

**A Study of the Relative Importance
Principals and Their Supervisors Assign to
Criteria Used to Evaluate Principals**

by

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(ABSTRACT)

The critical role of the principal in school leadership and school improvement, as highlighted in the research and in the plethora of national reports on education, has increased demands for principal accountability. While it is known that principals must handle many varied expectations relative to their job performance and that clear, mutually understood criteria are essential to effective evaluation, there is little evidence that the perceptions of principals and their supervisors relative to the evaluation criteria have been adequately explored.

The purpose of this study was to examine the perceptions of principals and their supervisors relative to the importance of criteria used to evaluate principals. Specifically, the study addressed the extent to which area superintendents in a large suburban school system differed in the relative importance they assigned to performance standards used to evaluate elementary versus secondary

principals, the differences in relative importance principals and their supervisors (area superintendents) assigned to these standards, and the extent to which principals were able to predict the relative importance their supervisor gave to the various standards.

A descriptive survey method was used in this study. The population consisted of 120 elementary principals, 41 secondary principals, and four area superintendents. Respondents were asked to assign 100 points to eight county-adopted performance standards to indicate the relative importance they attached to each. Descriptive statistics (frequencies and means) were used to report results.

The major findings relative to the school system studied were: (1) that there was little variation between and among principals' supervisors in the weights they placed on the various evaluative standards, (2) that supervisors, elementary principals, and secondary principals had similar perceptions of differences in the relative importance of the eight generic performance standards, (3) that principals and their supervisors were closer in their expectations relative to the importance of the evaluative standards than most principals thought they were, and (4) that there were few differences among principals based on any of several demographic variables studied.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated with love and gratitude to my wonderful wife and to our two beautiful and talented daughters, and . Their constant support and encouragement made the completion of this study possible and the attainment of the degree worthwhile.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Personnel evaluation is not new. As early as 2200 B.C. the emperor of China used formal tests to establish proficiency requirements for his public officials (Guba and Lincoln, 1981). In recent years the issue of personnel evaluation has taken on increased importance as few, if any, occupations escape careful scrutiny (Castetter, 1976). Still, the effectiveness of these evaluations is questionable. One study found that fewer than ten percent of the nation's companies have a good evaluation system for employees (Rice, 1985).

In education, most of the attention relative to personnel evaluation has focused on teachers. Here too the effectiveness of current practices has been questioned. A Rand study (Wise, Darling-Hammond, McLaughlin, and Bernstein, 1984), for example, found that "teacher evaluation is an underconceptualized and underdeveloped activity" (p. vi).

The arena of principal evaluation is even more problematic. Murphy, Hallinger, and Peterson (1985) believed it is more "primitive" than teacher evaluation, with many principals "neither supervised nor evaluated" (p. 79). Lipham (1975) characterized the evaluation of administrators

and administrative performance as "scattered and spasmodic" (p. 13). Hunt and Buser (1977) found it "perfunctory, bureaucratic, and routine, with few clear goals or rationale" (p. 12).

These negative assessments come at a most inauspicious time. A major focus of the renewed interest in educational reform, as espoused in the plethora of national reports, is the leadership role of the principal (Commission on Excellence in Education, 1984). As U.S. Secretary of Education William J. Bennett (1986) stated, "more than any other figure, the principal is able to create conditions for excellence . . ." (p. 43). Likewise, Chester E. Finn, Jr. (1987) noted, "the principal is probably the single most powerful fulcrum for improving school effectiveness" (p. 22).

But with power comes a demand for accountability. Pharis (1973) believed evaluation and accountability are practically synonymous. Sapone (1980) argued that the public will not increase its support of education unless educators can demonstrate that they are willing to be held accountable for student achievement. As McCleary (1979) correctly summarized:

Evaluation of educational personnel, particularly principals, is receiving increasing attention due to such immediate influences as pressures for improved administrative performance, the need for schools to demonstrate problem-solving capability, the performance-based and management-by-objectives movements, and the demands for accountability (p. 45).

All of these demands also increase principals' role complexity: the demands of students, teachers, parents, and the community at large are often conflicting. Blumberg and Greenfield (1980) noted:

Principals frequently take the brunt of multiple and usually conflicting expectations over issues ranging from student discipline to the problems of personnel administration, compliance with an increasing number of state and federal policy mandates, and maintaining a 'smooth running' education program that serves the needs of a school community that has become less and less homogenous in the character of student abilities and parents' aspirations for themselves and their children" (p. 9).

These multiple expectations and resulting role ambiguity for principals have been documented (Gaynor, 1975; McCleary and Thomson, 1979), but it is the multiple and conflicting expectations held for principals by their supervisors that seem to cause the most difficulty in the evaluation process.

How then can the evaluation of principals be improved? Here researchers and practitioners agree: two of the most critical elements of effective evaluation are clear criteria (performance standards) on which the evaluation is to be based (Deal, Dornbusch, and Crawford, 1977; Hunt and Buser, 1977; Ingram, 1986; Stow and Manatt, 1982), and a clear understanding by both the supervisor and employee relative to the expectations for performance (Bolton, 1980; McCleary, 1979; Redfern, 1972 and 1980). These issues, the criteria by which principals are evaluated and whether their relative importance is reflective of shared expectations between the

supervisor and the principal, were a major focus of this study.

Statement of Need

The increased demand for principal accountability has been reflected in the increase between 1962 and 1984 of school districts which reported that they had a formal evaluation procedure for school administrators (Educational Research Service [ERS], 1985:v).

At the same time, principals resist evaluation. One reason for their reluctance is their lack of certainty about the criteria that are used in the evaluation (Bolton, 1975; Castetter, 1976).

Principals see their own performance very differently than their staffs or supervisors (Manasse, 1985). Though many studies have identified similar competencies and standards on which principals should be evaluated (Ernest, 1985; McIntyre and Grant, 1980; National Association of Elementary School Principals, 1986), there is a lack of agreement about what principals ought to do and to whom they should be responsible when they encounter conflicting demands. As Suter (1985) noted:

The evaluation of principals is a complex task due to certain uniqueness in objectives, procedure outcomes, student constraints, and differential perceptions of the principal's role. The fact that those problems exist make it not only difficult but necessary that a

valid, reliable, and systematic evaluation process be developed (p. 2).

A review of literature and common practices surfaced additional problems. The relative importance of principal job tasks was not generally considered when local systems developed principal evaluation instruments (Fox, 1984). Most school systems use the same performance standards for both elementary and secondary principals (Duke and Stiggins, 1985; Mangione, 1979). Moreover, as Duke and Stiggins (1985) noted, "since little research has been conducted on the actual procedures used to evaluate and supervise school principals, little is known about the nature, role, or quality of those procedures" (p. 71).

Finally, there is conflicting evidence of the extent to which supervisors and their principals have different perceptions of what constitutes the most critical performance standards upon which principals should be evaluated (MacQueen, 1969; McIntyre and Grant, 1980). While it might well be desirable for principals and their supervisors to have a common set of beliefs or values relative to the importance of tasks required of the principal, it is essential that, at a minimum, they clearly understand any differences in one another's perceptions.

As a result, there is a need for additional research which can:

- examine supervisors' perception of the differences in the relative importance of criteria (performance standards) used to evaluate elementary versus secondary principals
- identify the extent to which supervisors and principals differ in the relative importance they assign to standards used to evaluate principals
- determine the extent to which principals are able to predict the relative importance their supervisors assign to evaluative standards.

Statement of the Problem

Given that sound criteria, mutually understood, are essential to valid, reliable, and effective evaluation, this study examines the perceptions of principals and their supervisors in relation to the importance of criteria (performance standards) used to evaluate the principal. Since not all tasks a principal performs are of equal importance (Jacobson, Reaves, and Logsdon, 1963), this study attempted to discern if area superintendents and principals saw certain performance standards as more important than others, and if, in general, the values and expectations of both groups were relatively congruent.

The study was conducted within a large, relatively affluent, suburban school system that was moving towards a principal evaluation system based on centrally developed

criteria. The principals' supervisors consisted of area superintendents, each of whom was responsible for evaluating up to fifty general education principals. The criteria used consisted of performance standards (including guidelines and performance indicators) that had been developed by a committee of staff members (principals and area/central office administrators) after an extensive review of the literature and current practices. The evaluative standards were further revised after all principals within the system had a chance to review them.

Specifically, this study addressed the following questions:

1. To what extent were there differences in the responses of area superintendents to the criteria used to evaluate principals?
2. To what extent did area superintendents differ in the relative importance they assigned to criteria used to evaluate elementary versus secondary principals?
3. To what extent did area superintendents and principals differ in the relative importance they assigned to the criteria used to evaluate principals?
4. To what extent were principals able to predict the relative importance their area superintendent gave to the criteria used to evaluate principals at that level?

5. Did certain demographic variables (e.g., years of experience) affect principals' responses?

In order to answer these questions, a survey was developed asking superintendents and principals to weight the importance of each of the agreed-upon criteria (performance standards). To answer the first and second questions, the principals' supervisors (area superintendents) were asked to allocate 100 points to the eight performance standards to indicate the relative importance they assigned to the same standards as they would be used to evaluate elementary versus secondary principals. The responses were compared, and differences were highlighted.

To answer the third question, descriptive statistics were used to compare the responses of principals and area superintendents relative to the importance of each standard as it was applied to the elementary or secondary level. The ranges of the responses were noted and differences in the means were highlighted.

To answer the fourth question, principals were asked to predict how their area superintendent ranked the performance standards. Descriptive statistics were again used, and the means were compared to determine if principals accurately predicted their area superintendent's responses.

Finally, certain demographic variables were analyzed to see if there were any differences in principal responses

based on level (elementary versus secondary and intermediate versus high school), sex (elementary only), or experience.

Assumptions

This study looked at the criteria for principal evaluation within a framework that assumed that the purpose of the evaluation process was to identify marginal and superior administrative performance; that the criteria for evaluation were job-oriented (i.e., related to job function and administrative competencies), rather than skill-oriented; and that the criteria were not tied to job targets that were negotiated by the principal with his or her supervisor.

Limitations

This study had several major limitations. First, since each school is unique, it is understood that superintendents did not necessarily have one ranking of importance of principal evaluative criteria that held for all schools.

Second, the study focused on principals and superintendents within one large suburban school system. While this limitation allowed the examination of principal and superintendent expectations within the same organizational climate or "corporate culture," it also

limited external validity; that is, the degree to which the results can be generalized beyond the population studied.

Third, the nature of the survey instrument and research methodology used precluded an analysis of the reasons and motivations underlying participants' perceptual responses. Qualitative research methods would need to be employed to explore this issue further.

Definition of Terms

1. Elementary principal - a principal of a school with students in kindergarten through grade six.

2. Secondary principal - a principal of a school with students in grades seven through twelve. Within the suburban school system studied, intermediate (grades seven and eight) and high school (grades nine through twelve) principals were included.

3. Area superintendent - the principals' supervisor. Within the school system studied, each area superintendent had direct line authority over 35-50 principals.

4. Evaluative criteria - standards by which a principal's performance is measured.

5. Job-oriented criteria - standards of performance that are related to the role and function of principals, rather than skills or personality characteristics.

Organization of Study

This study is divided into five chapters. The first chapter includes the following sections: background, statement of need, statement of the problem, assumptions, limitations, and definition of terms. The second chapter presents a review of selected literature related to the importance of criteria (performance standards) in the evaluative process and the differing perceptions of principals and supervisors relative to evaluative criteria. This chapter also contains a theoretical model which served as a backdrop to this study and describes the county in which the research occurred, including how the particular criteria used in the study were developed. The third chapter describes the research questions, the research method, the population, the instrumentation, the data collection, and the analysis procedures. The fourth chapter presents the demographic data along with the findings and interpretations relative to the research questions. The fifth chapter contains the summary, conclusions, implications, and recommendations for further study.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Although research, contemporary educational thought, and the public's demand for accountability all spotlight the pivotal role the principal plays in fostering excellence in our schools, surprisingly little attention has been paid over the years to the subject of principal evaluation (National Association of Secondary School Principals, 1988).

The purpose of this chapter is to (1) review the literature on the importance of appropriate criteria to the principal evaluation process and delineate the types of performance standards that undergird such criteria; (2) highlight previous studies on differing role perceptions of principals and their supervisors regarding the importance of various standards used in principal evaluation; (3) identify a theoretical model which served as a backdrop to this study; and (4) discuss the background of this research by describing the school system involved and the manner in which the principal performance standards used in this study were developed.

Importance of Criteria

It's clear that principal evaluation within a given district can have a myriad of purposes (ERS, 1974 and 1985). Nonetheless, the critical importance of sound evaluative criteria, including clear standards that effectively communicate performance expectations, must first be viewed in two broader contexts: a model of evaluation theory and the general organizational structure of the entire school system (Lipham, 1975; Zakrajsek, 1979).

Natriello (1977), noting the general lack of any substantial theoretical work on principal evaluation, developed a six-step model which included the setting of criteria or standards as the second step (after "assigning goals"). Both Dornbusch and Scott's (1975) and Natriello and Dornbusch's (1981) models have four stages: allocating tasks, setting evaluation criteria, sampling performances, and assessing the performances and outcomes against the standards.

Gephart, Ingle, and Potter's (1975) general evaluation design has five components:

1. determining the purpose
2. translating the purpose into appropriate criteria
3. locating or designing instruments to gather information to measure against criteria

4. comparing data against criteria
5. using the information gathered

Bolton's (1980) model is similar, but has only three phases: planning for evaluation, collecting information, and using the information. In Bolton's model, however, planning for evaluation encompasses the determination of evaluative criteria, along with establishing the purposes of evaluation, establishing goals and objectives, and developing means of measuring outcomes.

Other authors note the importance of clear evaluative criteria as a fundamental tenet of a sound principal evaluation procedure. Pharis (1973) and Strickland (1982) stated that principals want to understand what is expected of them. Redfern (1972) concurred and believed that these expectations should be in writing. Hemphill, Griffiths, and Frederiksen (1962) posited that one of the problems historically plaguing research on administrative behavior is the lack of useful criteria which reliably differentiate good and poor administrative performance. English, Francis, and Schmunk (1982) noted that clear criteria are essential in any type of merit pay system. Murphy, Mesa, and Hallinger (1984) found in studying outstanding California school districts that one of the common elements was that all had clearly defined criteria that were used as the basis for assessing principal performance. Keck and Hampton (1987) observed that

the pressure from boards of education, civic and business leaders, and state legislatures to develop evaluation systems based on clear performance criteria continues to increase. McCleary (1979) believed that the expectations for performance should be determined by both the individual being evaluated and his or her superior.

Thus, major models of principal evaluation have the determination of criteria upon which evaluation is based as a critical component of the evaluative process.

Whether clear information regarding performance expectations is communicated effectively, however, is much less evident and often lamented (Castetter, 1976; Deal, Dornbusch, and Crawford, 1977; Duhamel, Cyze, and Rutherford, 1981). Deal, Neufeld, and Rallis (1982) reported that one of the major weaknesses of evaluation procedures is that over half the principals they studied did not know what criteria were used to evaluate them. Cohen and Manasse (1982) stated that most school systems have not clearly defined what they expect from their principals. They noted that principals themselves are often unaware of why they were selected for a position; "thus there is no clear mandate for any particular type of leadership behavior, no articulated criteria for evaluating effectiveness, and little opportunity for principals to get useful feedback on their performance" (p. 4).

Totusek and Christner's (1983) interviews with principals and central office administrators found similar dissatisfaction with currently used evaluation systems. One of the major complaints they uncovered was the absence of clearly articulated criteria. A report prepared for the California state legislature (1978) had the same finding. Kelsey (1983), in studying the evaluation reports of principals in British Columbia, noted that over 75 percent of the time the superintendent's evaluative criteria were not indicated in the evaluation report. Pomarico's (1985) study of Kansas principals demonstrated that "with few exceptions, principals and evaluators differed in their view of the evaluation processes used and the degree of implementation of recommended criteria" (p. 190). He also found that evaluators indicated a greater incidence of implementation of the recommended criteria than did the principals.

