Professional Development:
Determining Member Needs for the
Virginia Business Education Association

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PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:  
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VIRGINIA BUSINESS EDUCATION ASSOCIATION  

by  
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(ABSTRACT)  

The purpose of this study was to determine the professional development needs of business educators in Virginia. An instrument was developed to assess priorities for leaders in business education in Virginia and the Virginia Business Education Association. The priorities were analyzed according to geographic region represented, and demographic factors of the respondents were compared to the priority rankings.  

Business educators attending regional conferences throughout Virginia during October, 1990 participated in this study. Two hundred and fifty usable instruments were received.  

A descriptive statistical analysis was used to determine the rank order, mean and standard deviation of the priorities; the same analysis by break-variable was used to determine the mean rankings for each geographic region. Correlations were run to determine relationships between the demographic factors and the priority rankings.
Conclusions resulting from data analyses performed and reported in this study are as follows: (1) business educators are concerned with keeping business education relevant to workforce needs, and they are aware of the importance of integrating business education into the academic curriculum; (2) business educators desire their professional organization to act as their advocate at the local and state levels, as well as provide them with regional professional development opportunities; (3) business educators from all geographic regions agreed on their priority rankings for business education leaders and the VBEA; and (4) business educators with advanced degrees and/or more years experience do not differ significantly in their priority rankings from those educators without advanced degrees and fewer years of service.
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Dedicated to
Lois A. Beeken
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CHAPTER 1
BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Vocational professional organizations have traditionally played an important role in the delivery of vocational education to students. These organizations operate on national, state, regional, and local levels. They endeavor to influence legislation affecting education, assist educators in understanding and implementing legislative mandates, and assist educators in developing professional leadership potential.

New technologies have had an impact on the workplace, challenging vocational education to meet expanded requirements for workers. Employers are no longer satisfied with skill training alone; they also demand employees who are literate and possess problem-solving skills. The changing global environment requires workers who are prepared to function in a global economy.

In addition, changes have been mandated by the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act of 1990. "Accountability" and "performance standards" must be implemented by 1992. The new law also directs vocational educators to integrate academics into their curricula and emphasize basic skills.
In order to meet these and other challenges, it is more important than ever for vocational educators to develop and enhance their professionalism. There continues to be some doubt as to whether teaching is a true profession. Professionalism is defined as: "The conduct, aims, or qualities that characterize or mark a profession or a professional person" (Woolf, p. 554). However, when applied to public school education, professionalism has been poorly defined and even more poorly understood (Lam, 1982). In the context of public school education, professionalism has two aspects, structural and attitudinal (Lam, 1983). Much of the pressure for change in education has targeted the teacher along with curriculum and assessment, which are traditionally domains of the teacher. Educational reforms, however, often lead to decreased autonomy for the teaching professional (Edcisky, 1988).

Additionally, "... professional educators need to become better at telling our story to others" Stewig noted (1985, p. 652). Professional activities that promote vocational education's importance and accomplishments are needed. "If vocational education is to survive as a vibrant profession, then we all must be committed to the total profession, not just individual parts" (Peters, 1982, p. 36).
Professional development activities leading to professional growth are vital to the education professional; however, Duke (1990) reported that many teachers find it difficult to identify meaningful professional development goals. Duke believes, therefore, that teachers need to become more aware of their professional needs in order to identify meaningful growth activities.

Membership in vocational professional organizations is an important part of professional development. Through attendance at local, regional, and national conferences, members have the opportunity to form networks with colleagues and share practical ideas for curriculum and classroom instruction. Leadership skills can be developed through committee work and holding office in professional organizations. Pending legislation and trends which will have an impact on the profession can be identified. Additionally, "... the involvement of classroom teachers in association work, ... generally increases their knowledge of their subject area and their leadership abilities" (Guilinger, 1986, p. 25).

More specifically, the promotion of business education requires cooperative efforts. The combination of a professional association working in harmony with business educators is one of the most effective ways to promote the
profession (Bell, 1983). Professional associations can assist educators in achieving excellence through their various activities.

The professional publications of the associations offer members access to professional literature on a regular basis. Publications generally contain articles of interest to the educator such as articles containing new ideas regarding instructional methods or success stories of colleagues. "The flow of useful information and new ideas which comes through the literature of the professional associations is a powerful advantage to the business educator who is sincerely interested in improving his or her professional effectiveness" (Bell, 1983, p. 49).

In addition to publications, the professional associations sponsor other activities that benefit the educator. Professional conferences, leadership development seminars, and legislative efforts provide educators with valuable opportunities for professional growth. Additionally, student contests and competitions sponsored by the associations offer business teachers an opportunity to promote and publicize their students' achievements. "Achievement and excellence are spotlighted with maximum impact on those who must be made aware of business education's achievements if the needed support which they can provide is to be obtained" (Bell, 1983, p. 50).
Virginia Business Education Association

The Virginia Business Education Association (VBEA) began in 1921 as the Commercial Teachers Section of the Virginia Education Association (VEA). The section held annual meetings and frequent inservice training sessions for business teachers during the following years. In 1938 the group changed its name to Virginia Business Education Association (VBEA), becoming the Business Education Section of the VEA and a section of the Virginia Vocational Association.

Currently the VBEA is affiliated with the National Business Education Association (NBEA), the Virginia Education Association (VEA), the American Vocational Association (AVA), and the Virginia Vocational Association (VVA). The purpose of the VBEA, as stated in its constitution, is to advance and improve business education in Virginia (VBEA Constitution, 1990).

The VBEA offers services and activities to its members. It is open to professional and retired educators and students in business education. The Association sponsors awards for the student organizations of Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) at the middle and high school levels and Phi Beta Lambda at the college level.
The association disseminates information to its members through newsletters, an annual issue of the Virginia Business Education Journal, and sessions at an annual conference. In addition, it serves as a legislative representative for business educators through the efforts of its legislative committee which encourages active support of legislation for business education in Virginia. The association also endeavors to educate the citizens of Virginia about business education.

The Virginia Business Education Association has a membership of 399 professional members, 43 Student members, and 11 retired members (Agee, 1991). In recent years membership has fluctuated as it has for most vocational professional associations; therefore, VBEA leaders have attempted to make the organization more responsive to member needs. Some recent efforts have included: awards for outstanding business teachers at the secondary and postsecondary level, distinguished service award for business educator, a VBEA scholarship program, and a VBEA sponsored summer inservice conference for business teachers.

Association members are facing challenges on national, state, and local levels. More than ever, business educators, as well as all vocational educators, need strong
professional associations to help them cope with legislative mandates and tighter state budgets.

Need for the Study

As stated earlier, professional associations can play a large part in developing educators' professionalism, but the associations' leaders may need to become more aware of what activities educators perceive to be vital to their professional growth. In the Fall of 1990, the Executive Board of the VBEA decided to survey business teachers in Virginia to determine what professional development activities they perceived to be important. An instrument (questionnaire) was developed to use at regional professional development meetings in the fall. The first part of the instrument was dedicated to demographic information, and the second part asked participating teachers to rank two sets of priorities. The first ranking asked them to rank priorities for leaders in business education for the next five years; the second ranking asked them to rank ways the Virginia Business Education Association could help them as business educators.

The Board felt that by asking the teachers to rank various needs in priority order they would be able to provide association activities that would be more in line with what teachers perceived to be their needs. In
addition, the very process of ranking priorities would require the teachers to analyze their own situations and use a goal-setting process to determine their needs.

**Purpose of the Study and Research Questions**

This study was conducted with Virginia business educators attending regional conferences in October, 1990. The following specific research questions were addressed:

1. What should be the priorities of leaders in business education over the next five years?
2. What should be the priorities of the Virginia Business Education Association for helping its members?
3. Do business educators' priority rankings differ according to geographic region?
4. In what ways do the demographic factors of institutional affiliation, years of experience, and educational degree relate to business educators' priority rankings on the first two questions?

**Delimitation and Limitation**

This study was delimited to obtaining priority rankings on two questions. The business educators completing the instrument were asked to rank two sets of priorities. The first set asked them to rank priorities for leaders in business education in Virginia; the second set asked them to
rank ways in which the VBEA could help them as business educators.

The study was limited to a convenience population of educators attending seven regional conferences in October, 1990. The regional conferences are held as inservice education meetings and attract a large number of business educators each year. The use of this population eliminated the cost of mailing and guaranteed participation of a large number of business educators.

**Significance of the Study**

Goal identification is a common planning technique found very useful in the corporate sphere. Teachers have often overlooked the potential of choosing goals to enhance their own professional growth, relying more often on goals established at the administrative level (Bey, 1986). A review of the literature reveals that using goal setting to establish priorities is a relatively new concept especially on the secondary level. "Unfortunately, the practice of setting professional goals is seldom recognized from the position of helping a teacher enhance his or her effectiveness in the classroom" (Bey, 1986, p. 2).

Therefore, a study of this type has broad implications. Other professional associations, vocational or otherwise, may find it useful in planning membership activities;
regional or district supervisors may be able to incorporate goal-setting techniques to help their educators assess their professional development needs. Colleges and universities should also benefit from this study as they plan institutes and workshops for pre-service teachers as well as teachers already in the field.

**Definition of Terms**

The following terms are defined as they apply to this study:

**Business educators** are those individuals employed to teach business subjects and units in middle and high schools, vocational centers, community colleges, and colleges and universities in Virginia. Examples of business classes are accounting, keyboarding, computer applications, business English, and business math.

**Region** refers to one of the eleven Virginia membership districts of the Future Business Leaders of America, which serve as the attendance regions for Virginia business educator inservice activities.

