

GUIDELINES FOR SMALL SCHOOL SYSTEMS IN DEVELOPING
ORIENTATION PROGRAMS FOR BOARD MEMBERS

by

Sally T. Rodgers

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APPROVED:

Glen I. Earthman, Chairman

M. David Alexander

Frank E. Barham

Jimmie C. Fortune

David J. Parks

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(Abstract)

The purpose of this study was to develop guidelines for small school divisions in Virginia to use in preparing an orientation program which would meet the needs of the new school board members. These guidelines addressed state and local concerns which had been identified through the review of literature and a questionnaire which was completed by superintendents and school board members from small school divisions in Virginia.

The questionnaire was distributed to all superintendents and school board members from school divisions with fewer than five thousand students. The contents of the guidelines were determined by those items which were identified as being essential by 50 percent or more of at least one of the respondent groups.

The results from this study indicated that school board members and superintendents do agree on the majority of items that were essential to an orientation program for new school board members. Thirty-eight of the sixty-nine items were

regarded as essential by both respondent groups. There were eight areas in which the superintendents and school board members disagreed. These areas were also included in the guidelines.

As a result of this study a set of curriculum guidelines was developed which would assist small Virginia school divisions in preparing an orientation program for new school board members. The ultimate aim of these guidelines was to improve the effectiveness of the new school board member.

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

The local school board is one of the most important governing bodies in our nation today. It plays a major part in the development of the American educational system. It was reported that "the modern complexities of public education increase the need for competent school board members." (Beckner, 1967, p. 3) Conant (1959), in his study of the American high school, considered a school board, which is ". . . composed of devoted, intelligent, understanding citizens who realize fully the distinction between policy making and administration," (p. 43) to be the first ingredient to having a good school. Tuttle (1963) further emphasized the importance of the school board when he stated:

The future of America is directly dependent upon the quality of its citizenry, which, in the long run is determined by the quality of the education they receive in the public schools for whose operation school boards are legally responsible.

Every board member who recognizes the extent of his responsibility also recognizes that he needs every possible aid to increase effectiveness. (p. 17)

Schools have changed rapidly as a result of major events that occurred after World War II. The decision of Brown v. Board of Education was one of these events that put a strain on the school system--schools became a means to implement social policy. With Sputnik the issue of quality education surfaced. President

Johnson's Elementary and Secondary Act of 1965 entrenched the federal government into the educational arena (p. 11). The National Commission on Excellence in Education added more recommendations to the list for school boards to consider:

Increasingly, educational policies were being made by a growing number of actors--no longer solely members of the traditional education establishment. Educational policy came to be influenced more and more by state legislatures, governors, state and federal courts, teacher unions, special interest groups, state departments of education, the U.S. Congress and finally, in 1980, by the federal Department of Education (p. 11).

In order to govern this complex changing organization, more informed school boards are needed. Orientation is a way to assist school board members in becoming better educated in the current issues facing school boards today.

In recent years it appears that the terms of school board members are almost as unstable as those of superintendents. In Thomas Varner's (1975) study of Virginia school board members, more than 52 percent of the school board members had three or fewer years in school board service. The transience which exists with this position suggests a complex problem which is occurring--an inexperienced school board is conducting the business of the school system. Davies and Prestwood (1951) compared a school board with an athletic team. They suggested that schools with athletic teams would not send a player into a contest without having first taught them how to play the game and

to cooperate with teammates. New school board members, however, were often left to learn for themselves as best they could the duties and responsibilities of their newly acquired position (p. 7). This ". . . consistent turnover does not provide the knowledgeable and stable base on the board needed to achieve educational goals and objectives." (Goble, 1977, p. 2)

The length of time necessary for school board members to acquire the desired skills and knowledge to become effective members varied according to the literature that was read. The amount of time varied from as short as one year to as long as four years of service before one could become effective (Grieder, Pierce, & Jordan, 1969; Kammer, 1968; McGhehey, 1953; Neubauer, 1983). In order to shorten the transition period from new board members to functioning board members, orientation programs were recommended as a means to this end (Kunder, 1975, p. 2).

Orientation, as defined by Websters' Third New Dictionary, was ". . . introduction to an unfamiliar situation: guidance or activity of a new kind." Orientation was one means which businesses and/or organizations have used to introduce new personnel to the goals of the organization and the role which each individual was expected to fulfill within the organization. The orientation process provided the means by which those who were new to the organization would become more effective in achieving the desired goals of the organization.

Research studies have identified the need for orientation or in-service training programs. In 1951 Baker looked at the present state of in-service programs for school board members and attempted to determine the evolving patterns of these training programs. In his recommendations he identified the need for in-service training programs at the local level. Approximately thirty years later, Neubauer (1983) studied the local in-service training program of school board members in Pennsylvania. A need for local in-service training programs was also a recommendation in her study of in-service training programs. Although thirty years separated these studies, both recommended the need for more orientation or in-service training for school board members. Therefore, the development of guidelines for school divisions to use when preparing orientation programs for new school board members appears to be needed and will be addressed.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to develop definite guidelines for small school divisions in Virginia to use in preparing an orientation program which would meet the needs of the new school board members. These guidelines addressed state and local concerns which had been identified through the review of literature and a questionnaire which was completed by superintendents and school board members from small school divisions in Virginia.

Research Questions

The question to be addressed in this study was:

What guidelines provided assistance in the preparation of orientation programs for new school board members from small school systems in Virginia?

In order to obtain data, the following subquestions were addressed:

1. What kinds of information did school board members consider necessary for them to be effective school board members?
2. What kinds of information did superintendents consider necessary for school board members to acquire in order to be more effective in their newly acquired position?
3. Who had the responsibility for initiating and implementing an effective orientation program for new school board members?

Limitations of the Study

The study was directed toward school divisions in Virginia which had fewer than five thousand students. This segment of the state represented eighty-six of the school divisions in Virginia, approximately 62 percent of the total number of school divisions.

A mailed questionnaire further limited the study. The responses from the questionnaire were dependent upon the desire

of the superintendent and the school board member to complete and return them.

The study was also limited in that those respondents surveyed included school board members and superintendents who were new to their position. These individuals may have or have not been able to understand some of the items on the questionnaire.

Definitions of Terms

Seven terms are defined to assist with the understanding of their usage in this study. The terms are defined as follows for the purpose of this study.

In-Service Training Program:

All activities in which an individual participates after assuming a particular position, which contributes to the maintenance or improvement of his or her competence in the position. (Nolte, 1966, p. 254)

Orientation:

The process of making a person aware of such factors in his or her school environment as rules, traditions, and educational offerings, for the purpose of facilitating effective adaptation. (Good, 1973, p. 402)

For the purpose of this study, the time of the orientation period was to be that time between appointment and the first six months of office.

School District:

The area that is under the supervision of a given school board. (Good, 1973, p. 192)

For the purpose of this study school district and school division were used interchangeably.

Small School Division:

For the purpose of this study "small" referred to those school divisions with fewer than 5,000 students. The categorization of school boards by size of enrollment was derived from the Digest of Education Statistics 1983-84 (p. 62).

School Board:

The school district agency created by the state, . . . on which the statutes of the state or commonwealth place the responsibility for conducting the local public education systems. (Good, 1973, p. 512)

School Board Member:

A citizen elected or appointed in a manner prescribed by law to serve for a limited number of years on the policy-making board of the school district. (Good, 1973, p. 512)

New School Board Member:

For the purpose of this study, "new" referred to any school board member that has been in office six months or less.

Organization of the Study

The introduction of the study and an explanation of the purpose of this study are presented in Chapter 1. The review of literature is discussed in Chapter 2 under the following subheadings: a) Introduction, b) Socialization and Orientation, c) Effectiveness of School Board Members, d) Need for Orientation Programs, e) Content of Orientation Programs and f) Summary. The design of research is explained in Chapter 3. In Chapter 4 an analysis of the data, a summary of the findings, conclusions from the data collected, recommendations for further study, and methodological observations are discussed. The curriculum guidelines for preparing orientation programs are presented in Chapter 5.

Chapter 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to develop guidelines to be used when preparing an orientation program for new school board members from small school divisions in Virginia. In reviewing the literature, the first aspect to be considered was socialization or enculturation, as it related to employees that were new to an organization and the role that orientation played in the socialization process. The review of literature then looked at the effectiveness of school board members who had participated in orientation programs. The last section to be reviewed was the research studies which were related to orientation programs and practices. This chapter was subdivided into the following areas as a means of presenting the review of literature: a) Socialization and Orientation, b) Effectiveness of School Board Members, c) Need for Orientation Programs, d) Content of Orientation Programs and e) Summary.

The studies that follow were concerned with the need for either in-service training or orientation programs. In some studies the words were used interchangeably. An attempt was made to distinguish between the two programs.

Socialization and Orientation

A school system is a social organization. The school board is one aspect of this social organization. Peter Blau and Richard Scott (1962) described a social organization as having two dimensions--the social structure and the culture (p. 4). The social structure of a school board concerns the types of interaction between the school board members, the sentiment toward each other and the extent to which certain members are sought and others are ignored (Hoy & Miskel, 1982, p. 52). The culture of a school board is dependent upon the values that each member brings to the meeting, the social norms that surface which inform the members of the expected behaviors and the role that each member has in this social organization (pp. 52-53). Julie Stout (1982) described the enculturation of new school board members as a process of role personalization. She considered the role personalization as becoming educated to school board activities as well as learning what it is that needs to be learned about a school board member. She continued by stating that as new school board members, they begin to learn the norms of the group such as the goals of consensual voting, not raising questions in public on an agenda item and the team aspect of the school board. She continued to describe this period of enculturation in the following manner.

During these early months they also arrive at a new view of the constituency and learn the costs of being a member as they view it from an altogether different

different perspective and begin to refer to the constituency as "they" and to themselves as "we" and evolve from private citizen to public citizen. They also begin sensing a need for ownership and belonging to the school board group. . .

After deciding what to learn, they set about the task of doing so with some enthusiasm. In the first month on the job they have begun to learn the trade. There is a need for specific knowledge; they discover and, after initial procedural problems are solved, they begin acquiring these facets of specificity. (pp. 117-118)

The process that Stout (1982) described through which new school board members pass can also be explained in terms of two forces--role and personality interaction (Getzels, Lipham & Campbell, 1968, p. 83). This interaction was described by Getzels et al. (1968) in terms of the following questions.

What are the dynamics of the interaction between the externally defined role expectations and the internally given needs dispositions? Or, to put the matter more concretely, the dual question may be asked: (1) How is it that in some organizations the role expectations seem generally understood and acquiesced in by all, so that role incumbents become aware of their rights and obligations and behave with respect to them with a minimum of strain, and in other organizations this is not the case? and (2) How is it that no matter what the organizational situation, some complimentary role incumbents understand and agree at once on their mutual rights and obligations where as others take a long time in reaching such agreement and quite frequently do not come to terms either with their roles or with each other? (p. 83)

Getzels et al. (1968) considered it the administration's role to reduce this discrepancy between the role expectations of the organization and the needs of the individual. They suggested that through training and supervision the individuals would

acquire the roles of the organization better. Etzioni (1964) viewed the selection process of individuals into an organization as one means of controlling the discrepancy between role and personality, for example, choosing those individuals that had already been partially socialized because of their background (p. 70). However, the school board selection process can not be controlled in this manner; therefore, it becomes the administration's responsibility to socialize these individuals into the organization through training and supervisory procedures (Getzels et al., 1968, p. 125).

The manner in which the school board acts and reacts in the social organization determines the effectiveness and efficiency of that organization. Getzels et al. (1968) used Barnard's concept of effectiveness and efficiency to describe these terms. ". . . Effectiveness refers to the degree of success for the organization and . . . efficiency refers to the degree of satisfaction for the individual." (p. 128) To further emphasize the concept of effectiveness and efficiency Getzels et al. (1968) used Bakke's and Argyris' concept of an organization.

"The first problem in all organization life is how to take an aggregate of varied individual people with varied capacities and predispositions and get them involved in cooperative activity which adds up to success for the organization and satisfaction for the individuals concerned. In short, the problem is to integrate the individual participants with the organization.

Our first job is to get clearly in mind the essential characteristics of the things we are trying to integrate. These things are basically a) the organization and b) the individual." (p. 127)

Argyris (1957) viewed the integration as ". . . two types of social organisms existing on either end of a multi-dimensional continuum. On the one end is the group whose focus is on individual needs; on the other, the organization whose focus is on the attainment of organizational objectives." (p. 193) When the two dimensions are incongruent the individual learns to adapt to the organization by a) leaving the organization, b) climbing up the organizational ladder, c) using defensive mechanisms and d) becoming apathetic and noninvolved (Argyris, 1957, p. 95).

