanded co-op programs

for more students, pre-vocational experiences, released school time for work, night school options, and a more flexible curriculum seem to be necessities to meet the needs of potential dropouts. All of the programs listed would be alternative methods available for credit towards the student's diploma.

It is important to remember that contrary to what has been written, even with all of the programs and options for students, students will leave your school before graduation. Many potential dropouts and dropouts have severe problems that cannot be addressed by normal educational programming. Many need therapeutic assistance to enable them to understand why they have chosen to combat the normal process of adolescence. Attention must be focused on the long term continued assistance to the marginal dropout.

**Life education.** The dropout and the potential dropout are typically quite immature and unrealistic about the basic facts of life. School personnel must realize that the majority of the students leaving school lack basic knowledge about human relations, marriage and family problems, money, working, drug and alcohol abuse, and many other concerns. It seems that school system personnel can no longer ignore these problems, rather they must realize they exist. Very early in the students' academic life, the curriculum must begin to stress the basic facts of living. Too many dropouts have reached their junior or senior year without the slightest understanding of living on their own, budgeting money, finding employment, or long range planning.

**Parent and teacher re-education.** In conclusion, parents and teachers must be informed of the extent of the dropout problem, potential ways to assist in helping to curb the dropout problem, and widespread nature of the dropout problem. Dropping out of school is a disease and the adult population must be given ways to cope with and correct the problem. The most than one million dropouts per year (Larsen & Shertzer, 1987) are the tip of the iceberg!! With the

many changes in the family system over the past 15 years, the problem of students dropping out of school has expanded to all social strata. Being a dropout is no longer limited to the disadvantaged, the poor, or the foreign.

### Conclusion

Our intent in writing this article is to express the obvious: The problem of treating dropouts, educationally and therapeutically, is much more difficult than appears in much of the popular literature. Concern for the potential dropout must begin at the elementary and middle school levels. The resolution of the problems facing dropouts and potential dropouts is a tremendously difficult task and there is no single, simplistic solution. The resolution of the dropout problem will take a long-term, concerted effort by the community, school, state and local government, and individual families. Without this concerted and *coordinated* effort, the problem will remain for generations to come.

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If public school instruction is to be enhanced it must start with a program aimed at providing early assistance to new teachers.

# Virginia's Beginning Teacher Assistance Program as a Model

by Donovan W. Cook  
Washburn University

The call for accountability in our public schools has been strong and consistent since the early seventies. Throughout the decade many schools responded with full-scale program evaluations. In the late seventies schools answered the demand by administering competency tests to elementary and secondary students. The deficiencies reported in these data contributed heavily to an educational reform movement, spearheaded by the National Commission on Excellence report, "A Nation at Risk." That reform movement is still in progress. The most recent thrust of this movement is apparent in the current educational literature. Attention has shifted to the nation's teachers, and accountability is being demanded from our instructional leaders. A major concern of the public seems to be in the area of the general competence of the teacher work force. Implicit in this concern is the quality of the people going into the field, and the quality of the teacher training programs. The majority of states are not acting on that concern by demanding that their teachers perform at some predetermined level of competence on state teacher tests.

## Teacher Testing

The state-by-state call for accountability has gained momentum rapidly in the past several years, and state mandated testing seems to have become the order of the day (Murray, 1986). Lines (1985) indicated that planning or adoption of teacher competency tests increased from 17 states in 1981 to 34 states in 1983. By 1984, 17 states had legislated teacher competency test requirements. An American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education survey completed in June, 1986, found that 44 states had incorporated or were planning to use teacher competency tests in their entrance,

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Dr. Donovan Cook is Assistant Professor of Education and Director of Field Experiences in the Department of Education at Washburn University in Topeka, Kansas.

exit, or certification processes (Murray, 1986). Only five states—Alaska, Iowa, South Dakota, Utah, and Vermont—currently report no legislative mandate or teacher testing program (AACTE, 1988).

The states have chosen various combinations of competency tests to assess teacher effectiveness. The three types of tests that are commonly given (Roth, 1985) are tests of a) basic skills, b) professional or pedagogical skills, and c) academic knowledge. Combinations of these types of tests are being given (Flippo, 1986) at three levels: a) Across the board to all teachers (such as Texas, Georgia, and Arkansas) as a requirement for certificate renewal, b) At the college level (usually in the sophomore year) as a condition for entry into the teacher education program, and c) For incoming teachers, to be taken at the end of their professional training prior to induction. Increasingly, some form of internship, or a beginning year with provisional certification has been used by the states. After the assessment process of the internship has been completed successfully, the teacher is generally awarded a bona fide certificate.

Putting more pressure on beginning teachers to prove their competence appears to be the fashionable way to deal with the issue of teacher competency. Three reasons why states are choosing this "prove yourself" approach in obtaining new teachers is offered by Flippo (1986). He cites concern for a) quality, b) selection, and c) public image.

**Quality.** Howey and Zimpher (1986) refer to the teacher preparation programs and the faculty and students within them as being "at the root of the current debate about reform in teacher education" (p. 41). The quality of the students who go into teacher education programs, if measured by aptitude scores, is not only lower than other college students, but has decreased sharply over the past decade (Weaver, 1984). Unfortunately, according to Murray (1986) the relative few who are top scorers tend to leave the profession early.

**Selection.** Employment practices in the schools may differ greatly. Some systems tend to screen for better candidates, and others hire teachers with temporary certificates or poor qualifications depending on supply and demand.

**Public Image.** State and local desire for potential incoming industry to perceive their educational systems in a positive light has generated concern. The southern states have been particularly aware of this and have lead the nation in raising certification requirements and mandating teacher competency.

Virginia has implemented an assessment program that uses on-the-job performance examinations which, according to Roth (1985), is rare. The program is innovative, specific to beginning teachers, and indigenous to Virginia. It is called the Beginning Teacher Assistance Program (BTAP).

## Beginning Teacher Assistance Program

In Virginia, the desire for educational accountability has been consistent with the rest of the country. Dr. S. John Davis, Superintendent of Public Instruction, announced in the Department of Education (DOE) brochure, *Professional Development and the Beginning Teacher Assistance Program* that the BTAP program "will strengthen the teacher certification process by ensuring that teachers demonstrate teaching competencies in the classroom before being issued the Collegiate Professional Certificate." These procedures, he said, will "help assure greater quality control in the granting of certification to beginning teachers in the Commonwealth."

The BTAP program has two components: a) The *Assessment* component provides a means of measuring the beginning teachers' skills; b) The *Assistance* component

provides a means of correcting areas of weakness. BTAP selected 14 research-based competencies and created an assessment instrument to measure the teachers' skills in demonstrating these competencies. Assistance programs were set up to provide instruction in and opportunities for practice in demonstrating the competencies. Nine state regional centers were established to organize the assessment procedures and the assistance sessions. Observers (many of whom were retired teachers and administrators) were trained by the University of Virginia assessment team.

Beginning teachers are assessed in this manner: They are given three opportunities to demonstrate that they possess the competencies that are required for full certification. They attend an orientation meeting, and regular assistance sessions to gain knowledge about the program and the competencies.

The beginning teachers are scheduled for three observations during their first assessment period. If the required competencies are not demonstrated during this first assessment, the second assessment period is scheduled. Assistance on the missed competencies is given prior to the second assessment. If BTAP requirements are not met during the second assessment period, more assistance will be provided, and the teacher will receive a third assessment. If the beginning teacher fails to meet the requirements in all three assessments, his or her performance scores will be reviewed for a final decision concerning the denial of the regular five-year renewable certificate.

The BTAP program required three years to develop, field test, and implement in the schools. This process of changing the Virginia certification standards will be described.

#### Development and Implementation of BTAP

In February, 1982, the Virginia Board of Education adopted requirements which affected initial certification of teachers in the state. These requirements for the new certification became effective July 1, 1985. Collectively, the BTAP requirements are as follows:

1. First-time applicants for teacher certification in Virginia are required to obtain a two-year nonrenewable teaching certificate.
2. To receive a five-year renewable Collegiate Professional Certificate, beginning teachers are required to demonstrate satisfactory performance in the classroom within a two-year provisional period.
3. BTAP has two stated goals:
  - (a) to provide assurance that every teacher who receives the Collegiate Professional Certificate has demonstrated the possession of selected competencies.
  - (b) to provide assistance to beginning teachers in the development of these competencies.
4. Satisfactory demonstration of required BTAP competencies is to be only one of several requirements that must be met to obtain a Collegiate Professional Certificate.
5. BTAP is concerned only with the responsibility of the state to ensure that each individual who is granted the Collegiate Professional Certificate has demonstrated minimum competencies necessary to meet state certification requirements (Virginia Department of Education).

With the above guidelines from the State Board, the DOE, together with contractors from Virginia Tech and the University of Virginia began initial development for the

BTAP program in September, 1982. Their work was divided into three major phases which spanned the ensuing three-year period.

Phase 1 involved (a) a review of existing beginning teacher programs in other states, (b) a review of legal precedents and bases of performance-based assessments, and (c) a review of literature on teacher competence and professional development of beginning teachers. Based on these reviews, four alternative approaches to the design of the program were developed and presented to the DOE. Assisted by a team of national experts in research in teaching and teacher education, the DOE selected one of the approaches as being most appropriate for the needs of Virginia.

Phase 2 of BTAP development began in August of 1983. The major purposes during this year were (a) to specify the program components, (b) to determine what competencies were to be addressed, and (c) to develop the preliminary assessment instrument. During this phase the DOE appointed a 20-member advisory committee made up of teachers, administrators, and representatives of teacher training institutions. They met on a regular basis and advised the program development team on how BTAP could best meet the specific needs of Virginia.

Phase 3 of BTAP development began in August of 1984. During this year (a) the assessment instrument was pilot-tested and finalized, (b) the assistance component of the program was developed and piloted, and (c) administrative strategies for implementation of the program were developed.

After July 1, 1985, each beginning teacher in the state of Virginia was issued a two-year nonrenewable teaching certificate. This certification is now standard for beginning teachers, and subject to replacement with a five-year certificate upon completion of BTAP requirements.

#### Review of BTAP Data

The 1985-86 school year was the first year in which BTAP observations were done. In September 1985, a total of 668 beginning teachers entered the program. During the first semester, each of the teachers was observed three times by three different trained educators over a 10-day period. In January, 1986, 319 more teachers entered the program, bringing the total number of first year BTAP participants to 987.

Of the 668 beginning teachers in the first group, 55 percent of them successfully completed the requirements for demonstrating the specified number of competencies in the first assessment. For them, the classroom performance part of the BTAP certification requirement was completed. The remaining 45 percent of the teachers from the first group were scheduled to attend BTAP assistance sessions for the purpose of improving in their indicated areas of weakness. After the assistance was provided, the beginning teachers were again observed in their classrooms in April and May, 1986. Results from these data indicated that 98 percent of the teachers who remained in the program successfully completed the second semester assessment and their BTAP requirements. Additional assistance and a third and final assessment was available for the remaining two percent of the teachers in the Fall, 1986. All of the remaining teachers who took the final assessment were successful.

The second group of beginning teachers was more successful during their first assessment period in the Spring, 1986. Sixty-nine percent of these teachers passed the program requirements, or successfully demonstrated 12 of 14 competencies. This represented a 14 percent increase in

performance rate over that of the Fall, 1985 teachers. The third group of beginning teachers in the Fall, 1986 was even more successful, demonstrating a 72 percent passing rate. A reason for the improvement was offered by Dr. William Helton, DOE Director of Teacher Education and Certification: "The improved scores probably result(ed) from beginning teachers becoming more familiar with the expectations of the BTAP program . . ." (DOE, 1986). In addition, the later groups may have improved because they had received assistance from BTAP instructors, successful beginners, and veteran colleagues (Exposito & Hylton, 1986).

### Public Perceptions of BTAP

The initial BTAP test results were a media sensation. A *Washington Post* heading on April 10, 1986 proclaimed, "45 Percent of New Teachers Tested by Virginia Flunk." The *Fredricksburg Free Lance-Star*, on the same day, published reactions to the BTAP results in an article, "Many Teachers Don't Make Grade" (Hedelt & Carrillo, 1986). The *Charlottesville Daily Progress* found that the results raised "serious questions about the way we train and certify our teachers," and quoted an education analyst as finding that the results were an affirmation of the fact that "people were coming into the system without their teaching practices honed."

A *Washington Post* editorial appeared three days after the news release, bemoaning the "disturbing results," and concluding that tougher standards (were) necessary for hiring (teachers) in the first place." The editors then called for school "personnel offices (to) be inspected to see what (was) wrong." This reporting was significant in that it presented a perception that the overall quality of our teachers was deficient, and that BTAP assessment was an exercise in needed vigor. In addition, the message appeared to have been received and conveyed that BTAP was, essentially, a tool for the improvement of instruction.