**Institutional affiliation** refers to the institutional affiliation of the individual completing the instrument. The institutions indicated were (a) middle school/junior high school, (b) high school (including vocational center), (c) community college, (d) college/university,
(e) supervisor/administrator, (f) student, and (g) other (including retired teacher, business/industry, and guidance counselor).

**Vocational professional associations** are organizations which offer membership to vocational educators at the national, state, regional, and local levels. These associations provide many services to educators including, but not limited to, opportunities to form networks with colleagues, professional development opportunities, opportunities to develop leadership skills, and advocacy for legislation which positively affects vocational education.

**Professional development activities** are activities which educators undertake to further develop their teaching and classroom skills. These activities most often take place at inservice seminars or workshops which occur at various times during the academic year. Professional association conferences and conventions also provide professional development activities.

**Area conferences** refers to the area conferences held as inservice education activities for Virginia business educators, generally on an annual basis.

**Virginia Business Education Association (VBEA)** is a professional association for business educators in Virginia. The VBEA is affiliated with the National Business Education,
the Virginia Education Association, the American Vocational Association, and the Virginia Vocational Association.
CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This section includes a review of related and pertinent literature. The literature reviewed revealed a paucity of research related to the topic of the study, which is an analysis of the professional development needs and priorities of members of the Virginia Business Education Association. Thus, the literature reviewed focused on the following topics: professionalism and professional associations, professional development, and assessing professional development needs.

Professionalism and Professional Associations

"A pervading political precept is that the most powerful groups are those that are united" (Blais & Frick, 1987, p. 2). Professional associations are important to all occupations; they help bring power, recognition and status to the group (Taub, 1985). Because teaching is seldom viewed as a profession by those who are not directly involved in education, educational professional associations are crucial to education. In fact, the term "professionalism" in the context of education has been poorly defined or understood (Lam, 1982). In 1983, Lam developed a theoretical framework for the attitudinal
dimension of professionalism which is important with respect to program delivery and instructional quality (Lam, 1983). Included in his framework was the importance of the professional organization to the teacher as a major reference.

Currently there are many pressures on educators which detract from their professionalism. According to Edcisky (1988) many problems of society are conveniently blamed on education, resulting in the call for educational reforms which target teachers and their traditional domains. According to House (1991) many of the educational policies at the national, state, and local levels of government were reactions to the economic policies at the national level. Many of the reforms, which were designed to cost little, were the results of media and government efforts, with education research playing a reactive rather than proactive role.

Many educational policies of the 1980's were attempts by federal, state, and local governments to deal with the ensuing crises by disciplining students and teachers through tougher regulations and standards, often by adding requirements and achievement testing, and by intensifying competition among students and organizations (House, 1991, p. 25).

Professional educators can improve their public relations through membership in professional organizations. These organizations can publicize their successes and
endeavor to shape public opinion. A more realistic view of the national role of education must be articulated by educators (House, 1991). "Professional associations do have a role in shaping public policy and educational programs" (Bragaw, 1986, p. 217).

There are several professional associations from which vocational educators may choose. Most vocational educators have the opportunity to belong to the American Vocational Association (AVA) as well as to the organizations associated with their specific fields. For business educators the largest and most active organization is the National Business Education Association (NBEA) with its state affiliates.

The opportunities for involvement in these professional associations vary; therefore, membership can fulfill a variety of member needs. Association activities offer opportunities to develop leadership qualities as well as opportunities to form networks with colleagues at state and regional conferences. The professional organization provides a more personal opportunity for growth and advancement to the individual business educator, and allows the business educator to make a significant impact on the business education field as well as on public opinion (Bronner, 1983). In many ways the state associations
contribute to the visibility and effectiveness of business education in each state (Culver, 1984).

**Professional Development**

Professional development activities for educators often take place at inservice seminars or workshops which occur at various times during the academic year. In the late 1970's and early 1980's political pressure for educational reform increased professional and staff development activities without the benefit of coordination and planning (Gallegos, 1980). Due to differing perceptions of inservice training needs, as well as limited assessment models, criteria for these activities were difficult to establish. Many teachers value and desire additional learning as evidenced by the large numbers of teachers who obtain master's degrees on their own time (National Education Association, 1983); however professional development activities are often planned with very little input from them as to what their needs are.

Most inservice programs have lacked a consistent, uniform approach to staff development that takes into account the needs and goals of the individual educators or the school system (Byrne, 1983). The identification of professional goals has not been a common planning technique
used by teachers; rather they tend to work towards goals decided upon at the administrative level which disregard their personal professional expectations (Bey, 1986).

To improve his or her teaching, each educator's potential should be nurtured. In order to meet these individual needs, inservice programs should meet the following criteria: 1) they should be primarily teacher oriented and teacher controlled; 2) diverse and flexible; 3) sequentially planned; and 4) include training requirements that individuals view as important and relevant to their professional development (Byrne, 1983). If programs are not designed to fit teacher and school needs, or if they are repetitious, they will probably meet with teacher resistance.

Professional development which includes inservice activities designed to assist teachers develop better classroom skills can have significant impact on teacher professionalism. In a comparative analysis of teacher attitudes, Lam (1982) found that teachers who perceived professional development to be useful had high scores on all aspects of professionalism. Lam (1983) noted that professional development fosters professional attitudes.

The desire for more teacher input into professional development activities has become more pronounced in the
last decade. In an appraisal of professional development activities in Oklahoma, Osborne (1987) cited components of successful professional growth programs including the involvement of both the teaching and administrative staff in setting goals for the growth activities, and effective communication that includes feedback and evaluation. Osborne contended that "success breeds success, strength breeds strength, and effective teaching in a school system will lead to higher levels of effective teaching" (p. 8).

The importance of goal identification and the teacher's participation in the planning of professional development activities cannot be overstated. However, as noted earlier, many teachers have difficulty in identifying goals or assessing their needs. Fessler and Burke (1983) suggested that supervisors can assist teachers by videotaping them in their classrooms, or by providing personal assessment rating forms to the teachers. Above all, it is important for the teacher and supervisor to agree on teacher needs to insure that professional growth activities are effective.

Asessing Professional Development Needs

Identifying teacher needs is the key to meaningful professional development activities. A needs assessment can be used by vocational educators to make informed decisions in planning professional development activities that will
meet their needs as well as those of their students, the administration, and their community. Needs assessment should be the initial planning step in managing change (Smith & Roth, 1989). The common methods of assessing needs are interviews, surveys, and small group meetings.

In an effort to improve vocational education in Oklahoma, a Delphi technique was used with selected state department of vocational and technical education staff members to identify and prioritize their concerns relating to program improvement (Stone, 1982). Stone conducted two Delphi studies, grouping the supportive services staff members in one group and educational services staff members into a second group. Both groups were requested to list a maximum of 10 concerns or problems related to the improvement of vocational education programs which they felt should be examined within the next five years.

The concerns that were identified and prioritized by both groups are as follows:

Support Services Group

1) Identify new technology and/or programs appropriate to vo-tech training;
2) Research the quality of instruction taking place in vocational programs throughout the state;
3) Evaluate the effectiveness of the CIMC package of curriculum materials: competency profile, curriculum manual, learning activity packet, media, and SOCAT test.
4) Identify effects of competency profiles;
5) Relate programs to jobs for which they specifically train;
6) Validate competency performance tests;
7) Develop competency performance tests;
8) Continue field testing of curriculum manuals for validity;
9) Research the effectiveness of the State Department of Vocational and Technical Education program evaluation system;
10.5) Combine programs with duplication of information and use modular programming with computer-based instruction and student articulation control monitored by computerization, e.g. auto mechanics, diesel, farm equipment repair, small engines;
10.5) Identify criteria for establishment or continuation of a vocational program.

Educational Services Group

1) Identify new and emerging technologies and industry practices appropriate to vo-tech training and retraining;
2) Research the effectiveness of supervisory visitations and team evaluations;
3) Determine perceptions of major industries and the general public toward vocational education in Oklahoma;
4) Analyze the State Department of Vocational and Technical Education's ability to respond to immediate training needs in the workplace;
5) Survey former vocational students to determine their attitudes toward the vocational training they received;
6) Conduct a follow-up of the State Department of Vocational and Technical Education evaluation teams' recommendations for program improvement to determine what percentage of the suggested improvements have been put into effect;
7) Identify reasons for declining enrollments in specific vocational programs;
8) Explore in depth the utilization of computers in industrial application (manufacturing process control, etc.);
9) Research the impact that the increasing availability of home computers may have on
vocational education, e.g. training programs, delivery systems;

10) Identify the effects of recruitment and placement activities on students' program selections (Stone, 1982, p. 10-13).

The concerns of both groups differed in scope and priority, and those concerns common to both groups differed in the groups' perceptions of importance. These differences were attributed to the differences in job functions of the two groups and individuals within the groups. Even with these differences, the list of concerns is still an effective planning tool (Stone, 1982).

Khaleel (1990) also used a Delphi process to identify significant issues currently confronting vocational education. An instrument was developed consisting of clusters and definitions, categories of concern in vocational education, issues, rating scale (four-point Likert-type), and space for other items to be added by panelists. The validated instrument was sent out to respondents in three rounds and in each round items were deleted, modified, or added. The Delphi process was used to build consensus on the importance of the issues identified. The panelists used for this study were members of the University Council for Vocational Education.

Ninety-four issues were identified; of those, the following represent the ten highest rated issues.
Is vocational education perceived by the public as an integral part of the education system?

Should strategies be designed for informing the public about vocational education?

What should the roles and purposes of vocational education be?

How should vocational teacher pre-service and in-service preparation be improved?

How can high-caliber individuals be attracted to careers in teaching vocational education?