It appears that even when sound evaluative criteria exist, the standards of performance are often not communicated effectively to principals, the ones most directly involved in the process.

Another problem relating to evaluative criteria concerns whether or not principals and their supervisors have the same perceptions of the relative importance of the various criteria. The results in this arena are conflicting. MacQueen (1969) found that superintendents and principals closely agreed on criteria, but Letterle (1981), in his study

of Ohio principals, found that less than half of the factors upon which the principal was evaluated were criteria which the principal deemed important.

Bolton (1975) defined another problem relative to evaluative criteria by noting:

Even the meaning of the term 'criteria for evaluation' is unclear; some people are referring to characteristics or personal qualities of administrators (such as emotional stability, appearance and sociability), others are referring to certain functions performed (such as implementation or maintenance), others are referring to procedures used by administrators (such as conducting inservice programs for teachers, planning with PTA groups, or initiating a change in the some aspect of the curriculum), while still others are referring to results of behavior (such as changes in teacher behavior, or changes in school climate, or parental satisfaction) (p. 74).

A study by ERS (1985) noted the same issue in relation to the performance standards that make up any meaningful criteria by indicating that the evaluation criteria can come from personal characteristics; objectives that are jointly defined by the supervisor and evaluatee; or skills, traits, and competencies that are defined by the district.

In some cases, however, the evaluative criteria are not "owned" by the principals most directly involved in the process, but are determined at the state level, as is the case in Tennessee, Georgia, and North Carolina (Tennessee Department of Education, 1985; Walters, 1980; North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, 1986).

When this occurs, there is no reason to believe that superintendents or principals feel the state criteria accurately reflect the nature of the principalship as either views it. Rountree (1981) found that Virginia superintendents, when asked to identify the criteria used in the evaluation of secondary principals, identified both state-mandated criteria and other criteria that were not state-mandated but were seen as equally important (such as business and finance, and school plant management).

Still, in reviewing the literature it is also clear that most centrally developed standards and criteria used to evaluate principals, while varying in approach or perspective, are really quite similar (Eisenhauer, 1980; Hooper, 1985).

To illustrate, Hoben (1986), Blumburg and Greenfield (1980), Redfern (1980), Erickson (1988), and Sashkin and Huddle (1988) all approach principal evaluation from a functional or task perspective.

Redfern's (1980) list has nine components: organization and administration, communications, personnel management, management of students, instruction, management of services, management of facilities, finance, and professional competencies.

Erickson's (1988) list has eight standards: management skills, communication, business affairs, school/community

relations, personnel, physical resources, curriculum, and student services.

Shaskin and Huddle's (1988) list has thirteen areas of responsibility: relations with central office, monitoring organizational information, coordinating school activities, managing finances, maintaining the building, directing support services, staffing, establishing an atmosphere conducive to learning, setting high expectations, setting goals, instructional leadership, communication, and building parent and community support. While longer lists, like Shaskin and Huddle's, give certain functions more visibility, the functions represented in these lists are present in most of the frameworks used.

Another approach used in the delineation of standards of performance as part of the evaluation criteria is to focus on principal competencies. In this area one of the most comprehensive lists is the PEEL (Performance Evaluation of the Educational Leader) definition of administrative competence which has been nationally validated (Metzger, 1975). The PEEL definition includes seven major areas of competence:

1. leader and director of educational program
2. coordinator of guidance and special education services
3. member of the school staff
4. link between the community and the school

5. administrator of personnel
6. member of the profession of educational administration
7. director of support management

Relative to these seven areas, Metzger found that 964 administrators from across the country (superintendents and principals at all levels) agreed that these seven standards accurately defined the principal's role. Herman (1988) developed a similar list and applied it to other school-based administrators as well.

Finally, there are other examples of lists of tasks, skills, and competencies that can serve as standards used in conjunction with principal evaluation (National Association of Elementary Principals, 1986; Lewis, 1982; Rebore, 1987; Stow and Manatt, 1982; McIntyre and Grant, 1980; Seal, 1977; Tucker and Gray, 1986). Many of them are currently being used in school systems across the country.

It is obvious, then, that clearly communicated evaluative criteria are essential to principal evaluation. While it is important that the criteria be developed by those directly involved in the evaluation process, it is also important that the criteria fit the goals and purposes of the school system in which it is used (Abbott, 1975; Cross, 1980; Eisenhauer, 1980; Pellicer and Stevenson, 1985). Of lesser importance is the wording of the specific standards, since most lists are quite similar.

For the particular research described in this study, the standards that made up the criteria were developed and approved by both the principals and supervisors in the county studied, and did match goals and purposes set by the local School Board. Before describing how the standards were developed, however, it is appropriate: (1) to review the limited number of studies which have focused on the difference in perceptions of superintendents and principals relative to roles, evaluative criteria, and standards, and (2) to identify a theoretical model which explains the types of differing perceptions that can develop between principals and their supervisors.

Differing Perceptions Relative to Evaluative Criteria

Although some research has occurred which tracked differences in perceptions between principals and their supervisors, it is difficult to synthesize the literature. The mechanisms of comparison have varied and the areas of focus have moved from role expectations, to administrative competencies, to leader behavior. Likewise, some of the studies have looked only at the perceptions of principals and supervisors, while others have included additional groups, such as teachers, board members, and community leaders.

Novotney (1980) compared elementary principals' and superintendents' perceptions of leadership behavior in one

California county. She found no significant differences between the two groups. Dilley (1984) took one West Virginia county and compared the expectations of teachers in each elementary school regarding their principals' leadership ability with the expectations of the assistant superintendent for instruction using the dimensions in the Leadership Behavior Description Questionnaire (LBDQ). She found that the principals' real leader behavior was congruent with teacher expectations in 35 percent of the cases, with the assistant superintendent for instruction's expectations in 25 percent of the cases, with both the teachers' and assistant superintendent's expectations in 18 percent of the cases, and with neither the teachers' nor the assistant superintendent for instruction's expectations in 23 percent of the cases.

Scott (1980) found a significant difference in the mean score responses of Texas high school principals and their superintendents on a questionnaire measuring role perception. He concluded that lack of communication played a significant role in creating this difference. Frazier (1964) had a similar finding in his study of Western Oregon school districts. Falzetta (1967), on the other hand, studied principals', teachers', and superintendents' role expectations and found that most of the difference in perceptions was between teachers and superintendents, not principals and superintendents.

Walters (1979) analyzed the importance principals and superintendents in Pennsylvania and New Jersey assigned to various administrative competency statements and found that both groups rated each competency as either important or very important. MacQueen (1969) got much the same result with slightly different criteria in his nationwide survey of high school principals.

A survey conducted as part of Project Rome (Results Oriented Management in Education), a pilot assessment program developed in Georgia to identify competencies that were correlated to school effectiveness, found that three competencies were more important than others: curriculum and instruction, fiscal management, and staffing. The survey also found some important differences between competencies at the elementary and secondary level: curriculum and instruction were more important for elementary principals, and staffing was more important at the secondary level (Georgia State Department of Education and University of Georgia College of Education, 1975).

A study by Foskett and Wolcott (1967) compared principals' role expectations, their perceived expectations of other groups for their role, and the actual expectations of the other groups. The other groups studied were superintendents, teachers, adult citizens, parents, community leaders, and school board members. These researchers found that there were definite differences

between principals' perceptions and those of the other groups. The highest error rates in perceptions by principals were for the views of the superintendent and school board. This error rate, they believe, "is a function of the principals' not having expected much difference in others' perceptions when in fact there is a marked difference" (p. 168).

Ingleman-Downham (1983) asked superintendents, elementary principals, central office staff, teachers, school board members, and parents to report the perceived values each placed on 80 skills and strategies deemed important to the effectiveness of elementary principals. She found some clustering and differences related to position, but classified participants' perceptions by the belief patterns of respondents.

Awender (1978) compared the expectations of Canadian teachers and superintendents to those held by the principal. He found some common understanding between principals and superintendents concerning the principal's role, but found little agreement between superintendents and teachers.

Sweitzer (1963) conducted an extensive study of the congruence of role expectations among Oklahoma superintendents, elementary principals, secondary principals, and teachers. He found that a generally high degree of importance was placed on four task areas (educational program, personnel development, community

relations, and maintaining funds and facilities) by all groups. Interestingly, he found that teachers see little difference in the importance of the tasks, that elementary principals see greater differences in relative importance than secondary principals, and that superintendents see greater relative degrees of importance for elementary school principals than secondary school principals. He also found that "superintendents held expectations for their elementary and secondary principals that were similar to the expectations that elementary and secondary principals thought their superintendent should hold for their role" (p. 314).

Tryon (1978) reported no significant difference in the perception of five respondent groups (superintendents, board presidents, secondary principals, classroom teachers, and elementary principals) relative to their expectations of the role of elementary principals in Iowa.

McNeill (1967) compared perceptions of elementary administrative behavior held by superintendents, principals, teachers, and school secretaries. He found that none of the groups were very accurate in their perceptions when compared to the self-perceptions of elementary principals. Surprisingly, secretaries were the most inaccurate.

Newkirk-Moore (1985) used the PEEL competency statements to assess the perceptions of elementary principals, superintendents, and board chairmen in Tennessee. She found that principals have conflicting expectations regarding their

job responsibilities and that there were definite differences statewide in the relative importance assigned to the competency statements.

McIntyre and Grant (1980) examined the priority and performance ratings eighteen Texas senior high school principals, their teachers, and their superintendents assigned to 32 competency statements grouped into eight functional areas. The eight areas studied were: community relations, staffing, time and space allocation, goal setting, noninstructional services, materials and equipment, program evaluation, and inservice training. These researchers found significant differences in both the priority and performance ratings, though the differences between the principals and teachers were greater than those between the principals and superintendents. Specifically, McIntyre and Grant found that both principals and superintendents gave staffing their highest priority. Moreover, principals placed community relations next highest, whereas superintendents put goal setting in second place. Also, principals tended to place more importance on their instructional leadership responsibilities than did either the superintendents or the teachers.

Peters (1982), Harrison and Peterson (1986), and Jurs (1976) compared the perceptions of principals and superintendents on various job competencies or standards. Peters found that Illinois superintendents and principals

generally agreed on the criteria and procedures that should be used in the evaluation of principals. Harrison and Peterson, however, found that principals and superintendents across one southern state did not agree on the criteria for principal effectiveness.

Negley's (1984) study of Wisconsin principals and superintendents found that "the perceptions of principals regarding how much importance superintendents placed on the criteria for evaluation were significantly lower than those of superintendents" (p. 80).

Likewise, Jurs (1976) found differences between building level administrators (senior high principals, junior high principals, and elementary principals) and superintendency level staff members in their responses to competency statements. Specifically, he found that the building level administrators placed greater importance on aspects of their job which deal directly with student-oriented responsibilities than do the superintendency level staff members, who placed greater importance on community involvement and districtwide responsibilities.

Harrison and Peterson (1988) examined differences in the perceptions of principals and superintendents relative to which indicators superintendents should examine in evaluating principal performance. While the ranking of principal and superintendent responses showed greater variance than what actually existed, principals clearly felt that "public

reaction" was more important to superintendents than it actually was. Furthermore, 87 percent of the superintendents but only 66 percent of the principals ranked "general quality of instruction" as the most important factor in principal evaluation.

Several other researchers have focused on demographic differences and how they affect perceptions of criteria and expectations. Frazier (1964) reported that the variables of age, sex, and years of experience only affected teacher subgroup differences relating to role expectations of the elementary principal. He also saw some difference in expectations for personnel in medium-sized districts compared to those of large and small districts.

Prine (1983) found that total number of years in present position and total number of years of experience as a principal or superintendent had no effect on the perception of success factors of principals in large high schools in Texas.

MacIntyre and Grant (1980) and Tryon (1978) found no differences in superintendents' and principals' ratings of criteria based on school size. Negley (1984) found significant negative relationships between how much importance principals and superintendents perceived superintendents placed on criteria for evaluation and the number of years of experience the principals and superintendents had in educational administration. Greene

(1983) reported significant differences in the way principals in North Carolina who devoted more time to professional growth and were more involved in community activities perceived the importance of administrative competencies compared to other principals. Jurs (1976) indicated that size of district, number of years of administrative experience, and major field of study made no difference in how administrators rank competency statements, while Sutton (1986) found differences in the perceptions of inner city elementary principals regarding the skills and competencies necessary for success when compared to those most frequently found in the literature.

Finally, Shull (1981) compared discrepancies in the perception of role performance and role expectations as viewed by Ohio superintendents and elementary school principals rated as effective or ineffective. Not surprisingly, he found that the effective principal's self-reported performance had a smaller discrepancy with the superintendent's expectation than the ineffective principal's self-reported performance.

Thus, the literature on differing perceptions of principals and supervisors relative to role expectations or administrative competencies has frequently been conducted on a statewide basis and has yielded contradictory findings. Comparisons of findings are especially difficult because each

study had a slightly different focus, and each used a different instrument for data gathering.

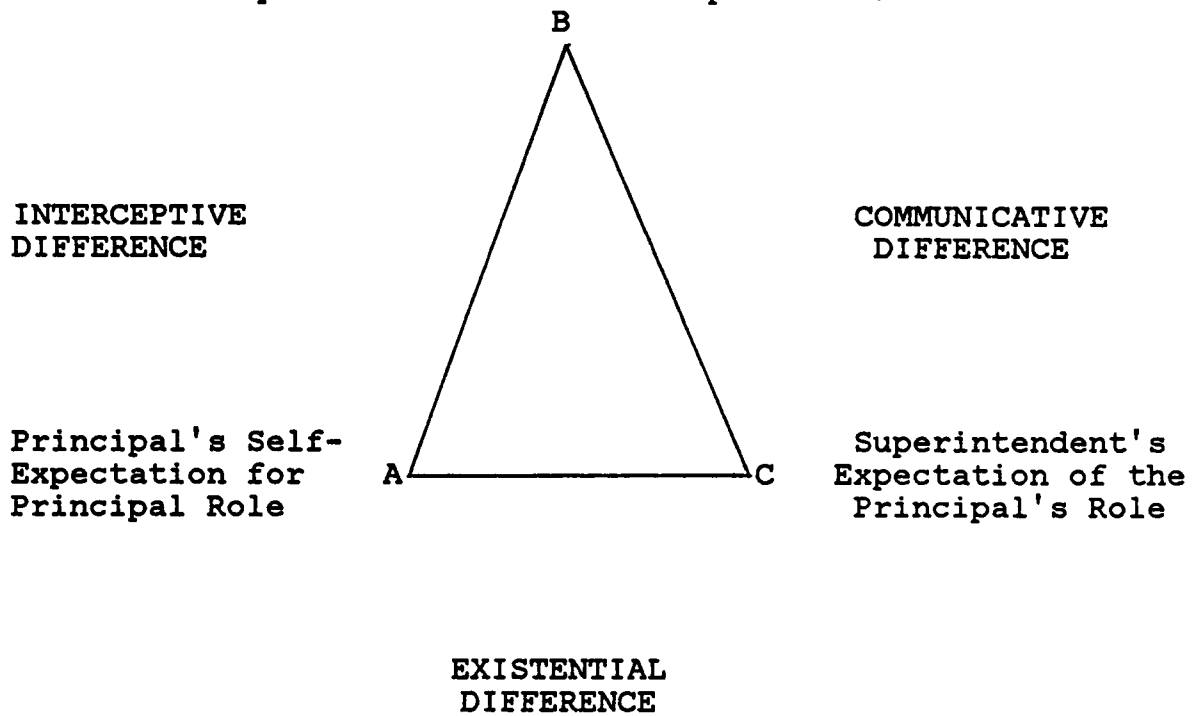
Nonetheless, two possible generalizations that can be made are that superintendents and principals have similar views relative to the importance of competency statements and/or role expectations, and that when disagreement occurs it seems most likely to be in the area of community involvement (Harrison and Peterson, 1986 and 1988; Jurs, 1976; MacIntyre and Grant, 1980). It is logical to assume that a congruence of perceptions between principals and their supervisors is more important as the "ante" goes up. What Wise, et al. (1984) observed relative to teacher evaluation is also true for principals: "results that decisively affect individuals demand a more thorough and reliable evaluation system than those that do not" (p. 75).