### Conclusions

Although BTAP may be anxiety-inducing, and seemingly designed to increase the attrition rate of new teachers, it may be favorably compared to other states' programs. The Virginia DOE did not jump on the accountability bandwagon with a series of standardized tests. Educators organized, designed, and field-tested the program to improve the quality of teaching in the state. Few of the other states' competency testing programs, with the notable exception of the Kansas Internship Program, provide the element of organized remediation for teachers. BTAP seeks to determine where beginning teachers are having difficulty and provides assistance.

BTAP is a large and costly state-run program. Over 5 million dollars have been appropriated to the program over the past two biennia (R. Shotwell, personal communication, January, 1987). If BTAP is not perceived to be effective, then a substantial amount of taxpayer money would, in the public's collective opinion, have been wasted. Virginia has taken a big chance with BTAP. They have chosen to be innovative, experimental, and costly at a time of low public confidence.

The public demand for maintaining teacher quality control has been made well known. Virginia has implemented a plan to meet the demand—a plan uniquely its own. In relating BTAP to comparable systems in other states, it appears to be an excellent model, superior to many in rationale and long range planning. Researchers and developers in Virginia continue to attend to and modify the program as more data become available. The jury is still out on BTAP, as it is with comparable states' programs, but the people of Virginia may have been provided with a program to achieve their objective: the enhancement of public school instruction.

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Not all of those likely to counsel potential suicide victims are equally qualified to do so. How do the competency levels of various professional groups rate?

# Recognizing Suicide Lethality Factors: Who is Competent?

by Robbie J. Steward  
University of Kansas  
and Kevin P. Austin  
Claremont College

## INTRODUCTION

Suicide and the threat of suicide remain important mental health issues for all health service providers. Farberow and Litman (Note 1) have estimated that five percent or fewer of individuals threatening suicide are unequivocally certain that they want to die. The remaining 95% are at least ambivalent about their wishes to die. They represent a group potentially receptive to intervention by mental health professionals.

Who the potential suicide victim (initially) turns to for help and how capable that person is in recognizing the signs of potential suicide are critical issues not fully addressed by recent research. Snyder (1971) found that suicidal persons are most likely to turn to family, friends, physicians, the clergy, psychiatrists, social workers, and lawyers in that order. However, the training of those individuals typically sought out for help may be inadequate. Pretzel (1970) and Anderson (1972) report that ministers are not given sufficient training in recognizing the signs of potential suicide. Motto (1969), Fawcett (1973), and Dorport and Ripley (1974) report that physicians are also believed to lack adequate training. Prokorny (1970) assessed the ability of resident psychiatrists ability to recognize the signs of a potentially suicidal individual and reported discouraging results. In general, these results suggest that the individuals sought after for help by individuals contemplating suicide may be inadequately trained to identify the signs of potential suicide.

A more recent study (Holmes & Howard, 1980) has attempted to assess various professional's ability to recognize the signs of potential suicide (lethality factors). Using the Thirteen Questions on Successful Suicide, Holmes and Howard attempted to discover who among psychiatrists, psychologists, physicians, social workers, ministers, and college students were most able to identify lethality fac-

tors. The study reported a clear ordering of the group. Physicians and psychiatrists had the highest mean scores followed by psychologists, social workers, ministers, and college students. This current study represents a partial replica of the Holmes and Howard research, controlling for potentially significant variables which were originally uncontrolled and extending the study to include the responses of masters level counselors. The variables to be controlled included: length of experience in profession, experience with suicidal individuals, and amount of training in the recognition of suicide lethality factors.

## METHOD

### Subject

This study employed physicians, doctoral level clinical or counseling psychologists, masters level counselors, masters level social workers, ministers, and lower division college students. Masters level counselors were added because, along with social workers, they form the majority primary mental health care services at various mental health agencies in the state of Oklahoma where the survey was conducted.

All were directly involved in professional care of clients. Students were enrolled in an undergraduate class at the University of Oklahoma.

### Instruments

The Thirteen Questions on Successful Suicide (TQSS) and the Survey of Professional Experiences with Suicidal clients served as the dependent measures.

The TQSS utilized a four-choice, multiple-choice format requiring the respondents to circle the correct answer. This survey is an adaptation of the Suicide Potential Rating Scale which attempts to assess an individual's ability to recognize signs of a potentially suicidal person. Recognition of the following factors, which have been found to be related to clients who attempt suicide (Coleman, 1964; Litman & Farberow, 1961; Farberow, 1980), was assessed: effective plan; prior attempts; isolation from friends and family; disruption of interpersonal relationships; depression, anxiety and helplessness; immediate stress; chronic illness; marital status; not communicating; alcoholism; acute onset of symptoms; having recently seen a physician; and, male over 50 years of age. For example, the first question was: "Persons who are most likely to succeed in committing suicide are (a) female and under 50 years of age; (b) female and over 50 years of age; (c) male and under 50 years of age; (d) male and over 50 years of age. The sixth question was: A potentially suicidal individual is more likely to succeed in the attempt if that person (a) has no idea how he or she will actually do it; (b) is afraid to think of how the actual attempt will be done; (c) has a definite plan of how it will be done; (d) appears very confused about how it will actually be done. These factors were used in instrument construction because of the empirical research supporting them. The instrument was used because of its previous use in the Holmes & Howard (1980) study and the researchers belief that it adequately assessed the recognition of signs of suicide lethality as indicated in the literature.

The Survey of Professional Experiences with Suicidal clients (SPESC) was developed by the researchers. Respondents were requested to answer five questions concerning the following: years of experience as a counselor; personal experience with suicide or attempts among family, friends, community, etc.; professional contact with suicide or attempts among clients; special training in recognition of suicide lethality signs in clients; and the expression of a need for additional training. Responses to the last four questions were presented in a yes/no format.

**Dr. Robbie Steward is Assistant Professor of Counseling Psychology at the University of Kansas in Lawrence, Kansas. Kevin P. Austin is a Staff Psychologist at Claremont College in Claremont, California.**



**RESULTS**

The TQSS mean score was found to be significantly lower for physicians in the current study (7.48) than in Holmes and Howard (1980) (9.20). However, other means were quite consistent with those in the previous study: for psychologists, 7.9 in present study, 7.53 in previous study; for social workers, 6.6 in present study, 6.23 in previous study; and, for ministers 5.1 in present study and 5.33 in previous study.

Each test was scored for the number of correct responses. The mean number of correct responses (out of 13 possible) and the results of Tukey's Test Comparisons Between Groups are presented in Table I. As the data reveals there were found to be no significant differences in the number of correct responses by physicians, psychologists, and counselors, but all three groups scored significantly higher than all of the other groups. Social Workers scored significantly higher than ministers, and ministers scored significantly higher than college students.

An analysis of the data by years of experience (regardless of profession) was also performed. Professionals with 0-2 years experience (n = 23) obtained a mean score of 6.68 correct responses; those with 2-5 years experience (n = 33) obtained a mean score of 9.26 correct responses; those with 5-10 years experience (n = 16) obtained a mean score of 11.83 correct responses; those with 10-15 years experience (n = 17) scored 6.2 as the mean of correct responses; while those with 15+ years of experience (n = 11) scored 6.66 as the mean of correct responses. Specific comparisons using Tukey's test revealed that the group with 5-10 years were most knowledgeable in recognizing suicidal signs as measured by the TQSS questionnaire. The results showed a progressive improvement in professionals with 0-10 years experience and then a sharp drop after this period.

The information collected from the questionnaire offers possible explanations for the above differences and similarities among groups. All groups, except ministers, had had some contact with suicide in their personal lives: 72% of the physicians; 66% of the psychologists; 62% of the counselors; 58% of the social workers. Ministers also reported the lowest incidence of professional contact with clientele dealing with suicidal tendencies (21%). This was significantly different from the physicians 81%, psychologists 88%, counselors 82%, and the social workers 100%.

According to Table II, approximately 50% of all psychologists, social workers, and counselors had experienced specific training in recognizing and working with suicidal clients. Twenty-seven percent of the physicians reported these experiences while only 16% of the ministers had. However, the extent of professional exposures of training seems to have a mixed effect on the expressed need of additional training. Psychologists, counselors and social workers reported a higher desire for additional training: 77%, 85%, and 83% respectively. Sixty-three percent of the physicians reported a desire for additional training. However, in spite of the low exposure to suicide, both personally and professionally, only 31% of the ministers reported a desire for this experience.

**DISCUSSION**

Recognizing the need for additional data we will proceed to make some tentative remarks about our research. First of all, our results conflict with previous study (Holmes and Howard, 1979) on two points. They found a significant

difference between the physicians and psychologists, where we found no significant difference among physicians, psychologists, and masters level counselors. This could be accounted for by the relatively small N which will be rectified as our research progresses. However, this remains to be seen. Results also conflict in that Holmes & Howard found a progressive increase in knowledge as professional experience increases. The present data show that those who were in the 5-10 year range of experience scored the highest, while those with more experience had a drastic drop in scores. This could open the door for speculation about reasons for this occurrence.

We also found from our additional questionnaire that ministers were distinguished from the other professionals by their general lack of personal contact with suicide, as well as limited relevant professional contact (21%). This may explain the low mean score as well as their lower expressed need (31%) to increase their amount of knowledge about the topic. The data also show that those who have had the most exposure to suicide, personally and professionally, are those who feel the strongest desire for additional information.

As scores were compared initially the results appear to decrease the urge for professional competition by showing that the three major areas are relatively equally competent in recognizing factors that may result in potential suicide. However, the fact remains that approximately 50% of psychologists, counselors, and social workers received training in this area with physicians trailing at 27%. This seems to be reflected in the general overall low mean scores relative to the number of items on the questionnaire. The highest score of 7.9 is only 60.7% of the entire test. If this had occurred in any academic setting an evaluation of failing would have surely been assigned! This study hopefully shows the urgency of programs training future mental health care providers in reevaluating current instruction related to the recognition of suicide lethality in order to train a more effective, helping professional.

**TABLE I**  
Results of Tukey's Test Comparisons  
Between Groups

Group	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Physicians N = 22		.42	.13	*.88	*2.38	*1.58
2. Psychologists N = 14			.29	*1.3	*2.8	*2.0
3. Counselors N = 33				*1.01	*2.51	*1.7
4. Social Workers N = 12					*1.5	*.7
5. Ministers N = 19						*.8
6. Students N = 27						
MEANS OF CORRECT #	7.48	7.9	7.61	6.6	5.1	5.9

\*significant difference p < .01

TABLE II

PROFESSION	(n) YEARS EXPERIENCE					Personal Contact		Professional Contact		Training?		Need?	
	0-2	2-5	5-10	10-15	15+	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
PHYSICIANS X = 7.48	2	4	3	7	5	72%	28%	81%	19%	27%	73%	63%	37%
PSYCHOLOGISTS X = 7.9	2	4	5	3	0	66%	34%	88%	12%	55%	45%	77%	23%
COUNSELORS X = 7.6	13	16	4	0	0	62%	38%	82%	18%	55%	45%	85%	15%
SOCIAL WORKERS X = 6.6	4	1	2	4	1	58%	42%	100%	0%	50%	50%	83%	17%
PSYCHOMINISTERS X = 5.1	2	8	2	3	4	0%	100%	21%	79%	16%	84%	31%	69%
TOTAL	23	33	16	17	11								

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What are the characteristics that make the departmental chair in educational administration attractive to some and less desirable to others?

# The Academic Department Chair in Educational Administration

by M. Scott Norton  
Arizona State University

## Introduction

In view of the fact that department chairs constitute the largest single group of administrators in institutions of higher education, it is perplexing that this role has received such limited study and analysis by researchers. Not only is there limited literature in the field relating to the work of the academic department chair, but there appears to be no rising interest in investigating the position despite certain evidences of erosion in this administrative role.

In a study by Waltzer of the role of chair at Miami University, it was noted that:

... more than half of the present chairmen state unequivocally that they will not consider another term in the job. Adding those who respond, "yes, I would consider another term if . . ." but attach a host of qualifications, and those who are seeking higher administrative positions, fewer than one-third of the chairmen remain open-minded about considering another term in the job.<sup>1</sup>

A study by Norton in 1977 revealed similar findings concerning willingness to continue service as chair. Of 106 chairs appointed from within the department to the position, 43.4 percent stated that they would be willing to continue in the position, while 27.4 percent stated an unwillingness to do so. Nearly 30 percent indicated that they would do so only on certain conditions.<sup>2</sup>

The Report of the National Commission on Excellence in Educational Administration recently emphasized the need to reexamine the position of department chair. As indicated by the Commission, "Too often, program leadership is regarded as temporary and a duty rather than as a challenge. This should change immediately . . . Scholars who reluctantly serve as chairpersons are unlikely to create an exciting setting. Program chairs should be committed to constantly improving programs . . ."<sup>3</sup>

**Dr. M. Scott Norton is with the Department of Education at Arizona State University in Tempe, Arizona.**

## The Study

In an attempt to find answers to the foregoing concerns and also to gain further insight into the role of the academic department chair in educational administration from a national perspective, a comprehensive study of the position was initiated in the spring of 1987. The study included 45 chairs in University Council for Educational Administration (UCEA) member institutions and 42 from non-member institutions. Six major study areas were emphasized that included departmental organization, position responsibilities, satisfactions/dissatisfactions of the chair role, and related factors that tend to inhibit/enhance the attractiveness of the position.