How can minority vocational teachers be attracted and retained?

To what extent should business and industry collaborate with vocational education?

How should vocational education accommodate greater diversity of learners, including women, Hispanics, Blacks, the handicapped, limited-English-proficient individuals, older adults, and the incarcerated?

What should be done to strengthen the instructional skills of non-degreed vocational teachers, including those already teaching and those who seek entry into vocational teaching from business and industry?

Should vocational education be included as a sound element of an academic curriculum? (Khaleel, 1990, p. 10-11).

A questionnaire format was also used by the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) to identify professional development needs for school counselors (Comas, Cecil, Deery, Lee & Wigtil, 1987). The association developed a questionnaire containing 119 potential professional development needs. These questionnaires were distributed to
ASCA local presidents and president-elects attending a leadership conference in 1986. The results of the questionnaire were summarized, and the top 14 rank-ordered needs were sent to all the ASCA presidents and presidents-elects on the association's mailing list and asked to select the top two needs. The association summarized the results again, selected the two top-priority professional development needs, and prepared bibliographic information on the needs for its members.

Another method of identifying or assessing professional development needs is the small group meeting. These meetings are usually an effective method of determining participants' feelings and often incorporate some form of "brainstorming" technique. In a study to develop a process to discover professional development needs and plan in-service programs for physical education teachers in the Edmonton Public School System, brainstorming techniques were used in small group settings involving teachers, administrators and university faculty (Beauchamp & Borys, 1980). Prior to the study, informal discussions were held with the teachers at which time their desire for autonomy was strongly expressed. "The process for identifying needs was based on the premise that professional development
needs, solutions, and actions must be 'owned' by teachers" (Beauchamp & Borys, 1980, p. 2).

The participants in the study found the "brainstorming" process to be a successful one. Not only was a long range plan for professional development for the Edmonton School System developed, but the study's brainstorming technique fostered openness and trust among the participants.

Assessing Business Educators' Needs

A one minute survey was used at the 1985 Annual Business Meeting and Convention of the Ohio Business Teachers Association to assess convention attendees' perceptions of importance of subject matter areas, patterns of curriculum and competencies needed for initial job entry at present and 10 years in the future (Siferd, Clements, & White, 1986). The questionnaire contained 18 subject matter areas important to business education, 5 curricular patterns, and 8 categories of competencies; a Likert scale was used to rate each item's importance.

Analyses of the completed questionnaires showed that the perceived level of significance of several subject matter areas altered over the 10 year period. Both shorthand and typewriting decreased in importance, while word processing, business English, business management, consumer economics, economics, and marketing increased in
importance. Business English was ranked highest for 1985, while for 1995, computer literacy received the highest ranking.

The curricular patterns ranked highest for 1995 in order of their importance were (1) intensive office education, (2) traditional business education, (3) cooperative office education, (4) cooperative retail marketing, and (5) laboratory retail marketing. When compared to the ranking of curricular patterns for 1985, no significant increase or decrease in ranking or importance was experienced.

The eight competencies perceived to be necessary for initial job entry in 1985 were human relations, communication, editing, typewriting, records management, evaluation, administrative, and reprographic. The perceived importance of all of these competencies was expected to grow significantly by 1995.

Although the initial purpose of this survey was not directed to professional development, results of the survey and others like it may be used to identify professional development needs. According to Siferd, et al.:

To strive for standards of excellence in business education, advisory committees should be utilized for the purpose of making periodic surveys to determine skills and knowledges needed by students enrolled in business education programs. Recommendations by the advisory committees should help to assure the relevancy of the content and
methods in business education programs at all instructional levels. Business and office education teachers ... should be prepared to objectively examine new and innovative patterns of curricular organization in secondary school programs (Siferd, et al., 1986, p. 13).

Wray and Haynes (1990) used a small group technique, the nominal group technique, with a representative sample of Illinois' secondary business teachers to identify their perceptions of the critical issues facing their profession. This technique, which was developed by Delbecq and Van de Ven in 1968, divides participants into small groups. Within these groups, issues are identified and recorded. These issues are then discussed and clarified within the group; finally the participants individually rank order issues and priorities are established through pooling of the individual rankings.

The main objective of the study was to determine the challenges to business educators in Illinois. By identifying these perceived challenges, inservice programs could be structured to assist the teachers to meet the identified challenges. By comparing these challenges to the critical issues identified by a 1983 National Business Education Association Task Force On Critical Issues, the researchers were also able to determine if the perceived challenges differed geographically.
The participants identified and rank-ordered the following fifteen challenges:

increased high school graduation requirements;
shortage of financial resources;
gaining the support of administrators;
increased college entrance requirements;
diminished image of business education;
decreasing high school enrollments;
increased state mandated courses;
misconceptions held by parents concerning the need for college education;
updating the business education curriculum;
developing harmony and enthusiasm within local Business Education Departments;
overcoming counselors directing students into nonvocational courses;
increasing cost of state-of-the-art equipment;
finding time and support for in-service training;
working with state and federal legislators;
working with business representatives and advisory committees (Wray & Haynes, 1990, p. 3).

Although many of these challenges were found to be among the critical issues identified by a NBEA task force, the Illinois' business teachers identified new challenges. The authors attributed some of these to educational reforms being introduced in public education.

Wray and Haynes (1990) concluded that challenges facing business education do differ on a geographical basis. They recommend that the nominal group technique be used as a model for similar studies in other areas of the country.

Assessing needs for professional development is critical to the success of a professional development program. According to Smith and Roth, the individuals
responsible for implementing the programs and those who will be affected should be involved or at least represented in the needs assessment process (Smith & Roth, 1989). However, few instances of needs assessments studies were reported in the literature, particularly as related to professional associations such as the Virginia Business Education Association.
CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to determine the professional development activities business education teachers in Virginia perceive to be important. Four research questions were answered:

1. What should be the priorities of leaders in business education over the next five years?
2. What should be the priorities of the Virginia Business Education Association for helping its members?
3. Do business educators' priority rankings differ according to geographic region?
4. In what ways do the demographic factors of institutional affiliation, years of experience, and educational degree relate to business educators' priority rankings on the first two questions?

A description of the research methodology used to answer these questions is organized according to the following topics: preliminary investigation and planning, general research methodology and design, and specific research methodology.
Preliminary Investigation and Planning

In the Fall of 1990, the Board of Directors of the Virginia Business Education Association (VBEA) determined a need to survey business teachers in Virginia to examine what professional development activities they perceived to be important. Carl Jorgensen, Business Education Service, Virginia Department of Education, contacted the business education program area of the Division of Vocational and Technical Education at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University to solicit help with this study.

Developing the Survey Instrument

An instrument was needed to assess the professional development activities that Virginia business teachers perceived to be important. A questionnaire format was selected for the instrument which incorporated demographic data as well as the rankings of priorities for the Virginia Business Education Association (VBEA) and for leaders in business education.

A survey instrument, developed by Rho Chapter of Delta Pi Epsilon for use with Ohio Business teachers, was used as a guide for the demographic questions (Siferd, Clements, & White, 1986). To answer the research questions, demographic information requested included institutional affiliation, district, years of experience, and highest degree earned was
obtained. A rough draft of the instrument was prepared and reviewed by two faculty members of the Vocational and Technical Education Division at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. After incorporating their suggested changes, the demographic portion of the questionnaire was finalized.

**Priorities for Business Education Leaders**

The priorities to be ranked for business education leaders were determined at a meeting of the business education supervisors and teacher educators of Virginia in Richmond on September 26, 1990. The individuals attending the meeting, five Department of Education supervisors and eleven teacher educators from seven institutions, split into two groups, and using the nominal group technique (Lynch, Schmidt, & Asche, 1988) developed two lists of priorities. The top five priorities from each list were combined and edited to eliminate repetition. A final list of nine priorities was used on the instrument along with a space for "other." The nine priorities on the instrument were:

- Expand partnerships with business and industry
- Develop and implement curriculum and methods for its revision
- Interdisciplinary initiatives (cognitive skills across curriculum, lifelong learning, provide program completers with diverse skills)
Facilitate teacher/staff development (concerns of students with special needs, new technology, cross training of teachers)

Align curriculum with needs in workforce including emerging occupations

Refine the business education curriculum to lessen course fragmentation and increase teacher expertise in specialty areas

Provide keyboarding support and leadership at all levels (K-12) of the school division

Align business education to be a part of the academic program including honors courses

Focus upon developing state-of-art communication skills of students, oral and written via use of office technology

Priorities for VBEA

After consultation with B. June Schmidt, faculty member, and Jeffrey Stewart, program area leader of business education at Virginia Tech, seven priorities along with a space for "other" were listed as the VBEA priorities on the draft copy of the instrument. These priorities were reviewed and discussed by the VBEA Executive Board at a September 22, 1990 meeting in Charlottesville. The Board gave no suggestions for changes; therefore, the priorities for VBEA were listed on the instrument as presented to the Board. The priorities were as follows:

Publicize accomplishments of business educators

Provide input to legislative groups at the state level
Provide input to local school boards

Provide professional development opportunities on a state level

Provide professional development opportunities on a regional level

Represent Virginia at national meetings of business educators

Provide opportunities for business educators to publish

The final form of the instrument was sent to Carl Jorgensen for reproduction. The instrument was then distributed to teachers attending business education regional conferences in October, 1990.

Research Procedures

Five research procedures were followed for this study. First, the individuals who would complete the instrument were located. Second, the instrument was distributed and collected. Third, a coding system was developed. Fourth, the instrument was prepared for analyses. Fifth, data analyses were performed.