A Theoretical Model

There is one theoretical model in the literature which can be applied to any aspect of the evaluation effort and which visually describes the types of different perceptions principals and their supervisors can hold regarding any evaluation issue. The model, adapted from Lipham and Hoeh (1974), is displayed in Figure 1.

As the diagram indicates, the model is a triangle with three points. Point A represents the principal's

Principal's Perception of Superintendent's
Expectation of the Principal's Role



Adapted from: Lipham, J. M., and Hoeh, J. A.
Principalship: Foundations and Functions, New York:
Harper and Row, 1974, p. 125.

Figure 1. Role Perceptions and Role Expectations
Relationship

self-expectation for the principal role. Point B is the principal's perception of the superintendent's expectation of the principal's role. Point C is the superintendent's expectation of the principal's role.

Line AB is referred to as the interceptive difference. It represents the lack of congruence between the principal's self-expectations and the principal's perception of the superintendent's expectations. Line BC is the communicative difference. Differences here are due to a lack of congruence between what the superintendent expects and what the principal thinks is expected. Line AB is the existential difference. These differences are created by a lack of congruence in perceptions between principals and superintendents because of such variables as age, training, experience, and values.

The current study focuses on one evaluative issue, the importance of various standards used to evaluate principals in a large, suburban school system. It examines communicative difference (line BC) and also looks secondarily at some aspects of existential differences (line AB), specifically differences due to level, sex, and years of experience.

Background of this Study

Before describing how the criteria used in this study were developed, it may be useful to provide some background data on the county studied, along with the climate which prompted a reconsideration of the principal evaluation procedures that had been in effect in the district previously.

The site for this study was Fairfax County, Virginia. Fairfax County is a suburb of Washington, D.C. covering a 400 square mile area. Overall, the county is affluent with a median family income in 1986 of \$56,700, although sections of the county have families living at or below the poverty line established by the federal government.

The Fairfax County Public School system was, at the time of this study, the tenth largest school system in the nation with an enrollment of approximately 130,000 students in grades K-12 (13 percent of Virginia's public school student body). As of 1987, minority students made up 24 percent of the school population, with Asians and blacks being the largest group--nine percent each. Over 89 percent of the school system's 1987 graduating class intended to pursue post-secondary education.

In 1987-88 the school system employed over 14,765 people, of which almost 8,000 were teachers and 440 were school-based administrators. The operating budget for that

same year was over \$650 million; average per pupil cost was almost \$5,000.

The county is administratively divided into four geographic areas. Two of the administrative areas (in the older sections of the county) have less than 30,000 students each; the other two areas contain the newer growth areas and have over 30,000 students each. The schools within each area are managed by an area superintendent who is responsible for evaluating the principals in each school.

The principal and teacher evaluation systems used in the county from the mid-sixties until the late eighties were based upon an EBO (evaluation by objectives) process. Like teachers, principals were rated on how well they met objectives that were jointly determined by the principal and area superintendent. In addition, seven other functional areas were considered in the principal's evaluation: instruction, personnel management, business management, administration, pupil personnel, community/public relations, and understanding human relations skills as applied to staff, parents, and students.

For principals there were three possible rating categories: "effective," "needs improvement," and "unsatisfactory." All principals received one overall rating. It was widely believed that the highest rating category was achieved by almost all principals evaluated.

Neither the teacher nor the principal evaluation system appeared to adequately discriminate between good and poor performance.

As a first step, the School Board began to consider the possibility of a performance-based/merit pay system for teachers in 1982. After school staff carefully analyzed the existing system, an outside consultant was hired to develop a performance-based system. A pilot program was implemented for one year based on the consultant's findings. At the conclusion of the pilot, it was decided that the pilot needed extensive revision.

In July 1985 a new superintendent was hired and given the task of continuing to develop a pay-for-performance system. A task force of teachers and administrators worked throughout the 1985-86 school year to develop the standards and procedures to be used. At the same time, a Blue Ribbon Commission of prominent business and community leaders made recommendations on what the new teacher evaluation system should encompass. Their recommendations provided strong community support for a performance-based evaluation system based on higher across-the-board teacher salaries.

In 1986-87 eight schools piloted the new proposed teacher evaluation system which included a five-level rating scale and a three-step career ladder. All teachers received a significant increase in the base salary scale while the new system was being implemented. The superintendent also

proposed that in the 1989-90 school year those teachers receiving the two highest ratings would be moved to a higher salary scale.

While it is unnecessary here to describe in detail the teacher evaluation system, it is important to note that principals were given the responsibility of assigning the final rating and that observation (but not evaluation) by peers was an essential part of the process. Obviously, this type of responsibility dramatically increased the leadership role of principals and placed significant new demands on them. Furthermore, the requirements of the teacher evaluation system, with its more exacting standards and procedures, caused more and more attention to be placed on principal evaluation procedures. A change in the principal evaluation system became inevitable.

In the fall of 1986 a committee of central office and school-based administrators convened to develop new selection, training, and evaluation procedures for school-based administrators. All three areas were included because it was considered important that the three areas be linked: that selection, training, and evaluation of school-based administrators should not exist in isolation of each another.

Committee members worked together and as part of three subcommittees which addressed in detail the three areas noted above. The evaluation subcommittee, of which the author was

a member, took as its initial task the responsibility for developing standards of performance to be used in the evaluation of principals.

After the evaluation subcommittee reviewed performance standards discussed in the literature, examined those used in other school systems, and received input from the other committee members, the subcommittee wrote a first draft of eight performance standards, along with guidelines that further explicated each.

In March 1987 the school system held a working conference on the committee's preliminary work. A broad cross-section of county principals were invited to attend, and outside experts (Lori Manasse; Marshall Sashkin and Hunter Moorman of the U. S. Department of Education; Russell French of the Tennessee Career Ladder program; and representatives of professional organizations such as the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, the National Association of Elementary School Principals, and the National Association of Secondary School Principals) were asked to share their thoughts on principal selection, training, and evaluation. All participants (principals and consultants) were asked to review the committee's work relative to the eight standards. Working subgroups of conference participants were also asked to suggest changes to the standards and guidelines, and were directed to write performance indicators for each standard.

In the next two months, each of the county's principal associations (high, intermediate, and elementary) was asked to review the standards, guidelines, and performance indicators and make recommendations for changes. Further, the superintendent sent drafts of the committee's work to all principals in the county and asked for their suggestions and input regarding the standards and other issues related to a new principal evaluation system.

As a result of these requests, all three levels of the county's principal associations raised several issues of concern. Among their recommendations was a request that "separate, differentiated standards for various level principals (elementary, intermediate, and high school). . . should be identified" (J. LeBel, S. deCorpo, and W. Trussell, personal communication, July 9, 1987). Whether separate standards are necessary is one of the issues examined in this study.

All suggestions for modifications to the standards, guidelines, and performance indicators from principals and area superintendents were reviewed by the committee. Many were incorporated into a final document that was used as part of a field test of principal evaluation standards during the 1987-88 school year. In June 1988 these same standards were formally adopted by the School Board as part of a pilot of new principal evaluation procedures that was to be

implemented during the 1988-89 school year in 32 county schools.

The eight standards adopted by the School Board are depicted in an abbreviated format in Figure 2. A complete list of the standards, guidelines, and performance indicators used in this study is included as Appendix A.

Thus, the eight standards used in this study were adopted by a very large suburban school system with high standards of student achievement. They were developed by a committee of school- and central office-based administrators. All standards were reviewed by outside consultants. All principals within the county had an opportunity for input into the final version that was adopted by the School Board. The standards were part of new principal evaluation procedures which paralleled a performance-based teacher evaluation system already in place. It appears quite likely that these standards will be the basis for some kind of merit-based system for administrators, but the exact nature of such a reward system is as yet undetermined.

Summary

Clearly communicated criteria consisting of realistic performance standards are an essential ingredient of any effective principal evaluation system. Less important is the number and content of individual standards, since those

STANDARDS

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| 1. Climate | Fosters a climate which ensures student learning |
| 2. Instruction | Leads and manages the instructional program effectively |
| 3. Staff Development | Provides for staff leadership, development, and training |
| 4. Staff Selection/
Evaluation | Selects, supervises, and evaluates staff |
| 5. Management | Manages a school-based operation |
| 6. School-Community
Relations | Develops positive school-community relations |
| 7. Human Relations/
Communications | Exhibits human relations and communication skills |
| 8. Professionalism | Demonstrates professional skills |

Figure 2. Eight Principal Performance Standards Used in Fairfax County, Virginia, Public Schools

identified in the literature and those commonly used in many school systems are all quite similar.

The literature is less clear on whether or not principals and their supervisors have similar expectations relative to the importance of the various standards used to assess principal performance. While some studies have found similar expectations, others have not. Demographic differences in superintendents and principals appear to have little effect on perceptions.

A theoretical model which describes the types of perceptual differences between principals and their supervisors regarding performance expectations has been developed. The model provides a workable conceptual framework within which the issues outlined in the study can be considered.

The county in which this particular study occurred is a very large, affluent, suburban school system (Fairfax County, Virginia) with high expectations for students and employees. The principal performance standards used were developed by principals and administrators within the county as a logical outgrowth of a new performance-based teacher evaluation system. The standards were developed after a study of the literature and current practices, and were reviewed by outside consultants.

It is likely that a pay-for-performance system based upon these standards will be put into effect in the near

future. This study was carried out to examine some of the factors which might help policy makers know how best to proceed.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the methods and procedures used in this study. The chapter is divided into six sections: (1) the research questions, (2) the research design, (3) a description of the population, (4) the instrumentation, (5) a description of procedures used to collect data, and (6) the analysis procedures.

Research Questions

The purpose of this study was to explore the extent to which relationships existed between the perceptions of principals and superintendents concerning the relative importance of standards used to evaluate principals.

Specifically, the research questions were:

1. To what extent were there differences between and among the area superintendents in the relative importance they assigned to the standards used to evaluate elementary and secondary principals?

2. To what extent did area superintendents (as a group) differ in the relative importance they assigned to standards used to evaluate elementary versus secondary principals?

3. To what extent did area superintendents and principals differ in the relative importance they assigned to standards used to evaluate principals?

4. To what extent were principals able to predict the relative importance their area superintendent assigned to the standards used to evaluate principals at their level?

5. Were there any differences in principal responses based on certain demographic variables such as grade level, principal experience, and gender (at the elementary level)?

Research Method

A descriptive survey method was used to accomplish the purpose of this study. Concerning the use of the descriptive survey method, Ary, Jacobs, and Razavich (1972) stated:

Descriptive research studies are designed to obtain information concerning the current status of phenomena. They are directed towards determining the nature of the situation as it exists at the time of the study . . . (p. 286).

The use of the descriptive survey approach has resulted in data collection which can be analyzed to answer the research questions.

Description of Population

The population of this study consisted of all 161 general education principals in a large suburban school

district (Fairfax County, Virginia) and their four supervisors, known as area superintendents. Of the 161 general education principals, 120 were elementary principals, 19 were intermediate principals (grades seven and eight), and 22 were secondary school principals (grades seven through twelve) or high school principals (grades nine through twelve).

Instrumentation

From a review of the literature and an examination of current practices in comparable school districts, eight standards by which principals are commonly evaluated were identified. A districtwide committee containing representatives of principals, assistant principals, the personnel department, and the office of staff development reviewed the standards, modifying them as appropriate. The standards were then distributed to each of three principal associations within the district for reaction and comment, and were also reviewed by outside consultants. Finally, all principals were provided with a copy of the proposed standards and were asked to provide voluntary feedback. After this process was completed, the standards became the basis for principal evaluation in the district studied.

With the centrally developed standards determined, a questionnaire was designed to identify the relative

importance principals and area superintendents assigned each of the eight standards. Since a simple ranking of the standards would give no indication of the magnitude of importance a respondent would assign to any one standard, respondents were asked to distribute a total of 100 points (with a minimum of one point to each standard) to indicate the relative importance they placed on each one.

A draft of the questionnaire (Appendix B) was reviewed by ten county principals serving in central office positions. They were asked to complete the survey; indicate any ambiguity in vocabulary, questions, directions, or format; and report how long it took them to complete it. As a result of this review, several modifications were made to the survey instrument. The administrators involved indicated that it took 15 to 20 minutes to complete the questionnaire.

The research proposal and questionnaire were also reviewed by Fairfax County's research evaluation committee. Suggestions from committee members were incorporated into the final instrument. The committee's permission was obtained, as required by school system policy, so that principals and area superintendents could participate in the research effort.

Data Collection

Area superintendents were asked individually to participate in the research project by completing the questionnaire (Appendix C). Though it was necessary to identify area superintendents' responses, each was assured that the way the findings were reported would maintain anonymity.

Principals were asked to complete the survey (Appendix D) at regularly-scheduled area meetings on March 2 and 9, 1988. At that time, copies of the survey were distributed with identifying cards attached. Principals were asked to return the survey with the identifying card. They were told that the identifying card could be returned separately and that it's only purpose was to identify non-respondents for purposes of follow-up. An assurance of anonymity was given to all principals who returned the survey.

Two weeks after each principals meeting, follow-up letters (Appendix E) were sent to those principals who had not responded. Ninety-three percent of principals and 100 percent of area superintendents completed and returned the survey.

Analysis Procedures

Responses to the survey items were entered into a computer database and analyzed. Responses that did not total one hundred points were eliminated from consideration, as were multiple responses to the questions that asked participants to identify the most important and least important standards. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the principals' and area superintendents' responses. Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients, comparing the rank order between each area superintendent's responses, were computed. The Pearson product-moment was used because of the large number of ties in the rank order responses of the area superintendents (Hinkle, Wiersma, and Jurs, 1979). Ultimately, this analysis was not useful and is not reported.

At the end of the survey, principals were invited to comment, if they wished. Forty-five of the 149 responding principals, or 30 percent, chose to comment. Their comments are summarized in Appendix F.

Research question 1, the extent to which there were differences between and among the areas superintendents in the relative importance they assigned to the standards used to evaluate elementary and secondary principals, was analyzed by charting each of the area superintendent's responses, and computing the mean and range for each standard.

Research question 2, the extent to which area superintendents indicated a difference in the importance of each standard as applied to elementary versus secondary principals, was analyzed by computing the mean for each standard. The differences in the means were determined and cases where the difference in the means was greater than two points were highlighted. A difference of three or more points was considered significant because it represented more than a 20 percent disparity in the responses being compared.

Research question 3, comparing principals' and area superintendents' responses, was analyzed by computing the mean, range, and differences in means for each standard as reported by both principals and area superintendents. The range, means, and differences were computed between area superintendents' responses and those of elementary and secondary principals. Likewise the range, means, and differences were computed between area superintendents' responses and the perceptions of elementary and secondary principals of their area superintendents' responses. Again, a difference of more than two between the means was considered noteworthy. Graphs were created to compare responses. Finally, the area superintendents' and principals' selections of the most important and least important standards were charted to see if any patterns emerged on these two questions.

Research question 4, the extent to which principals and their area superintendent differ on the weighting of each standard, was addressed by comparing the means and difference in means of the responses of principals and their area superintendent within each area.

Research question 5, the extent to which there were differences in the responses of principals based on certain demographic factors, was analyzed by computing the differences in the means of elementary versus secondary principals, intermediate versus high school principals, male elementary principals versus female elementary principals, principals with less than two years experience versus those with more than two years experience, principals with less than two years in their current assignment versus those with more than two years, and principals with less than two years experience working for their current area superintendent versus those with more than two years working for their area superintendent. Again, differences in the means that were greater than two points were highlighted.