Butler (1977) viewed the integration in terms of group cohesion. He defined group cohesion as--"A group in which the members work together for a common goal or goals." (p. 9) The basis of his study was to determine to what extent well oriented school board members work toward group cohesion or common goals (p. 11). He sent a survey instrument to all newly elected public school board members in Iowa. The survey instrument was concerned with the type and value of the orientation activities in which these new members had participated and their assessment of their commitment to group cohesion as well as the group's commitment toward group cohesion. Approximately 52 percent of the individuals responded. From this response he concluded that those new members who engaged in a wide variety of orientation activities and who placed a high value on orientation viewed themselves and the group significantly higher in factors which help to build group cohesion.

Francis & Woodcock (1975) viewed these "adaptions" of the individual to the organization as specific problems that arise in the work place. They exemplified this viewpoint with the following remarks.

Another manager's protest is that new people take too long to learn a job in the first place, and subsequently fail to keep their skills current. Employees often leave before they actually become useful: older technicians, craftsmen, professional workers, and managers frequently work with concepts that are twenty years out of date. There are a host of inefficiencies and added costs, including wasted materials, lost opportunities, training instructor's time, and, with senior people, outdated professional practices, that affect a company's competitive position.

Getting people to work is one thing, but getting them to work for the direct interest of the organization is quite another. . .

Organizations exist to do jobs that a single individual cannot handle alone. Often, however, people seem to pull in separate directions just as much as they try to pull together. (p. 10)

Francis et al. (1975) classified the problems or "people problem" into eleven categories. These categories were: a) inadequate recruitment and selection, b) confused organizational structure, c) inadequate control, d) poor training, e) low motivation, f) low creativity, g) poor teamwork, h) inappropriate management philosophy, i) lack of succession planning and management development, j) unclear aims and k) unfair rewards. In essence, he summarized these problems as poor communication (pp. 12-13).

Although Francis et al. (1975) was referring to business organizations, not school boards, some of the points he made were

relevant to this study. When discussing the problem of poor training, they referred to the story of a butcher who demonstrated the skill of knife sharpening.

Although the butcher was obviously very skilled, it was noticeable that he had quite a collection of scars on his hand where the knife had slipped. When asked how he accounted for them, the butcher replied, "Well, you have to learn in any job, don't you? Getting cut is part of it." (p. 56)

Francis et al. (1975) made their point that new knowledge and skills were often difficult to acquire, therefore, it is ". . . worthwhile to develop a systematic approach to help the new person reach a satisfactory standard with a minimum of time, cost and stress." (p. 56) They also stated that the organization had responsibility to the individual to provide the opportunity for learning, but that it was still the individuals who were responsible for their own development (p. 58).

Sue Ellen Thompson (1980) discussed the importance of orientation to individuals who were new to an organization. She concluded that two problems could exist with orientation programs. One problem was that there was little to no assistance given to the new personnel. The other problem was that many orientation programs were dull, disorganized or otherwise inadequate. She did point out that the resourceful individual would survive in spite of the program, but that the less resourceful person who might have as much to offer, might become disillusioned and acquire a negative attitude toward the

organization (pp. 2-3). The two basic points that she made concerning orientation programs were that:

. First impressions have a tremendous effect on the way a new employee views the firm and his or her future in it.

. The orientation program is where most of these first impressions are formed. It is up to you to make sure that the first impression is the right impression. (p. 8)

Effectiveness of School Board Members

The Recruitment Leadership and Training Institute (LTI) sponsored a study of school boards. This study was initiated because it was the belief of this organization that the orientation and training of school board members could make a difference. It was felt by this organization that these programs could assist school boards ". . . not only to understand the complexity of school systems, but to initiate and implement educational policies designed to deal with critical issues." (p. 6) This study involved an extensive examination of the literature and interviews with key school board personnel from two major cities in the United States. The intent of the report was to encourage and challenge superintendents, school board members, state school boards associations and anyone else associated with school boards to ". . . undertake training programs which will enable school board members to function more effectively." (p. 6) The author contended that school board members tasks were complicated by

. . . their inability (even when willing to learn) to grasp the inherent conflict of their dual relationship to both the public and to the educational bureaucracy. Thrust into a situation in which they must listen to and sort out the many and varied demands from outside the system, and simultaneously understand and direct a massive organization, most school board members are ill-prepared to serve as effective policy-makers. (p. 56)

The author concluded by stating

Local conditions and abilities of school board members will determine school board training needs and availability of resources as well as the nature and frequency of orientation and training programs. It is the position of the Recruitment LTI, however, that all newly appointed or elected board members should receive minimal preparation for undertaking their tasks and that experienced board members should be given opportunities immediately to enhance their abilities to function as representatives of the public and bureaucratic decision-makers. (p. 59)

Arthur Moehlman (1951) characterized a good operating organization as one with unity, order, discipline, flexibility, efficiency, freedom and individual and group morale (p. 90). He viewed the local school board as being the

. . . popular authority at community level for planning, providing executive organization, and appraising the operation of the education plan under its governing statutes. Its methods and efficiency of operation vary greatly with the size of the administrative district, community traditions and leadership, and the quality of professional leadership and interpretation furnished by the teaching profession. The board of education is the legal authority for the school district. . . (pp. 92-93)

Norrix (1947) compared the organization of a school system to the organization of modern industry. He contended that

schools assume a similar pattern to industry. The school board was the counterpart to the board of directors. The board member must realize the relationship between the school board and the organization. Norrix (1947) continued by stating that the proper orientation could be used as a means of correcting many preconceived ideas of new school board members. Without a program of orientation, a new member might have to adopt a watch and wait policy which might result in making little or no contribution for several months. He considered these programs necessary for a new school board member to become more effective sooner (pp. 45-46).

The effectiveness of orientation programs was researched by McGhehey (1953). One segment of his study was to determine if orientation programs did increase the effectiveness of school boards. The effectiveness of school boards was measured by a "critical incident" technique. For the purpose of his study McGhehey used the same population that Whalen (1953) had identified in his study of effective school board members. McGhehey chose the 20 cities that were considered to be in the upper quarter of effectiveness and the 20 cities from the lower quarter of effectiveness. McGhehey interviewed superintendents and school board members from these cities. The results of his study revealed that those school board members from the upper quarter were more likely to: a) recognize the value of

orientation, b) develop materials to assist new members in becoming familiar with their duties and responsibilities, c) attend conferences and d) recognize the importance of professional publications. Those school board members from the lower quarter of Whalen's study did not exhibit these characteristics. McGhehey concluded by addressing the need for the development of more effective orientation manuals for school board members. In addition to these manuals he recognized that a plan should be devised for superintendents and school board members concerning practices and procedures which had been effective in the orientation of new school board members.

Kammer (1968) also looked at the relationship between orientation programs and the effectiveness of school board members. His study involved determining the effectiveness of school board members as perceived by selected superintendents from school divisions in Colorado. The findings from his study revealed that those school board members perceived as being more effective by their superintendents possessed the following qualities: a) participated in regional, state and national school board meetings, b) participated in the development of orientation activities for new school board members, c) read professional publications and d) attended conferences.

In reviewing Kammer's and McGhehey's research, it appeared that participation in orientation or in-service activities did

increase the effectiveness of school board members. Considering the experience from the business world and research specific to school boards, it appeared that orientation programs would increase the effectiveness of school board members. Ward Reeder (1946), however, went one step further when he described a good school board member as possessing the spirit of a learner. The school board member must be willing and able to think in terms of school procedures and problems as well as have the desire to increase the knowledge base needed to become and remain a good school board member (p. 6).

Need for Orientation Programs

In 1970, John Francois conducted a study of 45 school districts which were chosen according to the pupil enrollment, size, and geographic location. The purpose of the survey was to determine the extent of orientation and training programs for school board members. The findings from this survey revealed that

the average boardman's orientation and training consist of little more than being given reading materials, having a private conference with the superintendent and touring a few schools. As would be expected, new board members, most of whom take office at the time they are elected, receive their limited training after they are on the job. (pp. 9-10)

The information acquired from Francois' study inspired two other individuals to do a follow-up study. R. E. Everett and Charles A. Sloan (1982) mailed a questionnaire to superintendents

and newly elected school board members in Illinois with approximately six months of service. The survey was designed to provide information which could be compared to Francois' study, to describe the current status of orientation programs and to compare the perceptions of school board members and superintendents as it related to school board orientation.

Everett and Sloan (1982) arrived at the following conclusions:

a) only 17 percent of the board members considered they had an organized and systematic orientation program, while 40 percent of the superintendents considered such a program existed, b) both school board members and superintendents agreed that written policy concerning orientation did not exist and c) it appeared that superintendents and school board members did not view the orientation or training program in the same light--a communication problem. To summarize the problem, Everett and Sloan (1982) contended that

. . . school board members need more knowledge on more subjects. Moreover, these persons, in order to be effective school board members, need intensive orientation, training and in-service growth opportunities throughout their terms on the board! (p. 7)

These two studies exemplified the fact that both school board members and superintendents realized the need for orientation programs for new school board members and periodic training programs for all members. However, what was being done did not coincide with what was felt should be done. One of the earlier

research studies was done by Douglas Baker (1951) who investigated the in-service training programs of school board members as a state function. It addressed the problems of discovering the official status of the in-service programs in each state, determining the essential elements of a state-wide in-service training program as well as the legal authority of the states toward in-service training. A few of his conclusions are cited:

1. The actual training practices for any given state might be determined by the condition, finances, organizations, and needs existing within the state.
2. The most effective training should be concerted and intentional in nature. The training procedures being practiced in many states might be incidental or accidental.
3. The training of school board members in general in most states might be haphazard and unorganized. This was substantiated by the fact that in many states the information requested was not available.
4. The lack of information in regard to training provisions and practices in many states might indicate that little was known about what was being done in the state, that little or nothing was being accomplished, or that they feel it was unimportant.

5. In most states it appeared that there is no central agency or person in charge of the in-service training of school board members. Where there was a person or agency in charge, more appeared to be accomplished (p. 338).

Baker (1951) recommended that a more centralized effort for the training of school board members be conducted. He also contended that training at the state level should supplement not replace local training.

Alpheus White (1959) summarized and analyzed research findings that related to selected school board problems. One of the problems discussed in his report was the in-service training of school board members. He analyzed this problem by reviewing the present effective methods at the local level and the role of state organizations in school board in-service. He suggested that in most cases in-service programs were for the purpose of orienting new school board members but in some cases it was also used to improve the effectiveness of all school board members. After analyzing an extensive review of the literature that concerned in-service training of school board members, he concluded that

although in-service training of school board members is of current concerns to many in the field of school administration, basic research designed to determine methods and materials for use in locally organized school board in-service training programs has not been made or at least was not discovered during this investigation. Likewise, the responsibilities that

state departments of education have for providing in-service education for local board members could not be determined because of lack of research. (p. 273)

Therefore White (1959) recommended that more research studies on in-service training of school board members was needed (p. 278). Without these studies to determine the usefulness and effect of in-service activities the present programs would continue by guess work (p. 278).

In 1970, Frederick Sales conducted a survey that looked at the need of orientation programs and the areas that should be addressed in an orientation program that was designed to assist a new school board member in becoming as effective as possible. From his survey of superintendents and school board members, he generalized that superintendents and school board members felt that orientation programs were very important. The need for these programs he noted was not being matched by the existence of orientation programs in their school districts (p. 186). Up to a third of the members of the board had less than two years of service, therefore, an orientation program was needed more than ever according to his report. Those surveyed thought that the board members should be oriented as soon as they were elected or appointed. Such an orientation program should continue through the early months of office. The board members felt that in the presentation of orientation materials a combination of techniques should be used rather than just giving material to read. From

those surveyed it was noted that neither the state or locality presented "noteworthy" orientations. The board members did not use money as an excuse to avoid orientation programs (pp. 186-189). Sales (1970) further recommended that an orientation program needed to be fair and effective and should present the bad with the good and that superintendents needed to refrain from glossing over orientation with general "chit-chat".

Fox (1978) agreed with the previous researchers that comprehensive training programs, of which orientation was one part, would be desirable for all board members. Therefore, he concluded that ". . . a concerted effort be focused on the development of programs in those districts where training is not available at the present time." (p. 166) He went one step further to try and determine the cause of inadequate training programs.

The lack of time on the part of the administrator and board members was indicated as a major reason for lack of adequate training programs. However, considering the importance placed on the need for training by both of these groups, it seems that arrangements should be made for providing the necessary time. (pp. 166-167)

In 1982, Jack Deere conducted a study to determine the extent to which superintendents and school board members perceive the importance of in-service training activities to their effectiveness as a school board member (pp. 9-10). From the collection and analysis of the data, he found that:

1. An ongoing orientation and in-service training was necessary for school boards to be effective. The research collected suggested that a void existed in such programs.
2. There was little evidence that local school divisions were taking the lead in local orientation or in-service training.
3. A research program needed to be designed that would coordinate and identify problems which were common to local district (p. 150).