Study Respondents

The respondents were business education teachers attending regional conferences throughout Virginia during October, 1990. These conferences were inservice education meetings for business educators which were held in each of
seven regions of the Commonwealth in October. Thus participation of a large number of business educators from across the Commonwealth was assured.

**Distribution and Collection of Instrument**

The final form of the instrument (included as Appendix A) was sent to Carl Jorgensen at the Virginia Department of Education for reproduction. Copies of the instrument were distributed at the regional conferences by Jeffrey Stewart, program area leader of business education at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, who was a feature presenter at each conference. The conference attendees were asked to complete the instrument and return them to Dr. Stewart as part of the conference. At the completion of the regional conferences, Dr. Stewart returned 295 completed questionnaires for analysis.

**Developing a Coding System**

Appendix B shows a sample coded instrument. Two hundred and ninety-five instruments were received, of which 45 were unusable. These instruments were not completed correctly; the respondents either did not rank the priorities at all or checked them rather than prioritizing them. The 250 usable instruments (85%) were coded to prepare them for data entry. To facilitate data analysis, numbers were assigned to all variables.
Preparing the Instrument for Analysis

Once the coding scheme was developed, the data were entered using the Number Cruncher Statistical System, Version 5.03, on an IBM Personal Computer XT. The data from each instrument was entered, and all data were manually checked for accuracy. To simplify data analyses of the priorities, the rankings were entered as completed on the instruments; however, at the completion of the data entry, a recoding transformation was run to change the rankings from 1 = highest to 10 = highest on the first set of priorities and to from 1 = highest to 8 = highest on the second set of priorities.

Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics were completed for (a) the overall rank order, mean, and standard deviation of each set of priorities; (b) the mean for each priority in each district; and (c) the correlation between the variables of institutional affiliation, degree held, and years of experience to the priority rankings.

Questions number one and two about the overall rank order of the priorities were answered by running a descriptive statistical analysis of the two sets of rankings. The resulting means and standard deviations were
then ranked from those with the highest mean to those with the lowest mean.

Question number three comparing priority rankings in each region was answered by running descriptive statistics similar to those in questions one and two, using each region as a break-variable. These statistics were, thus, run for each set of priorities for all eleven regions represented in the study.

Question number four about the correlation between the demographic factors of institutional affiliation, degree held, and years of experience to the priority rankings was answered by running a correlation matrix for all of the independent variables.
CHAPTER 4
FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study was to determine the perceived needs of business educators in Virginia. Through ranking priorities for leaders in business education and the ways in which the Virginia Business Education Association can assist them, business educators indicated their professional needs. Two hundred and ninety-five business educators who attended regional conferences in October, 1990 completed the instrument. Of the instruments completed, 250 were usable (85%). Specifically four questions were answered by this study.

Priorities for Business Education Leaders

The first question is: What should be the priorities of leaders in business education over the next five years?

Business educators completing the instrument were asked to rank nine priorities for leaders in business education over the next five years along with a space for "other." Table 1 depicts the priorities in rank order along with the mean and standard deviation for each priority. As the data in the table reflect, there was a spread of 2.74 in the means. The standard deviations for each priority were quite similar, ranging from 2.14 to 2.82. "align business
Table 1

Priorities of Business Education Leaders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Align business with academics</td>
<td>228</td>
<td>7.73</td>
<td>2.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Align curriculum with workforce needs</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>7.47</td>
<td>2.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keyboarding support (K-12)</td>
<td>214</td>
<td>6.38</td>
<td>2.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partnerships with bus/ind</td>
<td>219</td>
<td>6.28</td>
<td>2.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refine curriculum</td>
<td>216</td>
<td>6.24</td>
<td>2.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop communication skills of students</td>
<td>218</td>
<td>6.17</td>
<td>2.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilitate teacher/staff development</td>
<td>212</td>
<td>5.94</td>
<td>2.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop, implement, &amp; revise curriculum</td>
<td>206</td>
<td>5.48</td>
<td>2.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interdisciplinary initiatives</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>4.99</td>
<td>2.23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Ns varied as all respondents did not rank all items.
education to be a part of the academic program including honors courses" was ranked highest with a mean score of 7.73 and a standard deviation of 2.39 followed closely by "align curriculum with needs in workforce including emerging occupations" with a mean score of 7.47 and a standard deviation of 2.14. The lowest ranked priority was "interdisciplinary initiatives" with a mean score of 4.99 and a standard deviation of 2.23.

Two respondents included a priority in the "other" space; one wrote "encourage systems to keep equipment up to date" and gave it a ranking of two. A second respondent wrote in "fund additional courses," giving it a ranking of one. No other respondents listed "other" as a priority.

Priorities of the Virginia Business Education Association for Helping Members

The second question is: What should be the priorities of the Virginia Business Education Association for helping members?

Business educators completing the instrument were asked to rank seven ways the Virginia Business Education Association could help them as business educators along with a space for "other." Table 2 depicts the priorities in rank order along with the mean and standard deviation for each priority. As the data in the table reflect, the means
Table 2

**Priorities for VBEA to Help Business Educators**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>N&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Input to school boards</td>
<td>214</td>
<td>6.37</td>
<td>1.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional professional development opportunities</td>
<td>224</td>
<td>6.30</td>
<td>1.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input to state legislative groups</td>
<td>214</td>
<td>6.18</td>
<td>1.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State professional development opportunities</td>
<td>212</td>
<td>5.76</td>
<td>1.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publicize accomplishments</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>4.24</td>
<td>1.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Represent Virginia at national meetings</td>
<td>198</td>
<td>4.12</td>
<td>1.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide opportunities publish</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>2.83</td>
<td>1.49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>a</sup>Ns varied as all respondents did not mark all items.
ranged from 6.37 for the highest priority to a mean of 2.83 for the lowest. The standard deviations ranged from 1.43 to 1.81. "provide input to local school boards" was ranked as the first priority for the VBEA with a mean score of 6.37 and a standard deviation of 1.54 closely followed by "provide professional development opportunities on a regional level" with a mean score of 6.30 and a standard deviation of 1.62. The lowest ranked priority was "provide opportunities for business educators to publish" with a mean score of 2.83 and a standard deviation of 1.49.

Two respondents wrote in priorities in the "other" space as their lowest priority; one wrote in "higher pay," and one wrote in "provide professional development at local levels." One subject added the word "meaningful" to "provide professional development opportunities on a state level and regional level."

Priorities of Business Educators by Geographic Region

The third question is: Do the priorities of business educators differ according to geographic region?

The means and number of subjects ranking each priority are shown in Table 3. A listing of the region names by number is in Appendix C. Although there was general agreement across regions for each priority, at least one
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>11</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Partnerships with bus/ind</td>
<td>6.24</td>
<td>4.59</td>
<td>7.00</td>
<td>6.70</td>
<td>6.60</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>6.31</td>
<td>5.17</td>
<td>5.71</td>
<td>5.96</td>
<td>7.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum</td>
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<td>n=16</td>
<td>n=35</td>
<td>n=6</td>
<td>n=13</td>
<td>n=2</td>
<td>n=9</td>
<td>n=17</td>
<td>n=14</td>
<td>n=26</td>
<td>n=32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.25</td>
<td>5.31</td>
<td>5.57</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>5.11</td>
<td>5.76</td>
<td>6.14</td>
<td>5.50</td>
<td>5.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interdisciplinary initiatives</td>
<td>n=16</td>
<td>n=16</td>
<td>n=37</td>
<td>n=7</td>
<td>n=13</td>
<td>n=2</td>
<td>n=9</td>
<td>n=18</td>
<td>n=13</td>
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<td>n=31</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>4.88</td>
<td>4.78</td>
<td>7.29</td>
<td>5.15</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>4.67</td>
<td>5.17</td>
<td>5.54</td>
<td>5.38</td>
<td>4.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher/staff development</td>
<td>n=16</td>
<td>n=21</td>
<td>n=34</td>
<td>n=8</td>
<td>n=15</td>
<td>n=2</td>
<td>n=9</td>
<td>n=17</td>
<td>n=13</td>
<td>n=26</td>
<td>n=31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5.69</td>
<td>6.57</td>
<td>4.97</td>
<td>6.88</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>7.11</td>
<td>5.59</td>
<td>5.69</td>
<td>5.77</td>
<td>6.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Align curr. to workforce</td>
<td>n=17</td>
<td>n=18</td>
<td>n=39</td>
<td>n=9</td>
<td>n=16</td>
<td>n=2</td>
<td>n=12</td>
<td>n=18</td>
<td>n=14</td>
<td>n=27</td>
<td>n=32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6.88</td>
<td>7.78</td>
<td>7.64</td>
<td>8.22</td>
<td>7.13</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>7.75</td>
<td>8.11</td>
<td>6.29</td>
<td>7.70</td>
<td>7.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refine curriculum</td>
<td>n=16</td>
<td>n=20</td>
<td>n=39</td>
<td>n=6</td>
<td>n=16</td>
<td>n=2</td>
<td>n=11</td>
<td>n=17</td>
<td>n=14</td>
<td>n=26</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6.50</td>
<td>7.35</td>
<td>5.74</td>
<td>6.67</td>
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<td>---</td>
<td>6.09</td>
<td>5.82</td>
<td>6.14</td>
<td>6.73</td>
<td>5.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keyboarding support (K-12)</td>
<td>n=19</td>
<td>n=20</td>
<td>n=35</td>
<td>n=6</td>
<td>n=13</td>
<td>n=2</td>
<td>n=10</td>
<td>n=17</td>
<td>n=13</td>
<td>n=28</td>
<td>n=31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7.26</td>
<td>5.70</td>
<td>6.97</td>
<td>7.50</td>
<td>5.77</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>7.30</td>
<td>7.24</td>
<td>6.31</td>
<td>4.93</td>
<td>6.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Align bus ed with academics</td>
<td>n=20</td>
<td>n=21</td>
<td>n=39</td>
<td>n=7</td>
<td>n=17</td>
<td>n=2</td>
<td>n=13</td>
<td>n=17</td>
<td>n=13</td>
<td>n=27</td>
<td>n=33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8.40</td>
<td>8.38</td>
<td>7.87</td>
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<td>6.92</td>
<td>7.44</td>
<td>7.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student comm. skills</td>
<td>n=18</td>
<td>n=17</td>
<td>n=39</td>
<td>n=8</td>
<td>n=15</td>
<td>n=2</td>
<td>n=12</td>
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<td></td>
<td>6.67</td>
<td>5.24</td>
<td>6.05</td>
<td>6.75</td>
<td>5.93</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>6.17</td>
<td>5.44</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>6.96</td>
<td>6.20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Means are not reported; the number of respondents was 2.
priority was ranked differently by the respondents in each region.