## Conditions and Trends

Data gathered provided information that served to identify several conditions and/or trends related to the position of chair. These considerations revealed important changes occurring in the role and also described the environment in which the department chair presently is operating.

## Departmental Organization

It is apparent that departments of educational administration are changing both in structure and program relationships. Various forms of department reorganization have resulted in mergers of programs of educational administration with a wide variety of other program thrusts. Sixteen of 45 UCEA member departments and 13 of 42 non-member departments had been involved in some form of reorganization within the last *three* years. Of the total departments participating, only 40 percent reported that their faculty membership consisted exclusively of individuals in educational administration. In UCEA departments alone, 63 instructional areas other than administration were reported. Among the program components being housed with educational administration were Higher Education (most common), Adult Education, Counselor Education, Educational Psychology, Media, Multi-Cultural Education, Philosophy of Education, Special Education, Urban Education, and Vocational-Technical Education. Program components reported by non-UCEA departments were similar, but included such different thrusts as Recreation, Religious Education, Teacher Evaluation, Health Education, and Indian Education.

The diversification of organization in departments of educational administration is revealed also by department titles. Although the titles of departments were similar, 31 of 45 UCEA department titles differed. Such titles as Department of Administration; Training and Policy Studies; Educational Leadership and Cultural Studies; Educational Theory, Policy, and Administration; and Administration and Foundational Services were reported. The official titles of department/program chairs varied as well. Common titles for chairs were chairman, chairperson, and chairwoman; however, such titles as chief professor, coordinator, department head, and program chair were reported as well.

Departments generally were organized as graduate departments only, although a substantial number of UCEA departments offered some undergraduate course work as well (31%). Only two of the 45 UCEA departments reported that they were considered as both a graduate and undergraduate department while nine non-member departments had both program levels.

Departments of educational administration varied in number of faculty from five members or less to over 26 F.T.E. The most common F.T.E. for both UCEA and non-member

departments was 6–10 faculty members, although 22 departments reported having 11–15 faculty personnel.

While it is clear that faculty in programs of educational administration are being housed with faculty in many different program areas, the specific nature of the relationships between and among these areas, as well as the “cross-overs” among these programs is not clear. It is not known, for example, if mergers taking place are based on programmatic rationale or on other reasons more related to decreasing resources or personal views of central administrative officials.

### Stability of the Position

The study examined such factors as time in the position of chair, whether chairs were selected from inside the department, age of chairs when assuming the role, intentions to accept another term, and related job factors. Over 51 percent of the chairs in UCEA departments were in their first three years of service in the role. Nearly 63 percent of non-member chairs were in their first three years in the position. A study of chairs completed ten years earlier revealed that 20 percent were in their first three years of service as chair.<sup>4</sup> This figure is substantially lower than the 51 percent and 63 percent reported for UCEA member and non-member departments in 1987.

The practice of selecting a chair from members of the present department faculty was common to both UCEA member and non-member institutions. For example, only 11 of 45 UCEA chairs were not serving as members of the department when selected for the position. In all, only seven chairs were serving outside the department and at a different institution when selected as chair.

There is some evidence that individuals are assuming the position of chair at a later age than previously. The mode for assuming the present position of chair was 51–55 years in UCEA departments and 46–50 in non-UCEA departments. Overall, 61.4 percent of UCEA chairs were 46 years of age or more when they became chair. The approximate mean age for UCEA chairs at the time they assumed the role was 49.18 years. In the 1977 study of college department chairs mentioned previously, the individual was between 41–45 years of age when appointed to the position. The mean age of chairs ten years ago when appointed to the role was 42 years.<sup>5</sup>

Of the UCEA chairs who had specific terms of office such as 3 years, only 31 percent stated that they would accept another term while another 45 percent reported that they would do so only on certain conditions. These conditions varied widely but included such comments as “would not do so until I’m tenured,” “not unless time for research was programmed,” “only with an increase in salary,” and “not unless there was a decrease in the clerical demands of the position.”

It was of interest to note that only slightly more than one-half of the UCEA chairs received a salary differential for serving were in the position. Further, stipends were surprisingly low with stipends of \$1,000–\$3,000 being most common.

Another important factor relating to the stability of the chair position is its relationships with the office of the dean. Nearly half of the non-member chairs stated that communication between their office and the dean was “satisfactory, but in need of improvement.” Nearly one-third of the UCEA chairs viewed communication between them and the dean as “in need of improvement.”

Over one-fourth of the chairs reported a considerable disparity between position responsibility and position authority. Only 16 percent of the UCEA chairs and 20 percent

of the non-member chairs perceived a high correlation between the position responsibilities and their authority to fulfill them.

### The Job of Department Chair

Chairs of educational administration are witnessing an expansion in the number and range of position responsibilities even though there is a definite trend toward more centralized decision making within colleges and universities. Nearly two-thirds of the participating chairs reported some or much change toward centralization. Additionally, over 70 percent perceived a change toward more bureaucracy vs. more informal relationships within their institutions.

Expansion in position responsibilities was reported in virtually all areas, however, increases in the numbers of activities and deadlines required, reports and related paperwork being handled, and the increases required in the area of external communication with various groups were those especially noted by the chairs. Various administrative responsibilities were assigned actual time allocations by chairs in the study. For example, 20–30 percent of the chair’s time in UCEA programs was spent in the area of department affairs (planning, policies, conducting meetings, internal communications, etc.) with 5–10 percent given to academic affairs and 10–15 percent to student affairs. Further, chairs apparently would not ideally alter these time allocations a great deal.

Chairs generally were “released” one-half time for their administrative duties, although one-fourth time also was a common time allocation. Five UCEA chairs and two non-UCEA chairs reported that they were “full-time” in the chair’s role. Thirty UCEA chairs reported that their term was for a specific time. The most common term was three years (12 chairs) with one year (6 chairs), four years (5 chairs) and five years (5 chairs) also receiving several responses. Chairs in non-UCEA positions typically were selected for a three-year term.

Overall, chairs rated rather highly their ability to manage the position. On a scale of 1 low and 5 high, UCEA chairs had a mean of 3.64 and non-member chairs a mean of 3.78 concerning manageability of the position. Furthermore, the chairs’ assessments of their ability to meet such responsibilities as goal achievement, planning for improvement, developing programs, and others generally had means of 3.4 or higher on a 5-point scale.

Chairs were somewhat divided, however, on the importance and viability of the position. When asked if they viewed the role as “the heart of the academic enterprise” or as “the bottom rung in the downward delegation of managerial, clerical, and other such tasks,” approximately 58 percent agreed that the position was “the heart of the enterprise” while 42 percent viewed the role as “the bottom rung.”

Participants also expressed their opinions concerning changes in the status/prestige of the chair’s position over the last several years. These views were as follows:

Status of Chair’s Position	UCEA	Non-UCEA
Increase in status/prestige	31.1%	30.0%
Decrease in status/prestige	22.2%	12.5%
Retained somewhat of a status quo	46.7%	52.5%
Unable to judge	0.0%	5.0%

Nevertheless, the large majority of chairs was of the opinion that their role provided them some opportunity for input into policy development at the college level and that such input was indeed influential in shaping the final results.

### Related Rewards, Satisfaction, and Dissatisfactions

Various efforts were made to gain chairs' perceptions of job enjoyment and satisfaction. Responses were mixed. For example, when asked to assess their satisfaction in the role, UCEA chairs had a mean of 3.16 and non-member chairs a mean of 3.49 on a 5-point scale. However, when asked to assess the attractiveness of the position, means of 2.86 and 3.03 resulted.

Many different program components served to bring some degree of reward and satisfaction to the role. Positive student development and performance, for example, was viewed as resulting in a high degree or some degree of satisfaction for nearly all chairs. Faculty development and achievement, program development, and general department achievement also were underlined as having potential for high levels of job satisfaction. Rewards also were associated closely with opportunities to serve one's colleagues, to leave one's mark on the department, to have the opportunity to get something done and to gain the feeling of a job well done.

Department chairs were especially concerned about the toll the position takes on one's scholarly production. A large number (42.2%) reported a reduction in scholarly production since assuming the position. This concern for personal scholarly production was a primary deterrent to overall job satisfaction for most chairs.

Other factors that tend to pose difficulties and/or cause frustration for chairs included: (1) inadequacies of department resources including budget and personnel, (2) record-keeping and reporting requirements, (3) requirements calling for the justification of requests, resources, and programs, and (4) job overload. There were many others named by chairs, of course.

Those factors considered by chairs as highly significant to the position's *attractiveness* included several factors that also were identified with job satisfaction. Specific factors that tended to enhance the position's attractiveness included: (1) support from the faculty with regard to general decision making and policy development, (2) support from the faculty regarding program development, (3) having responsibilities matched with resources to fulfill them and, (4) assuring the chairs involvement in those decisions that require transmitting, interpreting, defending, and implementing.

What would lead chairs toward resignation? Several considerations such as continuing decrease in scholarly production were noted previously. However, it is clear that support from the office of the dean is an essential element for enhancing continuity in the position. Twenty-eight of 45 UCEA chairs and 24 of 42 non-UCEA chairs reported that they would resign if non-support from the dean's office became prominent. Support from the dean and support from the department faculty led all other considerations in regard to those conditions (should they deteriorate to an unsatisfactory level) that would lead chairs to step down from their positions.

### Summary Discussion

The study data provided insight into several conditions being encountered by academic department chairs in educational administration. It is clear that programs of educational administration increasingly are being housed with a variety of different program areas. This study did not at-

tempt to ascertain the rationale behind the reorganization that is taking place. What is clear however, is the fact that new faculty and program relationships are resulting from such arrangements. Not only are faculty and program relationship influenced through various reorganization arrangements, but the allocation of program resources and levels of administrative authority are altered as well. In many instances, for example, such matters as budget development/control and faculty compensation recommendations are being removed from the jurisdiction of the academic department chair. New levels of administration often are being placed between the chair and the office of the dean. Communication between the chairs of the department of educational administration and the dean's office was viewed by participating chairs in the study as in need of improvement. It would appear that the placing of additional layers of administration between the chair and dean does little to improve communication. In addition, the trend toward the centralization of decision making tends to remove further the department chair's personal involvement in decisions that ultimately must be implemented at the department level.

Another consideration of primary concern centers on the fact that there is an increasing instability in the position of chair in many institutions. This condition is revealed in part by the increasing turnover in the position of chair. An apparent trend is for chairs to serve for one specified term only and then return to the professorship. It is highly questionable that one-term chairs can provide the leadership necessary for the level of program development and renewal needed for a quality program in educational administration. Such temporary duty tends to discourage innovative, long-range program planning and implementation. In addition, an increasing number of chairs is accepting the position on the rationale that it was "their turn to serve." Such reluctance to accept this administrative role certainly is not conducive to the dynamic leadership required.

Study data provided useful information relating to improving the attractiveness of the position of chair. The toll that is taken on one's scholarly activities is an example of a condition that must be resolved if quality personnel are to be attracted to the role. Such factors as adequate department resources, adequate secretarial services, a reduction of reporting requirements and general job overload are additional examples of conditions needing the study and resolution of all parties concerned. A consideration often underestimated in importance for attracting and retaining quality chairs is that of compensation. At present, salary differentials do little to encourage highly qualified individuals to accept the role of chair. Chairs in the study were of the opinion that a stipend of \$5,000 or 10 percent of the base salary figure was an equitable remuneration for such service. Few chairs are remunerated at this level presently.

A final area of concern centers on the apparent diminishing authority of the chair's position in many institutions. A basic principle of administration is that authority should be commensurate with assigned responsibilities. Few chairs in the study reported a high correlation between position responsibilities and their authority. Study data gave some support to the trend of centralizing decisions of high importance and the assigning of additional clerical type activities to chairs. Such a practice provides little incentive for attracting individuals interested only in assuming challenging leadership roles and results in an unattractive perception of the position on the part of highly capable leaders. The need is to create a job setting that provides challenging

leadership opportunities along with appropriate accountability.

In view of the foregoing discussion, and the findings of this recent study, it is apparent that the role of department chair is being diminished in some institutions. If certain conditions continue to deteriorate, the position of department chair could be more seriously eroded. This matter requires the unrelenting concern of both professional organizations and institutions of higher education. The leadership function of the academic department chair must become a primary concern of cooperative study groups, professional conferences, task force groups, and other professional organizations that serve to study priority problems and provide directions that serve to assure dynamic leadership for all programs of administrator preparation.

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To what extent is the accountability issue of evaluating building administrators being practical by school superintendents?