Fox (1978), along with the other researchers concluded that orientation programs must have direction and be ongoing, not just a shot in the arm.

The latest study to be found relating to school board in-service problems, was done by Antonia Neubauer (1983). She analyzed the local in-service programs in Pennsylvania in terms of the following areas: a) the in-service needs of school board members, b) the local, ongoing programs and practices that had been developed, c) the need of local districts having their own in-service programs, and d) the major constraints on the initiation or expansion of local in-service programs (pp. 6-8).

In order to gather data relative to these areas, she used a descriptive survey method of research combined with personal interviews and observations. The criteria used for effective in-

service programs was established from the review of literature (pp. 61-62). From the data collected, the key constraints on in-service were identified. These constraints were ". . . time, pressure to conserve funds, and lack of whole board interest." (p. 398) She concluded that none of the constraints was so rigid that a creative, flexible approach to local district board development could not neutralize most or all of these constraints (p. 398).

The conclusions that were derived from her study were very similar to those mentioned in the previous studies. She addressed the need for an ongoing in-service program; however, she identified a particular need at the local school district level for such programs. She continued by stating that school districts classified as rural and small town areas (fewer than 5,000 students) were especially lacking in-service training programs. She continued by stating that an active school boards association was crucial in promoting and providing for school board in-service training; however, this was not to replace the local school system's responsibility. She identified the superintendent's education and self-image as affecting his or her willingness to provide a strong school board in-service program. She stated that

strong board development programs seen to promote stability in a district, reducing both superintendent and board conflict and turnover. When they understand problems, board members seem more willing to work with their superintendent rather than blame him or her.

Board members experience less frustration and anxiety, because they know how to find answers and ask proper questions. Often communities are more understanding and supportive, because they too have participated in the board development sessions. (pp. 399-400)

She recommended that the state and national associations place a more specific emphasis ". . . on how to design local in-service programs and activities for school boards that would both add to the knowledge of board members and develop their skills." (p. 402)

Neubauer (1983) contended that a good school board in-service program had six elements. The program should: a) have an orientation component and an ongoing set of activities for school board members, b) have a program that was developed around the school system's long and short range goals, c) have a written school board policy relating to in-service, d) have adequate funding, e) have scheduled meetings that utilize the school board member's time to the maximum, and f) be open to anyone. She considered many factors that act together to make a good school board in-service program. The content of those programs is discussed in the next section.

Content of Orientation Programs

Today's school board is faced with many challenges. These challenges include such things as, the changing and conflicting concepts of the role and function of schools, the changes in school finances, the changes at the state level with the

legislatures exerting greater control over finance, certification, professional standards and educational policy (Recruitment Leadership and Training Institute, 1975, pp. 8-9). Therefore, a school board member must be well-informed of the legislative, curricular and organization policies which determine the school program (Coddling, 1948, p. 29). One means of becoming informed of these policies is through an organized orientation and training program. Eight research studies were reviewed that concern the content or practices of orientation or in-service training programs.

Drew Starsiak (1982) analyzed the orientation programs for new school board members in selected school districts in DuPage County, Illinois. The intent of the study was to determine the responsibilities in which new school board members should be trained, to determine the opportunities and activities available to new school board members during the first months of membership, to determine who was responsible for the presentation of the orientation programs and to determine how existing orientation programs could improve. The data were collected from mailed questionnaires and personal interviews. Superintendents and new school board members were requested to complete the questionnaires. A selected group of school districts with orientation programs were interviewed for the purpose of gathering information specific to their orientation program.

Starsiak (1982) recommended that school boards and superintendents consider the following as orientation guidelines:

1. Recognize that orientation of new board members was essential and a necessary priority to have effective boards of education and therefore, effectively operating schools. It was essential that all boards of education and superintendents make an effort to develop quality orientation programs for the initial training of board members.
2. Coordinate district orientation programs with state association's efforts.
3. Make orientation mandatory for candidates to be elected to a board of education.
4. Establish a needs assessment instrument to gather the orientation needs of prospective or new board members.
5. Provide debriefing sessions after each initial orientation session and follow-up orientation sessions for the first two months of actual on-the-job experience.
6. Provide reading materials to new board members before orientation sessions take place on the specific topics covered during the orientation session.

7. Share the responsibility for planning and implementing orientation of new board members among the superintendent, experienced board members, and school board president (pp. 150-151).

A study of forty-five school board members was conducted by Harley Lautenschlager (1956) to determine certain aspects of school board in-service training techniques. These board members were ". . . regarded as being outstanding from the point of view of performing effectively the educational aspect of their work as board members." (p. 7) From these interviews Lautenschlager (1956) reached certain conclusions about effective techniques of in-service. A few of these conclusions were:

1. School board members depended on their superintendent for information, guidance and leadership.
2. School board members seldom read printed materials about educational programs, unless their superintendent encouraged such reading.
3. School board members were interested in gathering data about their own school system.
4. School board members considered Parent-Teacher groups and lay advisory groups as a valuable resource.

5. School board members relied on the reports by their superintendent in evaluating the work of their schools (pp. 93-96).

James Andrews (1971) went one step further than Lautenschlager, to distinguish between the activities for orientation and those for in-service training programs. The findings from his study came from a selected number of superintendents and school board members from Indiana that were interviewed by him. From the review of literature and the data collected from the interviews the conclusions concerning the orientation programs for new school board members were:

1. Little commonality was found in school board orientation procedures among the several states.
2. Extensive research and related materials were not available in the area of new school board members orientation.
3. The orientation process should start as soon as possible after the election or appointment.
4. Superintendents had been helpful in assisting new school board members in their new role.
5. New school board members should be encouraged to attend board meetings prior to taking office (p. 58).

In Andrews' (1971) recommendations he considered general areas that should be included during the orientation process. The areas that should be of local concern included: a) basic statistical and supplemental background information on the corporation and b) the duties, powers, and responsibilities of board members (pp. 59-61). The topics that should be discussed at workshops provided by the state school boards association were: a) the role of the state and national school boards association, b) the duties and responsibilities of school board members, c) school-community relations, d) board-superintendent relations, e) the legal responsibilities, and f) school finance (pp. 61-62).

Milton Snyder (1972) also considered the aspect of the new school board member becoming an effective member of the school board as quickly as possible. He stated that ". . . if boards of education are to function as knowledgeable and responsible policy makers in public education, they will need to improve and sharpen their skills in functioning as leaders in the total community." (p. 129) To ensure that they do improve and sharpen their skills he recommended that: a) legislation be approved requiring training programs for new school board members, b) mandatory training of all new school board members be established through district policy, c) budget allowances be established for supporting training programs, d) teams to conduct the training be

identified and selected, e) a planning procedure for training new members be designed at the state and national level, f) a continuous training program be established for all school board members, and g) the priorities of training programs be based on needs assessment of the identified issues and problems (pp. 128-129). Neubauer's (1983) recommendations were very similar to Snyder's recommendations.

Jack Allman (1976) was concerned with identifying those critical areas of knowledge for new school board members. To determine these knowledge areas, Allman selected one hundred superintendents from four states, all the executive secretaries or directors of the state school boards association and some executive board members to participate in his study. From those participating he was able to conclude that the great majority of the respondents felt that the orientation process was not adequate and that a better planned program for orientation for new school board members would be well received. All the respondent groups agreed that school board responsibilities and functions was the most important area to be considered in an orientation program. They also agreed that the policies of the school district and an overview of educational programs should be ranked second and third, respectively. The two areas of least importance were tenure and federal participation in education (pp. 77-78). After a thorough review of the literature and the

analysis of the data collected, he recommended that ". . . more concern should be given to the orientation process of new school board members of public schools." (p. 80) He continued by stating that more articles concerning the orientation of new school board members needed to be published. He felt that board incumbents needed to be more involved in the orientation process at the local level. He suggested that the state put more emphasis on orientation at regional and state workshops. As a final suggestion he recommended that for those states that did not have assembled "orientation packets", the state school boards associations might consider some mail-out programs for local districts to use when orienting new school board members (p. 80).

In 1978, Lanning Nicoloff also sought to determine the specific needs of school board members as perceived by school board members and superintendents. From his findings he concluded that school board members felt a need for further in-service training. Generally, the board members and superintendents agreed upon the needs for school board members. The needs that were identified by the board members and superintendents as being the most important were: a) increasing the power and influence of the school board, b) improving the financial operations and financial conditions of the schools, c) working with teacher personnel more effectively, d) providing quality education, and e) building better school boards. These

individuals felt the least need of in-service training in special programs and services of a school system and improving the mechanics of school board meetings. New school board members did agree with the areas that were cited except two additional areas were of a concern to the new member--a better understanding of the school division's budgets and a desire to understand the area of communication and good relations with the community (pp. 165-167).

Valerie Le Baron Sullivan (1978) did similar research to Nicoloff's study. She sought to determine the perceived needs for orientation of school board members in Arizona. Of the six topics that were recommended, four were similar to those recommended by Nicoloff. However, she did not include improving the financial operations and financial conditions of the school as did Nicoloff. The two areas she identified that were not consistent with Nicoloff were the legislative aspect of school boards and the development of policy (pp. 98-99).

In 1979, George Leonard conducted a descriptive study of superintendents' perceptions of in-service training programs for school board members. In the process of this study two areas of concern were identified--the existing training programs for school board members and the training needs that were not being met. His study was restricted to school systems with fewer than ten thousand students. The major conclusion from his study was

that there were few formal, organized training programs for school board members in the United States and Canada. A major finding from this study was that there was a need for a comprehensive in-service training for school board members.

However,

. . . state school board associations, even though they attempt to present worthwhile statewide in-service training programs for their board members, find it difficult to get all school districts to participate and send their members to attend these meetings. With this lack of participation on the part of some boards of education and their members, it becomes imperative the local superintendents and their professional staff must undertake to develop comprehensive training programs for their boards of education so as to fill this void. It would seem that the time is now to marshal forces with the universities, the state and national school board associations and the school administrators, to see that every board members in need of in-service training will have an opportunity to acquire it. (pp. 103-104)

Summary

Orientation is one means by which school board members could be socialized into the school organization. This socialization process could be shortened through a well-planned orientation process.

From the review of literature it appeared that many individuals, superintendents, school board members and members of the state or national school boards associations, indicated that problems existed in school board in-service training programs. The scarcity of programs and the difficulty of getting people to

participate were a few of the problems cited in the review of literature. Orientation has been identified as a major component of these programs. The review of the literature has established the need for new school board members to receive a well-planned orientation program in order that they become more effective board members in a shorter period of time. This study attempts to provide information that small school divisions in Virginia could use in preparing an orientation program specific to their locality.

Chapter 3

THE DESIGN OF RESEARCH

The design of research pertained to the development of a set of curriculum guidelines for small Virginia school divisions to use when planning an orientation program for new school board members. Procedures used in researching and completing this study included:

1. Identification of information needed for new school board members;
2. Development of a questionnaire which addressed the following questions:
 - 2.1 What kinds of information did school board members consider necessary for them to be an effective school board member?
 - 2.2 What kinds of information did superintendents consider necessary for school board members to acquire in order to be more effective in their newly acquired positions?
 - 2.3 Who had the responsibility for initiating and implementing an effective orientation program for new school board members?
3. Tabulation and analyzation of the data collected from the questionnaire;

4. Recommendations to be considered for further study.
5. Development of guidelines to be used by small school divisions in Virginia in preparing an orientation program for new school board members;

Instrumentation

A questionnaire which addressed the research questions was developed. Various sources that addressed the development of questionnaires were used at different stages in preparing this questionnaire (Galfo, 1983; Lees-Haley, 1980; Siedman, 1982). The questionnaire was divided into three major sections: a) Information Vital to a New School Board Member, b) Other Factors Related to Orientation of New School Board Members, and c) Demographic Data. Areas related to the orientation program for new board members were included in the initial list of items which were considered in Section I of the questionnaire. These items were gathered from six different sources. The items from the publication by the National School Boards Association entitled Becoming A Better Board Member were included, as well as the items from the orientation programs and materials related to these programs from five state school boards associations.

The orientation programs sponsored by the state school boards association which were selected to be analyzed were those

of Virginia, Georgia, Kentucky, Texas, and South Carolina. Various reasons were considered for selecting these five states. Virginia was chosen since the guidelines developed in this study were specifically for small Virginia school divisions. By including Virginia, it was possible to determine the areas which the school boards association emphasized in that particular orientation program, a relatively new one, for new school board members. Georgia, Kentucky, and Texas were chosen because their state legislatures have recently mandated training programs for school board members. Orientation was one part of these training programs. South Carolina was selected since a highly organized orientation program was already being implemented in that state.

The state school boards association from each selected state was contacted concerning the orientation program which had been developed for new school board members. The items to be included in Section I of the questionnaire were derived from the various materials related to the orientation of new school board members from each of the state school boards associations which were contacted. All items from these materials were included in the questionnaire.