**Priorities for Business Education Leaders by Region**

**Expand partnerships with business and industry**

Business educators in ten regions ranked this priority from 5.17 to 7.10. The mean ranking for this priority in Region 2 was 4.59, which was the lowest mean ranking on any priority for this region and was 2.51 below the highest ranking for this priority. Business educators in Region 2 consider partnerships to be less important than the other priorities listed as well as less important than the other regions.

**Develop and implement curriculum and methods for its revision**

The means for this priority ranged from a high of 6.14 in Region 9 to a low of 4.50 in Region 4. Eight regions ranked this priority at 5.00 or higher, while two of the regions gave it their lowest rankings, Region 1 at 4.25 and Region 4 at 4.50.

**Interdisciplinary initiatives (cognitive skills across curriculum, lifelong learning, provide program completers with diverse skills)**

One region ranked this priority at 7.29; the remaining regions had means ranging from 4.50 to 5.54. The highest
ranking occurred in Region 4, and the lowest ranking occurred in Region 1.

Facilitate teacher/staff development (concerns of students with special needs, new technology, cross training of teachers)

The mean ranking of this priority by business educators in all regions fell within 2.14 points. The lowest ranking, 4.97, was in Region 3, while Region 7 ranked it highest at 7.11.

Align curriculum with needs in workforce including emerging occupations

Although this priority was ranked second in the overall mean rankings (Table 1), it consistently received the highest mean rankings across the regions. Only one region ranked it below 6.50, the mean ranking for Region 9 was 6.29. Two of the regions, Region 4 and Region 8, ranked it above 8.00, and only two regions, Region 1 and Region 9, ranked it below 7.00.

Refine the business education curriculum to lessen course fragmentation and increase teacher expertise in specialty areas

The mean rankings for this priority ranged from a low of 5.38 to a high of 7.35 (all within 1.97 points). Only
three regions, Regions 3, 8, and 11, ranked this priority below 6.00.

Provide keyboarding support and leadership at all levels (K-12) of the school division

The mean ranking for this priority ranged from a low of 4.93 in Region 10 to a high of 7.50 in Region 4. Seven regions had mean rankings above 6.00. However, three regions, Regions 2, 5, and 10, had mean rankings below 6.00. Although this priority was ranked third overall (Table 1), there was a wide spread in the mean rankings across the regions on this priority.

Align business education to be a part of the academic program including honors courses

This priority had consistently high mean rankings from all regions. Only two, Regions 8 and 9, ranked it below 7.00, at 6.00 and 6.96; while Regions 1, 2, and 7, had mean rankings of 8.38 and above for this priority. This priority also received the highest overall mean ranking (Table 1).

Focus upon developing state-of-the-art communication skills of students, oral and written via use of office technology

The mean rankings of this priority were consistent in all regions, within 1.72 points. Only three regions, Regions 2, 5, and 8, had mean rankings below 6.00 for this priority. The mean rankings were 5.24 and above.
Priorities for the Virginia Business Education Association

The means and number of subjects ranking each priority for the VBEA are shown in Table 4. As the data in the table reflect, there is general agreement among respondents from the eleven regions as to the mean rankings; however, for at least one region, the respondents did not agree in their mean ranking with the other regions.

Publicize accomplishments of business educators

The mean rankings by region for this VBEA method of helping business educators varied. The highest mean ranking for this method was found in Region 1, 5.33 out of a possible 8.00. Region 4 had the lowest mean ranking for this priority, 3.88, which was the lowest ranking for any priority. Most of the regional rankings were below 4.44, with only two regions, Regions 1 and 11, having rankings for it at 5.00 or above. These mean rankings are comparable to the overall mean ranking, 4.25, for this priority (Table 2).

Provide input to legislative groups at the state level

There was general agreement among the regions for this method. The mean rankings ranged from a high of 6.65, Region 1, to a low of 5.42, Region 5. Other than the mean ranking in Region 5, all other mean rankings were above 5.42 and within 1.23 points of each other.
Table 4

Means by Region for Ways in Which VEEA Can Help Business Educators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>11</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Publicize accomplishments</td>
<td>n=15</td>
<td>n=17</td>
<td>n=34</td>
<td>n=8</td>
<td>n=14</td>
<td>n=1</td>
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<td></td>
<td>5.33</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>4.44</td>
<td>3.88</td>
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<td>----</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>4.32</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>4.19</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input to state legislative groups</td>
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<tr>
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<td>----</td>
<td>5.64</td>
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<td>6.30</td>
<td>6.15</td>
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<td>5.38</td>
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<td>n=11</td>
<td>n=15</td>
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<td>7.00</td>
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<td>4.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>3.83</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>4.60</td>
<td>4.20</td>
<td>4.40</td>
<td>3.64</td>
<td>4.26</td>
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<tr>
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<td>n=7</td>
<td>n=19</td>
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<td>n=22</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.93</td>
<td>2.18</td>
<td>2.56</td>
<td>5.13</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>2.86</td>
<td>2.58</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>2.86</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Means are not reported since the number of respondents was only 2, or for some priorities only 1.
Provide input to local school boards

This priority received the highest overall mean ranking, 6.34 (Table 2), and all mean rankings for the priority were 5.30 and above. The mean ranking in Region 7 was the highest, 7.28, and the lowest mean ranking was in Region 9, 5.30.

Provide professional development opportunities on a state level

The difference between the highest mean ranking, 6.60 in Region 8, and the lowest mean ranking, 5.38 in Region 11, was only 1.22. This choice was ranked third overall (Table 2); and clearly, the business educators in all eleven regions are in agreement on this priority for VBEA.

Provide professional development opportunities on a regional level

The mean rankings for this priority were higher in each region, with the exception of Region 8, than providing professional development opportunities on a state level as noted for the previous priority. The highest mean ranking was 7.20 in Region 5, and the lowest mean ranking was 5.85 in Region 8. The regions' mean rankings are in line with the overall mean ranking of 6.30 (Table 2).
Represent Virginia at national meetings of business educators

The highest mean ranking for this priority was 5.00 in Region 4, and the lowest mean ranking was 3.40 in Region 1. The mean ranking for this priority in all regions was 5.00 or below. This compares with the overall mean ranking of 4.12 (Table 2).

Provide opportunities for business educators to publish

This method received the lowest mean rankings ranging from a low of 2.18 in Region 2 to a high of 5.13 in Region 4. Only three regions, Regions 4 and 9 and 11, ranked this priority at 3.00 or above. This priority also received the lowest overall mean ranking, 2.83 (Table 2).

Demographic Characteristics Related to Priority Rankings

The fourth question is: In what ways do the demographic factors of institutional affiliation, years of experience, and degree relate to business educator's priority rankings on the first two questions?

To answer the question, correlations between these factors were examined. If a high correlation was found to exist between the respondents' rankings of the priorities of Virginia business education leaders and the VBEA and these characteristics of the respondents, then a relationship
between these characteristics and the rankings was assumed to exist.

In order to assess the strength or weakness of the correlations, values were assigned to serve as criteria for determining strong or weak relationships. In distributions based on objective scores, .50 or below is considered to be a weak relationship; however, in distributions composed of scores obtained subjectively (as in this study), a correlation coefficient of .50 to .60 indicates a strong relationship (Kubiszyn & Borich, 1987). Therefore, the correlation outcomes were interpreted using .50 to .60 as representing strong relationships. The complete correlation matrices appear in Appendices D-G.

Relationship of Institutional Affiliation to Priority Rankings

Business educators completing the survey were asked to indicate their institutional affiliation as part of the demographic information requested on the instrument. The choices given were: Middle School/Jr. High School, High School (including Vocational Center), Community College, College/University, Supervisor/Administrator, Student, or other. Of the 250 surveys that were usable, only 27 (11%) were from respondents not affiliated with a high school. Therefore, the priority rankings from the first two
questions were not correlated with institutional affiliation as the small number of respondents in categories other than high school would not lead to meaningful results.

**Relationship of Years of Experience to Priority Rankings**

Business educators completing the survey were asked to indicate their number of years teaching experience as part of the demographic information requested on the instrument. This information was then correlated with the responses to the priority rankings for state business education leaders and the VBEA.