# Superintendent Evaluation Practices of Building Administrators in Kansas

by R.G. Anderson  
Wichita State University  
and Jean Lavid  
Wichita High School South

To what extent is the accountability issue of evaluating building administrators being practiced by school superintendents? A partial answer to this question was supplied by 43 new-to-the-job Kansas superintendents in a 1987 survey. Information was collected on nine aspects of building administrator evaluation practices: contract expectations, frequency of evaluation, data collection methods, format of data collection, sources of data, evaluation conferencing, skill improvement areas, perceived role portrayal, and outcomes of building administrator assessment.

## Contract Expectations

Only one (2.3%) school superintendent reported that there was no written position guide for district building administrators. The other 42 (97.7%) respondents said that the principals had written expectations for their positions. Fourteen (32.6%) said that these written expectations were in specific behavioral terms with major and minor priority designation. The other 28 (65.1%) superintendents said the position guide responsibilities were stated in general, broad terms and often led to personal interpretations by both the superintendent and building administrators.

From this data one can deduce that the building administrator's role was minimally defined in two-thirds of these Kansas school districts. In school districts with vague descriptions, any definitive measurement of principal behaviors would be highly suspect.

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Dr. R.E. Anderson is a Professor of Educational Administration at Wichita State University. Jean Lavid is the Assistant Principal at Wichita High School South, Wichita, Kansas.

## Frequency of Evaluation

The frequency of formal evaluations of each principalship was quite revealing. Over half (55.8%) reported one formal evaluation of each principal, with another 16 (37.2%) evaluating their building administrators twice. Of the remaining three superintendents, one did not evaluate the building principal(s), another reported a formal evaluation conducted on a monthly basis for each building administrator, and the third followed a district evaluation schedule of each administrator similar to classroom teachers.

Kansas Laws (K.S.A. 72.9003 and 72.5453) state all certified school personnel are to be evaluated by the formal and procedures filed with the Kansas State Department of Education. The generally accepted interpretation of the laws is that all personnel who are not tenured are to be evaluated each year by some format and schedule. This interpretation allows some school districts with administrators who have been satisfactorily employed for six or more years to evaluate principals once every three years.

For those 24 school districts which evaluated the building administrators once a year the majority (16) did so in January or February. Three superintendents evaluated their principals in December with another two completing it in November. The remaining three superintendents formally evaluated their principals in October, April, or May.

For those 16 superintendents conducting building principal assessments twice a year, the months of November/February has three practitioners, and two superintendents each selected the monthly combinations of October/February, October/March, October/April, and November/March. The other four monthly combinations which had single practitioners were October/January, November/January, November/April, and December/March.

Evaluation patterns suggest that superintendents evaluated their buildings principals at about the same time or slightly later than the building principals were conducting evaluations of their teaching staff members.

## Data Collection

There was no unanimous means of data collection. At least four different methods were mentioned by the survey superintendents. The most common method was through direct observation of principals; 35 (81.4%) superintendents said they used this format. Seventeen (39.5%) said that they used the performance objectives method which the building principals had designed. Eleven (25.6%) superintendents said that they gathered data from teachers, staff members, and students from each attendance center for which the principal had responsibility. Another eight (18.6%) superintendents shared that they had used specific outcomes from building records as their means of data collection. They reviewed student grades, student scores on standardized tests, and fiscal management records.

At least seven (16.3%) superintendents used district goals and expectations, informal polling of students and staff members, support data from the principals, self-evaluation forms, or building principal responses to forms from the central office.

In general, superintendents used a variety of data collection means with which they evaluated their building administrators. First-hand observation was the means used by almost all of the new-to-the-site superintendents and none of these means carried more weight in data comparison.

## Data Format

Four separate formats of collecting data plus a combination of two or more formats were identified. Twenty-three (53.5%) superintendents said that they utilized a checklist/

rating scale with comments as their major format in the evaluation of their building principals. Another 18 (41.9%) employed the performance (work) objective approach format of data collection; three (7.0%) specifically used the management by objective (MBO) format. Seventeen (39.5%) labeled their data collection format as being a combination of two or more of the previously identified formats. Interestingly enough there were nine (20.9%) who used the essay/open ended format of data collection.

#### Sources of Data Used

The superintendents gathered information from four separate groups: teachers/staff/students in an attendance center, central office personnel, parents who had children in that attendance center, and board of education members. A combination was also given to the superintendents and most of them marked two more data groups. This resulted in 69 responses being distributed among these five options.

A slight majority (51%) indicated they used information supplied by central office personnel. The next option was that of a combination of sources with 17 responses. This was followed closely by 14 tallies for board members who supplied information. Eleven superintendents indicated that they gathered information from teachers, staff, and students. And four superintendents said that they used information from parents.

#### Feedback to Evaluated Administrators

The building principals received evaluation information and results by four identified practices. One was a conference session with only the superintendent present, 35 superintendents (81.4%). A second practice 12 superintendents (28%) respondents was an executive session with the board of education and the superintendent. The third practice mentioned (four superintendents, 9.3%) was an executive session conducted by the board of education without the superintendent present. The fourth practice mentioned (two superintendents, 4.7%) was a conference session held with central office personnel. Obviously some districts used a combination of methods of feedback.

The basis of this data on evaluation sessions to principals feedback was given primarily by the superintendent. However, in some districts when the superintendent was not present, board members or the central office personnel would assume the evaluation function.

#### Improvement Needs/Skills of Building Administrators

One of the major evaluation purposes espoused by experts is to provide some rationale and data for an individual to examine what s/he thinks is being demonstrated compared to what is expected of that position-holder. If this feedback is provided to the evaluatee in a constructive atmosphere, it should contribute to a more positive change in the behavior of the person being evaluated. Fourteen improvement areas were suggested by the survey form; the superintendents were asked to identify those areas that their building administrators had need to improve.

Two of these need areas were working with staff to solve issues/problems and communicating by oral/written means within the building and to the public and parents. Twenty-five superintendents (58%) marked the improvement need of joint working relationships to better solve the issues and problems facing the attendance center. Twenty-two superintendents (51%) felt that their principals could do a better job of communicating to staff, parents, and school patrons.

Three closely related need areas dealt with classroom observation data. One suggested that principals could do a

better job of collecting verifiable data from the classroom observation and received support from 19 (44%) respondents. The second skill need inferred that principals weren't classifying and analyzing the observation data sufficiently and had support from 15 (35%) chief administrators. The third identified need was that the conferencing ability of the principals regarding observed classroom data was ineffective and received support from 16 (37%) superintendents.

These need areas associated with classroom observation data were cited in a 1987 Research Roundup publication of the Mid-continent Regional Educational Laboratory. The researchers, Gottfredson and Hybl, reported that principals "consider staff direction, observation and feedback on teacher performance, and planning for school improvement the most important functions of their jobs." They also said that this perception was held by principals in all levels and types of school nationwide.

Four other need areas seemed to cluster around the behavior that an administrator would exhibit while making a decision. One of these called for the translation of school board policy into a rule, regulation, or procedure. Seventeen superintendents (40%) wished that their principals were able to do a better job of presenting the intent of board policy with a stated rule, regulation, or procedure. A second need expressed the desire for better handling of stress/conflict situations (10 superintendents, 23%). The other two reflected a desire that building administrators treat staff members as professional colleagues with positive mannerisms (four superintendents, 9%) and to display behavior of fairness/justice with staff and students (six superintendents, 14%).

An additional four need areas were job/image of their building principals: building principals should be more proactive versus reactive in building affairs or concerns (14 superintendents, 33%), building administrators should be assertive in their autonomy and commitment toward building level successes (eight superintendents, 19%), building administrators should be more creative and individualistic in their behaviors while carrying out their contract duties, and take steps to create this kind of image to their students, staff, and school patrons (seven superintendents, 16%) and principals should be more active in promoting school activities that would assure more student successes (four superintendents, 9%).

The current theme of instructional leadership by the building principal is found in most educational publications as being one of the critical elements of effective schools. These new-to-the-site superintendents rated their total building principal staff as being primarily instructional leaders, school-based managers, or one of two positions between these extremes. Nineteen superintendents (42.2%) ranked their evaluated principals as being instructionally oriented with eight (18.6%) who perceived their principals as being true instructional leaders. The other eleven (25.6%) superintendents identified the principals as working toward the goal of being instructional leaders. This left the remaining 25 superintendents (58%) as classifying their building administrators as being school-based managers or perceived as being more managerially than instructionally oriented. Eleven superintendents (25%) labeled their principals as being pure school-based managers with 14 others (33%) casting their principals as being more managerially oriented than instructionally focused.

#### Evaluation Outcomes

Superintendents identified five action outcomes that resulted from their evaluation practices with their build-



ing principals; some superintendents listed more than one outcome.

The outcome that had support from 24 (55.8%) superintendents stated that the evaluation session(s) caused the building principal(s) to identify areas of improvement. Another outcome (21 superintendents, 48.8%) said that the evaluation(s) resulted in specific directions/suggestions given by the superintendent and board of education. Three (7%) superintendents shared that their board of education was the primary source of giving specific directions/suggestions to the building principal(s) without any input by the superintendent.

Two other outcomes mentioned by the respondents were that the evaluation results encouraged a change in the personal/professional goals of the principal(s) (eight superintendents, 18.6%), and that some principals were forced to seek a change in their employment (seven superintendents, 16.3%).

### Respondents

Just how representative were these 43 new-to-the site superintendents on personal factors to the 304 superintendents in the state of Kansas? Lifting data from survey results of the Kansas School Board Association (KASB) and Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE), the comparable categories of age, superintendency experience, school district enrollment, number of administrators/supervisors evaluated, formal education, and gender were used.

Twenty-two (48.8%) of the new superintendents were in the 41-50 year old category with 11 and 9 others being in the 10 year brackets preceeding and following this classification. The two remaining superintendents were 61+ years old. The 1986 KASB survey revealed the average age of the 304 superintendents of schools was 50 years. The average age for superintendents when they first became superintendent of schools was 38 years.

Over half 23 (53.5%) of these neophytes were completing their first year as a superintendent of schools. Seven (16.3%) others were completing 2-7 years as superintendent and seven more had 8-10 years experience as the head administrator of a school district. Another six had 11-25 years in chief administrative jobs. The 1986 KASB survey revealed that the average length of superintendent service in his/her district was seven years, with 122 superintendents reporting administrative experience other than the superintendency for an average of seven years in the same district.

Twenty (46.5%) of the respondents were directing school district enrollments of 400 or fewer students. Another 16 (37.2%) superintendents were heading up school districts with student enrollments of 401-1,899 students. This left five (11.6%) others charged with the school programming for 2,000-9,999 students plus two others supervising school districts with 10,000+ students. In the 1987 KSDE report there were 108, 160, 30, and five school districts in these enrollment categories. This meant that these new superintendent respondents represented the following percentages of 19, 10, 17, and 40 respectively.

The number of administrators/supervisors being directly evaluated by these new superintendents fell into two categories, the first being 1-5 with 34 respondents reporting this statistic. The second one had seven (16.8%) superintendents registering that they directly evaluated 6-15 administrators. Two superintendents did not answer this section of the survey. Both of these categories fall within the recommended number (1-15) for the span of control

concept found in basic educational administration texts on line/staff relationships within organizational charts.

The formal education statistics reported as being the last achieved was divided into the doctorate, specialist, and masters degrees. Fifteen superintendents possessed the doctorate, 17 declared the specialist, and 32 listed the masters degrees as having been earned. The 1986 KASB report listed 77, 64, and 162 superintendents with doctorate, specialist, and masters degrees.

In Kansas there were three women who were superintendents of schools during the 1986-87 school year. Only one (2.3%) of these women was new to the position in 1986-87.

The 1986 KASB survey characterized the Kansas superintendent as being a 50-year old male who has been a school superintendent since he was 38 and has worked in his current district for seven years. He earns \$45,000 per year in salary and has a fringe benefit package including health/medical insurance worth \$2,400. He works on a 12 month contract with 20 vacation days and has signed a two-year contract with the district. He has a masters degree plus 40 additional hours of college credit and his travel expenses are fully reimbursed by the district.

The average superintendent profile of the new-to-site respondents was a 41-50 year old male who was completing his first superintendency. He has had 3-8 years building level/central office administrative experiences. He is directing a school district of 400 or less students and evaluating 1-5 building administrators. He possesses a formal education degree, doctorate or specialist, 10-20% respectively above the state proportion of 304 practicing superintendents.

### Conclusions

The 1986-87 evaluation practices of building principals by the 43 new-to-site superintendents in Kansas support the following conclusions.