Tables that display the data collected are presented in Chapter Four, along with comments and findings.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

This chapter reports the results of a questionnaire administered to four area superintendents and 161 principals in Fairfax County, Virginia, on the relative importance of eight standards used in the evaluation of principals. The chapter is divided into four sections: (1) Introduction; (2) Demographic data; (3) Analysis of responses to the questionnaires; and (4) Summary of results.

Introduction

A list of eight standards to be used in the evaluation of principals in Fairfax County, Virginia, was created with input from the principals involved (Appendix A). A questionnaire was administered to principals and their supervisors (area superintendents) regarding the importance of each standard. Respondents were asked to identify the relative importance of each standard by distributing 100 points among the standards (minimum of one point to each).

The population consisted of four area superintendents and all 161 general education principals in Fairfax County, Virginia. Usable returns were received from the four area

superintendents and 149 of the principals, for a return rate of 100 percent and 93 percent respectively. A more detailed breakdown of responses by level and by area is included in Table 1.

The data in Table 1 show that 90 percent of all elementary principals and 98 percent of all secondary principals returned the survey.

Each of the four administrative areas was well-represented, as demonstrated by Table 2, with overall return rates by areas of between 86 percent and 97 percent. When area principal groups were examined by level, three of the four secondary groups had 100 percent return rates. The lowest group return rate was 81 percent (elementary principals in Area II).

Demographic Data

Of the four area superintendents participating in this study, all were experienced. Each had held the position for a minimum of two and a half years. All were male; one was minority. All four had extensive experience in Fairfax County Public Schools. Two of the four had been secondary principals in the county within the last ten years; the other two had secondary administrative and teaching experience.

Table 3 provides demographic data regarding the principals in this study. It shows that the group of

Table 1. Total Survey Responses

	Possible	Number Returned	Percent Returned
Area Superintendents	4	4	100
Elementary Principals	120	109	90
Secondary Principals	41	40	98
Intermediate	19	19	100
High	22	21	96
Total Principals	161	149	93

Table 2. Principals' Survey Responses by Administrative Area

	Possible	Number Returned	Percent Returned
Area I			
Elementary	31	28	90
Secondary	9	9	100
TOTAL	40	37	92
Area II			
Elementary	27	22	81
Secondary	11	11	100
TOTAL	38	33	86
Area III			
Elementary	35	33	94
Secondary	13	12	92
TOTAL	48	45	93
Area IV			
Elementary	27	26	96
Secondary	8	8	100
TOTAL	35	34	97

Table 3. Demographic Profile of Responding Principals
(N=149)

Variable	Frequency	Percent
Years As Principal		
Less than two	28	19
Two or more	121	81
Years in Present School		
Less than two	47	32
Two or more	102	68
Years Working for Current Area Superintendent		
Less than two	26	17
More than two	123	83
Gender (for Elementary Only) (N = 109)		
Male	38	35
Female	71	65

principals studied were experienced: 81 percent of the principals in this study had more than two years experience, 68 percent had spent more than two years working in their present school, and 83 percent had spent more than two years working for their current area superintendent. The data also show that 65 percent of the elementary principals surveyed were female; 35 percent were male.

Analysis of Responses

Research Question 1: Were there differences between and among area superintendents?

The purpose of Research Question 1 was to determine if there were differences between and among area superintendents in the relative importance they assigned to the standards used to evaluate elementary and secondary principals.

Table 4 shows the four area superintendents' responses on the standards as applied to elementary principals. Looking at the range of responses of the area superintendents on the standards as applied to elementary principals, the data in Table 4 indicate a ten point range in the area superintendents' responses on standard 1 (climate) and standard 3 (staff development), and a nine point range in the responses on standard 4 (staff selection/evaluation). These ranges are caused by the differences in weights assigned to

Table 4. Comparison of Area Superintendents' Weighting of Standards for Elementary Principals

Standard	Area Supt. A	Area Supt. B	Area Supt. C	Area Supt. D	Range
1. Climate	15	10	15	5	5-15
2. Instruction	20	14	15	20	14-20
3. Staff Development	10	10	15	5	5-15
4. Staff Selection/ Evaluation	15	18	11	20	11-20
5. Management	10	12	11	15	10-15
6. School-Community Relations	10	13	11	10	10-13
7. Human Relations/ Communications	10	14	11	15	10-15
8. Professionalism	10	9	11	10	9-11

these three standards by Area Superintendents C and D. The range of area superintendents' responses on the remaining standards is much narrower, from two to six points.

Table 5 shows the four area superintendents' responses on the standards as applied to secondary principals. In terms of these responses, the data in Table 5 show that standard 2 (instruction) has the widest range of responses, twelve points. This difference is caused by the responses of Area Superintendents B and D.

On Standard 1 (climate), standard 3 (staff development), and standard 7 (human relations/communications), there is a ten point difference between two of the area superintendents' responses. In these cases, the responses of Area Superintendent D is either at the top or bottom of the range. The range of responses on standard 8 (professionalism) is only one point.

Table 6 compares the four area superintendents' responses on the standards as applied to both elementary and secondary principals. The data in Table 6 show that the responses of Area Superintendent C relative to elementary principals were identical to his responses relative to secondary principals. Likewise, the responses of the other three area superintendents relative to elementary versus secondary principals were quite similar, never varying more than five points.

Table 5. Comparison of Area Superintendents' Weighting of Standards for Secondary Principals

Standard	Area Supt. A	Area Supt. B	Area Supt. C	Area Supt. D	Range
1. Climate	20	14	15	10	10-20
2. Instruction	15	8	15	20	8-20
3. Staff Development	10	8	15	5	5-15
4. Staff Selection/ Evaluation	10	18	11	15	10-18
5. Management	15	16	11	15	11-16
6. School-Community Relations	10	12	11	5	5-12
7. Human Relations/ Communications	10	14	11	20	10-20
8. Professionalism	10	10	11	10	10-11

Table 6. Comparison of Area Superintendents' Weighting of Standards for Elementary and Secondary Principals

Standard	Area Supt. A		Area Supt. B		Area Supt. C		Area Supt. D		Elem. Range	Sec. Range
	Elem.	Sec.	Elem.	Sec.	Elem.	Sec.	Elem.	Sec.		
1. Climate	15	20	10	14	15	15	5	10	5-15	10-20
2. Instruction	20	15	14	8	15	15	20	20	14-20	8-20
3. Staff Development	10	10	10	8	15	15	5	5	5-15	5-15
4. Staff Selection/ Evaluation	15	10	18	18	11	11	20	15	11-20	10-18
5. Management	10	15	12	16	11	11	15	15	10-15	11-16
6. School-Community Relations	10	10	13	12	11	11	10	5	10-13	5-12
7. Human Relations/ Communications	10	10	14	14	11	11	15	20	10-15	10-20
8. Professionalism	10	10	9	10	11	11	10	10	9-11	10-11

Overall, Area Superintendent D showed the greatest range of responses (15 points) across the standards as applied to both the elementary and secondary level. The ranges across standards at both levels for Area Superintendents A, B, and C were quite consistent at 10 points, 9-10 points, and 4 points respectively.

A Pearson product-moment correlation was computed to compare each area superintendent's ranking with the others. This analysis was not reported because, though there are distinct differences when the area superintendents' responses are ranked, the range of responses is actually quite small. Thus, the use of the Pearson product-moment correlations exaggerated the minimal differences that existed.

Research Question 2: Were there differences in area superintendents' responses to standards as applied to elementary versus secondary principals?

The purpose of research question 2 was to compare the responses of the area superintendents on the standards as applied to elementary versus secondary principals.

The data presented in Table 7 indicate that there was generally little difference between the weights the area superintendents assigned to the same standards as applied to the evaluation of elementary versus secondary principals. Using a cut-off of more than two points as noteworthy, the

Table 7. Comparison of Area Superintendents' Weighting of Standards for Elementary Versus Secondary Principals (N=4)

Standards	Elementary Mean	Secondary Mean	Difference
1. Climate	11	15	+ 4
2. Instruction	17	14	- 3
3. Staff Development	10	10	0
4. Staff Selection/ Evaluation	16	14	- 2
5. Management	12	14	+ 2
6. School-Community Relations	11	10	- 1
7. Human Relations/ Communications	12	14	+ 2
8. Professionalism	10	10	0

only notable differences between the area superintendents' responses were on standard 1 (climate), where there was a four point difference; and standard 2 (instruction), where there was a three point difference. The data indicate that area superintendents felt that climate was of greater importance at the secondary level; instruction was of greater importance at the elementary level.

Research Question 3: Were there differences between principals' and area superintendents' responses?

The purpose of the third research question was to determine the extent to which area superintendents and principals differed in the relative importance assigned to standards. Table 8 shows the range, means, and differences in the means of the responses of elementary principals compared to the area superintendents. Similarly, Table 9 compares the responses of secondary principals to area superintendents.

Because the range of principal responses on each standard is nearly identical, a column has been inserted in each table to show the number of times a principal assigned 30 or more points to any one standard. When 100 points are being distributed over eight standards, it is noteworthy when a principal feels that any one standard is important enough to give it almost one-third of the available points.

Table 8. Ranges, Means, and Differences for Elementary Principals' and Area Superintendents' Weightings of Standards

Standard	Elementary Principals N=109			Superintendents N=4			Diff. in Means
	Range	No. Responses > or = 30	Mean	Range	Mean		
1. Climate	5-40	6	14	5-15	11	- 3	
2. Instruction	5-40	5	15	14-20	17	+ 2	
3. Staff Development	5-40	1	11	5-15	10	- 1	
4. Staff Selection/ Evaluation	5-40	6	16	11-20	16	0	
5. Management	1-30	1	10	10-15	12	+ 2	
6. School-Community Relations	4-30	1	10	10-13	11	+ 1	
7. Human Relations/ Communications	5-70	5	14	10-15	12	- 2	
8. Professionalism	2-30	2	10	9-11	10	0	

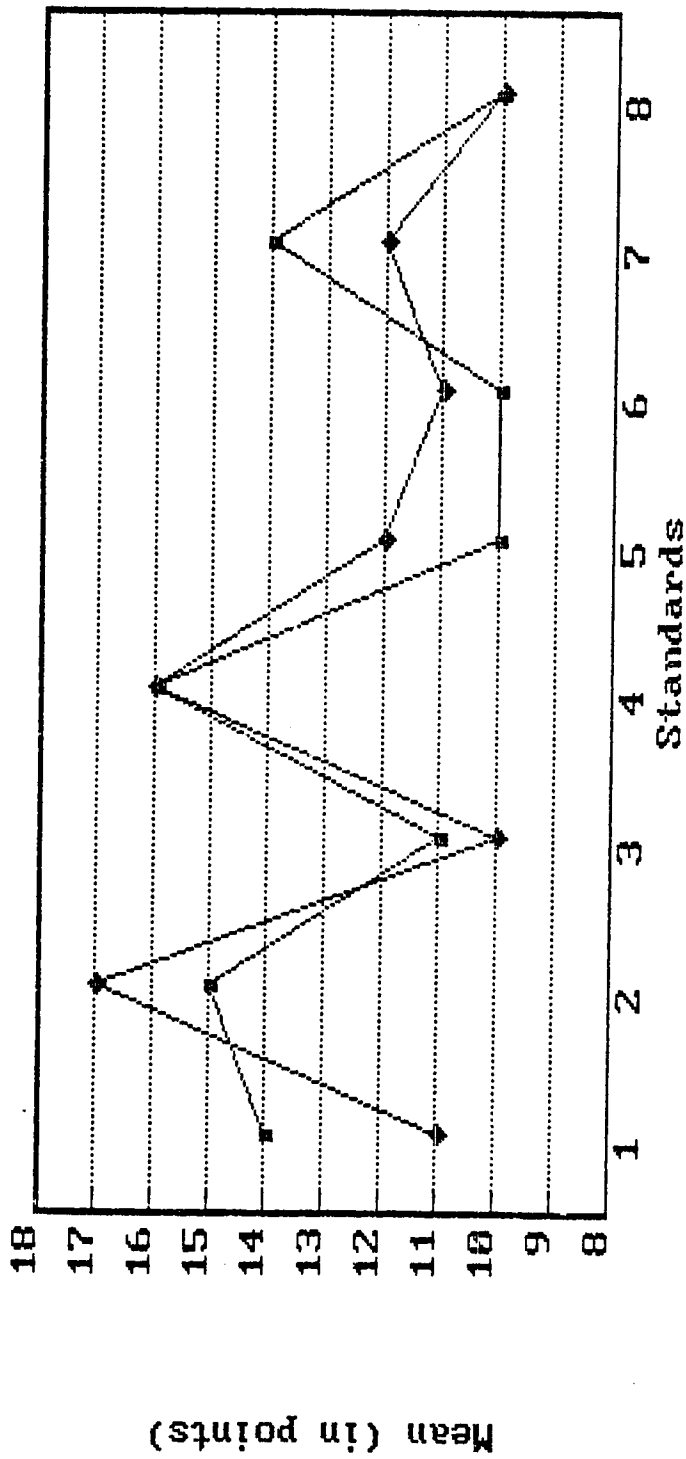
Table 9. Ranges, Means, and Differences for Secondary Principals' and Area Superintendents' Weighting of Standards

Standard	Secondary Principals N=40			Superintendents N=4			Diff. in Means
	Range	No. Responses > or = 30	Mean	Range	Mean		
1. Climate	5-40	1	16	10-20	15	- 1	
2. Instruction	5-30	1	15	8-20	14	- 1	
3. Staff Development	5-25	0	11	5-15	10	- 1	
4. Staff Selection/ Evaluation	4-30	1	15	10-18	14	- 1	
5. Management	5-40	1	12	11-16	14	+ 2	
6. School-Community Relations	1-20	0	9	5-12	10	+ 1	
7. Human Relations/ Communications	5-40	1	13	10-20	14	+ 1	
8. Professionalism	4-20	0	10	10-11	10	0	

Table 8 shows that, comparing mean responses, elementary principals felt that standard 4 (staff selection/evaluation) was the most important. Standard 5 (management), standard 6 (school-community relations), and standard 8 (professionalism) tied for the lowest ratings. The range between the lowest and highest mean ratings was six points. Further, six elementary principals felt strongly enough about the importance of standard 1 (climate), and another six felt strongly enough about the importance of standard 4 (staff selection/evaluation) to give that standard 30 or more points.

A comparison of the mean responses of elementary principals and area superintendents is depicted in Figure 3. It shows that there was very little difference on each standard, with one notable exception. That exception was standard 1 (climate) where the mean response of elementary principals was three points higher than the mean response of the area superintendents.

Table 9 compares the mean responses of secondary principals and area superintendents. Secondary principals gave the highest rating to standard 1 (climate) and the lowest rating to standard 6 (school-community relations). Here the range between the lowest and highest mean was seven points. Unlike elementary principals, very few secondary principals felt strongly enough about any one standard to give it 30 or more points.



■ Elem. Principals ♦ Area Supt.