**Influence of Years of Experience To Priority Rankings for Business Education Leaders**

Table 5 contains the correlation for years experience to Question one—"What should the priorities of leaders in business education be over the next five years?" As the data in the table reflect, there is not a strong relationship between years experience and any of the choices in this ranking. The highest correlation coefficient between years of experience and the priorities is a negative -0.24 for "focus upon developing state-of-art communication skills of students, oral and written via use of office technology." In addition, there were two other negative relationships, "expand partnerships with business and industry," and "align business education to be a part of the
Table 5

Correlation of Years Experience to Ranking of Priorities for Business Education Leaders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Correlation with Years of Experience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Partnerships with business/industry</td>
<td>-0.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum</td>
<td>0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interdisciplinary initiatives</td>
<td>0.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher/staff development</td>
<td>0.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Align curriculum to workforce</td>
<td>-0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refine curriculum</td>
<td>0.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keyboarding support</td>
<td>0.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Align business education with academics</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student communication skills</td>
<td>-0.24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
academic program." However, none of these relationships was strong.

Apparently business educators with more experience did not differ in their rankings of these priorities. However, the negative relationships do point out that business educators with more years experience do not feel as strongly about these priorities as do those with less experience.

Influence of Years Experience on Question Two

Table 6 contains the correlation for years experience to Question two—"What should the priorities of the VBEA be to help its members?" As the data in the table reflect, there is, again, no strong relationship between years of experience and any of the choices in this ranking. The highest correlation coefficient of 0.19 is with "provide input to legislative groups at the state level." However, the relationship was not strong. There were four negative relationships: "publicize accomplishments of business educators," "provide input to local school boards, represent Virginia at national meetings of business educators," and "provide opportunities for business educators to publish." None of these negative relationships, however, can be considered strong.

As the correlation matrix reflects, business educators with more experience do not differ significantly from those
Table 6

Correlation of Years Experience to Ranking of Priorities for VBEA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Correlation with Years Experience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Publicize accomplishments</td>
<td>-0.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input to state legislative groups</td>
<td>0.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input to school boards</td>
<td>-0.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State professional development opportunities</td>
<td>0.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional professional development opportunities</td>
<td>0.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Represent Virginia at national meetings</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publishing opportunities</td>
<td>-0.13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
with less experience. However, the negative relationships do indicate that some educators with more experience do not desire publishing opportunities, or advocacy at the local school board level, national representation, or publicizing of accomplishments as much as those with less experience.

Relationship of Education Degree Obtained to Priority Rankings

Business educators completing the survey were asked to indicate their educational degree attainment as part of the demographic information requested on the instrument. The choices provided were: BA/BS, MA/MS, and PhD/EdD. BA/BS degree was assigned a value of 1, MA/MS a value of 2, and PhD/EdD a value of 3. This information was then correlated to the priority rankings for business education leaders and the VBEA.

Influence of degree obtained on Priorities for Business Education Leaders

Table 7 contains the correlation for degree obtained to Question one—"What should the priorities of leaders in business education be over the next five years?" As the data in the table reflect, there is not a strong relationship between degree obtained and the rankings for this question. The highest correlation coefficient of 0.13 was obtained for "facilitate teacher/staff development
Table 7

Correlation of Degree to Ranking of Priorities for

**Business Education Leaders**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Correlation with Degree Obtained</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Partnerships with business/industry</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum</td>
<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interdisciplinary initiatives</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher/staff development</td>
<td>0.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Align curriculum to workforce</td>
<td>0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refine curriculum</td>
<td>0.02</td>
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<tr>
<td>Keyboarding support</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Align business education with academics</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student communication skills</td>
<td>-0.06</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(concerns of students with special needs, new technology, cross training of teachers)." There were four negative relationships: "expand partnerships with business and industry," "interdisciplinary initiatives (cognitive skills across curriculum, lifelong learning, provide program completers with diverse skills)," "align business education to be a part of the academic program including honors courses," and "focus upon developing state-of-art communication skills of students, oral and written via use of office technology."

The negative relationships indicate that as some of the educators obtained higher degrees the importance of these priorities decreased. The correlations computed were so close to zero in all cases, that the relationships are trivial, at most.

**Relationship of degree obtained to Priorities for VBEA**

Table 8 is contains the correlation for degree obtained to the second Question, "What should the priorities of VBEA be to help its members? As the data in the table reflect none of the relationships between these variables was strong, in fact there was no correlation coefficient above 0.09. The negative relationships between degree obtained were with "publicize accomplishments of business educators,"
Table 8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priorities</th>
<th>Correlation with Degree Obtained</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Publicize accomplishments</td>
<td>-0.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input to state legislative groups</td>
<td>0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input to school boards</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State professional development opportunities</td>
<td>0.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional professional development opportunities</td>
<td>0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Represent Virginia at national meetings</td>
<td>-0.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publishing opportunities</td>
<td>0.04</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
"provide input to local school boards," and "represent Virginia at national meetings of business educators."

The negative relationships in this correlation were also negative in the correlation of years experience. The consistency of these negative relationships would indicate that business educators with more experience and higher degrees do not feel that these priorities are as important as those with less experience and without advanced degrees. But again, the absolute values of the correlations indicated no practical relationships between the priorities and degree held.

**Summary**

The overall mean rankings and order of the priorities for both business education leaders and the VBEA were determined by running a descriptive statistical analysis of both sets of rankings. There was a spread of only 2.74 in the mean rankings for the priorities for business education leaders (7.73 to 4.99) indicating that overall, business educators tended to agree on the importance of the priorities. The ranking of the priorities for the VBEA were more widely spread, 6.37 to 2.83, indicating that business educators preferred the higher ranked choices. To determine the mean rankings for each set of priorities by region, a statistical summary similar to the one for the overall
rankings was run for each of the eleven regions. These analyses indicated that the business educators generally agreed across the regions on their rankings with one or two exceptions by priority.

To determine the correlations of the demographic factors of years experience and degree obtained, correlations were run for each variable. The correlations were not run for the variable of institutional affiliation due to the lack of subjects in categories other than high school. The correlations did not show any meaningful relationships (either positive or negative) between the demographic variables and the priority rankings.
CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter summarizes the previous chapters. In addition, conclusions, recommendations, and suggestions for further study are provided.

Summary

Purpose of the Study and Research Questions

The purpose of this study was to determine the perceived needs of business educators in Virginia. Four research questions were answered in this study:

1. What should be the priorities of leaders in business education over the next five years?

2. What should be the priorities of the Virginia Business Education Association for helping its members?

3. Do business educators' priority rankings differ according to geographic region?

4. In what ways do the demographic factors of institutional affiliation, years of experience, and educational degree relate to business educators' priority rankings on the first two questions?
Instrumentation

An instrument was designed to survey business educators in order to assess the professional development activities that they perceived to be important. A questionnaire format was selected for the instrument which incorporated demographic data and priorities to be ranked for leaders in business education in Virginia and the Virginia Business Education Association (VBEA).

The priorities for the leaders in business education were determined at a meeting of the business education supervisors and teacher educators of Virginia, using the nominal-group technique. Using the top five priorities from two groups, the priorities were narrowed to a list of nine priorities along with a space for "other." Priorities for the VBEA were developed by the researcher and approved by the VBEA Executive Board.

Study Respondents

The respondents were business education teachers attending regional conferences throughout Virginia during October, 1990. Copies of the instrument were distributed at the conferences by Jeffrey Stewart, Program Area Leader of Business Education at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, who was a feature presenter at each
conference. Two hundred and ninety-five instruments were received, of which 45 were unusable.

**Data Analysis**

A descriptive statistical analysis was used to determine the rank order of the priorities along with the mean and standard deviation for the rankings of each priority to answer research questions one and two. Descriptive statistical analyses similar to those used in questions one and two were run using each district as a break-variable in order to answer question three. Correlations were run to determine the relationships between the demographic factors and the priority rankings to answer question four. The correlation outcomes were interpreted using .50 to .60 as representing the existence of a strong relationship.

**Findings of the Study**

**Rankings of Priorities**

There was a spread of 2.74 in the mean rankings of the priorities for the business education leaders. Receiving the highest ranking, 7.73 out of 10, was "align business education to be a part of the academic program including honors courses" followed closely by "align curriculum with
needs in workforce including emerging occupations," ranked at 7.47. The priority receiving the lowest ranking, 4.99, was "interdisciplinary initiatives (cognitive skills across curriculum, lifelong learning, provide program completers with diverse skills)."

The mean rankings for the priorities for the VBEA ranged from 6.37 to 2.83. The top three priorities, "provide input to local school boards," "provide professional development opportunities on a regional level," and "provide input to legislative groups at the state level" had mean rankings of 6.37, 6.30, and 6.18, respectively. As evidenced by the wide spread in mean rankings, the respondents did not perceive all of the priorities listed for the VBEA as being important.

Priorities as Ranked by Regions

The mean rankings across districts for priorities for business education leaders and VBEA were generally consistent and agreed with the overall mean rankings. For all of the priorities the respondents in at least one region did not agree in their mean rankings with the respondents in other regions.

Priorities for business education leaders. The priorities for business education leaders receiving the highest consistent rankings in the regions were "align
curriculum with needs in workforce including emerging occupations," and "align business education to be a part of the academic program including honors courses."

The priority with the widest spread in mean rankings was "provide keyboarding support and leadership at all levels (K-12) of the school division." Although this priority was ranked third overall, 6.38, three of the regions had mean rankings below 6.00. One priority that received higher mean rankings across the regions than in the overall mean rankings was "facilitate teacher/staff development (concerns of students with special needs, new technology, cross training of teachers)."

Priorities for VBEA. The priorities for VBEA that received the highest mean rankings across the regions were "provide input to local school boards," all at 5.30 or above, "provide professional development opportunities on a regional level," 5.90 or above, and "provide input to legislative groups at the state level," 5.42 or above. These findings agree with the overall rankings of these priorities. The priority receiving the lowest mean rankings across the regions, all 3.00 and under with the exception of 5.13 in one region, was "provide opportunities for business educators to publish," which again agrees with the overall rankings of this priority.
Relationship of Demographic Factors to Priority Rankings

The relationships of the demographic factors of years of experience and degree obtained to the priority rankings were determined using correlation coefficients with an r of .50 to .60 interpreted as indicating a strong relationship.