1. The majority of school districts employ some form of building administrator evaluation. The practices varied from very strong accountability by written position guides to generalizations of responsibility in writing or implied in conversational exchanges between principals and superintendents. Kansas law regarding evaluation of certified personnel was interpreted differently in these school districts because administrators do not have tenure provisions as do teachers.
2. Data collection for administrative evaluations was primarily by first-hand observation. Superintendents gathered data by observing their principals in action with staff members, students, patrons, administrative colleagues, and then applying it to the district administrative evaluation form. Some indicated that other means of data such as forms, records, polls, and second-hand reports of individuals were also considered as they marked the checklists/rating scales. Whether or not this data was representative of each administrator's behavior was not queried.
3. Evaluation feedback to the building principals was almost always given by the superintendent of schools in private sessions. Nearly a fourth of the school districts also had administrative evaluation feedback with the board of education in executive sessions.
4. The five improvement need areas that building principals shared in common, according to superintendents' comments were: better working relations with staff to solve issues/problems, better means of oral/written communications with staff and community patrons, gathering/

analyzing/conferencing aspects of teacher evaluation data, administrative decision-making behavior, and leadership image factors.

5. The building principals in these school districts were mainly described being more managerially oriented than instructionally focused. Forty-two percent were classified by the superintendents as leaning toward or becoming instructional leaders. This left fifty-eight percent of the superintendents who regarded their building principals as being school managers and not investing major portions of their time with instructional concerns. The inference being that these principals delegated this responsibility to their staff members or that instructional leadership was not a priority concern to the principals.
6. These superintendents felt that the evaluation practices were causing their building principals to examine their past behaviors with expectations of change. At least half of the superintendents said their building principals had identified improvement areas in their principalship.

Most of the targeted areas were in response to specific inputs from the superintendent and board members. Seven superintendents said one or more of their principals were encouraged to seek employment outside their school district.

7. These superintendent respondents were considered a fairly representative sample of the total 304 chief administrators in the state but did reflect significant differences in attainment of formal education degrees.

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Although both the United States and England share the same concerns about special needs students they have responded to the challenge somewhat differently.

# The United States and England—Meeting the Mandate

by Mildred Odom Bradley  
Master Teacher  
and Roy G. Jones  
Southampton, England

Though uniquely different in organization, the school systems of England and the United States share many commonalities. Each is a reflection of the society which created it, and each represents the aspirations of that society to develop a well educated citizenry capable of preserving the tenets of a democratic way of life. Sharing a heritage and a culture based on common values, each system seeks to transmit a culture, promote societal values, and provide options ensuring optimum literacy.

In the most recent decade, the school system in each country has shared yet another commonality in the challenge handed down by legislative mandate directing that schools in each country provide appropriate education for all handicapped children. The education prescribed by the mandates required that, to the maximum extent appropriate, handicapped learners were to be educated in the mainstream of the school system along with non-handicapped pupils.

Meeting that challenge represented some major changes in the way services had previously been delivered. The legislative acts and attendant judicial decisions gave explicit directions on services, along with exact timetables for implementation. In assuring the rights of the handicapped to educational opportunity, the legislative acts in each country called on educators and schools to embrace a new era of education for an under-served group of learners, and challenged the creative abilities of administrators and teachers to re-define their role as professionals.

In the brief period since enactment of this mandate, what changes have taken place? Have schools changed in their sensitivity to what constitutes an appropriate educa-

tion? How have the mandates been interpreted and translated into action? To what extent has England and the United States complied with the intent of the mandate? This report will attempt to answer some of these concerns by comparing data before the mandate (1978) with the status of education of the handicapped reflected in the most recent data available (1987). Opinions and reactions from Administrators, teachers, and parents will be presented in an informal format so as to assess some of the feelings generated by the changes that have been required.

In the United States, the path which led to passage of Public Law 94-142, mandating an appropriate education for handicapped children in the least restrictive environment was a route that emerged out of a variety of forces. A powerful catalyst came from judicial decisions, and from legislative action lobbied into reality by advocacy groups.

The present system of educating the handicapped in England and Wales has evolved over a period of time and reflects concern for educating the handicapped that goes back for a long period of time. A progression of reports, studies, commission policies and parliamentary action has provided the framework for the operation of a diversified school system. The current system which embraces a diversity of private enterprises, volunteer agencies, and government initiative produces an umbrella of tax supported and government supervised schools that cannot be reduced to a simple description. The efforts of government, church, and private endeavor combine to provide for the education of children, including the handicapped. Specifically, it was Parliament that established the Committee of Enquiry which filed the report leading to the Education Act of 1981, often called the Warnock Committee Act.

Both Public Law 94-192 and the Education Act of 1981 embodied some specific changes that were remarkably similar. In both countries, it was mandated that

- (1) All handicapped have access to an education appropriate to individual needs.
- (2) The confidentiality of records and procedures be respected.
- (3) Parents be made part of the decision-making process regarding the child.
- (4) All procedures from assessment to the delivery of services be non-discriminatory.

The Education Act of 1981 in England and Wales incorporated a bold new concept from the Warnock Report that, in time, may significantly change the direction of service to the handicapped. It mandated a model for delivery of service based solely on educational needs rather than on the previously used medical model. Prior educational programs had been built around a categorical condition with delivery of services focused on an environment populated by others with the same medically diagnosed condition. Education supposedly addressed deficits perceived to be the result of a "disability of body or mind." The Education Act of 1981 made a complete change by replacing categorical definitions with a single description; Pupils With Special Education Needs.

Here was a dynamic philosophical posture from which it was possible to look at the child's educational needs and at ways of meeting those needs through appropriate educational practices. This process described the child's needs for modification in teaching methods, modification of curriculum, and adequate support so as to ensure a measure of success. A certain measure of accountability is built into the process by requiring that a statement of educational needs be written for each child who is in need of additional Special Education. The statement is to detail specific needs of the child and how they are to be met.

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**Mildred Odom Bradley currently is on the staff of Master Teacher where she writes and does teacher in-service.**

**Roy G. Jones has been the Superintendent of Schools in Southampton. He is currently editing a training guide for school administrators.**

By looking specifically at the educational needs of children, the categories no longer reflect a group of children according to the cause of their need. Rather it allows for grouping according to what the child needs to learn regardless of the cause of his present symptoms. The Education Act of 1981 in effect divides service levels into three levels in order to address the varying intensity of needs as well as to provide a degree of flexibility in options.

Public Law 94-142 retained the procedure that was in place by using a categorical description for funding, for qualifying pupils for service and for delivery of services. One of the key provisions, however, is the requirement that, to the extent appropriate, handicapped children must be educated with non-handicapped. Special class placement or other educational environments that created a segregated situation were to be considered only when the nature and severity of the handicapping condition made regular classes, with support services, an unsatisfactory placement for the child.

The term, "least restrictive environment" has come into common use and reflects the intent to provide education with non-handicapped peers to the greatest extent appropriate for the learner. The appropriateness of an educational placement is two-pronged: it must be a setting in which the child can make progress and an environment in which the child can interact with his/her non-handicapped peers. It is well to keep in mind the tension that will always exist between the special education needs of the child and the need for the least restrictive environment. For many, the least restrictive environment may be the regular class, but for others it may be a special class or an institution. The key determiner lies in the word "appropriate."

When seeking comparative figures to use to measure with statistics the extent to which the two countries have complied with their respective mandates, it is essential to acknowledge the difficulty to find the desired level of credibility in data collected from different bases and with differing levels of sophistication. Generalization allows only a summary statement to be made regarding numbers of children served and the setting in which they were served. Some tentative conclusions can be made by looking at the numbers of children served as reported in summaries from the Federal Bureau of Education of the Handicapped (now the Division of Special Education in the Department of Education). Table I shows the change in the United States.

**FIGURE 1**

**Percentage of school enrollment served as handicapped, by handicapping condition, for the 50 States and the District of Columbia during school years 1976-1977, 1984-1985, and 1985-1986.**

Handicapping Condition	1976-77	1984-85	1985-86
Learning Disabled	1.79	4.72	4.73
Speech Impaired	2.84	2.90	2.86
Mentally Retarded	2.16	1.84	1.68
Emotionally Disturbed	0.64	0.96	0.95
Other Health Impaired	0.32	0.18	0.17
Multihandicapped	—	0.18	0.22
Hard of Hearing or Deaf	0.20	0.18	0.14
Orthopedically Impaired	0.20	0.15	0.14
Visually Handicapped	0.09	0.08	0.07
Deaf-Blind	—	0.01	0.01
Total	8.24	11.19	10.97

— Data for these categories were not collected in 1976-77

Review of data reflecting practices in the United States showed an early focus on the concept of Least Restrictive Environment. Reports from the various states showed a growing preference for regular class placement with support services. In the 1978-79 school year, every school district audited by the Department of Special Education showed expansion of options that were available. Placements in environments other than the public schools decreased as new programs were made available.

If one examines changes in the United States from school year 1978-79 to school year 1985-86, certain trends and some changes are noteworthy. Following several years of rapid increase in number of children served, there was a slowing of this trend by 1983-84 and only slight increases in 1984-85 and 1985-86. The total number of students served in school year 1985-86 was 4,370,244. No doubt the rapid increase in numbers in the first years following enactment of P.L. 94-142 was a result of two facts: absorbing handicapped children who had not been in public schools, and increased identification of children classified as learning disabled. As a percentage of total school enrollment, the numbers of handicapped children being served decreased slightly in 1984-85 and again in 1985-86, with the latter year showing data reflecting 10.97 percent of all children being served under P.L. 94-142.

Survey of data from all states in the United States show that a majority of handicapped children are being educated in settings with non-handicapped children. Twenty-seven percent were being educated in regular class with 42 percent receiving instruction in resource rooms. An additional 24 percent were in special classes in a building that housed mostly regular classes. Though there were significant variations among the states and between districts in the same state, there is a generalization which can be made with some validity: learning disabled and speech or language handicapped were more likely to be in regular classes than some other categories. For example, mentally retarded were more likely to be in separate classrooms. Nationally, 50 percent were in separate classes.

In England and Wales, a close look at data shows some interesting trends developing, especially when figures on Special Schools and hospital-based schools are examined. Reports from the Department of Education and Science showed 138 maintained hospital schools in 1979 with an enrollment of 7,780 students. That number has changed to 87 maintained hospital schools with an enrollment of 4,265 children by 1986. The inference to be drawn here is that as ordinary and special schools developed programs, the demand for and use of hospital schools decreased.

The same trend is true of the Special Schools though the decrease is less dramatic. In 1979 there were 1,461 Special Schools (boarding and day schools) enrolling 123,091 children. In 1986 these numbers had changed to 1,406 schools with 107,675 children in attendance. Here again certain inferences can be drawn. As more students are finding appropriate education in the integration process associated with ordinary schools, fewer are filling places in the special schools.

Data for 1986, England and Wales, shows a total of 30,046 students with Special Education needs were in ordinary schools with slightly more than half (16,810) on the register of ordinary classes. Link arrangements between special schools and ordinary schools is allowing for cooperative programming and opening opportunities for children who formerly were isolated, allowing them to gain new skills both academically and socially. Mixing with other students in ordinary schools allows special needs students to have access to curriculum, to sit for exams, and elimi-

nates the regression to the mean which occurs in classes of all handicapped. Jowett (1988) found that three-fourths of the special schools in England and Wales had some kind of scheme for linking with an ordinary school.

In examining any significant change brought on by legislative direction it is appropriate to look at the change from the viewpoint of those whose lives are impacted by new policies. How has the Education Act of 1981 been received by those who give and those who receive services within the parameters it outlined? Has the spirit of the law generated new optimism for improved education among those who are consumers of what it has produced?

Significant to the new process is the involvement of parents as partners in their children's education. This new relationship between parents and school staff has required changed attitudes in all parties involved. Julian Kramer, Assistant Education Officer, surveyed a random sample of 10% of parents in Derbyshire to assess their perception of satisfaction with their child's education. Using a survey form, a surprising 84% returned the questionnaire sent to them. Though overall response showed a high level of satisfaction, the dissatisfactions that were expressed centered around time delays, education jargon, and feelings that parents were often hurried through procedures that were new to them. They called for simplification of letters, forms, and documents being used. (Kramer, 1985)

In two London boroughs, Dr. Sarah Sandow found from her research that parents had little knowledge of the Education Act of 1981. Among the parents surveyed whose children were in special schools only 37% expressed the opinion that their child would be better educated in an ordinary school. The Sandow report again emphasizes the need for better communication relative to the intent and purpose of the law and a need to assist parents in understanding their role as a participant.

In the United States, case studies found that most parents of handicapped children reacted favorably to placement of their children in an environment with non-handicapped learners. Their response centered around the more appropriate role models for their children and their belief that there is a better academic climate in the regular classroom.

In the early years of compliance with the mandates, it was recognized that help was needed to make parents participatory partners in their child's education. In school year 1978-79, only about half of all parents were actual participants in formulating their child's Individual Education Plan. Though most parents willingly signed the I.E.P., the goal of P.L. 94-142 was to have participation in its development. Several steps were taken to improve participation of parents in the decision-making process. Legal issues relating to I.E.P. meetings were clarified. Rights as well as responsibilities of parents, and directions for stimulating parent participation were addressed in memoranda issued by the Office of Special Education, Department of Education (formerly known as Bureau of Education of the Handicapped). Overall, an atmosphere of success was prevalent. In a later survey, however, full acknowledgement of shortcomings and needed improvements were articulated for ensuing years.