The items were then categorized. The categories which were used were those suggested by the National School Boards Association (1982) in the publication Becoming a Better Board Member. These categories were: a) School-Community Relations,

b) General Responsibilities, c) School Finance, d) School Curriculum and Instruction, e) Administration and Staff, and f) School District Facilities (pp. 15-16). A separate category of School Law was included because of the difficulty in categorizing some of the items relating to that subject matter. For organizational purposes as well as the difficulty in categorizing some of the items into the particular categories, the category of Printed Materials was also included.

Sections II and III were included in the questionnaire to determine the extent to which orientation programs were occurring in Virginia and the desire of superintendents and school board members to be involved in these activities. These sections added additional information into possible problems of orientation programs which needed to be addressed in the guidelines. The questions relating to the years of service and the position of each respondent were necessary for analyzing the data.

The questionnaire was presented for discussion at an educational seminar led by Dr. Glen Earthman. The format was the major item discussed; however, suggestions were made in some of the content areas. After the appropriate changes were made, the questionnaire was reviewed by an ex-school board member who was requested to review the entire questionnaire for clarity, content, and format. The most beneficial comments came from her review. After the revisions, she was requested to examine once

again the questionnaire. At this point, few revisions were necessary. The questionnaire was then submitted to a panel for review.

The panel who reviewed the questionnaire was chosen because of their leadership and interest in the local school boards in Virginia. This panel included: a) Virginia Delegate George Grayson, who sponsored House Joint Resolution No. 282, which encouraged new school board members to participate in state-sponsored orientation programs, b) Dr. E. Benjamin Howerton, Associate Superintendent for Personnel and Administrative Field Services, c) Dr. Frank E. Barham, Executive Secretary for the Virginia School Boards Association, d) Mr. George May, school board member from the Roanoke City School System, and e) Dr. Lois Harrison-Jones, Superintendent of the Richmond City School System. Each person on the panel was asked to review the questionnaire with consideration to both content and construction. Some minor revisions and omissions were made at the suggestion of the members.

Population

The total population of this study consisted of superintendents and school board members from small school divisions in Virginia. A specific population of superintendents and school board members was requested to participate in this study, since this study was designed to address only small school divisions.

Public school superintendents from small school divisions in Virginia with fewer than five thousand students were requested to participate in this study. This population represented 86 out of the 139 school superintendents in Virginia, approximately 62 percent. All superintendents in school divisions which met these specific requirements were contacted by mail and were asked to participate in this study by completing and returning the questionnaire.

A selected group of school board members was also requested to participate in this survey. Those school board members from school divisions with fewer than five thousand students were requested to participate. This population represented 474 out of 828 of the school board members in Virginia, approximately 57 percent. Each school board was requested to complete the questionnaire and return it to their division superintendents. Each division superintendent was instructed to return all completed questionnaires in the self-addressed stamped envelope.

Distribution and Collection of Data

A letter of introduction (see Appendix A) was sent to each school superintendent in Virginia whose school division had fewer than five thousand students, as indicated on the 1984 end-of-year membership (Facing - Up-19, 1985, pp. 3-4). This letter explained the thrust of the study. The superintendents were informed that the packet of materials would be arriving within

three weeks after their receipt of this letter and they were requested to assist with the data distribution and collection.

A packet of materials was sent to the identified school superintendent. The packet of materials included: a) a personal letter to the local superintendent (see Appendix B) explaining the nature of the study and requesting assistance in the distribution and collection of the questionnaires, b) enough questionnaires (see Appendix C) for the superintendent and all of the school board members in the division, c) a letter to each school board member (see Appendix D) requesting his or her assistance in completing the questionnaire and returning it to the division superintendent, and d) a self-addressed, stamped envelope in which to return the completed questionnaires.

The superintendent was requested to include this item on his or her next school board meeting agenda and to distribute and complete all questionnaires at this time. The superintendent was requested to then return the completed questionnaires in the self-addressed, stamped envelope.

The return envelope and each questionnaire was coded by school division. As questionnaires were returned, the school divisions which participated were checked off a master list. This procedure was used to identify those school divisions which had not responded to the survey. All school divisions which did not respond to the survey were contacted by telephone. A follow-

up packet of materials was then sent to these school divisions if the divisions chose to participate in the study.

Analysis of Data

The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences was used to analyze the data from the questionnaire. One analysis, percentages and frequency distributions, was used from this program.

Frequency distributions and percentages were used to report the rating of each item. Those items which were identified by 50 percent or less of the respondents as being "Essential" for orientation were omitted. Likewise those items rated by more than 50 percent of the respondents as being "Essential" for orientation were included in the guidelines as being an essential part of an orientation program for new school board members.

The contents of the guidelines which were developed for the orientation of new school board members were based upon the results of the questionnaire. The analysis assisted in the determination of the major topics which were included in the guidelines.

Chapter 4

ANALYSIS OF DATA AND RESULTS

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to survey school board members and superintendents from school divisions with fewer than five thousand students in Virginia with regards to the content of orientation programs for new school board members. A set of curriculum guidelines which could be used when preparing an orientation program for new school board members was the end product of this study.

A letter of introduction was sent on September 6, 1985, to each school superintendent whose division met the criteria of the study. This population represented 86 of the 139 or approximately 62 percent of the school divisions in the state of Virginia. One school division requested not to participate in this study. This request was acknowledged.

The questionnaires, which were constructed to determine the content to be included in a set of curriculum guidelines for orientation programs, were mailed to identified superintendents on September 23, 1985. Five hundred fifty-three questionnaires were distributed throughout the state by these superintendents. By November 1, 1985, 175 questionnaires had been returned. The

superintendents whose school divisions had not responded to the questionnaire were contacted by telephone on November 8, 1985, and November 16, 1985. Forty-three school divisions were contacted. Each division was asked if the packet of materials had been received and the status of these materials. They were also personally invited to participate in the study. Seven of these school divisions requested that another packet of materials be sent. These materials were sent to the appropriate school divisions immediately following the request. This follow-up procedure resulted in an additional 38 responses. Two hundred thirteen questionnaires were returned and included in this study. This represented a 38.5 percent return.

An analysis of the questionnaires which were returned revealed that 58 of the school divisions, which were asked to participate, returned at least one questionnaire. This represented 67.4 percent of the school divisions that were contacted. Thirteen of the school divisions that did not participate in this study were located in the eastern section of the state. This represented approximately 52 percent of the school divisions contacted in this section of the state which did not choose to participate. No other common denomination could be identified between the twenty-seven non-participating systems other than location.

A total of 213 questionnaires were returned. Of the 213 questionnaires, 185 were returned by school board members. This represented approximately 40 percent of the school board members who were requested to participate in this study. Twenty-six superintendents responded, which represented approximately 30 percent of the superintendents who were requested to participate. Two questionnaires did not indicate the position of the individual completing it.

The low response from the superintendents and school board members was a concern. The small percentage of superintendents participating in the study could be attributed to a misunderstanding as to those who were to participate in the study. One superintendent, who was contacted by telephone, indicated that he had skimmed the letter and did not realize that superintendents were asked to respond as well as school board members. An additional reason for the low response could be attributed to the quantity of questionnaires from various sources that superintendents were being asked to complete. One superintendent, when contacted by telephone, indicated that without the endorsement of the State Department of Education, superintendents were not obliged to complete questionnaires. He indicated that this interpretation came from the State Superintendent for Public Instruction. The length of the questionnaire was another limiting factor which could have

attributed to the low response. The low response is discussed in the Methodological Observations with recommendations addressing areas that might result in a greater response. These remarks suggested a different approach to the distribution and collection of data to future researchers.

In analyzing the demographic data of the participants of this study, some general conclusions were derived. This set of data was illustrated in Table 1. Approximately 38 percent of the respondents had two or fewer years of service. Over 70 percent of the respondents had six or less years of service. Approximately 86 percent of the school board members and all of the superintendents who responded had attended at least one conference that was sponsored by the school boards association. Of those that attended these conferences, over 50 percent attended them specifically for the orientation of new school board members. Therefore, the majority of the respondents of this study have had experience as a participant in some form of an orientation program for new school board members. The intent of this study was to contact school board members and superintendents to get their opinions as items that should be included in an orientation program for new school board members. Considering the experience of those responding, the participation of these individuals with other orientation programs, and the close agreement between the school board members

TABLE 1
Summary of Demographic Data

Item	School Board Member Percent Responding (number) n = 185	Superintendent Percent Responding (number) n = 26
A. What is your position in the school division?	39.8 (185)	30.2 (26)
B. How many years have you been serving as a school board member or superintendent?		
0	16.8 (31)	11.5 (3)
1	11.4 (21)	11.5 (3)
2	10.8 (20)	7.7 (2)
3	10.3 (19)	.0 (0)
4	7.0 (13)	7.7 (2)
5	9.2 (17)	7.7 (2)
6	10.3 (19)	.0 (0)
7	2.7 (5)	3.8 (1)
8	2.7 (5)	3.8 (1)
9	2.7 (5)	7.7 (2)
10	1.6 (3)	3.8 (1)
11	.0 (0)	3.8 (1)
12	1.1 (2)	3.8 (1)
13	2.2 (4)	.0 (0)
14	3.2 (6)	11.5 (3)
15	1.1 (2)	.0 (0)
16	3.8 (7)	7.7 (2)
17	1.1 (2)	.0 (0)
18	.0 (0)	3.8 (1)
19	1.1 (2)	.0 (0)
20	.5 (1)	3.8 (1)
24	.5 (1)	.0 (0)
C. Have you ever attended any of the following conferences sponsored by school boards associations?		
Regional Conferences within the state	19.5 (36)	3.8 (1)
State Conferences	16.2 (30)	3.8 (1)
National Conferences	.0 (0)	.0 (0)
Regional and State Conferences	36.8 (68)	46.2 (12)
Regional and National Conferences	.5 (1)	.0 (0)
State and National Conferences	2.7 (5)	.0 (0)
All of the above Conferences	10.3 (19)	46.2 (12)
D. Did you attend the conference specifically for the orientation of new school board members?		
Yes	51.4 (95)	50.0 (13)
No	35.1 (65)	46.2 (12)

and superintendents, the return from this study of 38.5 percent was considered adequate.

As the questionnaires were returned, they were re-organized for data processing. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences was used to analyze the data. Frequency distributions and percentages were calculated for each item on the questionnaire according to the position which the respondent held, school board member or superintendent. This analysis was necessary to determine if there were items in which school board members and superintendents disagreed as to whether the item was essential or not essential. From analyzing the data which were acquired concerning the information that school board members and superintendents considered necessary for new school board members within the first six months of office were identified. In addition to the above information, responsibility for the initiation and implementation of an orientation program, as indicated by school board members and superintendents, was identified.

The analysis of the data and presentation of the findings of this study were discussed according to the categories which were on the questionnaires. The items within each category were discussed as a part of that category, not individually. The categories which were discussed are: a) General Responsibilities, b) Administration and Staff, c) School

Curriculum and Instruction, d) School District Facilities, e) School Finance, f) School Community Relations, g) School Law, h) Printed Materials, i) Other Comments and j) Other Factors Related to Orientation. The remainder of this chapter was designed to summarize the findings, discuss the conclusions which were derived from this study, make recommendations for further study and end with some methodological observations.

General Responsibilities

The items in the category of General Responsibilities were listed in Table 2 in the same order in which they appeared on the questionnaire. The percentages of essential responses of school board members and superintendents were also listed in Table 2. Each item was ranked relative to the items within the category. This ranking was indicated by the number in parenthesis.

From the data which were represented in Table 2, it appeared that there was agreement between the superintendents and school board members as to the items from this category which should be included in an orientation program. Nine of the eleven items were considered essential within the first six months of office. An explanation of sovereign immunity and evaluation procedures for school board members were the only two items within this category which were not considered essential. The concept of evaluation procedures was recommended by the National School Boards Association as well as from other sources of the

TABLE 2
Summary of Responses in the General Responsibilities Category

Item	School Board Member Percent Responding Essential (rank)	Superintendent Percent Responding Essential (rank)
1. Knowledge of legal and ethical responsibilities of the school board	93.5 (2)	92.3 (2)
2. Knowledge of the procedures to be used in conducting school board meetings	81.6 (5)	92.3 (2)
3. Understanding of school board's role in policy making	95.7 (1)	100.0 (1)
4. Understanding of school board's role in establishing administrative regulations	69.7 (9)	76.9 (9)
5. Understanding of Freedom of Information Act as pertaining to conduct of Executive Sessions	80.5 (7)	76.9 (9)
6. Understanding of the working relationship between school board members	81.6 (5)	84.6 (7)
7. Description of school division's administrative chain of command	80.5 (7)	92.3 (2)
8. Explanation of judicial and legislative trends regarding sovereign immunity	22.7 (11)	30.8 (11)
9. Understanding of organization of local school board officers and committees	85.9 (4)	92.3 (2)
10. Understanding the process by which school boards make decisions	87.6 (3)	92.3 (2)
11. Explanation of the evaluation procedures for school board members	30.3 (10)	38.5 (10)

literature (Andrew, 1971; Leonard, 1978; Neubauer, 1983); however, neither of the respondent groups considered this an essential item. Possibly this could be attributed to a lack of understanding of this method of evaluation and being apprehensive about the possibility of their evaluation being revealed to their peers.