Relationship of years experience to priority rankings for business education leaders and VBEA. There were no strong relationships between years experience and priority rankings for business education leaders and for VBEA. There were weak negative relationships for both rankings. The negative relationships found in the priorities for business education leaders were, "expand partnerships with business and industry," "align curriculum with needs in the workforce including emerging occupations," "align business education to be a part of the academic program including honors courses," and "focus upon developing state-of-art communication skills of students, oral and written via use of office technology." The first two of these were for the two highest ranked priorities overall.

In the case of the priorities for VBEA, negative relationships were found with "publicize accomplishments of business educators," "represent Virginia at national meetings of business educators," and "provide opportunities
for business educators to publish." These priorities were also ranked last in the overall rankings.

**Relationship of degree obtained to priority rankings for business education leaders and VBEA.** The relationships of degree obtained to the priority rankings for business education leaders and VBEA were all found to be weak. The negative relationships found in the priorities for business education leaders were the same as those found with years experience with the exception of "align curriculum with needs in workforce including emerging occupations." The negative relationships found in the priorities for VBEA were also the same as those found with years experience with the exception of "provide opportunities for business educators to publish."

**Conclusions**

To address the five research questions, conclusions are drawn that relate to the overall priority rankings, the priorities by geographic region, and priorities as related to demographic characteristics of respondents.

**Overall Priority Rankings**

**Priorities for business education leaders**

The priorities listed on the instrument for business education leaders were all ranked relatively close together.
by the business educators who participated in this study. These rankings lead to two conclusions: business educators realize the importance of keeping business education relevant to workforce needs; and the importance of integrating business education and the academic curriculum. The two top priorities were "align business education to be a part of the academic program including honors courses," and "align curriculum with needs in workforce including emerging occupations."

The spread of the mean rankings for these priorities was small with only 2.74 points separating the highest ranked priority from the lowest ranked priority. The narrow spread of the overall mean rankings for these priorities indicates that all of the priorities were of roughly equal importance to the business educators participating in the study.

The rankings of these priorities by the respondents agree with a study using a Delphi technique that was conducted with vocational and technical education staff members in Oklahoma (Stone, 1982). Stone divided the staff members into two groups, support staff and educational services staff, and asked them to list ten concerns or problems related to the improvement of vocational education programs. Both groups rated "identify new technology and/or
programs appropriate to vo-tech training" as their first concern. In addition, the support services group also ranked as fifth, "relate programs to jobs for which they specifically train," and the educational services group rated "analyze the State Department of Vocational and Technical Education's ability to respond to immediate training needs in the workplace" as their fourth concern.

Another study similar to that being reported on identified perceived challenges to business educators in Illinois (Wray & Haynes, 1990). The resulting fifteen challenges identified by this study contain only one, which specifically identifies business curriculum, ranked seventh. However, these challenges were identified using the nominal-group technique rather than by a pure ranking process.

In a study by Khaleel (1990) that was undertaken to identify significant issues currently confronting vocational education, the seventh highest rated issue was "to what extent should business and industry collaborate with vocational education?" which agrees with the seventh highest ranked issue in this study overall, "expand partnerships with business and industry." The respondents in Khaleel's study also identified "should vocational education be included as a sound element of an academic curriculum" as their tenth highest rated issue.
The fifth place ranking overall of "focus upon developing state-of-art communication skills of students, oral and written via use of office technology" agrees with the perceived increase in importance of word processing, and Business English in the Ohio survey of Business educators undertaken by Siferd, et al. in 1986. The respondents in this study, however, did not perceive any curriculum revisions as being necessary.

Priorities for VBEA

The priorities listed for VBEA on the instrument were not all important to the business educators participating in this study, as evidenced by the diverse mean rankings for them. The rankings of these priorities lead to the conclusions that business educators want advocacy at the local level and regional professional development activities. The highest priority, "provide input to local school boards," received a mean ranking of 6.37, closely followed by "provide professional development opportunities on a regional level" at 6.30, and "provide input to legislative groups at the state level" at 6.18; while the lowest priority, "provide opportunities for business educators to publish," had a mean ranking of 2.83.

The rankings of the priorities for the VBEA agree closely with the identified challenges of Illinois business
educators (Wray & Haynes, 1990). Of the fifteen challenges identified in this study, five relate to the three priorities ranked highest overall by the current study's respondents. The following challenges, "shortage of financial resources," "gaining the support of administrators," "increasing cost of state-of-the-art equipment," "finding time and support for inservice training," and "working with state and federal legislators" compare closely with the top three priorities identified in this study for the VBEA. The other challenges identified in this study, with the exception of "updating the business education curriculum," are state-specific issues.

The top rankings of these priorities support the position by Edcisky (1988) that many problems of society are blamed on education resulting in education reforms that target teachers. Business educators, as well as other vocational educators, are experiencing feelings of pressure on their image and desire their professional organizations to assist them with these pressures. According to Bragaw (1986) professional associations should be involved in shaping public policy and educational programs.
Priorities for business education leaders

The mean rankings across the regions for priorities for business education leaders were generally consistent with the overall mean rankings. The consistency of these rankings supports the equal importance assigned the priorities on the overall rankings. In addition, these rankings support the previous conclusion that business educators realize the importance of keeping business education relevant to workforce needs, as well as the importance of integrating business education and academic programs.

The two highest priorities by region were "align business education to be a part of the academic program including honors courses," and "align curriculum with needs in workforce including emerging occupations." The low ranking of "provide keyboarding support and leadership at all levels (K-12) of the school division" in three of the regions indicates the doubts of some business educators regarding keyboarding instruction at the lower levels, as well as the importance of ensuring that keyboarding instruction at these levels would be undertaken by business educators.
Priorities for VBEA

The rankings by regions for the priorities for VBEA were also consistent with the overall mean rankings. The rankings of these priorities by region support the previous conclusion that business educators want advocacy at the local level and professional development opportunities on a regional basis. The three priorities receiving the highest consistent rankings across the districts were "provide professional development opportunities on a regional level," "provide input to local school boards," and "provide input to legislative groups at the state level."

Relationship of Demographic Factors to Priority Rankings

Relationship of years experience to priority rankings

The demographic factor of years experience related to the priorities for business education leaders and for VBEA indicate that some limited relationships exist. Business educators with more experience and advanced degrees did not show strong differences in their rankings for these priorities, from those with less experience; however, the negative correlations found indicate that as business educators gain experience and/or advanced degrees some of the priorities become less important.
Years experience to priorities for business education leaders. Negative relationships were found between years experience to priorities for business education leaders for "expand partnerships with business and industry," "align curriculum with needs in workforce including emerging occupations," "align business education to be a part of the academic program including honors courses," and "focus upon developing state-of-art communication skills of students, oral and written via use of office technology." These priorities include ideas related to relatively new trends in education; thereby leading to the conclusion that of the business educators studied, those with more experience tended to be somewhat less willing to embrace these new ideas as those with less experience.

Years experience to the priorities for VBEA. The negative relationships found between years experience and the priorities for VBEA were for "publicize accomplishments of business educators," "provide input to local school boards," "represent Virginia at national meetings of business educators," and "provide opportunities for business educators to publish." For those business educators studied, those with more experience were somewhat less concerned with publishing opportunities, advocacy at the local school board level, national representation, or publicizing accomplishments than those with less experience.
Relationship of Degree Obtained to Priority Rankings

Degree obtained to priorities for business education leaders. Negative relationships were found between degree obtained to "expand partnerships with business and industry," "interdisciplinary initiatives (cognitive skills across curriculum, lifelong learning, provide program completers with diverse skills)," and "focus upon developing state-of-art communication skills of students, oral and written via use of office technology." Those business educators with higher degrees were slightly less concerned with business and industry partnerships, interdisciplinary initiatives, aligning business education with academics, or student communication skills than those business educators without advanced degrees.

Degree obtained to priorities for VBEA. The negative relationships found between degree obtained to priorities for VBEA agree with those between years experience and VBEA priorities with the exception of publishing opportunities. Again, business educators with advanced degrees are not as concerned with publicizing accomplishments, advocacy at the local school board level, or representation at national meetings as are those without advanced degrees.

The negative relationships between years experience and degree obtained to both sets of priorities may indicate, to
some extent, a feeling of complacency among business educators with more experience and/or advanced degrees or doubts that these efforts would be productive.

The correlations found between years experience and degree obtained to the priority rankings for both the business education leaders and the VBEA agrees with the position taken by Bey (1986) that goal identification historically has not been used by teachers as a planning technique for professional development. As evidenced by these findings, business educators who are newer to the profession or have not obtained advanced degrees were more receptive to newer trends possibly due to their having more positive experiences with professional development activities as found by Lam (1982).

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made based on the findings of this study:

1. Business education leaders in Virginia should focus attention on the business education curriculum. The business educators participating in this study ranked two of the three priorities dealing with business education curriculum as the first two priorities overall. Care should be taken to ensure that business education curriculum is
relevant to workforce needs, and that emerging occupations are identified for inclusion into the business education curriculum. To accomplish this, business education leaders should work with Advisory Committees, encourage business educators to work in business and industry during school breaks, and enlist the cooperation of business and industry professional organizations.