It is to children that we must go to find a candid evaluation from a consumer point of view. How do children who are living the mandated integration assess the overall situation?

Dr. Wendy Lynas conducted interviews with hearing students in ordinary schools in which deaf students were mainstreamed to assess the reactions to integration on the part of those directly affected. Her findings were interesting in that it revealed the typically human resentment that sur-

faces when children perceive a situation as unfair. Many interpreted the extra attention given to deaf students as being unfair and a subtle signal that the teacher preferred those students over hearing students. The students saw this extra attention as an inappropriate dual standard embraced by the teacher and did not use it as a rejection factor toward deaf students, however. Obviously teachers with mainstreamed students need to involve all students in an understanding of the needs of a student with a handicap. Such lessons could, conceivably add an element of patience and compassion to those involved. (Lynas, 1986)

Deaf students being educated in an ordinary school along with hearing student sex pressed their belief that such experience gave them better preparation for life in the adult hearing world. The students, surprisingly, expressed resentment over what they perceived as too much help. They did not want to be singled out or seen as a "teacher's pet."

Every teacher knows it is difficult, if not impossible, to treat the child with special needs as if he/she has no special needs. To do so is to deny the child the education that is appropriate, but to single out a child in the class and make them different creates a new set of problems. (Lynas, 1986)

Reaction, on the part of teachers, in both countries runs the gamut from enthusiasm to extreme reluctance. Most teachers who express continued resistance do so out of a lack of confidence in their training to teach children with special needs. Both Public Law 94-142 and the Education Act of 1981 seek to address this need through provisions for a wide range of training opportunities for staff.

The initial reaction from regular teachers in the United States has gradually become less negative than it was at first. This has been attributed to realization that the mandate would not result in large numbers of severely limited students in regular classes.

Regular teachers are becoming more expert at making necessary modifications to accommodate learners who have special needs. Some of this can be attributed to the additional specific course work now required in the United States to meet teacher certificate criteria. Much of the improvement in teacher competence has come from experiencing success and from support from consultants and other professionals. Though not without some grumbling, there is a commitment to professionalism among teachers in both countries that moves them, as a whole, toward greater competence with handicapped learners.

A final opinion can be formulated when the intent of the legislative mandate is judged against what has actually happened. Without doubt, both P.L. 94-142 and the Education Act of 1981 had as their central purpose an education appropriate to needs in a non-segregated environment. The moral and ethical values of both countries embrace a position of integration and equity. The United States has made incredible strides in bringing all children into the public school system, and has provided a variety of options in keeping with the intent of the law. Unfortunately, these enhanced opportunities have been made available to children who carry a handicapped label. Children are integrated but still segregated by a label. The categorical label remains a stigma and is related to the medical diagnosis of their condition rather than revealing specific educational needs.

In England and Wales, progress towards integration has been somewhat slower but clearly in keeping with the spirit of the law. All categorical labels using the medical model have been discarded in favor of the term "special needs." Such wording has replaced the word "handicapped" and is used in an introductory sense to spell out exact services and learning environment that are needed. Thus chil-

dren who need special education in order to reach their potential, whether it is short term or long term, are provided for without a label that relates to the condition causing his/her need. This bold step is a sound step, educationally, and is at the heart of compliance with the spirit of the 1981 Act.

What of the future? Each country suffers from restricted budgets for education. Each country is on the cutting edge of teachers demands for in-service training and improved working conditions. Each country is searching for ways for improved accountability and better performance from students. Where and how Special Education will fit in the future remains the final challenge of P.L. 94-142 and the Education Act of 1981.

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The Hazelwood decision reopens the discussion of student First Amendment rights in relation to school authority.

# Freedom of Speech/Press and High School and College Newspapers

by Donna Miles  
and Andrea Yoxall  
Seward County Community College

The First Amendment of the United States Constitution states it clearly: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances" (Alexander 130).

But where does it say, except for high school students? What does freedom of speech or press really mean, especially where high school publications are concerned? How should a high school journalism adviser implement the constitution in his or her role as adviser? And what are the rights of high school journalists versus college journalists versus professional journalists? Where does imposing journalistic standards end and censorship begin?

The issue surrounding censorship of student press and legal restraints on student publications are both controversial and complex (Avery 1). Traditionally, high school and college publications alike have operated under a relative freedom of expression. In *Tinker vs. Des Moines Independent Community School District* "students and teachers do not shed their constitutional rights to freedom of speech and expression at the school house gate" (Avery 3). *Dickey vs. Alabama State Board of Education* extended First Amendment protections to students and the school or university can only restrict those rights through reasonable regulation (Avery 9). However, the recent *Hazelwood School District vs. Kuhlmeier* Supreme Court decision may affect the legal bases of freedom of expression as it has traditionally existed in high schools by emphasizing the school's role as "publisher."

The *Hazelwood* decision has been supported by those who place emphasis on the need to maintain discipline and order in the schools and criticized by those who place relatively greater emphasis on the protection of civil liberties and constitutional rights ("Supreme" 1).

**Donna Miles and Andrea Yoxall are journalism instructors at Seward County Community College in Liberal, Kansas.**

The roles of the administrator, adviser, and student may become increasingly intertwined and diverse as the *Hazelwood* case is discussed and applied. High schools and colleges may need to re-evaluate or establish policies that clearly define the role of the newspaper as well as the role of administrators, advisers, and students.

## Importance of Study

Since the 1969 *Tinker* decision students have been entitled to free speech and expression unless school authorities could show restraint is reasonable to prevent substantial interference with school discipline. Although the *Hazelwood* case involves circumstances which apply only to its local school district, the *potential* for further censorship of high school publications has been established, since the decision against constitutional protections for students of all ages in the *Hazelwood* case has been highly publicized throughout the United States, not only as editorials in professional publications, but in student publications as well. This publicity may find administrators placing further restrictions on "time, place, and manner of distribution of literature created and distributed by their students" (Avery 6). The Supreme Court also gave public school officials broad, new authority to censor student newspapers and other forms of student expression (Carelli). "Educators are entitled to exercise greater control over this second form of student expression . . . to assure that activity is designed to teach, that readers, or listeners are not exposed to material that may be inappropriate for their level of maturity, and that views of the individual speaker are not erroneously attributed to the school" (White 20).

School administrators and advisers must understand the reasoning and special circumstances in this decision. The implications could be far reaching for misinformed or uninformed school personnel. If administrators begin to apply *Hazelwood* broadly without an understanding, many First Amendment rights could be violated.

## Limitations of Study

Special characteristics and circumstances are key terms used in Justice Byron H. White's opinion of the *Hazelwood* case. However, in the 1985 *New Jersey vs. T.L.O.* decision, the court also recognized that the school environment has special characteristics and the law must be applied with this in mind.

*Hazelwood's* school board policy reflects that the school-sponsored publication is a laboratory situation in which the students publish the school newspaper. Students received grades and academic credit. This course was taught during regular school hours (*Hazelwood East Curriculum*). All of these factors gave the school board the right to "reserve the forum for its intended purpose," as a supervised learning experience. The Court said the school officials, therefore, were entitled to regulate the contents of the publication in "any reasonable manner" (White 20).

The Court said these special circumstances apply to only this one case and, therefore, the public should not intend to use this case as a precedent. Each case would have its own limitations and special circumstances.

## Background

Prior to 1985, cases involving student rights had been decided with careful attention to the 1969 *Tinker* case giving students constitutional rights that they did not shed at the schoolhouse door. A standard also made it the responsibility of the school, before restricting the constitutional rights of students, to demonstrate that the actions to be sanc-

tioned would “substantially interfere with the work of the school or impinge upon the rights of other students” (“Supreme” 1).

However, in three recent cases dealing with student rights since 1985, the Supreme Court has fixed new boundaries within which those rights are to be considered (“Supreme” 2).

In 1985 the *New Jersey vs. T.L.O.* decision, which did not deal directly with freedom of speech and press, stated that students in public schools can have limitations placed on their constitutional rights. The Supreme Court decision, while stating that students enjoy the protection of the Fourth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, their rights were balanced against the rights of administrators and teachers to maintain order in the schools (“Supreme” 3). In his dissent in the *Hazelwood* decision, Justice William J. Brennan stated that “only speech that ‘materially and substantially interferes with the requirements of appropriate discipline’ can be found unacceptable and therefore prohibited” (Brennan 2). The “reasonable suspicion” clause becomes an important aspect in dealing with students. The *T.L.O.* case involves a student’s purse that was searched after two students were caught smoking in a lavatory in violation of a school rule. The search uncovered marijuana and other drug-related paraphernalia, money, and two letters. The Supreme Court overruled the Appellate court’s decision saying that, although the constitutional provisions were applicable, the original search had been legal because:

“Under ordinary circumstances, a search of a student by a teacher or other school official will be justified at its inception when there are reasonable grounds for suspecting that the search will turn up evidence that the student had violated or is violating either the law or the rules of the school. Such a search will be permissible in its scope when the measures adopted are reasonable related to the objectives of the search and not excessively intrusive in light of the age and sex of the student and the nature of the infraction” (“Supreme” 3).

The 1986 *Bethel School District #403 vs. Fraser* decision further separated the adult from the student. The First Amendment guarantees wide freedom in adult public discussion and would protect an adult using offensive language to make a point in a political speech. It, however, does not follow that “the same latitude must be permitted to children in a public school. The case involved a student speech which referred to a candidate “in terms of an elaborate, graphic, and explicit sexual metaphor.” The Supreme Court reversed the court of appeals decisions saying it is an appropriate function of the public schools “to prohibit the use of vulgar and offensive terms in public discourse” (Supreme 3).

The most recent case to affect student rights is *Hazelwood* where the Supreme Court, by a 5–3 vote, once again overturned the court of appeals decision. The case started near the end of school in 1983 when a school principal decided not to permit publication of two pages of the school newspaper involving two stories, one dealing with the pregnancies of three teen-age girls and the other with the experiences of a student whose parents had gone through a divorce. Although the principal objected to only two stories, the entire two pages were pulled because of the pressure of time. The student editors argued that their First Amendment right of freedom of expression had been violated (Supreme 4).

### Role as Publishers

“A school may in its capacity as *Publisher* of a school newspaper or producer of a school play disassociate itself not only from speech that would substantially interfere with its work or impinge on the rights of other students but also from speech that is, for example, ungrammatical, poorly written, inadequately researched, biased or prejudiced, vulgar or profane, or unsuitable for immature audience” (Justice 10). This was the decision in the *Hazelwood* case concerning the school’s role as publisher.

In effect, the school, as publisher, makes all the decisions concerning the newspaper since they “own” the newspaper. The owners, however, are covered by First Amendment rights and responsibilities.

Professional newspapers, such as *The Garden City Telegram*, describe the school’s role as publisher: “If they (school administrators) believe students will benefit by participating in a newspaper laboratory, then they shouldn’t be afraid to allow students to experiment in that setting. They should encourage open discussion and free speech on a broad range of subjects. They should allow students to define what subjects are ‘appropriate,’” according to Jim Bloom, editor-publisher (Bloom).

The Supreme Court defines the school’s role as “publisher” as: “Educators are entitled to exercise greater control over this second form of (school-sponsored vs. individual student-initiated) student expression to assure that participants learn whatever lessons the activity is designed to teach, that readers or listeners are not exposed to material that may be inappropriate for their level of maturity, and that the views of the individual speaker are not erroneously attributed to the school” (Justice 10).

By making this ruling, the Supreme Court has given approval for administration to supervise and approve of each article and issue of the newspaper. In professional newspapers the department heads make these decisions.

“If they (employees) have questions,” said Bloom, “about whether we should publish a story, photo, or advertisement, then they ask me for my advice.” He said, however, he did not approve each front page.

“The right to ask questions and to expect public officials and the average citizen to offer honest answers” is Bloom’s definition of a free press, and this should apply to school publications. “If it doesn’t, the school administration should drop the charade. After all, wouldn’t it be better to allow young people to continue to believe in an ideal, but without the chance to practice free speech, than it would be to force them to practice under a situation that is far removed from the idea” (Bloom).

### Language Versus Issue

Although the *Hazelwood* administration objected to only two articles which were to be published in the final edition of the *Spectrum*, the administration censored all the information dealing with teenage pregnancy or marriage, divorce, and runaways. However, society expects the school system to educate students so they are prepared to work in the “real” world.

“By teaching about the First Amendment in social studies classes and then not applying it themselves, schools say one thing and do another. This is the sort of thing that drives people crazy or into a protective stupor. I think the enduring lesson for high school students will be that one is not to be trusted to think things through on one’s own and is dependent upon some wiser authority. This is not a lesson in democracy” (Risk). However, in its reversal of the Court of Appeals, the Supreme Court reasoned that parents and school authorities have an obvious interest in pro-



tecting children, especially in a captive audience, from "sexually explicit, indecent, or lewd speech." The Supreme Court also reasoned that since the *Spectrum* was a "laboratory" situation, a high school assembly or classroom is not the place for a "sexually explicit monologue directed towards an unsuspecting audience of teenage students" ("Supreme" 4).