Both school board members and superintendents considered the school board's role in policy-making and the legal and ethical responsibilities of the school board as the two major areas to be covered in an orientation program. When compared to all identified essential items, these two items along with an understanding of the process of making decisions and solving problems and an explanation of the local school board officers and committees were ranked within the first ten responses. The importance of this category was exemplified by the fact that this category had more items noted as being essential than any of the other categories and the general ranking of these items relative to those from other categories.

Administration and Staff

The items in the category of Administration and Staff were listed in Table 3 in the same order as they appeared on the questionnaire. Table 3 represented the percentage of the essential responses by the school board members and superintendents for each item in this category. Each item was

TABLE 3**Summary of Responses in the Administration and Staff Category**

Item	School Board Member Percent Responding Essential (rank)	Superintendent Percent Responding Essential (rank)
1. Knowledge of the superintendent's responsibilities	96.8 (1)	100.0 (1)
2. Understanding how the school board and superintendent work together	95.7 (2)	100.0 (1)
3. Explanation of the recruitment procedure for personnel	23.2 (11)	34.6 (8)
*4. Knowledge of the procedure for evaluating the superintendent	41.1 (5)	53.8 (3)
5. Knowledge of the procedure for evaluating personnel	30.3 (8)	26.9 (10)
6. Understanding of the grievance procedures for personnel	56.2 (4)	50.0 (5)
7. Knowledge of selection process for employing the superintendent	24.3 (10)	42.3 (6)
8. Knowledge of the procedure for dismissing personnel	64.9 (3)	53.8 (3)
9. Explanation of the orientation program for new personnel	30.8 (7)	26.9 (10)
10. Explanation of the staff development program for the school division	27.6 (9)	30.8 (9)
11. Knowledge of the current development in employment laws	35.1 (6)	38.5 (7)

*Indicates a difference of opinion between the school board members and superintendents.

ranked within the category according to the percentage of essential responses. This was indicated by the number in parenthesis.

This category was unlike General Responsibilities. The majority of the items in this category were considered not essential by both respondent groups. Knowledge of the superintendent's responsibilities and an understanding how the school board and superintendent work together were indicated by both respondent groups as being essential. The relative importance of these items was exemplified by being ranked in the first four when compared to all other essential responses. This relative importance was consistent with the findings in literature (Allman, 1976; Andrew, 1971).

Of the items that were related to school personnel, only the grievance procedure and dismissal of personnel procedure were considered essential. Five items related to personnel were not considered essential by both of the respondent groups. This could be attributed to the month in which school board members were appointed. Decisions relative to these items probably would not surface during the first six months. Since the questionnaire indicated a time frame, within the first six months, this could be a reason for this type of response.

Both respondent groups did not consider the selection process of the superintendent as an essential item. This could

be directly related to the timing of the appointment of superintendents to a four year contract, which has recently past. The evaluation of the superintendent was considered to be essential by superintendents but not by the school board members. The difference of opinion could also be related to the recent dismissal and/or appointment of superintendents. Superintendents could be identifying this aspect essential because they see a direct need for this type of in-service.

School Curriculum and Instruction

A listing of the items in the category of School Curriculum and Instruction was represented in Table 4. The order of the items was consistent with the order on the questionnaire. The percentage of essential responses was listed by each item. The ranking of each item within the category was represented by the number in the parenthesis.

The school board members and superintendents agreed to the relative importance of each of the items which were represented in this category. The four items which were considered to be essential for new school board members were related to items which were general in nature, such as, philosophy, responsibility to curriculum development, overview of the curriculum program and curriculum standards required by federal and state laws or regulations.

TABLE 4**Summary of Responses in the School Curriculum and Instruction Category**

Item	School Board Member Percent Responding Essential (rank)	Superintendent Percent Responding Essential (rank)
1. Explanation of the philosophy of the school division	82.7 (1)	88.5 (1)
2. Knowledge of the curriculum standards required by federal and state laws or regulations	63.2 (4)	53.8 (4)
3. Explanation of the results of the school division's standardized testing program	38.4 (6)	38.5 (6)
4. Knowledge of the school division's overall curriculum program	67.0 (3)	76.9 (3)
5. Explanation of the coordination of the elementary and secondary curricula	35.1 (7)	34.6 (7)
*6. Knowledge of the programs for the gifted, special education, and handicapped students	57.3 (5)	46.2 (5)
7. Understanding the school board's responsibility in curriculum development	76.2 (2)	84.6 (2)
8. Explanation of the textbook program relating to the rental, textbook adoption, and fee schedule	35.1 (8)	30.8 (8)

*Indicates a difference of opinion between the school board members and superintendents.

When the nature of the items was directed toward specifics of the school division the opinion as to the importance changed. The school board members indicated that a knowledge of the programs for the gifted, special education and handicapped students was essential; however, the superintendents did not. The discrepancy could be related to the publicity that these programs have been receiving in recent years and school board members were aware of some of the responsibilities related to these programs. The three items which were more specific to an individual school division were indicated as being not essential by both respondent groups.

School District Facilities

The items in the category of School District Facilities were listed in Table 5. These items were listed in the same order in which they were listed on the questionnaire. The percentage of essential responses was indicated for each item. The number in the parenthesis represented the ranking of each item within that category. The ranking of each of the items relative to this category was the same for both respondent groups.

Although two of the three items within this category were considered essential, the relative importance of these items as they relate to the other identified essential items, was not as great. In Jack Allman's study he identified twelve critical issues for orientation programs. The building program and future

TABLE 5

Summary of Responses in the School District Facilities Category

Item	School Board Member Percent Responding Essential (rank)	Superintendent Percent Responding Essential (rank)
1. Knowledge of the school transportation system	54.1 (2)	65.4 (2)
2. Knowledge of the school division's building program and construction projects	63.2 (1)	80.8 (1)
3. Knowledge of the school division's maintenance program	41.6 (3)	42.3 (3)

construction projects were identified as one of the issues which needed to be addressed in orientation programs. Once identified, he categorized the issues in order of importance. This issue was ranked eighth out of twelve items. The relative ranking of the essential items in this category with the other essential items was in the bottom third of essential responses, which was consistent with Allman's study.

School Finance

The items in the category of School Finance were recorded in Table 6. The items were listed in the order in which they were presented on the questionnaire. The percentage of essential responses was indicated for each item. The items were also ranked according to the relative position of each item within this category. The number in parenthesis represented this ranking.

The school board members and superintendents were in agreement as to the relative importance of the development and approval of the school budget and an understanding of state funding. In Lanning Nicoloff's (1978) study, the need for a better understanding of the budget was specifically identified as a need for new school board members. Neubauer (1983) not only included an understanding of the budget but also included a knowledge in the preparation of the budget as being essential components for an orientation program.

TABLE 6**Summary of Responses in the School Finance Category**

Item	School Board Member Percent Responding Essential (rank)	Superintendent Percent Responding Essential (rank)
1. Understanding how the state funds local school programs	80.5 (2)	84.6 (2)
2. Knowledge of the school division regarding tax structure, ability to pay taxes, population, employment, and average income	48.6 (5)	46.2 (6)
3. Knowledge of the federal aid used in school division's educational program	56.3 (3)	50.0 (5)
4. Explanation of the projected student enrollment	52.3 (4)	65.4 (3)
5. Knowledge of how the local school budget is developed and approved	87.6 (1)	96.2 (1)
*6. Knowledge of the process for purchasing supplies and equipment	44.3 (6)	57.7 (4)

*Indicates a difference of opinion between the school board members and superintendents.

There was disagreement between the school board members and superintendents concerning the process for purchasing supplies. The superintendents indicated that this item should be included in an orientation program while the school board members did not. The difference of opinion might be related to the knowledge of the superintendents in terms of the legal problems which might occur if the process was not followed completely.

Both of the respondent groups indicated that the knowledge of the school division's tax structure, ability to pay taxes, population, employment, and average income was not essential to new school board members. Possibly the reason for this response was related to the time limitation set by the questionnaire. Decisions concerning this information would not normally be made within the first six months.

School Community Relations

The items in the category of School Community Relations were listed in Table 7. The items in Table 7 were recorded according to the order in which they were represented on the questionnaire. Each item was ranked relative to its position in this category. The number in parenthesis represented this ranking.

All four items in this category were determined essential by both respondent groups. The relative importance of the process of handling complaints and pressure tactics and the process of working with the media were viewed by the school board members

TABLE 7

Summary of Responses in the School Community Relations Category

Item	School Board Member Percent Responding Essential (rank)	Superintendent Percent Responding Essential (rank)
1. Explanation of the public relations efforts or programs in the school division	59.8 (4)	80.3 (3)
2. Understanding of the school division's policy on community involvement	67.6 (3)	73.1 (4)
3. Understanding of the process used by the school board members to handle complaints and pressure tactic	92.4 (1)	100.0 (1)
4. Understanding of the process by which the school board members work with the media	82.2 (2)	100.0 (1)

and superintendents as the same. The importance of this category in an orientation program was identified in Andrew's (1971) study. Lanning Nicoloff (1978) also identified the desire to understand the area of communication and good relations with the community as a definite concern to new members.

School Law

The items in the category of School Law were listed in Table 8. These items were recorded in the same manner as they appeared on the questionnaire. Each item was ranked according to the percentage of essential responses within the category. The ranking was recorded in the parenthesis in Table 8.

The school board members and superintendents agreed upon three items in this category to be included in an orientation program. The two respondent groups also agreed to the relative importance of these three items. Andrew's (1971) study indicated that new school board members considered that the category of School Law should be stressed during an orientation program; however, the specific areas to be covered in this category were not discussed.

There was a difference of opinion between school board members and superintendents as to the importance of an explanation towards prayer, teaching religion, and creationism in the school. School board members did not consider this an essential item; however, 50 percent of the superintendents did

TABLE 8**Summary of Responses in the School Law Category**

Item	School Board Member Percent Responding Essential (rank)	Superintendent Percent Responding Essential (rank)
1. Explanation of how the school division cooperates with the law enforcement officers and protects the student's privacy at the same time	55.7 (3)	50.0 (3)
2. Explanation of the policy describing proper access to student records, lockers and automobiles and use of body searches	48.6 (4)	38.5 (6)
3. Explanation of procedures for holding due process hearings for handicapped students	44.9 (5)	46.2 (5)
4. Explanation of the procedures to follow when disciplining handicapped students	36.2 (7)	34.6 (7)
5. Understanding the state and federal regulations relating to special education and handicapped students	62.2 (2)	53.8 (2)
*6. Explanation of the school board's responsibility towards prayer, teaching religion and creationism in the school	44.3 (6)	50.0 (3)
7. Explanation of the responsibility of the school board as it relates to liability/negligence	76.8 (1)	88.5 (1)

*Indicates a difference of opinion between the school board members and superintendents.

consider it essential. The fact that 50 percent of the superintendents considered this item essential and 50 percent did not consider it essential indicated that a greater response from superintendents might have resulted in a difference response.

Printed Materials

The items in the category of Printed Materials were recorded in Table 9. These items were listed according to the order in which they appeared on the questionnaire. The percentage of essential responses was indicated for each of the items in this category. Each item was ranked within this category according to the percentage of essential responses. This ranking was indicated by the number in parenthesis.

