

SCHOOL BOARD LEADERSHIP

by

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# Leadership of School Boards

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(Abstract)

Local school boards and their presidents provide Americans with the grass roots leadership for public education. Both have been ignored by policy makers and authors.

The purpose of the study was to solicit school board members', school board presidents', and past presidents' perceptions of the role as well as the real and ideal leadership attributes of their school board presidents.

A survey method was utilized to address the questions inherent in the purpose. The population for this study included the members of local public boards of education in the U.S. The sampling frame consisted of local school board members holding membership in the National School Boards Association. A random stratified sample was selected.

Descriptive procedures were used to summarize the data. Additionally, the relationships between school board presidents', past presidents', and board members perceptions and selected demographic variables (i.e. geographic region, gender, community type, school system enrollment, age,

number of terms served, education attainment, race, method president is chosen) was explored using cross-tabulation procedures. The response rate was about 27%.

School board members perceive their school board presidents to be most active in the board room. Ideally, school board members perceive an expanded role for their president that includes services to board members and superintendent relations. School board presidents perceive a greater role for the school board presidents than do school board members that includes the highly visible board room roles as well as board member services and superintendent relations activities. Past school board presidents' views differ widely from those of school board presidents and slightly from board members, and in most cases tend to give lower rating of the board president.

School board members, school board presidents, and past presidents perceive their school board presidents as displaying few of the leadership attributes of traditional leaders. They agree that ideally these leadership attributes are critical or important.

Differences concerning the board president's real and ideal role and real and ideal leadership attributes were found among board presidents by gender and school system enrollment; among past presidents by school system enrollment, and method president is chosen; and among school board members by geographic region, gender, age, school system enrollment, and

education attainment.

Results should assist school superintendents and professional educators, school board presidents, school board members, and the general citizenry as they work to clarify their respective roles.

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Dedication

To my wife, Leah

and

my son, David.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter		Page
1	INTRODUCTION	1
	Problem Statement	2
	Purpose of the Study	3
	Research Questions	3
	Definitions	4
	Significance	4
	Limitations of the Study	5
	Outline of the Study	5
2	REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE	7
	Introduction	7
	Role	8
	Leadership Attributes	14
3	METHOD	21
	Population and Sample	21
	Instrumentation	24
	Instrument Distribution	25
	Scoring	26
	Analysis	27
4	FINDINGS	31
	Description of the Sample	31
	Descriptions of the Respondents	33
	Findings for Research Questions	37
	Research Question 1a	38
	Research Question 1b	42
	Research Question 1c	46
	Research Question 2a	50
	Research Question 2b	52
	Research Question 2c	56
	Research Question 3	59
	Presidents by Gender	59
	Presidents by Enrollment	65
	Past Presidents by Enrollment	68

	Past Presidents by Method	
	President is Chosen	73
	Board Members by Region	78
	Board Members by Gender	82
	Board Members by Age	85
	Board Members by Enrollment	89
	Board Members by Education	94
	Respondents by	
	Presidential Experience	98
	Summary	98
5	SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS	100
	Summary	100
	Findings	101
	Conclusions	108
	Recommendations for Further Study	109
	REFERENCES	111
	APPENDIX A	114
	APPENDIX B	119
	APPENDIX C	121
	APPENDIX D	123
	VITA	125

## LIST OF TABLES

Table	Title	Page
3.1	Geographic Regions According to NSBA	22
4.0.1	Distribution of Returned Surveys by Region	32
4.0.2	Personal Characteristics of Respondents	34
4.1.1	School Board Members' Responses to Role Items	39
4.1.2	School Board Presidents' Responses to Role Items	43
4.1.3	Past School Board Presidents' Responses to Role Items	47
4.2.1	School Board Members' Responses to Leadership Attributes Items	50
4.2.2	School Board Presidents' Responses to Leadership Attributes Items	54
4.2.3	Past School Board Presidents' Responses to Leadership Attributes Items	57
4.3.1	Always or Nearly Always Responses of Presidents to Roles and Leadership Attributes by Gender	61
4.3.2	Always or Nearly Always Responses of Presidents to Roles and Leadership Attributes by School System Enrollment	67
4.3.3	Always or Nearly Always Responses of Past Presidents to Roles and Leadership Attributes by School System Enrollment	70

4.3.4	Always or Nearly Always Responses of Past Presidents to Roles and Leadership Attributes by Method President is Chosen	76
4.3.5	Always or Nearly Always Responses of Board Members to Roles and Leadership Attributes by Geographic Region	80
4.3.6	Always or Nearly Always Responses of Board Members to Roles and Leadership Attributes by Gender	83
4.3.7	Always or Nearly Always Responses of Board Members to Roles and Leadership Attributes by Age	86
4.3.8	Always or Nearly Always Responses of Board Members to Roles and Leadership Attributes by School System Enrollment	91
4.3.9	Always or Nearly Always Responses of Board Members to Roles and Leadership Attributes by Education Attainment	95
5.1	Summary of Crucial and Important Roles	102
	Summary of Crucial and Important Leadership Attributes	103

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

Local school boards, and school board presidents, which provide Americans with the grass roots leadership for public education have been ignored by both policymakers and the authors of independent studies in the unprecedented public discussion, debate, and action around public education in the past five years (Institute for Educational Leadership, 1986). Now, more than ever, the need for strong leadership is vital to a school system's success, and much of that leadership role is best provided by the school board president (Lewis, 1989). It is the role of the school board president to establish a tone of cooperative leadership to a group of individuals who bring all sorts of expectations and agendas to school board service (Ficklen, 1985).