Although the court's reaffirmation of the schools' disciplinary powers certainly is welcome, if the schools now use those powers to push reality out of sight, "they will be doing no one any good, least of all students. A society that expects its educational system at all levels to act in loco parentis cannot insist this same system willfully ignore the facts of its students' lives. Somehow the schools have to reconcile their traditional educational mission with the responsibility we have foisted on them to teach students how to live in the real world; it's a tough assignment" (Yardley).

### Surveys/Adviser Statistics

A survey conducted by Seward County Community College revealed some startling facts about high school and college presses in Oklahoma and Kansas. The areas discussed in this survey included policy statements, prior approval for controversial issues, roles of these publications, and First Amendment rights. Principals, advisers, and student editors responded (Journalism).

#### Statement of Policy

Of the 17 schools responding, four indicated they currently have a statement of policy governing student publications; 10 do not and three do not know. In light of the *Hazelwood* decision, 10 indicated that they do not plan to incorporate a policy. Eight respondents, who currently have a written policy, do not anticipate any changes in that policy; two are not sure (Journalism).

#### Controversial Issues

Concerning controversial issues at these 17 schools, six currently need approval to run these articles; 11 do not. Meredith Pucci, editor at Putnam City West High School, said, "We need adviser approval to publish anything."

"We watch for profane language written, drawn, or inferred," said Jerome Reed, administrator at Goodland High School. "Again, a good sponsor is the reason for a good paper."

Nancy Zirkel, adviser at Liberal High School, indicated that she checks with administration if she has questions (Journalism).

Brent Bates, adviser at Labette Community College, who attended the April Kansas Association of Journalism Advisers' meeting in Manhattan, said he has no doubt that if the time comes, his administration will try to censor the paper, while Esther Gormley, adviser at Highland Community College, expressed her concern for the high schools in her area. She informed the group the Hiawatha High School principal said the administration would approve the paper now. Highland High School principal expressed concern to Gormley that the school would become more liable. Adams, who lead the discussion on *Hazelwood*, said many principals do not want the role of publisher because it would make them more liable. "Now the responsibility will be squarely the responsibility of the school instead of the responsibility of the student," Adams said. Suits that have been brought against students in the past have never amounted to much; however, suits against the administration will be more severe.

Topics that most respondents felt would be considered controversial were similar, such as "anything that sounds 'pro-sin,' such as abortion," said Thelma Workman, adviser at Cloud County Community College (Workshop).

"A few years ago, an adviser was removed for approving a 'sexual content' series of articles. This year a Planning Parenthood ad was vetoed. Anything dealing with teen sex and birth control are basically off-limits," said Pucci.

"Articles which point out faults of the faculty members or refute what has been said by the towns' people in the city paper" are generally eliminated, said Beckie Stephenson, adviser, Montezuma High School.

Kinsley High School administrators question the promotion of drugs or alcohol and the use of obscene or profane language; however, this has not happened, said David Gailey, administrator.

Most did not feel that their policies would change since the *Hazelwood* decision.

When an adviser is confronted with a student who wants to publish an article on a controversial topic, most discuss the topic, the necessity of coverage, and the angle to take in an article.

"We discuss the value of the issue to the student body and the importance of including it in the yearbook as historical information," said Marla Lord, adviser, Garden City Community College.

"I would discuss it with the student editor. If very controversial, I ask the principal as I did with an ad from Planned Parenthood," said Linda Ralls, adviser, Putnam City West High School.

"I discuss with the student the reason for wanting to do the article, its relevance to our readership, tactics to be used in gathering the news, and the probability of success in getting the necessary information," said Mike Welch, adviser, Hutchinson Community College. Kinsley High School requires the adviser to see the administration and discuss any issue that might be questionable, Gailey said.

"I let them tackle it after a discussion involving me, the editor, and the writer. If the article is researched completely and attempts journalistic fairness, I will consider using it," said Zirkel.

"Our sponsor wants to know why we want to publish it and then we talk about it and can maybe work something out," said Roberta Paxson, editor, Morland High School.

"I challenge them to examine the perspective of readers, sources, and other interested parties. Something 'controversial' is an opportunity for all sides to be quoted, as well as high reader service," said Ron Johnson, adviser, Fort Hays State University (Journalism).

#### Newspaper's Role in Teaching Human Sexuality

In light of the recent ruling to teach human sexuality, including teenage sexuality and communicable diseases, most respondents did not see the role of the high school publication changing.

"Although I realize our paper is an excellent media for reaching teens, I really do not feel my staff members who have a maximum of two years of journalism have the diligence or objectivity to write stories about controversial issues such as these," said Zirkel. Her editor, Stacy Jungel, said because of the conservative attitude the administration and the patrons from the high school paper she doubts that an important subject as such would be discussed in detail in their publication.

Jerome Reed, principal at Goodland High School, said such information would be taught in class with a professional teacher who is prepared to teach human sexuality.

Publication roles have been defined in a variety of ways. Many high schools see their roles as different from college publications and both of these see their roles as different from professional publications.

"Our purpose is to cover the year as it happened and create a historical record of the year," said Marla Lord, yearbook adviser, Garden City Community College.

The Johnson County Community College newspaper is designed to keep students and faculty updated on school happenings, programs, and policies, said Curt Sharp, JCCC student. However, it is not a public relations tool of the college; rather it is funded through activity fees, so it does not need to agree with administrator's wishes.

"The *Collegian* is produced by journalism students and I have been a practicing journalist for 15 years," said Mike Welch, adviser, Hutchinson Community College. "As a result, the *Collegian* is run as close to professional journalistic standards as possible. So, while our primary role is the same as a high school publication—serving its readers—we accomplish that by applying journalistic technique. That means that the reporters and editors do not inject their opinions and prejudices into the news columns and that even in opinion pieces they must establish a foundation of fact and use a recognizable pattern of logic to present it."

"FHSU student publications serve the same functions of the professional print media: news, information, entertainment, opinion, the list goes on," said Ron Johnson, Fort Hays State University adviser. "Now, however, high school publications are at the mercy of administration."

Rudy Louis, administrator at Holcomb High School sees their paper primarily as "a publication of positive things our students are involved in here at school. It is great for our public relations in the community" (Journalism).

### Limitations

*Hazelwood* addresses the issue of First Amendment rights for high school publications. Many respondents perceive the rights of high school publications as being similar to those the public press possesses with some limitations.

"We no longer have freedom of speech or freedom of the press," Pucci said. "We can be censored. I guess the only freedoms we have left are the freedom of religion and the right to assemble peacefully."

However, Ralls sees students as still having the privilege of communication with the student body as long as those privileges are not pressed to the maximum. "We must teach judgment somehow. I feel the students for the most part retain First Amendment rights."

Welch said college publications generally have the same rights as any publication, which are none except as a representative of those individuals exercising their First Amendment rights. "The obvious conflict is that, in most cases, the publication is owned by the college; therefore, the college has authority over it. Meanwhile, the individuals working on the publication have First Amendment rights and are exercising those rights; the college is justified in controlling one of its properties. It doesn't mean that they may have to look elsewhere for a vehicle. (There is no constitutional freedom of the press. There is a constitutional freedom of speech)," said Welch.

"They have the same rights as professional publications, at least at this time," said Mark Raduziner, adviser, Johnson County Community College. Ron Johnson agreed. "From my perspective, they have the same rights of professional journalists, with the exception of private colleges. Unfortunately, those rights are interpreted differently at different institutions, no matter what court precedent implied" (Journalism).

### High School Versus College

High school advisers and student editors may be more affected by *Hazelwood* than colleges. In dealing with these advisers, college and university advisers offered assistance and suggestions.

"I would suggest that the advisers become conversant in the restrictions placed on their publications by administrations, and that they convey these restrictions to the students before they begin publishing," Welch said. "It is a fact of life that such restrictions will be in place—especially at the high school level—so it is encumbant on advisers to incorporate them into the publication process. If there is no written statement of policy, the adviser should recommend to the administration that one be established. The adviser could even submit a proposed policy. Either way, it would be better to deal with the issue in a constructive way rather than wait until there is a crisis and suffer potential reprisal."

"Now more than ever, they must establish a solid, professional relationship with supervising administrators," Johnson said. "They must convince these administrators that they and their students are acting responsibly, and that coverage of news and issues will focus on all sides. Smart administrators should recognize that by allowing such free flow information, they can capitalize on the avenue of expression to get their views across."

"I don't think I'd want to be a high school adviser these days," Raduziner said. "It's important especially now that they all keep up with legalities occurring in the press and with the student press law center. They can cover controversial subjects. It's determining how to handle them that takes patience and time and I'd help them as an adviser in any way that I can."

What about advisers who have uncooperative administrators?

"The door may be shut, unless they wish to cooperative or seek their own legal redress," Johnson said (Journalism).

### Affect on Collegiate Publications

While these recent Supreme Court cases may not affect college media to the same degree they may affect high school media, the *Hazelwood* case may not be a "ringing endorsement that the *Hazelwood* standards will never apply to collegiate media," Adams said. The *Hazelwood* case stated that "we need not now decide whether the same degree of deference is appropriate with respect to school-sponsored expressive activities at the college and university level." White's statement gives the court the opportunity in the future to deny similar rights to college publications as well (Dave 1).

The *Hazelwood* ruling also indicates that each school must be able to take into account the emotional maturity of the intended audience in determining whether to disseminate student speech on potentially sensitive topics (Justice 11). Although "certainly there would be few audiences anywhere which are more broad-minded than a collegiate atmosphere is expected to be," (Adams 1) nothing can rule out the possibility that decisions similar to *Hazelwood* could eventually affect college or university publications in the same fashion they may now affect high school publications.

Responsibility for newspaper content should rest "squarely on the backs of the students and ask that they rise to that responsibility. We can't teach good writing and editing unless students are held accountable for that product. We can't train journalists to seek truth in the real world unless they are free to find it in campus stories. We can't teach ethics and responsibility unless students are free to exercise judgment. Perhaps the highest compliment an adviser can be paid is when a student recognizes that the cam-

pus newspaper is real. Tangled in real conflicts, tied with heavy responsibilities, taught against the highest standards, and measured against the loftiest ideas, it's theirs. And the passion for keeping it theirs must be part of journalism education (Corner 14).

The theory that a university student publication would be identified as speaking for the department or the whole university is not valid reason for prior restraint, according to the *Bazaar vs. Fortune* decision (Avery 10). *Joyner vs. Whiting* further stated that the university cannot dictate what the publication may or may not print even though it has established the newspaper (Avery 10).

This does not, however, coincide with a recent poll that indicated the number of news-editorial majors has dropped, while the number of radio-television and advertising-public relations majors has dramatically increased. Students have changed from selecting news-editorial majors because most journalism programs have divorced themselves from the campus press. Large numbers of papers that are completely controlled by university administrations become nothing more than public relations tools of the administration, which does not know the function of a newspaper in a free society or its legal rights (Holmes 12).

#### Adviser Statistics

An additional survey conducted by College Media Adviser members analyzed the role and status of advisers and a profile of the media they advise. Results indicated that the case for advisers has grown worse in a number of areas. In 1984, for example, 19.6 percent of advisers received no release time or extra remuneration for serving in their positions; in 1987, 22.4 percent or 41 reported that status (Kopenhaver 8).

Nearly one-half (49.3 percent) of those responding advise newspapers only. The next largest group, 15 percent, have responsibility for newspaper, yearbook, and a magazine. Twelve percent advise both the newspaper and yearbook, and 9.1 percent advise all media. Almost 3 percent advise only radio and one advises television only (Kopenhaver 8).

More than half the advisers (57.1 percent) have master's degrees and nearly one-fifth (19.3 percent) have a doctorate. Of the 129 advisers responding, 50 had degrees in journalism, while 16 had degrees in English or English literature and 13 in history. The remaining 50 had other degrees. Half of the advisers had newspaper backgrounds, while 21 percent had work experience in public relations or advertising. Other types of experience included magazines, 13 percent; broadcasting, 11 percent; and free-lance writing, 4 percent (Kopenhaver 9).

On a state high school level, Johnson, who attended the April Kansas Association of Journalism Advisers' meeting in Manhattan, further suggested that approximately 30 percent of the publications advisers in Kansas have journalism degrees, and he said he may be overestimating (Johnson).

A recent telephone survey further analyzed the high school teacher's journalism background. Of the twenty-one advisers in the southwest Kansas area, none had a journalism education degree; nine had English degrees; six, business; and the remainder had either a history, art, drama, industrial arts, physical education, or computer science emphasis. One of the English teachers, indicated that she has a minor in journalism, while one is presently working on a master's in journalism (Phone).

If nothing else, *Hazelwood* should at least encourage Kansans to raise the standard of those people advising high school and college publications by encouraging a strong journalism background, said Adams (Adams).