The relative importance of the policy manual, school budget and short and long-range goals was agreed upon by both of the respondent groups. The importance of these printed materials was also indicated in the literature that was reviewed (Andrew, 1971; Neubauer, 1983). The superintendents and school board members disagreed on four of the items in this category. Superintendents considered the minutes of the past school board meetings to be valuable to new school board members within the first six months of office; however, school board members did not agree with this need. The literature recommended that minutes of the past school board meetings be given to new school board members (Andrew, 1971; Starsiak, 1982). However, in Lautenschlager's (1956) study

TABLE 9
Summary of Responses in the Printed Materials Category

Item	School Board Member Percent Responding Essential (rank)	Superintendent Percent Responding Essential (rank)
1. Copy of the local policy manual	97.3 (1)	100.0 (1)
*2. Copy of the minutes of the past year's school board meetings	34.6 (13)	65.4 (8)
3. Copy of the current school division's budget	94.1 (2)	100.0 (1)
4. List of education agencies and organizations that provide services to local school divisions	33.5 (15)	23.1 (18)
*5. Copy of the employees' salary schedules	46.5 (9)	76.9 (6)
6. List of available resources such as workshops, books, conferences and agencies for school board members to learn about their responsibilities	73.5 (4)	73.1 (7)
7. Data concerning teacher-pupil ratio and median class size	51.9 (8)	57.7 (10)
8. Copy of the job descriptions of personnel	42.7 (11)	46.2 (13)
9. Listing of the existing facilities with the number and grade level of students served	56.8 (7)	84.6 (4)
10. Copy of the personnel directory	60.5 (6)	61.5 (9)

TABLE 9 (continued)
Summary of Responses in the Printed Materials Category

Item	School Board Member Percent Responding Essential (rank)	Superintendent Percent Responding Essential (rank)
*11. Copy of the statistical data of student population--elementary and secondary enrollment, average daily attendance, number of graduating students, number attending post high school education and drop-out rate	41.1 (12)	53.8 (11)
12. Copy of data related to school division--number of schools and their organizational structure	64.3 (5)	80.8 (5)
13. Copy of the school division's latest short and long-range goals	85.4 (3)	96.2 (3)
14. Copy of accreditation reports on the regional and state level	34.6 (13)	34.6 (16)
15. Copy of the organizational structure of the educational program--student groupings, departmentalization and team teaching	31.9 (17)	34.6 (16)
16. Description of the present library and instructional materials centers	21.6 (19)	15.4 (19)
17. Description of the size in square miles of attendance zones and attendance policies of the school division	32.4 (16)	46.2 (13)
18. Copy of the school division and individual building level statistical data on per pupil cost	25.9 (18)	38.5 (15)
*19. Copy of data on existing bond indebtedness of the school division	45.4 (10)	53.8 (1)

*Indicates a difference of opinion between the school board members and superintendents.

he concluded that school board members seldom read printed materials about educational programs, unless their superintendent encouraged such reading. The fact that over 65 percent of the school board members considered this item to be not essential, could be related to the amount of time that they have available to read such material. The salary schedules of the school employees, the statistical data of student population, and the data concerning the bond indebtedness were areas that school board members did not consider essential within the first six months. This conclusion could be related to the time limitation set by the questionnaire. These materials would be necessary in the development of the budget. The development of the budget would normally occur after the first six months of office, therefore, the school board members might have taken this into consideration when deciding whether these items were essential or not essential within the first six months of office.

There were seven items in the category of Printed Materials which were indicated as being not essential by both respondent groups. Although these items were recommended by the National School Boards Association as being necessary for a new school board member, the school board members and superintendents did not view this in the same manner. Possibly the time that a school board member had to read was considered. Therefore, the quality of the reading material was more important than the quantity of the material given to the school board member.

Other Comments

At the conclusion of the items to be considered essential or not essential on the questionnaire, the respondents were asked to make additional comments concerning topics to be considered in orientation programs for new school board members. Of the 213 questionnaires which were returned, 16 of the respondents made additional comments to this question. Some of the comments made were not listed, since the comments noted by the respondents were related to the process by which the questionnaire was completed and not to specific content areas. These responses are summarized below:

1. Evaluation of the superintendent, if in the final year of the contract
2. Information on the background experience of all board members
3. Explanation of abbreviations, e.g. SOL and SOQ
4. Clear understanding of the differences between policy-making and administration
5. Role of special interest groups
6. Explanation of the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) scores
7. Explanation of Robert's Rules of Order
8. Explanation of the past history of problems with administrative personnel

9. Bias held by superintendent and/or other administrators
10. Description of building principal's role in daily decision-making
11. Discussion of handling parent telephone calls
12. Summary sheet which includes a brief explanation of the major issues currently facing the board
13. Discussion of ways to deal with the governing body both as an individual and member of the school board.

These items were not included in the Guidelines since 50 percent or more of those participating did not respond in this manner. Although none of these comments met the criteria, some of the comments might fall under some of the items that have already been identified.

Other Factors Related to Orientation

The second major section of the questionnaire considered other factors related to the orientation of new school board members. Table 10 contained the percentage of essential responses that were indicated by school board members and superintendents. The table was separated into four subsections. These subsections were representative of the subsections that were on the questionnaire.

TABLE 10

Summary of Other Factors Related to Orientation

Item	School Board Member Percent Responding Essential (number) n = 185	Superintendent Percent Responding Essential (number) n = 26
A. Would you be willing to devote extra time for an orientation program or would you rather acquire the information on your own?		
Orientation Program	89.2 (165)	88.5 (23)
On your own	9.2 (17)	11.5 (3)
No Response	1.6 (3)	.0 (0)
*If you chose an orientation program, how much time would you be willing to devote to the program?		
Less than 2 hours	1.8 (3)	.0 (0)
One-Half of a day (4 hours)	11.9 (20)	15.4 (4)
One day (8 hours)	31.5 (53)	23.1 (6)
As much time as necessary	54.8 (92)	57.7 (15)
No Response	.0 (0)	4.8 (1)
Would you be willing to attend state and regional conferences related to school board orientation?		
I would attend these meetings if the expense was reimbursed.	57.3 (106)	69.2 (18)
I would attend these meetings at my expense.	28.1 (52)	26.9 (7)
I would not attend these meetings.	10.8 (20)	.0 (0)
No Response	3.8 (7)	4.8 (1)
B. Would you support developing a policy in your school division that would require orientation for new school board members?		
Yes, I would support such a program.	78.9 (146)	88.5 (23)
No, I would not support such a program.	11.9 (22)	7.7 (2)
Our division already has a written policy.	6.5 (12)	3.8 (1)
No Response	2.7 (5)	.0 (0)

*Missing data is not included in the calculation.

TABLE 10 (continued)

Summary of Other Factors Related to Orientation

Item	School Board Member Percent Responding Essential (number) n = 185	Superintendent Percent Responding Essential (number) n = 26
C. Who should be responsible for the cost of the orientation program?		
Individual Board Member	4.9 (9)	.0 (0)
School Division	67.0 (124)	73.1 (19)
State	20.0 (37)	19.2 (5)
No Response	8.1 (15)	7.7 (2)
*If answered school division, would you be willing to vote for funding the orientation program?		
Yes	89.7 (130)	95.5 (21)
No	10.3 (15)	4.5 (1)
D. Who should be held responsible for ensuring that new school board members have an orientation program?		
The Superintendent	14.6 (27)	30.8 (8)
The School Board Chairman	10.3 (19)	11.5 (3)
The More Experienced School Board Member	1.1 (2)	0.0 (0)
A Joint Responsibility Between the Superintendent and the School Board Chairman	43.8 (81)	34.6 (9)
The State School Boards Association	15.1 (28)	11.5 (3)
The State Department of Education	4.9 (9)	0.0 (0)
Other	2.2 (4)	0.0 (0)
No Response	8.1 (15)	11.5 (3)

*Missing data is not included in the calculation.

The first subsection which was considered, was to determine the amount of participation or willingness to participate in orientation programs. Related to this question was the amount of time individuals would be willing to devote to this activity as well as the amount of participation at the state and regional level that might be expected.

Of those responding 89.2 percent of the school board members preferred an orientation program rather than gathering information on their own. Superintendents responded in a similar manner with 88.5 percent preferring an orientation program. The question continued by asking only those who responded by marking Orientation Program determine the amount of time they would be willing to devote to such a program. However, not all respondents followed directions, which resulted in an additional three responses. In calculating the percentages from these data, those who responded to this question were included in the calculations. Approximately 55 percent of the school board members, who indicated they wanted an orientation program, would give up as much time as necessary for a program of this nature. Approximately one third of these school board members were willing to devote at least one day to such a program. The breakdown of superintendents on this item was similar to that of school board members, with 57.7 percent indicating as much time as necessary and 23.1 percent indicating one day. Attendance at

state and regional conferences that address orientation programs was an additional consideration in this section. Approximately 57 percent of the school board members indicated that they would attend these conferences, if the expenses were reimbursed and 28.1 percent would attend at their own expense. Therefore, approximately 85 percent of the school board members were interested in these conferences if financial assistance was available. Superintendents also indicated a strong support of these conferences with 69.2 percent considering the reimbursement as a factor and 26.9 percent considering individual financing. The responses from each group indicated a support for orientation programs. This support could be at the local, regional and/or state level. One respondent stated that he or she would not mind attending orientation sessions, if he or she could be convinced that the sessions were of benefit.

The second subsection concerned the development of a local policy in school divisions that would require orientation for new school board members. Of those responding to this question, 78.9 percent of the school board members and 88.5 percent of the superintendents indicated that they would support such a program. Some of the responses that came from this section posed some of the following questions and comments:

1. How do you require it?
2. What incentive would be used?
3. What penalty would be imposed?

4. I would not support any policy without specifics!
5. I would only support such a policy on a local level.

In the third subsection the respondents were requested to indicate who should bear the cost of an orientation program. The majority of the school board members and superintendents stated that the school division should be held responsible for the cost of these programs. This represented 67 percent of the school board members and 73.1 percent of the superintendents. Approximately 20 percent of the respondents indicated that the state should fund the program. The question continued for those respondents that answered School Division. These individuals were also asked to consider if they would fund the orientation program in the local budget. Only those individuals that responded School Division in the previous question were to answer this one. However, all of the respondents did not follow the directions. This resulted in an additional twenty-four responses to this question. In calculating the percentages from these data, those who responded to this question were included in this calculation. The results indicated that over 90 percent of those responding to this question would support funding for orientation programs.

The last question to be considered in this section pertained to whom the responsibility for orientation programs should be

assigned. There was a diversity of opinion as to whom should be held responsible. Approximately 44 percent of the school board members considered that the orientation program should be a joint effort between the superintendent and the school board chairman, 34.6 percent of the superintendents chose the same response. Approximately 31 percent of the superintendents indicated that it was the superintendent's responsibility for orientation programs for new school board members. Over 14 percent of the school board members indicated that superintendents should be held responsible for these programs. Approximately 15 percent of the school board members indicated that the state school boards association should be held responsible, with 11.5 percent of the superintendents indicating the same response. Over 10 percent of the school board members and 11.5 percent of the superintendents indicated that the school board chairman should be held responsible for the orientation program. Other comments that were made in reference to this question are listed below:

1. It should be a joint responsibility between the superintendent, school board chairman and the state school boards association.
2. It should be the entire board's responsibility.
3. It should be the new member's responsibility to acquire this information.

4. It should be the state department of education's and state school boards association's responsibility.
5. It should be the responsibility of the body who appoints the school board members.

Summary

In this chapter the results and analysis of the findings related to the items that should be included in an orientation program for new school board members were presented. Other data related to orientation programs for new school board members was also presented. Those that participated were asked to decide which of the sixty-nine items presented were essential or not essential in an orientation program for new school board members to be held within the first six months of office.

Thirty-eight items were identified by both of the school board members and superintendents as being essential for an orientation program for new school board members. All of the items in the category of School Community Relations were considered essential by both respondent groups. Superintendents in general put more emphasis on the items in this category than did school board members, as was indicated by the percentages of essential responses. The category of General Responsibilities was another category that was considered important, as indicated by nine of the eleven items being included as essential and the general ranking of these items. The category of Administration

and Staff had the lowest number of items identified as essential for orientation programs. Although only four items were included in this category, two of the items were ranked in the top four, as indicated by the percentage of essential responses. The category of School District Facilities included two of the three items as essential. However, these two items were ranked in the lower third of the identified essential items.

A summary of the items which were indicated as being essential by 50 percent or more of the respondents was illustrated in Table 11. This table listed the items according to the importance, as indicated by the percentage of essential responses. Table 12 listed those items which were considered essential by at least 50 percent of the respondents in one of the respondent groups. These items were listed according to the percentages of the combined totals. Other than these eight items, the school board members and superintendents have agreed upon the elements that should be included in an orientation program for new school board members.