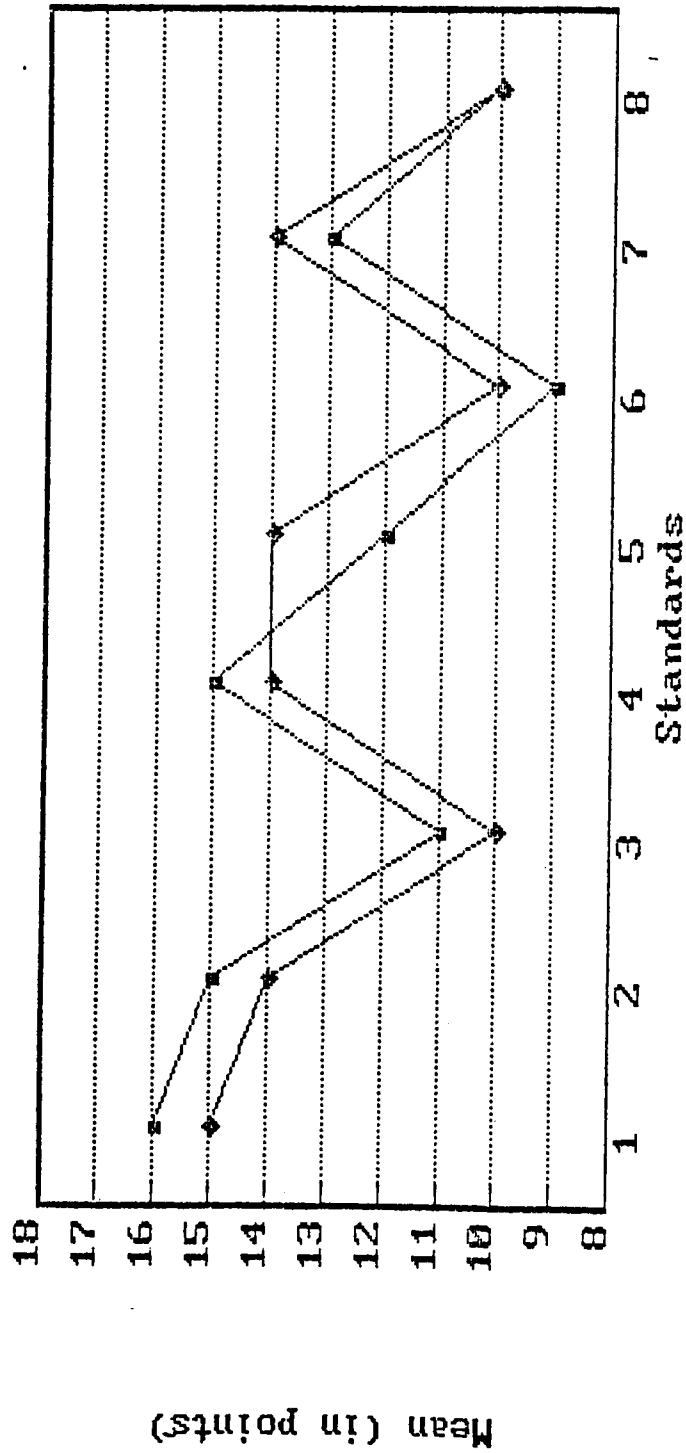
Figure 3. A Comparison of Mean Responses of Elementary Principals and Area Superintendents Performance Standards

A comparison of the mean responses of secondary principals and area superintendents is depicted in Figure 4. It shows amazing agreement with no notable difference in the means.

Table 10 tabulates the differences in the elementary principals' perception of area superintendents' responses compared to the area superintendents' actual mean responses.

Although the area superintendents' highest mean response was standard 2 (instruction), the elementary principals' perception of what the area superintendents believe was the most important standard was standard 4 (staff selection/evaluation). Moreover, nine of the elementary principals gave 30 or more points to standard 4 (staff selection/evaluation). This finding is not surprising considering the importance area superintendents placed on a new pay-for-performance teacher evaluation system that was being implemented in the school system during the 1987-88 school year.

More important, however, is the discrepancy between the mean responses of elementary principals when asked to rate their area superintendents' responses, compared to the area superintendents' actual mean responses. In this regard, Table 10 and Figure 5 show that elementary principals vastly underestimated the importance their area superintendents placed on standard 2 (instruction). They also overestimated

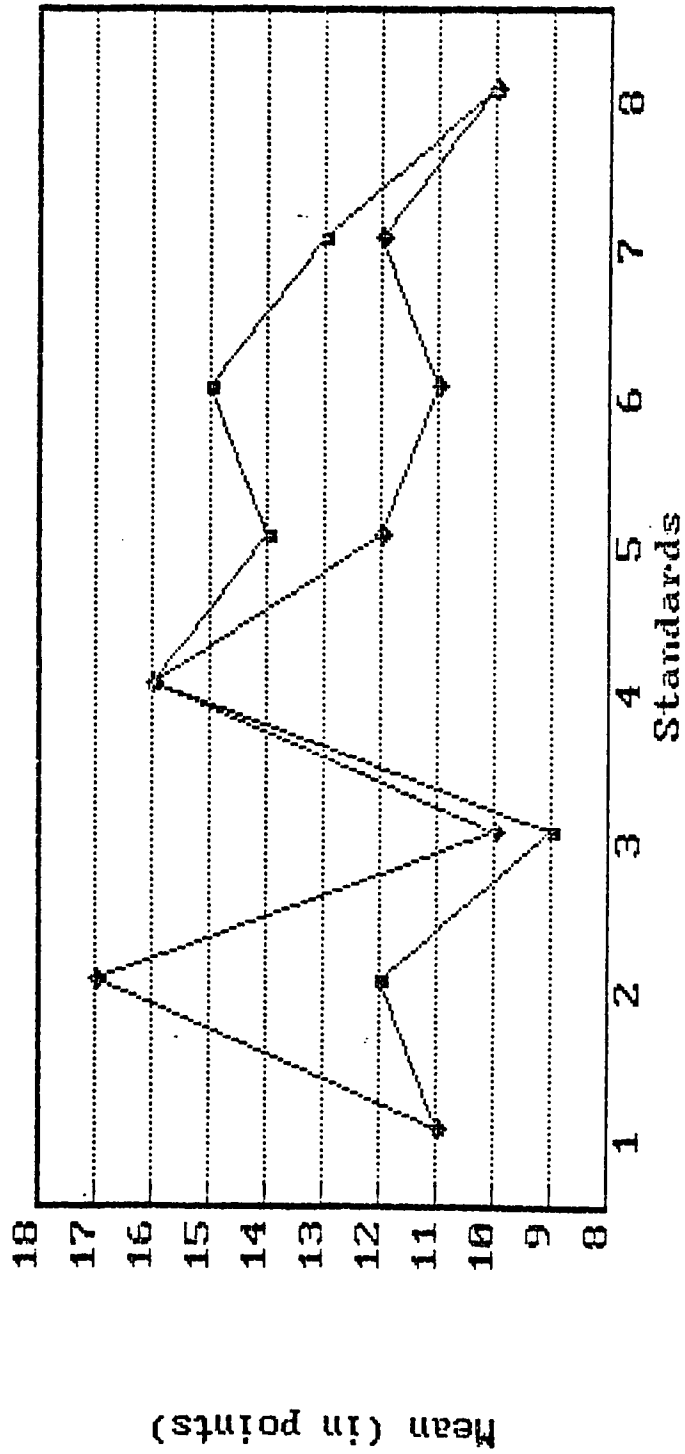


■ Sec. Principals ♦ Area Supt.

Figure 4. A Comparison of Mean Responses of Secondary Principals and Area Superintendents on Performance Standards

Table 10. Ranges, Means, and Differences For Elementary Principals and Their Perception of Area Superintendents' Weighting of Standards

Standard	Perceptions of Elementary Principals N=109				Superintendents N=4		Diff. in Means
	Range	No. Responses > or = 30	Mean	Range	Mean		
1. Climate	4-40	2	11	5-15	11	0	
2. Instruction	0-50	2	12	14-20	17	+ 5	
3. Staff Development	3-25	0	9	5-15	10	+ 1	
4. Staff Selection/ Evaluation	4-50	9	16	11-20	16	0	
5. Management	5-40	6	14	10-15	12	- 2	
6. School-Community Relations	3-40	5	15	10-13	11	- 4	
7. Human Relations/ Communications	3-40	3	13	10-15	12	- 1	
8. Professionalism	1-30	1	10	9-11	10	0	



■ Elem. Principals ♦ Area Supt.

Figure 5. A Comparison of Elementary Principals' Perception of Area Superintendents' Responses with Area Superintendents' Responses on Performance Standards

the importance their area superintendent placed on standard 6 (school-community relations).

Table 11 shows that, in the mind of secondary principals, standard 5 (management) was the most important (with the highest mean response of sixteen) and standard 3 (staff development) was the least important (with a mean response of 8). As they did in weighting their own responses, few secondary principals assigned 30 or more points to any one standard.

Table 11 and Figure 6 show that secondary principals also misperceived the responses area superintendents gave to two standards. Secondary principals overestimated the importance area superintendents placed on standard 6 (school-community relations) and underestimated the importance area superintendents placed on standard 7 (human relations/communication skills).

Because it was quite possible that several standards could receive an equally high or low rating, participants were also asked to indicate which standard was the most and least important. Table 12 shows which standards were rated most important by elementary and secondary principals, which standards each group believed their area superintendent felt was most important, and which standards the four area superintendents actually rated as the ones they believed were most important. The percent of respondents choosing each standard is shown, where appropriate.

Table 11. Ranges, Means, and Differences for Secondary Principals and Their Perception of Area Superintendents' Weighting of Standards

Standard	Perceptions of Secondary Principals N=40				Superintendents N=4		Diff. in Means
	Range	No. Responses > or = 30	Mean	Range	Mean		
1. Climate	5-25	0	14	10-20	15	+ 1	
2. Instruction	5-30	1	14	8-20	14	0	
3. Staff Development	5-20	0	8	5-15	10	+ 2	
4. Staff Selection/ Evaluation	4-25	0	14	10-18	14	0	
5. Management	5-40	2	16	11-16	14	- 2	
6. School-Community Relations	1-40	2	15	5-12	10	- 5	
7. Human Relations/ Communications	5-20	0	10	10-20	14	+ 4	
8. Professionalism	4-20	0	9	10-11	10	+ 1	

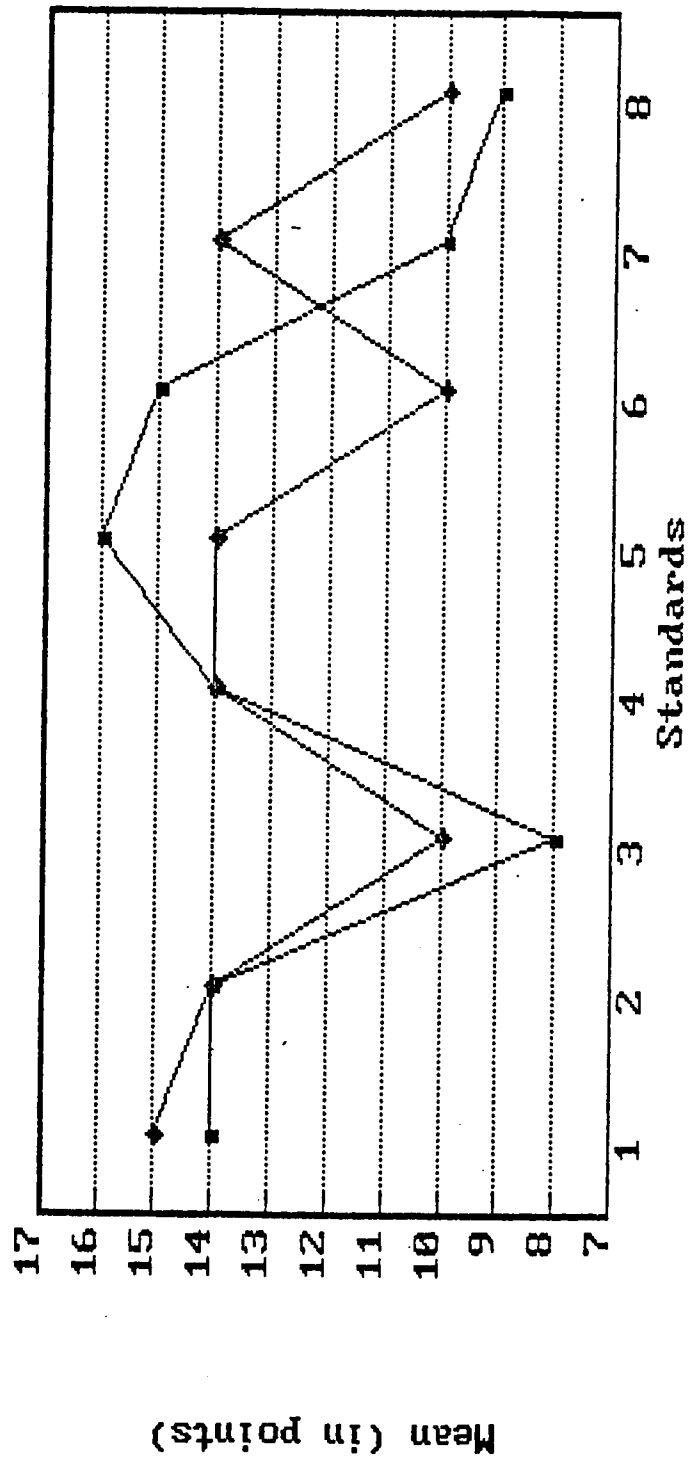


Figure 6. A Comparison of Secondary Principals' Perception of Area Superintendents' Responses with Area Superintendents' Actual Responses on Performance Standards

Table 12. Frequency of Responses for Most Important Standards as Determined by Elementary Principals, Secondary Principals, and Area Superintendents

Standard	Elem. Prin.			Sec. Prin.			Perceptions of Elem. Prin. of Area Supt.			Area Supt. for Elem. Sec. Prin.		
	No.	%	No.	No.	%	No.	No.	%	No.	%	No.	No.
1. Climate	20	18%	7	18%	10	9%	5	12%				1
2. Instruction	27	24%	11	27%	8	7%	6	15%			3	1
3. Staff Development	8	7%	1	2%	2	1%	0	0%				
4. Staff Selection/Evaluation	21	19%	6	15%	24	22%	4	10%			1	1
5. Management	5	4%	2	5%	18	16%	9	22%				
6. School-Community	1	0%	0	0%	22	20%	4	10%				
7. Human Relations/Communications	15	13%	7	17%	10	9%	0	0%				1
8. Professionalism	4	3%	1	2%	4	3%	0	0%				
None	8	7%	5	12%	11	10%	12	30%				

The data in Table 12 show that there was a divergence of opinion by all groups with regard to which standard was the most important. No standard was selected as most important by more than 27 percent of any group. Though the top four choices of elementary principals, secondary principals, and area superintendents are the same, two of the top three standards that elementary and secondary principals felt that their area superintendent thought was most important were not in this group. The standard that received the highest ranking by elementary principals, secondary principals, and area superintendents was standard 2 (instruction). Further, principals were once again inaccurate in predicting area superintendents' responses.

Table 13 provides similar data regarding respondents' choice of the least important standard.

The data in Table 13 show that there was little unanimity among groups about which standard is least important. Like the responses to the question on the most important standard, elementary principals, secondary principals, and area superintendents showed some agreement amongst themselves, though most elementary principals selected standard 8 (professionalism) as least important and most secondary principals selected standard 6 (school-community relations) as least important. There was less agreement among the area superintendents on this question as well.

Table 13. Frequency of Responses for Least Important Standards as Determined by Elementary Principals, Secondary Principals, and Area Superintendents

Standard	Elem. Prin.		Sec. Prin.		Perceptions of Elem. Prin. of Area Supt.		Perceptions of Sec. Prin. of Area Supt.		Area Supt. for Elem. Sec. Prin.	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	No.
1. Climate	3	2%	0	0%	3	2%	0	0%		
2. Instruction	4	3%	3	7%	9	8%	2	5%	1	1
3. Staff Development	15	13%	4	10%	26	23%	9	22%	1	1
4. Staff Selection/ Evaluation	1	0%	0	0%	1	0%	2	5%		
5. Management	23	21%	4	10%	20	18%	3	7%	2	1
6. School-Community/ Human Relations/ Communications	12	11%	11	27%	4	3%	2	5%	2	1
7. Professionalism	3	2%	0	0%	5	4%	3	7%		
8. Professionalism	27	24%	9	22%	23	21%	8	20%	1	1
None	21	19%	9	22%	18	16%	11	27%		

Table 13 also shows a particularly high non-response rate. Many principals did not answer this question. Some who also elected to comment most often indicated that "no standard was 'least important.'"

Research Question 4: Were principals able to predict their area superintendent's responses?