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What are the major factors resulting in relatively high superintendent turnover in rural school districts?

# Superintendent Turnover in Rural School Districts

by Miles T. Bryant and Marilyn L. Grady  
University of Nebraska

## Introduction

The importance of school district stability has been downplayed by the educational reform movement. Various external mandates to improve education have been imposed upon the school district regardless of their potential for dysfunctional consequences. For example, states have required competency testing of teachers even though the primary effect of such policies may be to erect yet another bureaucratic hurdle over which the competent must vault. The focus of the reform has been on excoriating the negative, not in protecting the positive. Thus, an approach that would carefully guard school factors that are positive has been judged less important than an approach which would foster change.

The extent of the state and national effort to initiate change in the schools may damage school district effectiveness in unexpected ways. Establishing a causal link between the acts of the reform movement and subsequent school characteristics is difficult. However, it is plausible to expect some consequences. An increase in external demands on the public schools may contribute to an organizational instability that is reflected in higher rates of personnel turnover. When teachers, administrators, and board members enter and depart quickly as through a revolving door, the educational program is diminished. Consistency and continuity are threatened; the image participants have of their school is tarnished; good teachers and administrators (those who are desired elsewhere) are lost; poor teachers and administrators (those who are not desired elsewhere) are retained.

Superintendents are critical players in the creation of orderly change and school district stability. When there is a rapid turnover of superintendents, there will be difficulty in establishing consistent policy and administrative rule. In turn this will have a negative impact throughout the organization as participants face a persistent internal uncertainty which detracts from their work. Goals are likely to become ambiguous, employees are likely to divert their loyalty from organizational goals, and a crisis-oriented management style will dominate. In the typical school district, the superintendent is a critical force in developing and institutionalizing operational policy.

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**Drs. Miles T. Bryant and Marilyn L. Grady are with the Department of Education at the University of Nebraska in Lincoln, Nebraska.**

Cunningham and Hentges (1983) note that the average superintendent stays in his/her position for about 5.9 years (down from 6.0-6.5 in 1972). A more recent national study reports an average stay in present office of 6.7 years (Feistritzer, 1988). Since these are average data, it can be assumed that there are districts where the superintendent turnover is higher. For example, turnover may be an acute problem in districts where there are chronic financial or board difficulties, poor socioeconomic conditions, militancy on the part of teacher organizations, isolation in rural areas, or some combination of these characteristics. Surprisingly, there are little data dealing with turnover other than the occasional report by the American Association of School Administrators (AASA).

It is not known if, in the near future, there will be an unusual shortage of school administrators due to retirement. There is a perception in some states that this will happen. If this shortage occurs, it is likely that its intensity will vary according to district type. It will be important to know more about the causes that deplete the pool of administrators. Personnel shortages result when employees change positions within the same profession, change professions, retire, or die. There is little research on the incidence or causes of superintendent turnover.

Using past research, one can begin to identify some of the elements that appear to increase or constrict turnover. For example, Buchholz (1969) found no difference in the effectiveness of outsider versus insider succession. Both seemed to fare equally well. Rather than accentuating district differences, Buchholz sought similar districts for his study. In so doing, his study missed some important characteristics of the superintendency such as the effect of district size on superintendent turnover. Thus, it is possible that there may be a difference in the success of insider or outsider superintendents depending upon the district type.

Cunningham and Hentges (1983) noted that in larger school districts of 25,000 or more pupils, approximately 55.4% of the superintendents hired were outsiders (Carlson, 1962). In school districts of less than 300 pupils, the percentage of outsiders climbed to 70.9%. One consequence of this preponderance of outsiders in smaller school districts was suggested by Fenske (1970) who found that in high prestige districts, the style of superintendent leadership could be characterized as having a cosmopolitan/outsider orientation with a crusading style. Fenske did not find this same style to be common in low prestige districts. Fenske thus implies that the match between district and superintendent is more purposeful in high prestige districts.

Given this reasoning, it is logical to expect that in low prestige districts turnover will be above the national average reported by Cunningham and Hentges of 5.9%.

## The Study

The investigators were particularly interested in the extent of superintendent turnover in rural states as well as in some of the causes underlying turnover. Nebraska presented the researchers with a suitable educational environment for the investigation. The state has a population of 327 K-12 school districts. There has been a history of concern over superintendent impermanence. Goddard (1977) reviewed these concerns about the high rate of turnover in Nebraska and noted that in the mid seventies, the average tenure of Nebraska superintendents was less than five years.

Two objectives guided this study:

- 1) the identification of the turnover in a state with many rural school districts:

- 2) the identification of reasons causing superintendent turnover in smaller school districts.

Using annual lists of school district superintendent personnel in Nebraska's K-12 school districts, the movement of superintendents in and out of their positions was charted. This was done for a period of seven years. In this fashion data were gathered on superintendent turnover.

Using this same information, individual superintendents who served for short terms were identified. A telephone interview guide was developed. This guide was reviewed by seven experts in educational administration. Revisions were made as a consequence of this review. The interview guide was then used in gathering information from superintendents about the causes of their departure from office.

Using the annual lists, 21 superintendents who held their position for only one year were identified. A similar group of 42 who held their position for only two years was also identified. The investigators were able to locate 10 superintendents who had held their position for one year and 15 of those who had held their position for two years.

The interview guide was then administered to 25 individuals in a telephone interview. This phase of the study was conducted during the summer of 1987. The resulting data on the causes of turnover were aggregated. An additional personal interview with one of the subjects was conducted in order to review and explicate the information collected in the telephone interviews.

### Findings on Superintendent Turnover

During the seven-year period covered by the study, there were 268 superintendent turnovers in the 327 K-12 school districts included in this study. Table One presents time-series data on superintendent vacancies. A surprising number of turnovers occurred during the seven-year period.

**Table One**  
Superintendent Vacancies by Year

Year	Vacancies	Districts	Percentage
1979/80	44	327	13%
1980/81	42	327	13%
1981/82	33	327	10%
1982/83	33	327	10%
1983/84	38	327	12%
1984/85	45	327	14%
1985/86	33	327	10%

Total District Turnover Over Seven Years = 268

Annual Average Over Seven-Year Period = 12%

Source: Statistics and Facts About  
Nebraska Schools: 1979/80-1985/86

Table One shows a consistently high turnover during the seven years of 10% to 14%, a number substantially above that calculated by Cunningham and Hentges (1983). Small rural districts had greater difficulty retaining superintendents than the average school district nationwide.

In the population of 327 districts, 134 (41%) had no turnover in the seven-year period. In 131 (40%) districts there was one turnover during the seven-year period. In 49 (15%) districts there were two turnovers during the seven-year period. In 13 (4%) districts there were three turnovers during the period of the study. The schools with two or more turnovers create the higher percentages reported in Table One. Accordingly, it is in these districts that one may expect to find characteristics associated with rapid su-

perintendent turnover. As noted earlier, the subjects interviewed were drawn from the districts with multiple turnovers.

### Findings on Causes Related to Turnover

The average population in districts with multiple turnovers was approximately 600 residents. Most districts were in agricultural communities located over 30 miles from any population center. Sources queried about these communities referred to them as dying towns characterized by a loss of business vitality and a steady outmigration of inhabitants. These root causes of decline were manifested at the school district level in a number of ways.

Goddard (1970) offered a rudimentary analysis of the higher rate of superintendent turnover in rural districts. Administrative turnover may be caused by such factors as financial problems, the large number of administrative units, the upward mobility of superintendents, the instability of the position, or the inadequacy of the people who comprise the boards of education in small rural districts (Goddard, 1970:7-8). Goddard's analysis was used to build a taxonomy for organizing subject responses.

The identified causes of departure were grouped into four categories:

- 1) Personal Reasons
- 2) Job or District Characteristics
- 3) Problems with Board of Education
- 4) Career Ascendancy

Personal reasons were cited by 10 of the 24 subjects as the primary cause of their leaving. Four superintendents ought to move closer to their home or "roots" and had achieved a career level that allowed them to do so. Stress on family, educational needs of children, and marriage were mentioned. One subject who had been a short-term superintendent in a small, rural school summed up his reasons for leaving by saying: "We traveled to buy groceries; we traveled to go to the doctor; we traveled for entertainment; we traveled to go to church; and we traveled to do everything."

Eight former superintendents cited job or district conditions as the primary cause of their departure. Mentioned in this category were such factors as declining enrollment, poor district financial health, and administrative interference by board members. Several of these superintendents were ousted by the return of the "native son"—local individuals who wanted their jobs back. In one of these situations, board members sought to give a job to a qualified local whose farm was failing. Generally, the short-term superintendent in this group complained frequently about the power exerted by individual community members. A poor coaching record, the disciplining of the wrong student, the unhappy parent with influential relatives all were examples used to illustrate the power of individual community members.

Five of the subjects directly attributed their departure to problems with board relations. All five depicted board member confusion over board role and their eventual inability to cope with that confusion. The superintendent was expected to be the board "puppet" or "scapegoat." Boards would instruct superintendents to fire a teacher or undertake some similar action that the superintendent could not perform professionally or ethically.

Finally, four participants in the study indicated their move to be simply a move up. Shiroda (1973) labeled this movement career ascendancy. One superintendent noted that the new job provided a salary increase of \$6,000. Another indicated that he had been recruited. Another had only planned to stay at the vacated superintendency until experience and visibility had been attained and then move

to a better job. All saw their move as a departure from a low prestige district to one with higher prestige.

### Discussion and Implications

Turnover appears to be a constant feature of the Nebraska school landscape and it may be a phenomenon on the increase. During 1987/88, Nebraska's schools experienced 50 superintendent turnovers, a percentage of about 15%. Sixty-six percent of those leaving one superintendency left to assume similar positions in Nebraska or other states. Eighteen percent retired. Two percent died and it was unknown what happened to the remaining 14%. These turnovers continued to be concentrated in small, rural, isolated schools in dying communities.

American society grows more stratified and economically segregated (Martin, 1988). School districts are not outside these societal changes. Thus, in terms of wealth and stability, some school districts fare better than others. Policy makers need to face this reality and begin to redress the unequal distribution of resources that is manifested in differential turnover rates of superintendents.

More information is needed about superintendent turnover and its causes. When top school management changes, the ability of school leaders to provide a nurturing environment for educational programs is compromised. This is not to say that management should not change. However, some degree of organizational stability is necessary for schools to function. High superintendent turnover is a symptom that the local school organization lacks direction and future orientation.

This study explored turnover and its implications only in a rural context. While the investigators did not empirically contrast the rural districts and superintendents of this study with other districts and superintendents, there is reason to expect unique differences in rural areas. Too often,

state and national policy studies are directed at schools regardless of local environment and organizational conditions. Such approaches miss critical distinctions.

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## Book Review

**College: The Undergraduate Experience in America**, by Ernest L. Boyer. New York: Harper and Row, 1987. 328 pp.

In the four years since the National Commission on Excellence in Education appeared on the scene with *A Nation at Risk*, American's have exhibited an increased interest in the state of education, its function, its successes, and ultimately its failures. While the focus has shifted from the rudiments of elementary education to the preparatory service of secondary instruction, the interest has far from abated. Now, with texts such as *Cultural Literacy* by E.D. Hirsch, Jr., and Allan Bloom's *The Closing of the American Mind* topping the non-fiction bestseller lists, the examination of this nation's institutions of higher education is at hand.

The most recent study by The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching is detailed in **College: The Undergraduate Experience in America** by Ernest L. Boyer. A companion to **High School: A Report on Secondary School in America**, the current text explores the next step on the continuum of knowledge, baccalaureate education. Focusing on eight primary problems identified by the Carnegie group as undermining the success of higher education, Boyer examines each not only from the standpoint of the individual, but likewise endeavors to analyze the implication the insufficiency of knowledge will have on the nation and

world in which he lives. While the unearthing of problems in colleges and universities is obligatory in any such analysis, it is perhaps Boyer's attention to the role the college graduate will play in society that sets this study apart from the rest. What is college doing to prepare students for democratic leadership? Are steps being taken to close the gap between public policy and public understanding? Do graduates understand and appreciate the dignity of work? To Boyer the dual traditions of individuality and community in higher education must work in harmony:

"Colleges . . . should help students become independent, self-reliant human beings, yet they should also give priority to community . . . To serve private priorities while neglecting social obligations is, ultimately, to undermine self-interest."

With this study and the resulting analysis, Boyer and the members of The Carnegie Foundation call for a reduction of the depersonalization of the college experience. As the university setting is ideally to represent society at large, effort must be made to reduce the distancing of the student from his world. To meet the needs of the global community, that which is learned must be applicable to "humane ends."

The philosophical nature of this inquiry makes Boyer's text both readable and thought-provoking. While intended as a guidebook for American higher education, the tenets set forth by this study are no less relevant to institutions of higher learning throughout the world.

Reviewed by Susan Day Harmison  
Book Review Editor