The findings related to the other factors of orientation programs, indicated that the respondents would prefer acquiring the information needed for new school board members through orientation programs. It also indicated that the majority of the respondents would be willing to devote as much time as necessary to acquire this information. The majority of the respondents did

TABLE 11
Summary of Essential Items

Item (category)	Combined Total Percent Responding Essential
Knowledge of the superintendent's responsibility (Administration and Staff)	97.2
Copy of the local policy manual (Printed Materials)	97.2
Understanding of the local school board's role in policy-making (General Responsibilities)	96.2
Understanding of how the school board and superintendent work together (Administration and Staff)	96.2
Copy of the current school division's budget (Printed Materials)	94.4
Knowledge of the legal and ethical responsibilities of the school board (General Responsibilities)	93.4
Understanding of the process by which school board members handle complaints and pressure tactics (School Community Relations)	93.0
Understanding of the process by which a school board makes decisions and solves problems (General Responsibilities)	88.3
Knowledge of how the local school budget is developed and approved (School Finance)	88.3
Explanation of the organization of the local board—officers and committees (General Responsibilities)	86.4
Copy of the school division's latest short and long-range goals (Printed Materials)	85.9
Understanding of the process by which school board members work with the media (School Community Relations)	84.0
Knowledge of the procedures to be used in conducting school board meetings (General Responsibilities)	83.1
Explanation of the philosophy of the school division (School Curriculum and Instruction)	83.1
Understanding of the working relationship between school board members (General Responsibilities)	82.2
Description of the school division's administrative chain of command (General Responsibilities)	81.7
Understanding of the Freedom of Information Act, as it pertains to the conduct of Executive Sessions (General Responsibilities)	80.3
Understanding of how the state funds the local school program (School Finance)	80.3
Explanation of the responsibility of the school board as it relates to liability/negligence (School Law)	77.5
Understanding of the school board's responsibility in curriculum development (School Curriculum and Instruction)	77.0
List of the available resources, such as, workshops, books, conferences and agencies for school board members to learn about their responsibilities (Printed Materials)	73.2

TABLE 11 (continued)
Summary of Essential Items

Item (category)	Combined Total Percent Responding Essential
Understanding of the school board's role in establishing administrative regulations (General Responsibilities)	70.9
Knowledge of the school division's overall curriculum program (School Curriculum and Instruction)	67.6
Understanding of the school division's policy on community involvement (School Community Relations)	67.6
Copy of the data related to the school division--number of schools and their organizational structure (Printed Materials)	65.7
Knowledge of the school division's building programs and construction projects (School District Facilities)	65.3
Knowledge of the procedure for dismissing personnel (Administration and Staff)	63.4
Knowledge of the curriculum standards as required by federal and state law or federal and state regulations (School Curriculum and Instruction)	61.5
Explanation of the public relations efforts or programs in the school district (School Community Relations)	61.0
Understanding of the state and federal regulations relating to special education and handicapped students--Public Law 94-142 (School Law)	61.0
Copy of the personnel directory (Printed Materials)	60.6
Listing of existing facilities with the number and grade level of students served (Printed Materials)	59.6
Understanding of the grievance procedures for personnel (Administration and Staff)	55.9
Knowledge of the federal aid that is used in the school division's educational program (School Finance)	55.9
Knowledge of the student transportation system (School District Facilities)	55.4
Explanation of how the school division cooperates with law enforcement officers and at the same time protects students' privacy (School Law)	54.5
Explanation of the projected student enrollment (School Finance)	54.0
Data concerning teacher-pupil ratio and median class size (Printed Materials)	52.6

TABLE 12**Summary of Essential Items According to Only One Respondent**

Item	School Board Member Percent Responding Essential	Superintendent Percent Responding Essential
1. Knowledge of the programs available for gifted, special education and handicapped students (School Curriculum and Instruction)	57.3	46.2
2. Copy of the employees' salary schedules (Printed Materials)	46.5	76.9
3. Copy of the data on the existing bond indebtedness of the school division (Printed Materials)	45.4	53.8
4. Knowledge of the process for purchasing supplies and equipment (School Finance)	44.3	57.7
5. Explanation of the school board's responsibility towards prayer, teaching of religion and creationism in the school (School Law)	44.3	50.0
6. Knowledge of the procedure for evaluation of the superintendent (Administration and Staff)	41.1	53.8
7. Copy of the statistical data of the student population--elementary and secondary enrollment, average daily attendance, number of graduating students, number attending post high school education and drop-out rate (Printed Materials)	41.1	53.8
8. Copy of the minutes of the past year's school board meetings (Printed Materials)	34.6	65.4

respond that they would attend state and regional conferences which addressed the topic of orientation. When asked if they would support a policy to require orientation, the majority of the respondents indicated that they would support this policy.

The cost of the orientation program was identified as being the school division's responsibility as indicated by 67.1 percent of the respondents. Over 90 percent of those responding to this question, indicated that they would support funding for orientation programs. Approximately 42 percent of the respondents indicated that there should be a joint responsibility for orientation programs between the superintendent and school board chairman.

Conclusions

1. Results from this study indicated that school board members and superintendents do agree on the majority of items that were essential to an orientation program for new school board members. Thirty-eight of the sixty-nine items were regarded as essential by both respondent groups. There were eight areas in which the superintendents and school board members did not agree. These areas were:
 - a. Knowledge of the programs available for the gifted, special education and handicapped students
 - b. Copy of the employees' salary schedules

- c. Copy of the data on the existing bond indebtedness of the school division
- d. Knowledge of the process for purchasing supplies and equipment
- e. Explanation of the school board's responsibility towards prayer, teaching of religion and creationism in the school
- f. Knowledge of the procedure for evaluation of the superintendent
- g. Copy of the statistical data of the student population--elementary and secondary enrollment, average daily attendance, number of graduating students, number attending post high school education and drop-out rates
- h. Copy of the minutes of the past year's school board meetings

Of the eight items that have been identified by only one respondent group, only one of these items was recommended by the school board members--knowledge of the programs for the gifted, special education and handicapped students. The remaining seven items were considered essential by only the superintendents.

Four of these items come from the category of Printed Materials. This information would be relatively simple for the superintendents to acquire; however, the school board members did

not consider these as important items within the first six months of office. This could be related to the amount of reading material that school board members receive. With limited time, the school board members may have been concerned with the quality of printed materials rather than the quantity.

The items related to the purchasing procedures and religion in the schools were also considered essential by the superintendents. These items may have been considered essential because of the legal ramifications that could result from a misinterpretation of either of these procedures.

The superintendents were concerned with their evaluation by the school board. Possibly they were requesting that school boards be more knowledgeable in this area to ensure that they were treated fairly.

Recommendations for Further Study

1. Additional research is needed in the area of orientation programs. Efforts need to be directed to determining to what extent orientation programs exist and if these programs are effective.
2. Additional research is needed to determine if the curriculum guidelines which have been developed in this study are useful to the persons responsible for orientation programs. This could be achieved by randomly choosing school divisions to use these guidelines in preparing orientation programs and to rate the effectiveness of the Guidelines.

3. It would be interesting to compare the opinions of newly appointed or elected school board members and experienced school board members toward board development, especially in the area of orientation programs. This is an additional area that could be researched.

Methodological Observations

As was discussed in Chapter 4, the return from the questionnaire was not as high as would be preferred. This low response indicated a need to identify some possible methods that could have resulted in a higher response. The following recommendations are for future researchers who plan to request information from superintendents and/or school board members.

1. The letter of introduction should convince the participant that the topic which is being studied is an interesting topic. It should also address the need for the study and how the results of the study will help the participant in their present position. The participants must be assured that the responses will be totally confidential.
2. When addressing the individual who is being requested to participate in the study, personalize the letter by referring to the participant by his or her name, not the position.
3. If at all possible, avoid distributing and collecting data through a second person. Rather than the superintendent returning the questionnaires, provide a self-addressed

envelope for each of the respondents and have them mail the questionnaire back separately. When pursuing the follow-up of those who do not respond, contact them personally. Avoid sending information through a second person.

4. In the event that superintendents are requested to distribute or collect the data, provide a checklist for them to use when distributing and/or collecting the data. This will summarize the instructions for the superintendents. If the questionnaires for the superintendents and school board members are the same, label specifically the questionnaire to be completed by each individual.
5. The timing of the distribution of the questionnaires should be considered. Be aware of the many activities that may be imposed on the participants at any given time of the year.
6. If the questionnaire is lengthy and may result in a lower response, consider item sampling as a possible method of sampling.
7. Since the quantity of questionnaires being sent to superintendents is increasing, it may improve the returns if the State School Boards Association, State Department of Education or State Superintendent of Public Instruction would endorse the study. However, if the study was not endorsed by either the School Boards Association, State Department or State Superintendent, this should not be considered a reason for not pursuing the study.

Chapter 5

GUIDELINES

Introduction

One of the most important governing bodies in our nation today is the local school board. Major events such as, Brown v. Board of Education, Sputnik, the Elementary and Secondary Act of 1965 and a Nation at Risk are examples of some of the issues that have been raised over the past thirty years that have impacted the schools. It is the school board's responsibility to deal with issues of this nature as they arise. Therefore, in order to govern this changing organization, a more informed school board is needed.

Virginia is one state that has recognized the importance of well-informed school board members. The Virginia General Assembly in 1985 passed a resolution which requested ". . . members of local school boards to participate in an in-service seminar, developed cooperatively by the Department of Education and the Virginia School Boards Association, within two months of their appointment (House Joint Resolution No. 282, 1985)." The sponsors of this resolution cited the following as reasons for initiating this action: a) little or no knowledge of the law relating to education or the issues that may confront a school board by the new school board member and b) the increased complexity of education issues.

Orientation is one avenue that can be used to assist new school board members in becoming educated in these issues. Orientation, as defined in these guidelines, is the process by which a person is made aware of the rules, traditions and educational offerings in his or her school environment. Orientation is to be distinguished from in-service training by being further defined as the time period between appointment and the first six months of office.

The purpose of this study was to develop curriculum guidelines for school divisions to use when preparing the orientation program for new school board members in their divisions. The information in the sections that follow were identified by school board members and superintendents in Virginia from school divisions of fewer than five thousand students through the vehicle of a questionnaire.

The curriculum guidelines that follow cover a wide range of information. This information has been identified as being essential by 50 percent or more of the responding school board members and/or superintendents. The information to be included in these guidelines is divided into the following sections: a) General Responsibilities, b) Administration and Staff, c) School Curriculum and Instruction, d) School District and Facilities, e) School Finance, f) School Community Relations, g) School Law and h) Printed Materials.

This information is intended to be used as a guide. School board members and superintendents are encouraged to use these guidelines for assistance in developing an orientation program which is most appropriate for their school division.

Planning of an Orientation Program

The literature related to orientation programs suggests that local school divisions should have a policy concerning the orientation of new school board members. The results from this study also reached this same conclusion. The development of a policy concerning this issue should ensure, to some degree, that new school board members would receive some type of in-service related to their responsibilities.

In the policy, the person(s) responsible should be identified. The results of the study did not identify any one particular person who should be responsible for the orientation program. Instead, this determination should be made by each local school board as the policy is developed.

The results from this study indicated that if funds were available for school board development, participation in these activities should increase. As the local board considers budget items, funds for board development programs, either at the state or local level, should be included. It was indicated by the results of the study that there would be positive support for funding in this category.

Once the person(s) responsible has been identified and the funds have been allocated, it then becomes necessary to decide the content to be included in the orientation program. As one identifies the content and method of presentation, the amount of time allotted for orientation must be decided. From the results of the study, over 75 percent of the respondents indicated that they would devote at least one day towards school board orientation.

Content of an Orientation Program

The content to be included in an orientation program has been divided into categories. Each category is further divided into the essential elements to be included in that category. These items have been identified by school board members and superintendents as being essential to the new school board member within the first six months of office and should be included in an orientation program for these members.

General Responsibilities: Upon completion of the discussion of General Responsibilities, the new school board member should have an understanding of:

1. school board's role in policy-making,
2. the legal and ethical responsibilities of the school board,
3. the process of decision making and problem solving,

4. the organization of the local school board, e.g. the officers and committees,
5. the procedure that is used in conducting the school board meeting,
6. the working relationship that should exist between school board members,
7. the chain of command in the school division,
8. the Freedom of Information Act as it pertains to Executive Sessions,
9. the role of the school board in administrative regulations.

Administration and Staff: Upon completion of the discussion of Administration and Staff, the new school board members should have an understanding of:

1. the superintendent's responsibilities,
2. how the school board and superintendent should work together,
3. the procedure for dismissing personnel,
4. the grievance procedure for personnel,
5. a procedure for evaluating the superintendent.

School Curriculum and Instruction: Upon completion of the discussion of School Curriculum and Instruction, the new school board member should have an understanding of:

1. the philosophy of the school division,

2. the school board's responsibility in curriculum development,
3. the school division's overall curriculum program,
4. the curriculum standards which are required by federal and state laws or regulations,
5. the programs which are available for gifted, special education and handicapped students.

School District Facilities: Upon completion of the discussion of School District Facilities, the new school board member should have an understanding of:

1. the school division's building program and construction projects,
2. the student transportation system.

School Finance: Upon completion of the discussion of School Finance, the new school board member should have an understanding of:

1. the process of developing and approving the local school budget,
2. the process by which the state funds the local school program,
3. how federal aid is used in the school division's educational program,
4. the projected student enrollment,
5. the process for purchasing supplies and equipment.

School Community Relations: Upon completion of the discussion on School Community Relations, the new school board members should have an understanding of:

1. the process by which school board members handle complaints and pressure tactics,
2. the process by which school board members work with the media,
3. the school division's policy on community involvement,
4. the explanation of the public relations efforts or programs in the school division.