The purpose of Research Question 4 was to determine to what extent principals are able to predict the relative importance their area superintendent gave to the standards used to evaluate principals at that level. In Table 11, for each area, the mean scores of elementary and secondary principals and the predicted mean scores assigned by elementary and secondary principals is compared to the area superintendent's actual score. The column marked "Real Difference" is the difference between the mean responses of elementary and secondary principals when the area superintendent's mean score is subtracted from it. The column marked "Perceived Difference" is the difference between the mean predicted response of elementary and secondary principals when the area superintendent's real score is subtracted from it.

Tables 14 through 17 show how each area superintendent's and his principals' scores compare on each of the eight standards. For purposes of analysis, the sum of the integers

representing the differences (both real and perceived) were computed for each area superintendent. By comparing these sums ("real difference" and "perceived difference") for each area superintendent and his principals, there was some indication of whether (1) there was little difference between the area superintendent's and principals' scores and the principals perceived it, (2) there was little difference between an area superintendent's and principals' scores and the principals didn't perceive it, (3) there was a definite difference between an area superintendent's and principals' scores and the principals perceived it, or (4) there was a definite difference between an area superintendent's and principals' scores and the principals didn't perceive it.

In Table 14, for example, the sum of the integers for the "perceived differences" is much higher than the sum of the integers for the "real difference." Thus, elementary principals working for Area Superintendent A thought there was a greater difference than there actually was between their weighting of the importance of various standards and the weighting assigned by their area superintendent. In this case, there was a definite difference and the principals didn't know it. On the other hand, secondary principals in the same area showed less real difference, but the closeness of the sum of integers for "perceived difference" means that they knew that some difference existed.

Table 14. Comparison of Area Superintendent A's Scores With His Elementary and Secondary Principals

Standard	ELEMENTARY				SECONDARY			
	Prin. Mean	Prediction of Area Supt.	Supt. Score	Real Perceived Diff.	Prin. Mean	Prediction of Area Supt.	Supt. Score	Real Perceived Diff.
1. Climate	14	10	15	+ 1	16	13	20	+ 4
2. Instruction	14	10	20	+ 6	14	9	15	+ 1
3. Staff Development	11	9	10	- 1	12	8	10	- 2
4. Staff Selection/ Evaluation	18	19	15	- 3	15	13	10	- 5
5. Management	8	13	10	+ 2	14	15	15	+ 1
6. School-Community Relations	10	16	10	0	7	14	10	+ 3
7. Human Relations/ Communications	16	15	10	- 6	12	9	10	- 2
8. Professionalism	10	8	10	0	10	7	10	0
SUM OF INTEGERS (FOR DIFFERENCES)			19	36			18	26

Table 15 looks at the scores of Area Superintendent B compared to his principals. The small sum and the closeness of the sums mean that these principals (both elementary and secondary) had few differences with their area superintendent and they knew it.

The scores of Area Superintendent C and his principals are in Table 16. Here the comparison of the sum of integers for "real" and "perceived" differences show there were differences between the perceptions of the area superintendent and his principals, but that elementary principals in this area thought the disparity was much greater it was.

Table 17 examines the principals working for Area Superintendent D. Here there was almost an exact match in the sums of "real" and "perceived" differences for both elementary and secondary principals. These principals and their area superintendent had different views of the importance of various standards, but the principals were aware that such differences existed.

Overall, Tables 14 through 17 also show that in most cases the mean scores of elementary and secondary principals, when compared to the actual scores of his or her area superintendent, were closer than the principals' perceived scores compared to the area superintendents' real scores.

Thus, the principals perceived there to be more difference than there was between their scores and those of

Table 15. Comparison of Area Superintendent B's Scores With His Elementary and Secondary Principals

Standard	ELEMENTARY				SECONDARY			
	Prin. Prediction Mean	Supt. Score	Real Diff.	Perceived Diff.	Prin. Prediction Mean	Supt. Score	Real Diff.	Perceived Diff.
1. Climate	16	10	- 6	- 4	15	14	- 1	0
2. Instruction	15	14	- 1	+ 2	14	14	- 6	- 6
3. Staff Development	11	10	- 1	+ 1	10	8	- 2	- 1
4. Staff Selection/ Evaluation	16	18	+ 2	- 4	16	14	+ 2	- 4
5. Management	11	12	+ 1	- 1	11	13	+ 5	+ 3
6. School-Community Relations	10	13	+ 3	- 2	10	12	+ 2	- 2
7. Human Relations/ Communications	14	14	0	+ 1	12	14	+ 2	+ 2
8. Professionalism	9	9	0	- 2	11	10	- 1	+ 1
SUM OF INTEGERS (FOR DIFFERENCES)			14	17			21	19

Table 16. Comparison of Area Superintendent C's Scores With His Elementary and Secondary Principals

Standard	ELEMENTARY				SECONDARY			
	Prin. Prediction Mean	Prediction of Area Supt.	Supt. Score	Real Perceived Diff.	Prin. Prediction Mean	Prediction of Area Supt.	Supt. Score	Real Perceived Diff.
1. Climate	12	9	15	+ 3	18	16	15	- 3
2. Instruction	15	12	15	0	17	14	15	- 2
3. Staff Development	11	8	15	+ 4	11	7	15	+ 4
4. Staff Selection/ Evaluation	8	13	11	+ 3	15	13	11	- 4
5. Management	11	17	11	0	13	20	11	- 2
6. School-Community Relations	10	15	11	+ 1	6	16	11	+ 5
7. Human Relations/ Communications	12	12	11	- 1	14	7	11	- 3
8. Professionalism	11	11	11	0	8	6	11	+ 3
SUM OF INTEGERS (FOR DIFFERENCES)				12	26			
				29	35			

Table 17. Comparison of Area Superintendent D's Scores With His Elementary and Secondary Principals

Standard	ELEMENTARY				SECONDARY			
	Prin. Mean	Prediction of Area Supt.	Supt. Score	Real Perceived Diff.	Prin. Mean	Prediction of Area Supt.	Supt. Score	Real Perceived Diff.
1. Climate	13	11	5	- 8	14	12	10	- 4
2. Instruction	15	13	20	+ 5	16	14	20	+ 4
3. Staff Development	13	10	5	- 8	12	7	5	- 7
4. Staff Selection/ Evaluation	15	16	20	+ 5	14	10	15	+ 1
5. Management	11	13	15	+ 4	10	13	15	+ 5
6. School-Community Relations	10	13	10	0	11	11	5	- 6
7. Human Relations/ Communications	13	11	15	+ 2	14	8	20	+ 6
8. Professionalism	10	9	10	0	9	8	10	+ 1
SUM OF INTEGERS (FOR DIFFERENCES)				32				34
								37

their area superintendents. Area Superintendent B had scores that were the closest both to the perceived and actual scores of his elementary and secondary principals. His principals also knew there was little difference between them.

Area Superintendent D's scores were the farthest away from his principals' real and perceived scores, but this was the same area superintendent who had the widest range of responses when compared to the other area superintendents. Further, his principals seemed to know that differences existed.

For Area Superintendents A and C there were some differences between reality and perception, but elementary principals in these areas did not seem to be aware of these differences.

Research Question 5: Were there any differences based on selected demographic variables?

The purpose of this research question was to determine if there were any differences in the responses of:

- elementary versus secondary principals
- intermediate versus high school principals
- male versus female elementary principals
- principals with less than two years of experience versus those with two or more years of experience

- principals with less than two years of experience in their current assignment versus those with two or more years in their current assignment
- principals with less than two years of experience working for their current area superintendent versus those with two or more years working for their current area superintendent

Table 18 shows the differences between the mean responses of elementary versus secondary principals. It indicates that there were no notable differences in the mean responses of elementary and secondary principals. On three standards the means were identical, on three standards the difference in means was one point, and on the remaining two standards there was a two point discrepancy. The two standards on which there were the most differences were standard 1 (climate) and standard 5 (management), both of which secondary principals saw as more important than elementary principals.

Table 19 compares the mean responses of intermediate and high school principals. The data in this table indicate that of the eight standards there was one notable difference between intermediate and high school principals: high school principals felt that standard 5 (management) was more important than did intermediate principals. It was also interesting to note that the mean rating of elementary and

Table 18. Comparison of Mean Responses of Elementary Versus Secondary Principals

Standard	Elementary Principals' Mean N= 109	Secondary Principals' Mean N= 40	Difference in Means
1. Climate	14	16	+ 2
2. Instruction	15	15	0
3. Staff Development	11	11	0
4. Staff Selection/ Evaluation	16	15	- 1
5. Management	10	12	+ 2
6. School-Community Relations	10	9	- 1
7. Human Relations/ Communications	14	13	- 1
8. Professionalism	10	10	0

Table 19. Comparison of Mean Responses of Intermediate Versus High School Principals

Standard	Intermediate Principals' Mean N=19	High School Principals' Mean N=21	Difference in Means
1. Climate	15	16	+ 1
2. Instruction	16	15	- 1
3. Staff Development	11	12	+ 1
4. Staff Selection/ Evaluation	16	15	- 1
5. Management	10	14	+ 4
6. School-Community Relations	10	8	- 2
7. Human Relations/ Communications	14	12	- 2
8. Professionalism	9	10	+ 1

intermediate principals on this standard was identical. On the remaining seven standards there was a difference in the means of either one or two points.

Table 20 compares the responses of male and female elementary principals. It shows that there were no notable differences between the responses of male and female elementary principals. On three standards, the mean responses were identical; on four standards there was a one point difference in the means; and on one standard, standard 7 (human relations/communication skills), there was a two point difference in the means.

Table 21 compares experienced and inexperienced elementary and secondary principals. For purposes of this study, "experience" was defined as two or more years as a principal.

The data in Table 21 indicate that there were generally few notable differences between experienced and inexperienced secondary principals. The two exceptions both related to differences between experienced and inexperienced secondary principals. Specifically, on standard 4 (staff selection/evaluation) experienced secondary principals felt that standard was more important than did inexperienced secondary principals. On standard 7 (human relations/communication skills), inexperienced secondary principals felt that standard was more important than did experienced secondary principals. However, the small number of inexperienced

Table 20. Comparison of Responses of Male and Female Elementary Principals

Standard	Male Elementary Principals' Means N=38	Female Elementary Principals' Means N=71	Difference in Means
1. Climate	14	14	0
2. Instruction	14	15	+ 1
3. Staff Development	11	12	+ 1
4. Staff Selection/ Evaluation	16	17	+ 1
5. Management	11	10	+ 1
6. School-Community Relations	10	10	0
7. Human Relations/ Communications	15	13	- 2
8. Professionalism	10	10	0

Table 21. Comparison of Mean Responses of Experienced Versus Inexperienced Elementary and Secondary Principals

Standard	Elementary Principals			Secondary Principals		
	Mean	Mean	Diff.	Mean	Mean	Diff.
1. Climate	12	14	+ 2	14	16	+ 2
2. Instruction	15	14	- 1	15	15	0
3. Staff Development	13	11	- 2	11	11	0
4. Staff Selection/ Evaluation	16	16	0	13	16	+ 3
5. Management	11	10	- 1	12	12	0
6. School-Community Relations	11	10	- 1	9	8	- 1
7. Human Relations/ Communications	13	14	+ 1	16	12	- 4
8. Professionalism	9	10	+ 1	10	9	- 1

secondary principals (N=7) makes this result somewhat questionable.

Table 22 provides a comparison of principals with less than two years in their current school with those who have two or more years in their current school.

The data in Table 22 indicate that there were virtually no differences in principals' responses based on length of time they have served as principal of their current school. The one exception related to standard 5 (management). Secondary principals who had served for two or more years in their current assignment rated this standard as more important than did secondary principals new to their current positions.

Table 23 examines whether the number of years a principal has worked for his or her current supervisor (area superintendent) makes a difference in the weights the principals assigned.

Examination of the data in Table 23 reveals that there are no noteworthy differences in principals' responses based on the number of years they have worked for their current area superintendent. Thus, it can be concluded that principals' ability to predict their supervisor's responses is not effected by the length of time the principal has worked for that supervisor.

Table 22. Comparison of Mean Responses of Principals With Less Than Two Years in Their Current School With Those Who Have Two or More Years in Their Current School

Standard	Elementary Principals			Secondary Principals		
	Less Than Two Years Experience N=34	Two or More Years Experience N=75	Diff.	Less Than Two Years Experience N=13	Two or More Years Experience N=27	Diff.
1. Climate	13	14	+ 1	16	15	- 1
2. Instruction	15	14	- 1	15	15	0
3. Staff Development	12	11	- 1	12	11	- 1
4. Staff Selection/ Evaluation	17	16	- 1	15	15	0
5. Management	10	10	0	10	13	+ 3
6. School-Community Relations	10	10	0	9	9	0
7. Human Relations/ Communications	13	14	+ 1	13	13	0
8. Professionalism	10	10	0	10	10	0

Table 23. Comparison of Mean Responses of Principals Who Have Worked for Less Than Two Years For Their Current Area Superintendent With Those Who Have Worked Two or More Years With Their Area Superintendent

Standard	Elementary Principals				Secondary Principals			
	Less Than Two Years N=18	Two or More Years N=91	Less Than Two Years N=8	Two or More Years N=32	Less Than Two Years N=8	Two or More Years N=32	Mean	Diff.
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Diff.
1. Climate	13	14	17	15	17	15	15	- 2
2. Instruction	16	14	17	15	17	15	15	- 2
3. Staff Development	13	11	12	11	12	11	11	- 1
4. Staff Selection/ Evaluation	16	17	16	15	16	15	15	- 1
5. Management	11	10	11	12	11	12	12	+ 1
6. School-Community Relations	10	10	7	9	7	9	9	+ 2
7. Human Relations/ Communications	12	14	11	13	11	13	13	+ 2
8. Professionalism	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	0

Summary of Results

In summary, the findings of this study are as follows:

1. The differences in responses among the area superintendents to any one standard was as much as two times greater than the difference between the responses the same area superintendent gave to any one standard as applied to elementary versus secondary principals. Even so, the differences between and among area superintendents were minimal, with mean ranges of differences from one to twelve points.

2. The only substantial difference between how area superintendents rated the same standard, as applied to the elementary versus the secondary level, was that area superintendents believed standard 1 (climate) was of slightly greater importance at the secondary level, and standard 2 (instruction) was of slightly greater importance at the elementary level.

3. In comparing the mean responses of area superintendents and principals, the only notable difference was that elementary principals rated climate three points higher than did area superintendents. There were no notable differences between the mean responses of secondary principals and area superintendents.

4. When principals were asked to allocate points based on how they believed their area superintendent would do so,

principals as a whole did not accurately predict their area superintendent's scores. There were, however, interesting differences from area to area. In two of the areas, principal groups seemed to be more aware of the differences between their views and those of their supervisor, whereas elementary principals in the other two others were not as aware of the differences.

5. Generally, little agreement was found among principals or area superintendents regarding the most important or least important standard. However, the one standard most frequently rated "most important" by elementary principals, secondary principals, and area superintendents was standard 2 (instruction). Once again, however, principals were not able to accurately predict the standard their area superintendent felt was most or least important.

6. There were no notable differences in the mean responses of elementary versus secondary principals, and only one notable difference between the responses of intermediate versus high school principals. This difference related to the importance of standard 5 (management).

7. Other demographic variables analyzed in this study (specifically several different types of experience and gender at the elementary level) showed few differences between the mean responses of the two groups compared, when that variable was used to separate respondents for purposes of comparison. Thus, it did not appear that any of the

demographic variables have an substantial effect on principals' perceptions or their ability to predict their supervisor's perceptions relative to the importance of evaluative standards.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

Given that sound criteria, mutually understood, are the basis for any successful evaluation process, the purpose of this study was to examine the perceptions of principals and their supervisors (area superintendents) in a large suburban school system relative to the importance of eight standards used as the criteria for principal evaluation.