Business education leaders in Virginia should also encourage and support the alignment of business education with academic programs. Integration of vocational and academic education is currently being studied and, in some cases, implemented at the secondary level. Curriculum materials along with team building and leadership strategies should be made available to business educators to assist them with integrating business education and academic courses.

Another curriculum priority, "provide keyboarding support and leadership at all levels (K-12) of the school division," was ranked third overall. However, due to the disagreement on this priority across the regions, business education leaders should examine this issue more closely. If keyboarding support is to be provided to all levels (K-12), business education leaders must assure that business
educators are involved in providing the keyboarding instruction.

2. The Virginia Business Education Association must endeavor to provide advocacy for business educators and business education at the local and state level. Further, the VBEA should provide leadership training to enable members to represent business education at the local level.

The VBEA should also endeavor to provide professional development opportunities on a regional level. Professional development activities are important to business educators, as evidenced by the rankings of the two professional development priorities. Participants in this study clearly preferred regional activities to those on a state level.

The consistency of the rankings across the regions for the priorities for the VBEA would seem to indicate that there is a general consensus across Virginia among business educators on their perception of the VBEA and its role in business education. Therefore, in the planning of activities by the Executive Board of the VBEA, different activities need not be planned for different regions.

3. Both the business education leaders and the VBEA should endeavor to encourage more active participation by business educators with advanced degrees and/or more experience. The negative, although small, relationships
found between these variables and the priorities may indicate that these business educators have a certain degree of skepticism regarding new or innovative ideas. Inservice activities and services designed to help these educators become more involved and active in business education need to be explored by both the business education leaders and the VBEA.

**Suggestions for Future Studies**

The assessment of professional development activities should be an ongoing process. The constantly changing education environment requires educators to develop and enhance their professional commitment. Professional development needs as perceived by educators must continue to be investigated, and activities planned to accommodate these needs.

Surveys of business educators' professional development needs, along with their perceptions of the role that business education leaders play in helping them in their profession, should be completed at least every five years. Once the surveys are completed and the findings are analyzed, professional development activities should be planned that are appropriate.

Additional studies could be undertaken to better define "advocacy" at the local and state level. These studies
should focus on assisting educators identify program strengths and needs; as well as assisting them to articulate these to governing bodies.

Another study that could be developed is one which assists educators in defining professional needs. A study of this type could help business educators examine their role as classroom teachers; and it could also help them assess broader avenues for expressing their goals and professional needs.
REFERENCES


APPENDIX A

SURVEY INSTRUMENT
TAKE-A-MINUTE

Help your Virginia Business Education Association serve your needs better. Take a few minutes to complete the two sides of this survey—your opinions are important!

Check your institutional affiliation:

( ) Middle School/Jr. High School
( ) High School (including Vocational center)
( ) Community College
( ) College/University
( ) Supervisor/Administrator
( ) Student
Other
( ) Retired Teacher
( ) Business/Industry
( ) Guidance Counselor
or ____________________

Circle your membership region.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11

Please answer the following:

Number of years teaching experience? ______________________

Highest earned academic degree? BA/BS ___ MA/MS ___ PhD/EdD ___

Are you currently enrolled in a graduate program as a candidate for a degree? Yes ___ No ___

How many business education conferences, seminars, colloquia or workshops have you attended in the past two years?
National (NBEA, SBEA, etc.) _____, State _____, Local _____

Please indicate your membership in the following organizations:
VVA _____, AVA _____, NBEA _____, VBEA _____
What should the priorities of leaders in business education be over the next 5 years? (Please rank the following list ... 1 = highest)

__ Expand partnerships with business and industry
__ Develop and implement curriculum and methods for its revision
__ Interdisciplinary initiatives (cognitive skills across curriculum, lifelong learning, provide program completers with diverse skills)
__ Facilitate teacher/staff development (concerns of students with special needs, new technology, cross training of teachers)
__ Align curriculum with needs in workforce including emerging occupations
__ Refine the business education curriculum to lessen course fragmentation and increase teacher expertise in specialty areas.
__ Provide keyboarding support and leadership at all levels (K-12) of the school division
__ Align business education to be a part of the academic program including honors courses
__ Focus upon developing state-of-art communication skills of students, oral and written via use of office technology
__ Other ____________________________

In what ways can the Virginia Business Education Association help you as a business educator? (Please rank the following list ... 1 = highest)

__ Publicize accomplishments of business educators
__ Provide input to legislative groups at the state level
__ Provide input to local school boards
__ Provide professional development opportunities on a state level
__ Provide professional development opportunities on a regional level
__ Represent Virginia at national meetings of business educators
__ Provide opportunities for business educators to publish
__ Other ____________________________

If you are not a member of VBEA, please indicate why.

____________________________________

____________________________________

Please rank these for summer conference locations. (1 = highest)

____ Charlottesville  ____ Richmond  ____ Roanoke  ____ Norfolk
____ Northern Virginia  ____ Other  ____________________________

(please name)
APPENDIX B

SURVEY INSTRUMENT

CODED FOR DATA ENTRY
TAKE-A-MINUTE

Help your Virginia Business Education Association serve your needs better. Take a few minutes to complete the two sides of this survey--your opinions are important!

check your institutional affiliation:

\[ \text{( ) Middle School/Jr. High School} \]
\[ \text{( ) High School} \]
\[ \text{ (including Vocational Center)} \]
\[ \text{( ) Community College} \]
\[ \text{( ) College/University} \]
\[ \text{( ) Supervisor/Administrator} \]
\[ \text{( ) Student} \]
\[ \text{Other} \]
\[ \text{( ) Retired Teacher} \]
\[ \text{( ) Business/Industry} \]
\[ \text{( ) Guidance Counselor} \]
\[ \text{or} \text{ } \]

\[ \text{Circle your membership region.} \]

\[ 1 \text{ } 2 \text{ } 3 \text{ } 4 \text{ } 5 \text{ } 6 \text{ } 7 \text{ } 8 \text{ } 9 \text{ } 10 \text{ } 11 \]

\[ \text{Northern Virginia} \]
\[ \text{AMI} \]
\[ \text{Central Virginia} \]
\[ \text{Richmond} \]
\[ \text{Southwest Virginia} \]
\[ \text{Virginia Tech} \]
\[ \text{Southeast Virginia} \]
\[ \text{Eastern Shore} \]
\[ \text{Western State} \]

Please answer the following:

4. Number of years teaching experience?  \[ \text{No. of years} \]

5. Highest earned academic degree?  \[ \text{BA/BS 1 MA/MS 2 PhD/Edd 3} \]

Are you currently enrolled in a graduate program as a candidate for a degree? Yes ____ No ____

How many business education conferences, seminars, colloquia or workshops have you attended in the past two years?
National (NBEA, SBEA, etc.) ____ State ____ Local ____

Please indicate your membership in the following organizations:
VVA ____ AVA ____ NBEA ____ VBEA ____
What should the priorities of leaders in business education be over the next 5 years? (Please rank the following list ... 1 = highest)

1. Expand partnerships with business and industry
2. Develop and implement curriculum and methods for its revision
3. Interdisciplinary initiatives (cognitive skills across curriculum, lifelong learning, provide program completers with diverse skills)
4. Facilitate teacher/staff development (concerns of students with special needs, new technology, cross training of teachers)
5. Align curriculum with needs in workforce including emerging occupations
6. Refine the business education curriculum to lessen course fragmentation and increase teacher expertise in specialty areas.
7. Provide keyboarding support and leadership at all levels (K-12) of the school division
8. Align business education to a part of the academic program including honors courses
9. Focus upon developing state-of-the-art communication skills of students, oral and written via use of office technology

10. Other

In what ways can the Virginia Business Education Association help you as a business educator? (Please rank the following list ... 1 = highest)

10. Publicize accomplishments of business educators
11. Provide input to legislative groups at the state level
12. Provide input to local school boards
13. Provide professional development opportunities on a state level
14. Provide professional development opportunities on a regional level
15. Represent Virginia at national meetings of business educators
16. Provide opportunities for business educators to publish

17. Other

If you are not a member of VBEA, please indicate why.

Please rank these for summer conference locations. (1 = highest)

Charlottesville ______ Richmond ______ Roanoke ______ Norfolk
Northern Virginia ______ Other ______ (please name)
APPENDIX C

GEOGRAPHIC REGIONS
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APPENDIX D

CORRELATION MATRIX:
YEARS EXPERIENCE TO RANKING OF PRIORITIES
FOR BUSINESS EDUCATION LEADERS
### Correlation of Years Experience to Ranking of Priorities for Business Education Leaders

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APPENDIX E

CORRELATION MATRIX:

YEARS EXPERIENCE TO RANKING OF PRIORITIES

FOR VBEA
Correlation of Years Experience to Ranking of Priorities for VREA

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Years Experience

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APPENDIX F

CORRELATION MATRIX:
DEGREE TO RANKING OF
PRIORITIES FOR BUSINESS EDUCATION LEADERS
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APPENDIX G

CORRELATION MATRIX:

DEGREE TO RANKING OF PRIORITIES FOR VBEA
## Correlation of Degree to Ranking of Priorities for VBEA

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<th>(2) Input to state legislative groups</th>
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<th>(4) State prof. development activities</th>
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CURRICULUM VITAE

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EDUCATION

1992 Masters of Science, Vocational and Technical Education, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg, Virginia.

1969 Bachelor of Arts, German, Stetson University, DeLand, Florida.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

1991-1992 Assistant Producer, DIMENSIONS (Series of Teleconferences for Virginia High School Students), Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg, Virginia.


PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Omicron Tau Theta, Iota Chapter, Professional Society in Vocational Education.

Delta Phi Epsilon, Beta Gamma Chapter, National Honorary Professional Graduate Society in Business Education.

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