School Law: Upon completion of the discussion on School Law, the new school board member should have an understanding of:

1. the responsibility of the school board as it relates to liability/negligence,
2. the state and federal regulations relating to special education and handicapped students--Public Law 94-142,
3. how the school division cooperates with law enforcement officers and at the same time protects students' privacy,
4. the school board's responsibility towards prayer, teaching of religion and creationism in the school.

Printed Materials: The following materials were considered essential by the school board members and superintendents:

1. policy manual,
2. current school division's budget,
3. latest long and short-range goals of the school division,
4. available resources, such as workshops, books, conferences and agencies for school board members to learn about their responsibilities,
5. data related to the school division--number of schools and their organizational structure,
6. personnel directory,
7. existing facilities with the number and grade level of the students served,
8. data concerning the teacher-pupil ratio and median class size,
9. minutes of the past year's school board meetings,
10. employees' salary schedule,
11. statistical data of the student population--elementary and secondary enrollment, average daily attendance, number of graduating students, number attending post high school graduation and drop-out rate,

12. data on the existing bond indebtedness of the school division.

The publication, Virginia School Boards, which is published by the Virginia School Boards Association, contains much of the information which has been identified in the above curriculum guidelines. The publication, Becoming a Better Board Member, also contains information related to the items that have been identified as essential for an orientation program. In addition to these two publications, the Virginia School Boards Association conducts orientation sessions for new school board members on the state and regional level. In-service programs, not specifically for new school board members, are also conducted by this association.

Evaluation of an Orientation Program

The effectiveness of an orientation program should be evaluated on a semi-annual basis. Those members that participated in the activities of the orientation program should provide feedback as to the quality of the orientation program. In addition to quality, it is necessary to know if the needs of the participants have been met. The school board members must assess the strengths and weaknesses in the program. From this assessment the direction for the next year's program could be made. Areas in the orientation program that were identified as being weak need to be redirected; likewise, those areas of strength need to be maintained.

In addition to the above specific evaluation of a program, a school board can also evaluate the relative effectiveness of a program by evaluating the practices that should have resulted from the implementation of such a program. Through a school board self-evaluation, a school board or school board member may be able to evaluate the operational procedures of the school board. This evaluation procedure can assist in determining the effectiveness of the school board. The strengths and weaknesses identified by the members through the use of this device could be used to direct future orientation or in-service programs.

Summary

These guidelines were developed to assist school divisions in Virginia as they prepare orientation programs for new school board members. It is intended that these curriculum guidelines be the skeleton of an orientation program. It is up to the school divisions to determine what should be added to this skeleton.

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APPENDIX A

September 6, 1985

Dear Superintendent,

The purpose of this letter is to request your cooperation with my dissertation research. The thrust of this study is to formulate guidelines for small school divisions (less than 5,000 students) to use when developing an orientation program for new school board members. These guidelines should be beneficial to you in designing an orientation program for board members in your school division. The data that is received from your school division will be used in deciding which areas will be included in these guidelines. Your assistance is needed.

During the week of September 23rd, I will be mailing a packet of materials to your school division. In this packet will be questionnaires for you and all your school board members. It would be extremely helpful if you would allot time at your October board meeting for you and your board members to complete the questionnaires and return them in the self-addressed, stamped envelope.

The data that I receive from your school division will be kept in strict confidence. The codes on the questionnaire will be used only for follow-up mailing where necessary. The data that are received will determine the areas of school board service that need to be included in an orientation program for new school board members. These areas will be included in the guidelines. A copy of the conclusions of this study will be sent to you upon completion.

I hope that you will put this item on the October agenda. Your time and consideration on this matter is greatly appreciated.

APPENDIX B

September 23, 1985

Dear Superintendent,

During the week of September 6, 1985, you should have received my letter concerning the need for your assistance with my doctoral dissertation research. The study deals with the formulation of guidelines for developing orientation programs for new school board members. I would greatly appreciate your allotting time at your October board meeting for completion of the enclosed questionnaires.

The packet includes copies of a questionnaire which is designed to determine the areas of school board service which are essential for a new school board member to know within the first six months of service on the board. At your October school board meeting, would you please ask each school board member to complete one of the questionnaires? I am enclosing a stamped, self-addressed manila envelope in which the completed questionnaires are to be returned. Please return the completed questionnaires at your earliest convenience.

The data which is received from you and your board members will be held in strict confidence. The codes on the questionnaires will be used only for follow-up mailing where necessary. A copy of the conclusions of this study will be sent to you when the study has been completed.

I sincerely trust that you and your school board members will participate in this study. Your time and consideration will be most greatly appreciated.

APPENDIX C

QUESTIONNAIRE PERTAINING TO THE ORIENTATION
OF NEW SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS

SECTION I: INFORMATION VITAL TO A NEW SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER

The purpose of this questionnaire is to determine those areas of knowledge related to school board service that should be included in an orientation program for new school board members. All of the items on the questionnaire are important aspects of school board service, but not all can be included in an orientation program. Therefore, please indicate which items are the most important during the first six months of service by checking "E" for essential. If you feel that the item is not essential during the first six months, check "N" for not essential.

E -- Essential within the first six months of service
N -- Not essential within the first six months of service

A. GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES

	E	N
1. A knowledge of the legal and ethical responsibilities of the school board is:	_____	_____
2. A knowledge of the procedures to be used in conducting school board meetings is:	_____	_____
3. An understanding of the school board's role in policy-making is:	_____	_____
4. An understanding of the school board's role in establishing administrative regulations is:	_____	_____
5. An understanding of the Freedom of Information Act, as it pertains to the conduct of Executive Sessions is:	_____	_____
6. An understanding of the work relationship between school board members is:	_____	_____
7. A description of the school division's administrative chain of command is:	_____	_____

8. An explanation of the judicial and legislative trends regarding sovereign immunity is: _____
 9. An explanation of the organization of the local school board--officers and committees is: _____
 10. An understanding of the process by which a school board makes decisions and solves problems is: _____
 11. An explanation of evaluation procedures for school board members is: _____
- B. ADMINISTRATION and STAFF:
1. A knowledge of the superintendent's responsibilities is: _____
 2. An understanding of how the school board and superintendent work together is: _____
 3. An explanation of the recruitment procedure for personnel is: _____
 4. A knowledge of the procedure for evaluating the superintendent is: _____
 5. A knowledge of the procedure for evaluating personnel is: _____
 6. An understanding of the grievance procedures for personnel is: _____
 7. A knowledge of the selection process for employment of the superintendent is: _____
 8. A knowledge of the procedure for dismissing personnel is: _____
 9. An explanation of the orientation program for new personnel is: _____
 10. An explanation of the staff development program for the school division is: _____

11. A knowledge of the current developments in the employment laws is: _____

C. SCHOOL CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION:

1. An explanation of the philosophy of the school division is: _____
2. A knowledge of the curriculum standards as required by federal and state regulations is: _____
3. An explanation of the results of the school division's standardized testing program is: _____
4. A knowledge of the school division's overall curriculum program is: _____
5. An explanation of the manner in which the elementary and secondary curricula are coordinated is: _____
6. A knowledge of the programs available for gifted, special education and handicapped students is: _____
7. An understanding of the school board's responsibility in curriculum development is: _____
8. An explanation of the textbook program as it relates to the rental program, textbook adoption and fee schedule is: _____

D. SCHOOL DISTRICT FACILITIES:

1. A knowledge of the student transportation system is: _____
2. A knowledge of the school division's building program and construction projects is: _____
3. A knowledge of the school division's maintenance program is: _____

E. SCHOOL FINANCE:

1. An understanding of how the state funds the local school program is: _____
2. A knowledge of the school division regarding tax structure, ability to pay taxes, populations, employment and average income is: _____
3. A knowledge of the federal aid that is used in the school division's educational program is: _____
4. An explanation of the projected student enrollment is: _____
5. A knowledge of how the local school budget is developed and approved is: _____
6. A knowledge of the process for purchasing supplies and equipment is: _____

F. SCHOOL COMMUNITY RELATIONS:

1. An explanation of the public relations efforts or programs in the school division is: _____
2. An understanding of the school division's policy on community involvement is: _____
3. An understanding of the process by which school board members handle complaints and pressure tactics is: _____
4. An understanding of the process by which school board members work with the media is: _____

G. SCHOOL LAW:

1. An explanation of how the school division cooperates with law enforcement officers and at the same time protects students' privacy is: _____
2. An explanation of the policy that describes the proper access to student _____

records, lockers and automobiles and the use of body searches is: _____

3. An explanation of the procedures for due process hearings for handicapped students is: _____

4. An explanation of the procedures to follow when disciplining the handicapped student is: _____

5. An understanding of the state and federal regulations relating to special education and handicapped students--Public Law 94-142 is: _____

6. An explanation of the school board's responsibility towards prayer, teaching of religion and creationism in the school is: _____

7. An explanation of the responsibility of the school board as it relates to liability/negligence is: _____

H. PRINTED MATERIALS:

1. A copy of the local policy manual is: _____

2. A copy of the minutes of the last year's school board meetings is: _____

3. A copy of the current school division's budget is: _____

4. A list of education agencies and organizations that provide services to local school divisions is: _____

5. A copy of the employee's salary schedules is: _____

6. A list of the available resources, such as workshops, books, conferences and agencies for school board members to learn about their responsibilities is: _____

7. The data concerning teacher-pupil ratio and median class size is: _____

8. A copy of the job descriptions of personnel is: _____
9. A listing of existing facilities with the number and grade level of students served is: _____
10. A copy of the personnel directory is: _____
11. A copy of the statistical data of the student population--elementary and secondary enrollment, average daily attendance, number of graduating students, number attending post high school education and drop-out rate is: _____
12. A copy of the data related to the school division--number of schools and their organization structure (pre-kindergarten-12) is: _____
13. A copy of the school division's latest short and long-range goals is: _____
14. A copy of the accreditation reports on the regional and state levels is: _____
15. A copy of the organizational structure of the educational program--student groupings, departmentalization and team teaching is: _____
16. A description of the present library and instructional materials center is: _____
17. A description of the size in square miles, the attendance zones and the attendance policies of the school division is: _____
18. A copy of the school division and individual building level statistical data on per pupil cost is: _____
19. A copy of the data on the existing bond indebtedness of the school division is: _____

Please list any additional items that a new school board member needs to know within the first six months of office.

- A. Imagine yourself as a newly appointed school board member. Would you be willing to devote extra time for an orientation program or would you rather acquire the information on your own? (CHECK ONE)

_____ Orientation Program

_____ On your own

If you chose an orientation program, how much time would you be willing to devote to the program? (CHECK ONE)

_____ Less than 2 hours

_____ One-half of a day (4 hours)

_____ One Day (8 hours)

_____ As much time as necessary

Would you be willing to attend state and regional conferences related to school board orientation? (CHECK ONE)

_____ I would attend these meetings if the expenses were reimbursed.

_____ I would attend thee meetings at my expense.

_____ I would not attend these meetings.

- B. Would your support developing a policy in your school division that would require orientation for new school board members? (CHECK ONE)

YES, I would support such a program.

NO, I would not support such a program.

Our division already has a written program.

- C. Who should be responsible for the cost of the orientation program? (CHECK ONE)

Individual Board Member

School Division

State

If answered school division, would you be willing to vote for funding the orientation program?

Yes

No

- D. Who should be held responsible for ensuring that new school board members have an orientation program? (CHECK ONE)

The Superintendent

The School Board Chairman

The More Experienced School Board Members

A Joint Responsibility Between the Superintendent and the School Board Chairman

The State School Boards Association

The State Department of Education

Other, Please Specify _____

SECTION III: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

- A. What is your position in the school division?

School Board Member

Superintendent

- B. How many years have you been serving as a school board member or superintendent? (INDICATE THE NUMBER OF YEARS)

_____ Years (If you are appointed in the current year, indicate by putting zero.)

- C. Have you attended any of the following conferences sponsored by the school boards association? (CHECK THOSE THAT APPLY)

_____ Regional Conferences Within the State

_____ State Conferences

_____ National Conventions

If yes, did you attend the conference specifically for the orientation of new school board members?

_____ Yes

_____ No

Thank you for participating.

APPENDIX D

September 23, 1985

Dear School Board Member,

I would like to seek your assistance with my research which I am conducting as a doctoral student at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. The purpose of my study is to formulate guidelines for developing an orientation program for new school board members.

Your assistance and cooperation are being sought in determining which items are necessary for a new school board member to know during the first six months of service on the school board. Identified items will be included in the guidelines for orientation of new school board members.

Please complete the questionnaire, keeping in mind the first six months of service. When you have completed the questionnaire, please return it to your superintendent in the envelope which is provided. He will return all of the completed questionnaires to me.

All information will be kept in strict confidence. The code on the questionnaire will be used only for follow-up mailing, if necessary. A copy of the conclusion of this study will be sent to your superintendent when the study has been completed.

Your time and consideration is greatly needed and will be most humbly appreciated.

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