The eight standards were identified by an administrative committee within the school system studied and were approved by all three county principal associations after their input was solicited. While the standards were developed locally, they include many elements that are common to systems used elsewhere, and to criteria frequently discussed in the literature. The eight standards were:

1. fosters a climate that ensures student learning
2. leads and manages the instructional program
3. provides for staff leadership, development, and training
4. selects, supervises, and evaluates staff
5. manages a school-based operation

6. develops positive school-community relations
7. exhibits human relations and communication skills
8. demonstrates professional skills

Descriptive statements that further defined each standard were also developed by the committee and the principals.

Specifically, this study had five objectives:

1. to determine the extent to which there were differences in the responses of area superintendents;
2. to determine the extent area superintendents differed in the relative importance they assigned to standards used to evaluate elementary versus secondary principals;
3. to ascertain the extent area superintendents and principals differed in the relative importance they assigned to standards used to evaluate principals;
4. to determine the extent principals were able to predict the relative importance their area superintendent gave to the standards used to evaluate principals; and
5. to examine if certain demographic variables such as grade level, experience, and gender affected principals' responses.

In order to answer these questions, surveys were constructed for area superintendents and principals. Both groups were asked to spend a total of 100 points (with a minimum of one point to each) to indicate the relative

importance they placed on each of the eight standards. This procedure provided more than a simple ranking because it allowed respondents to weight the importance of any one item compared to the others.

Area superintendents were asked to assign the 100 points in weighting the importance of the standards in evaluating elementary and then secondary principals, and then to identify the most important and least important standard for each.

Principals were asked to weight the importance of the standards based on their own experience, and then to weight the standards as they believed their area superintendent did. They were also asked to choose the most important and least important standard both from their perspective, and from the perspective of their area superintendent. Principals also responded to several questions that provided selected demographic data that were used to analyze their responses.

Ninety-three percent of principals and 100 percent of area superintendents completed the survey. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze survey results. Means, ranges, and differences in means were computed and used to compare group responses.

Findings

Five research questions were developed as part of this study. They are discussed in numerical order.

Question 1: Were there differences between and among area superintendents?

There were some differences between and among the area superintendents in their responses to the weighting process, but these differences relate largely to the responses of one area superintendent who made sharper distinctions between standards. The other area superintendents tended to confine their responses to a much narrower range. Even taking this fact into account, however, the total range of area superintendent responses to each standard was quite narrow, from one to twelve points.

Question 2: Were there differences in area superintendents' responses to standards as applied to elementary versus secondary principals?

There was even less difference between the weights area superintendents assigned to the same standards as applied in the evaluation of elementary versus secondary principals. The only noticeable differences were that the area

superintendents felt that climate was of greater importance at the secondary level and that leading and managing the instructional program was of greater importance at the elementary level.

Question 3: Were there differences between principals' and area superintendents' responses?

There was very little difference between the mean responses of principals and area superintendents on the importance of the standards. The only exception was that elementary principals felt that climate was more important than the area superintendents rated it. There were no notable differences at the secondary level.

There were, however, several notable differences in the area superintendents' responses when compared to the perceptions of elementary and secondary principals about what they thought the area superintendents' responses would be. Taken as a whole, elementary principals underestimated the importance their area superintendents placed on leading and managing the instructional program and overestimated the importance area superintendents placed on daily management. Secondary principals overestimated the important area superintendents placed on school-community relations and underestimated the importance the area superintendents placed on human relations and communication skills.

When each group was asked to rate the most important and least important standards, one standard emerged as most important for both groups (instruction), while none were noticeably least important. On the question of the most important standard, instruction received the highest ratings from elementary principals, secondary principals, and area superintendents. On the question of the least important standard, elementary principals and area superintendents chose management; most secondary principals selected school-community relations. Once again, the actual responses of principals and area superintendents were much closer than the principals' perceptions of their supervisor's responses.

Question 4: Were principals able to predict their area superintendent's responses?

While overall responses show some distortion of the principals' view of the area superintendents' responses, this question looked specifically at how accurate principals were in predicting their own area superintendent's responses. The data revealed that one of the four area superintendents had scores that were quite close to his principals' perceived and actual scores. The area superintendent with the scores that were farthest from his principals' perceived and actual scores was the one with the widest range of scores. The data may simply reflect this phenomenon.

Of special note was the observation that the principals in two of the four areas were better able than the principals in the other two areas to predict how their superintendent weighted the standards. The reason for such a difference is unknown.

Question 5: Were there differences based on selected demographic variables?

There were few differences in principals' responses based on gender or experience. While elementary and secondary principals' responses did not substantially differ, there was one notable difference in the responses of intermediate principals compared to high school principals. High school principals felt that management was more important than did intermediate principals. Intermediate principals' rating on this standard was closer to that of elementary principals.

Conclusions

There are five main conclusions that can be drawn from this study:

1. Elementary principals, secondary principals, and their supervisors (area superintendents) had similar perceptions of the relative importance of eight generic

standards used as criteria to evaluate principal performance. In evaluating principals, area superintendents need to be aware that elementary principals often believe that climate is more important they do.

2. Principals and their supervisors were closer in their expectations relative to the importance of evaluative standards than principals thought they were. This fact either speaks to the need for improved communication between principals and their supervisors or indicates that some principals, for whatever reason, don't seem to believe their supervisor sees their job in the same way they do.

3. Within the school system studied, there was little variation in the values one supervisor placed on one standard versus another. A minimal amount of training should be able to reduce the minor variance that existed. Thus, principals with one supervisor can be reasonably certain that person will not have different priorities relative to evaluative standards than another supervisor.

4. While there was no consensus on which aspects of the principals' job was "most important" or "least important," principals and their supervisors did believe that some standards were more important than others. For elementary principals and their supervisors, the two standards relating to selection, supervision, and evaluation of staff and leading and managing the instruction program received higher weights than others. For secondary principals and their

supervisors, the same two reappeared with the addition of a third--school climate.

5. Principals' attitudes about the importance of evaluative standards appeared to be formed early in their tenure as a principal and did not appear to change based on experience. Also, there appeared to be no differences in viewpoint that were related to gender, at least at the elementary level.

Implications

This research has several implications for principals and their supervisors relative to the evaluative process.

First, even though there is an oft-stated concern amongst principals and in the literature that separate evaluative standards should be developed for elementary and secondary principals (Herman, 1988), this study finds questionable evidence that this is necessary. The minor differences between the perceptions of supervisors and elementary and secondary principals can be adequately handled through communication and collaboration in the development of the evaluative process and the standards upon which the process rests. Nonetheless, neither principals nor area superintendents believe all standards are equally important.

Second, when mutually developed or mutually agreed upon evaluative standards are used in principal evaluation, this

study found that principals' concern that one supervisor may have different priorities than another does not appear to be a major problem. This finding does not mean, however, that evaluation training for supervisors can be ignored or that principals' concerns about this issue do not have merit. Nonetheless, in the school system studied, a minimal degree of training on the importance of standards seems to be required.

Third, both principals and their supervisors need to understand that clear oral and written communication is at the heart of a successful evaluation process. The importance of such communication is underscored in the literature (Murphy, Peterson, and Hallinger, 1986), but the literature also notes that superintendents think they do a better job of communicating with and involving principals in the evaluation process than principals think they do (Negley, 1984).

This study showed that principals and their supervisors were closer in their weightings of the importance of various evaluative standards than principals in general thought they were. What this means is that supervisors and principals must work harder at communicating and sharing their respective expectations relative to principal evaluation.

Recommendations for Further Study

Recommendations for further study include research that focuses on the following:

1. Replication of this study in a different type of school system or across several school systems.
2. Exploration of the reasons principals misperceive the importance their supervisors place on evaluative standards and what strategies can be used to reduce this misperception.
3. Determination of whether all standards are clearly understood by all parties involved, whether they are measured by area superintendents in the same way, whether any guidelines under the standards are more important than others, and whether the School Board or superintendent needs to establish that some standards are more important than others.
4. Determination of whether principals' and/or area superintendents' actions correspond to the values they expressed on the survey instrument.

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**APPENDIX A. FAIRFAX COUNTY'S STANDARDS, GUIDELINES, AND
PERFORMANCE INDICATORS FOR PRINCIPALS**

PRINCIPAL

The following standards, guidelines, and performance indicators define what is expected of Fairfax County Public Schools principals. All standards are essential to effective performance. They are not intended as a checklist to be used quantitatively. Though the principal has the overall responsibility for maintaining an effective learning environment, other school-based administrators share this responsibility through the delegation of job functions, as appropriate.

1. FOSTERS A CLIMATE WHICH ENSURES STUDENT LEARNING

Guidelines

Stimulates student interest in school life and learning

Ensures student compliance with school standards and FCPS policies and procedures

Supports management procedures which promote student behavior that is in compliance with Student Responsibilities and Rights and ensures student safety

Establishes and implements school goals

Provides guidance for student social and emotional needs

Communicates high expectations to the staff, students, and community

Manages nonclassroom activities (enrichment, extracurricular, and cocurricular)

Recognizes and rewards student achievement, attendance, and involvement in school activities

Maintains the integrity of instructional time

Performance Indicators

Pleasant environment in the school; harmonious relationships between students and staff members; controls to protect instructional time

Wide interest and involvement of students representing all populations in the school's activities; provision for recognition of outstanding student achievement in a variety of endeavors

Student, staff, and community awareness of high expectations and positive feelings about the atmosphere for learning

Implementation of Student Responsibilities and Rights

2. LEADS AND MANAGES THE INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

Guidelines

Is knowledgeable of the Program of Studies countywide emphases, national/state trends, and the school's curriculum

Provides for ongoing assessment and modification of the instructional program

Monitors student achievement

Monitors programs for special students

Applies knowledge of child development

Uses school and county resources for instructional improvement

Helps staff identify and use resources effectively

Analyzes and uses data on student achievement

Develops long-range plans

Performance Indicators

Exercise of initiatives to seek and use appropriate resources for improved leadership and instructional management

Articulation of curriculum and its appropriate adaptation to meet the needs of the various populations within the school

Thorough and ongoing assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the school's program; understanding of learning theory and child development; judicious application of research findings in program planning

Information and staff access to a variety of school and community resources and their effective use

Use of effective strategies to monitor student achievement

Appropriate planning and sound judgment in the development of long- and short-range goals and strategies

3. PROVIDES FOR STAFF LEADERSHIP, DEVELOPMENT, AND TRAINING

Guidelines

Facilitates appropriate staff development opportunities

Helps staff improve instructional and professional effectiveness

Collaborates with staff to develop school improvement plans

Fosters staff collegiality to strengthen school goals and expectations

Motivates staff

Recognizes and encourages staff initiatives; recommends staff for rewards

Encourages and trains new administrators

Performance Indicators

A well-balanced staff development and training program

Staff development activities which reflect needs identified by the school, area, and county staff

Incorporation of targeted strategies from staff development and training programs into the school's program

Positive staff attitudes about staff development activities and commitment to using improvement strategies

4. SELECTS, SUPERVISES, AND EVALUATES STAFF

Guidelines

Monitors program; supervises staff

Communicates effectively with team leaders/department chairpersons

Recognizes the different ways teachers may organize, manage and communicate with students

Judges effectiveness of individual staff members in helping students achieve the school goals

Selects and assigns staff within systemwide needs

Provides programs of improvement for identified teachers

Evaluates staff in accordance with established procedures

Performance Indicators

The identification of staff strengths and needs

Plans for individualized assistance and recognition

Recognition and reward of staff initiatives

Use of appropriate model of supervision

Knowledge of relevant research

Recognition of outstanding staff performance and varied teaching/learning styles

Sound judgment on teacher evaluations

Documentation to justify pay-for-performance decisions

Effective interviewing, selection, and assignment of staff

5. MANAGES A SCHOOL-BASED OPERATION

Guidelines

Assists in developing and implementing the master schedule

Coordinates activities in the building

Engages in successful program analysis and problem solving

Maintains records according to established procedures

Supervises and maintains the school facility and surrounding grounds

Manages school finances effectively

Uses support staff efficiently

Delegates responsibilities appropriately

Requisitions, purchases, and maintains equipment, materials, and supplies

Performance Indicators

Appropriate assignment of students to classes and effective scheduling

Fulfillment of financial responsibilities

Effective management strategies and sound judgment

Accurate and timely records and reports

Effective use of space, and the appropriate maintenance of the facility and grounds

6. DEVELOPS POSITIVE SCHOOL-COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Guidelines

Uses community resources and volunteer services

Interprets and communicates school information, including evaluative data, to the community

Assists parents in understanding the development of their children

Encourage parental involvement in the school

Provides opportunities for parental input into school goals

Performance Indicators

Community-oriented school philosophy and practices; provisions for ongoing community input to school objectives and budget requests

A tone of helpfulness throughout the school

An invitation for open communication with parents

Publication of school activities and procedures, schedules, student discipline regulations, and due process provisions

Presentation of accurate evaluative data, accompanied by explanations, which promote parental understanding and proper perspectives

Communication of specific procedures for parental requests of student data and special services

Use of community resources in instruction; parental and community participation in activities and meetings to support and improve the school

A general community knowledge and positive feelings about the school program

7. EXHIBITS HUMAN RELATIONS AND COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Guidelines

Demonstrates oral and written communication

Recognizes and is sensitive to the multicultural needs of students

Shows respect for individuals

Participates in team-building efforts

Performance Indicators

Effective oral and written communication

Mutual respect between individuals within the school

Awareness of the value of two-way communication; provision for receiving parental ideas; anticipation of differences in opinions and the planning of effective strategies for resolving conflict

A conscious effort to raise minority students' self-esteem, increase their participation in academic enrichment activities, and meet the needs of students with special needs by working with parents and other community members

8. DEMONSTRATES PROFESSIONAL SKILLS

Guidelines

Serves as a role model for students and staff

Exhibits the following:

- Leadership
- Decisiveness
- Personal motivation
- Knowledge of school administration
- Effective use of time

Works cooperatively with school system personnel and other professionals

Uses area and central office resources as appropriate

Participates in personal and professional growth activities

Performance Indicators

Accomplishment of school improvement objectives or justification for unmet goals

Realistic self-assessment and ongoing plans for improvement

Understanding of varied management strategies and their successful use in different kinds of situations; openness to suggestions for improvement; willingness to participate in meaningful professional development opportunities

Positive staff and community perceptions of the principal's personal motivation, commitment to the school, decisiveness, knowledge of school administration, and ability as an instructional leader

Appropriate use of area and central services

Acceptance as a role model for students and staff

APPENDIX B. PILOT QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PRINCIPALS

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PRINCIPALS

The purpose of this questionnaire is to investigate your attitudes relative to Fairfax County's proposed criteria by which principals could be evaluated.

PART ONE- DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Directions: Please check one answer for each of the following questions.

1. Gender:
 _____ Male
 _____ Female

2. Which best describes the school in which you are now a principal?
 _____ Elementary _____ Special Education Center
 _____ Intermediate _____ I am not now a principal
 _____ High/Secondary

4. What is your race? _____

5. Including this current year, how many years have you served as a principal (rounded to the nearest whole number)?

 _____ years

6. Including this year, how many years have you been principal of your current school (rounded to the nearest whole number)?

 _____ years

7. Including this year, how many years have you worked for your current area superintendent?

 _____ years

PART TWO

Directions: Listed below are eight criteria by which you could be evaluated. Recognizing that each are important but that some categories may be more important than others, please indicate the relative importance you would assign to each category by distributing a total of 100 points as you see fit.

EXAMPLE:

	Standard	Assigned Points
1.	Fosters a climate which ensures student learning	5
2.	Leads and manages the instructional program effectively	10
3.	Provides for staff leadership, development, and training	5
4.	Selects, supervises, and evaluates staff	20
5.	Manages a school-based operation	5
6.	Develops positive school-community relations	10
7.	Exhibits human relations and communication skills	40
8.	Demonstrates professional skills	<u>5</u>
	TOTAL	100

In relation to the importance of these criteria, the respondent in the above example has indicated that items 1, 3, 5, and 8 were of equal but lesser importance. On the other hand, item 7 was perceived as most important (receiving 40 points) and it was seen as being twice as important as item 4, which received 20 points. The remaining criteria fell in between these two extremes and were weighted accordingly.

Now please assign 100 points as you would rate the importance of these criteria in principal performance. Some examples are listed under each standard. You must assign all 100 points and every standard must receive at least one point.

STANDARD	ASSIGNED POINTS
1. Fosters a climate which ensures student learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o communicates high expectations o assures student compliance with school and county rules o recognizes student achievement o manages extra-curricular activities 	
2. Leads and manages the instructional program effectively <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o knows curriculum/POS o monitors student achievement o uses school/county resources 	
3. Provides for staff leadership, development, and training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o motivates staff o fosters collegiality o organizes staff development activities for all school personnel 	
4. Selects, supervises, and evaluates staff <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o judges teacher effectiveness o assigns staff appropriately 	
5. Manages a school-based operation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o designs master schedule o maintains financial records o delegates responsibilities o maintains building and grounds o solves problems 	
6. Develops positive school-community relations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o uses community and volunteer resources o assists parents o uses school publications effectively 	
7. Exhibits human relations and communication skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o communicates well orally and in writing o fosters mutual respect among individuals o engages in team-building 	
8. Demonstrates professional skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o exhibits leadership, decisiveness, effective use of time o uses school system resources o participates in growth activities 	
TOTAL	100 points

Of the eight criteria listed, which criteria do you feel is the most important (by number)? -----

Which is the least important criteria (by number)? -----

PART THREE

Now please assign 100 points as you believe your area superintendent would rate the importance of these criteria for principals at your level (elementary or secondary). You must assign all 100 points and each standard must receive at least one point.

STANDARD	ASSIGNED POINTS
1. Fosters a climate which ensures student learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o communicates high expectations o assures student compliance with school and county rules o recognizes student achievement o manages extra-curricular activities 	
2. Leads and manages the instructional program effectively <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o knows curriculum/POS o monitors student achievement o uses school/county resources 	
3. Provides for staff leadership, development, and training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o motivates staff o fosters collegiality o organizes staff development activities for all school personnel 	
4. Selects, supervises, and evaluates staff <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o judges teacher effectiveness o assigns staff appropriately 	
5. Manages a school-based operation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o designs master schedule o maintains financial records o delegates responsibilities o maintains building and grounds o solves problems 	
6. Develops positive school-community relations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o uses community and volunteer resources o assists parents o uses school publications effectively 	
7. Exhibits human relations and communication skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o communicates well orally and in writing o fosters mutual respect among individuals o engages in team-building 	
8. Demonstrates professional skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o exhibits leadership, decisiveness, effective use of time o uses school system resources o participates in growth activities 	
TOTAL	100 points

Of the eight criteria listed, which criteria do you feel your area superintendent would feel is the most important? ____

Which criteria do you believe your area superintendent would view as least important? ____

PLEASE INDICATE HOW LONG IT TOOK YOU TO COMPLETE THIS QUESTIONNAIRE. ____ MIN.

ANY COMMENTS YOU HAVE WOULD BE APPRECIATED:

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR HELPING !

APPENDIX C. QUESTIONNAIRE FOR AREA SUPERINTENDENTS

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR AREA SUPERINTENDENTS

The purpose of this questionnaire is to investigate your attitudes relative to Fairfax County's proposed standards by which principals could be evaluated.

PART ONE — ELEMENTARY PRINCIPALS

Listed below are eight standards by which elementary principals could be evaluated. Each is important, but some categories may be more important than others. Please indicate the relative importance you would assign to each standard by distributing a total of 100 points as you see fit.

EXAMPLE:

Standard	Assigned Points
1. Fosters a climate which ensures student learning	5
2. Leads and manages the instructional program effectively	10
3. Provides for staff leadership, development, and training	5
4. Selects, supervises, and evaluates staff	20
5. Manages a school-based operation	5
6. Develops positive school-community relations	10
7. Exhibits human relations and communication skills	40
8. Demonstrates professional skills	<u>5</u>
TOTAL	100

In showing the relative importance of these standards, the respondent in the above example has indicated that items 1, 3, 5, and 8 were of equal but of the least importance, receiving five points each. On the other hand, item 7 was perceived as most important, receiving 40 points. Item 7 was also seen as being twice as important as item 4, which received 20 points. The remaining two standards (items 2 and 6) fell between 5 and 20.

Now please assign 100 points as you would rate the importance of these criteria in evaluating elementary principals. Some examples are listed under each standard. You must assign all 100 points, and each standard must receive at least one point.

STANDARD	ASSIGNED POINTS
1. Fosters a climate which ensures student learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sets goals; communicates high expectations • assures student compliance with school and county rules • recognizes student achievement • manages extra-curricular activities 	
2. Leads and manages the instructional program effectively <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • knows curriculum/POS/instructional issues and trends • monitors achievement of all students • uses school/county resources 	
3. Provides for staff leadership, development, and training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • organizes staff development activities for all school personnel • motivates staff; rewards initiative • fosters collegiality 	
4. Selects, supervises, and evaluates staff <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • judges teacher effectiveness • assigns staff appropriately 	
5. Manages a school-based operation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • schedules classes and activities • manages finances • meets deadlines; delegates responsibilities • maintains building and grounds • analyzes and solves problems • uses support staff effectively 	
6. Develops positive school-community relations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • uses community and volunteer resources • assists parents; encourages parent involvement • uses school publications effectively 	
7. Exhibits human relations and communication skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • communicates well orally and in writing • fosters mutual respect among individuals • engages in team-building 	
8. Demonstrates professional skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • exhibits leadership, decisiveness, effective use of time • uses school system resources • participates in growth activities 	
TOTAL	100 points

Of the eight standards listed, which standard do you feel is the most important in relation to elementary principals (by number)? _____

Which criteria is the least important in relation to elementary principals (by number)? _____

PART TWO - SECONDARY PRINCIPALS

Now please assign 100 points as you would rate the importance of the same standards in evaluating secondary principals. Some examples are listed under each standard. You must assign all 100 points, and each standard must receive at least one point.

STANDARD	ASSIGNED POINTS
<p>1. Fosters a climate which ensures student learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sets goals; communicates high expectations • assures student compliance with school and county rules • recognizes student achievement • manages extra-curricular activities 	
<p>2. Leads and manages the instructional program effectively</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • knows curriculum/POS/instructional issues and trends • monitors achievement of all students • uses school/county resources 	
<p>3. Provides for staff leadership, development, and training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • organizes staff development activities for all school personnel • motivates staff; rewards initiative • fosters collegiality 	
<p>4. Selects, supervises, and evaluates staff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • judges teacher effectiveness • assigns staff appropriately 	
<p>5. Manages a school-based operation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • schedules classes and activities • manages finances • meets deadlines; delegates responsibilities • maintains building and grounds • analyzes and solves problems • uses support staff effectively 	
<p>6. Develops positive school-community relations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • uses community and volunteer resources • assists parents; encourages parent involvement • uses school publications effectively 	
<p>7. Exhibits human relations and communication skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • communicates well orally and in writing • fosters mutual respect among individuals • engages in team-building 	
<p>8. Demonstrates professional skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • exhibits leadership, decisiveness, effective use of time • uses school system resources • participates in growth activities 	
<p>TOTAL</p>	<p>100 points</p>

Of the eight standards listed, which standard do you feel is the most important in relation to secondary principals (by number)? _____

Which criteria is the least important in relation to secondary principals (by number)? _____

APPENDIX D. QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PRINCIPALS

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PRINCIPALS

The purpose of this questionnaire is to investigate your attitudes regarding the proposed criteria by which Fairfax County Public Schools principals could be evaluated.

PART ONE - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Directions: Please check one answer for each of the following questions.

1. Which best describes the school in which you are now a principal?

<input type="checkbox"/> Elementary	<input type="checkbox"/> Special Education Center
<input type="checkbox"/> Intermediate	<input type="checkbox"/> I am not now a principal.
<input type="checkbox"/> High/Secondary	

2. In what area is your school located?

<input type="checkbox"/> Area I	<input type="checkbox"/> Area III
<input type="checkbox"/> Area II	<input type="checkbox"/> Area IV

3. Including this current year, how many years have you served as a principal?

<input type="checkbox"/> less than two years	<input type="checkbox"/> two or more years
--	--

4. Including this year, how many years have you been principal of your current school?

<input type="checkbox"/> less than two years	<input type="checkbox"/> two or more years
--	--

5. Including this year, how many years have you worked for your current area superintendent?

<input type="checkbox"/> less than two years	<input type="checkbox"/> two or more years
--	--

For elementary principals only:

6. What is your gender?

<input type="checkbox"/> male	<input type="checkbox"/> female
-------------------------------	---------------------------------

PART TWO - RATING OF EVALUATIVE CRITERIA

Directions: Listed below are eight standards by which you could be evaluated. Each is important, but some standards may be more important than others. Please indicate on the following pages the relative importance you would assign to the standards by distributing a total of 100 points as you see fit.

EXAMPLE:

Standard	Assigned Points
1. Fosters a climate which ensures student learning	5
2. Leads and manages the instructional program effectively	10
3. Provides for staff leadership, development, and training	5
4. Selects, supervises, and evaluates staff	20
5. Manages a school-based operation	5
6. Develops positive school-community relations	10
7. Exhibits human relations and communication skills	40
8. Demonstrates professional skills	5
TOTAL	<u>100</u>

In showing the relative importance of these standards, the respondent in the above example has indicated that items 1, 3, 5, and 8 were of equal value but of the least importance, receiving five points each. On the other hand, item 7 was perceived as most important, receiving 40 points. Item 7 was also seen as being twice as important as item 4, which received 20 points. The remaining two standards (items 2 and 6) fell between 5 and 40. Each received 10 points.

Now please assign 100 points as you would rate the importance of these standards of principal performance. Some examples are listed under each standard. You must assign all 100 points, and every standard must receive at least one point.

STANDARD	ASSIGNED POINTS
1. Fosters a climate which ensures student learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● sets goals; communicates high expectations ● assures student compliance with school and county rules ● recognizes student achievement ● manages extra-curricular activities 	
2. Leads and manages the instructional program effectively <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● knows curriculum/POS/instructional issues and trends ● monitors achievement of all students ● uses school/county resources 	
3. Provides for staff leadership, development, and training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● organizes staff development activities for all school personnel ● motivates staff; rewards initiative ● fosters collegiality 	
4. Selects, supervises, and evaluates staff <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● judges teacher effectiveness ● assigns staff appropriately 	
5. Manages a school-based operation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● schedules classes and activities ● manages finances ● meets deadlines; delegates responsibilities ● maintains building and grounds ● analyzes and solves problems ● uses support staff effectively 	
6. Develops positive school-community relations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● uses community and volunteer resources ● assists parents; encourages parent involvement ● uses school publications effectively 	
7. Exhibits human relations and communication skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● communicates well orally and in writing ● fosters mutual respect among individuals ● engages in team-building 	
8. Demonstrates professional skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● exhibits leadership, decisiveness, effective use of time ● uses school system resources ● participates in growth activities 	
TOTAL	100 points

Of the eight standards, which standard do you feel is the most important (by number)? _____

Which is the least important standard (by number)? _____

PART THREE - PERCEPTIONS OF AREA SUPERINTENDENT'S RATING OF CRITERIA

Now please assign 100 points as you believe your area superintendent would rate the importance of these standards for principals at your level (elementary or secondary). You must assign all 100 points, and each standard must receive at least one point.

STANDARD	ASSIGNED POINTS
<p>1. Fosters a climate which ensures student learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o sets goals; communicates high expectations o assures student compliance with school and county rules o recognizes student achievement o manages extra-curricular activities 	
<p>2. Leads and manages the instructional program effectively</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o knows curriculum/POS/instructional issues and trends o monitors achievement of all students o uses school/county resources 	
<p>3. Provides for staff leadership, development, and training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o organizes staff development activities for all school personnel o motivates staff; rewards initiative o fosters collegiality 	
<p>4. Selects, supervises, and evaluates staff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o judges teacher effectiveness o assigns staff appropriately 	
<p>5. Manages a school-based operation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o schedules classes and activities o manages finances o meets deadlines; delegates responsibilities o maintains building and grounds o analyzes and solves problems o uses support staff effectively 	
<p>6. Develops positive school-community relations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o uses community and volunteer resources o assists parents; encourages parent involvement o uses school publications effectively 	
<p>7. Exhibits human relations and communication skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o communicates well orally and in writing o fosters mutual respect among individuals o engages in team-building 	
<p>8. Demonstrates professional skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o exhibits leadership, decisiveness, effective use of time o uses school system resources o participates in growth activities 	
TOTAL	100 points

Of the eight standards listed, which standard do you feel your area superintendent would feel is the most important (by number)? _____

Which standard do you believe your area superintendent would view as least important (by number)? _____

COMMENTS (Optional):

Return completed form to: **ALAN LEIS**
BUNKHOLDER CENTER

THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP!

APPENDIX E. FOLLOW-UP LETTER TO NON-RESPONDENT PRINCIPALS

March 18, 1988

Dear

According to my tally of returned identification cards, I have not yet received your response to my survey of your perceptions regarding the proposed criteria for principal evaluation. An additional copy of the survey is enclosed.

If you have already completed the survey and returned it, thank you! DO NOT complete another survey. Simply destroy this letter and attachment.

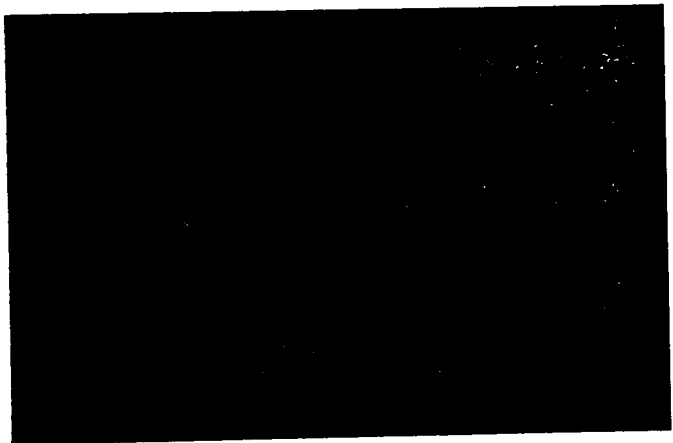
If you have not completed the survey, I would very much appreciate it if you would take the time to do so. Please return it to me at the Burkholder Center as soon as you are able. If you are willing to return the identification card (either separately or attached), I promise not to bug you again. Returned identification cards are disassociated from surveys so the survey responses can remain anonymous.

Thank you again for your help. It is important that I get the highest possible response rate, and I very much appreciate your assistance.

Sincerely,

Alan Leis
Burkholder Center

Attachment



APPENDIX F. SUMMARY OF PRINCIPALS' COMMENTS ON RETURNED
SURVEYS

Of the 149 principals who completed and returned the survey, 44 or 29 percent wrote optional comments in the space provided. As comments were categorized, principals expressing several comments were counted whenever each of the categories mentioned below were listed.

The largest single response (on 13 surveys) was that all the evaluative standards were of equal importance.

The second most frequent comment (on 12 forms) was that completing the survey was a difficult task. This notation was frequently combined with one or both of the following:

- the weightings given vary in importance from "day to day" or "building to building" (seven comments)
- many of the standards were "interrelated" or "overlap" (six comments).

Principal respondents also expressed opinions fairly frequently on individual standards or guidelines, occasionally making suggestions for improvement (10 comments).

Less frequently noted comments related to individual area superintendents (five comments), or some facet of how principals felt about the most important or least important standard (four comments). Four principals expressed interest in the findings and/or general support for the study. Three

other responses were unique and could not be categorized into any of the categories listed above.

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