The Institute for Educational Leadership (1986), in a study involving 500 school board presidents, and 620 school districts, gathered and analyzed information on the structure and role of school boards. They found the board president to be critical in determining whether a board is effective or ineffective. A good president is fair, allows all viewpoints to be heard, and prevents individuals from monopolizing meetings. The study produced little evidence of dominating, autocratic styles among presidents: the role has evolved into facilitating the work of the board and building consensus. Respondents

generally agreed that the board president plays a role as a sounding board or lightning rod for the superintendent in anticipating board members' attitudes, reactions and probable actions in regard to superintendent and staff initiatives.

Feistritzer (1989), in survey of 2197 school board presidents, asked for simple demographic information (age, gender, race, degree held, income earned), respondents' attitudes about what school boards can and should do, and school board presidents' thoughts about education reform. Of all the board presidents surveyed, 99 percent said their superintendents influence their decision making, and 81 percent said their superintendents have great influence on their decisions. Also, the longer school board presidents serve on the board, the more comfortable they appear to be with the status quo; as board presidents become more experienced, their support for reform measures wanes.

### Problem Statement

The role of school boards and school board presidents is not well known (Institute for Educational Leadership, 1986). What has been written about the school board presidency has consisted of articles describing the experiences and perceptions of superintendents, school board members, and school board presidents. Much research has been done concerning school board presidents' perceptions of the role of the superintendent, the role of the school board, and attitudes concerning educational problems. There has been little

research specifically on the role or leadership attributes of the school board president. Clearly, the general citizenry is not informed about the role and function of school boards, and ironically, detailed knowledge of what boards do is missing as well among professional educators, especially teachers (Institute for educational Leadership, 1986).

### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to establish the real and ideal role and leadership attributes as perceived by school board presidents, past presidents and by school board members, and to investigate the relationships between respondents' views and selected demographic variables.

### Research Questions

This study addressed the following questions:

- 1a. What is the real and ideal role of the school board president as perceived by school board members?
- 1b. What is the real and ideal role of the school board president as perceived by school board presidents?
- 1c. What is the real and ideal role of the school board president as perceived by past school board presidents?
- 2a. What are the real and ideal leadership attributes of the school board president as perceived by school board members?
- 2b. What are the real and ideal leadership attributes of the school

board president as perceived by school board presidents?

2c. What are the real and ideal leadership attributes of the school board president as perceived by past school board presidents?

3. How are the role and leadership attributes of the school board president as perceived by school board presidents, by past presidents and by school board members related to selected variables?

### Definitions

The following terms used in this study have certain restrictions placed on their usage:

Role. The term role, as used in this study, identifies a behavior or organized set of behaviors belonging to identifiable offices or positions or the individuals occupying those positions. This includes any specific tasks that may elsewhere be referred to as functions.

Leadership attribute. The term leadership attribute, as used in this study, refers to any trait, interest, attitude, ability, or skill characteristic of leaders of organizations or groups.

### Significance

This study establishes the foundations from which more systematic research can be developed as well as adds to the body of knowledge concerned with school governance. The results of this study might prove useful to school board presidents who seek to compare themselves and their positions

to their colleagues across the nation. Additionally, the results of this study might benefit school board presidents, school board members, superintendents, professional educators, and the general citizenry as they work to further define their respective roles.

### Limitations of the Study

The limitations of the study were:

1. The population for this study was composed of members of local public school boards whose members subscribe to the American School Board Journal.
2. The responses to the instrument were assumed to be the true perceptions of the respondents based on personal observation, experience, or preference.
3. No attempt at a second mailing or telephone follow-up was made in response to the American School Board Journal requirement of anonymity in studies involving its subscribers.

### Outline of the Study

This study is divided into five chapters. The first chapter includes the introduction, problem statement, purpose of the study, research questions, significance and limitations of the study. The second chapter presents a review of the literature pertaining to the role of the school board president and school board president's leadership attributes. The third chapter describes the

procedures used in devising the data collection instrument, the administration of the survey instrument, a description of the population and sample, and the methods used to organize and analyze the data. The fourth chapter describes the data and the findings of the survey. The fifth chapter includes the summary, conclusions, and recommendations.

## CHAPTER TWO

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

#### Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a review of the literature relevant to the study of the role and leadership attributes of the school board president.

Most of the literature pertaining to the role and leadership attributes of the school board president is found in articles by presidents, past presidents, school board members, or superintendents accounting individual perceptions and experiences involving the school board presidency. Some manuals from NSBA and state school board associations are available which describe the role of the school board presidency. The Institute for Educational Leadership (1986) did include in their study, perceptions of school board presidents, school board members, and citizens about the efficient and effective functioning of school boards in general, and uncovered some of the roles of the school board president. Feistritzer surveyed school board presidents in 1989, and determined who these individuals are and what they think about a wide variety of issues concerning education in America.

## Role

The school board president, in conjunction with the superintendent and other administrative staff, has the role of preparing the school board meeting agenda (National School Boards Association, 1970; Pennsylvania School Boards Association, Inc., 1972; Foldesy, 1983; MacDonald, 1983; Ficklen, 1985; Thomas, 1985; Institute for Educational Leadership, 1986; Gardner, 1988; Billings, 1989; Lewis, 1989; Herman, 1990). The agenda for board meetings should be prepared and distributed to school board members far enough in advance of the meeting to allow school board members time to review its items. Along with the school board meeting agenda should be included information pertinent to each item as well as the recommendations of the administrative staff. These facilitate examination of issues and formulation of opinions prior to the meetings in order for the board to make informed decisions concerning agenda items (National School Boards Association, 1970; Foldesy, 1983; Ficklen, 1985; Herman, 1990). Any board member or administrator who wishes to place business on the meeting agenda should inform the board president by a deadline set several working days before the scheduled board meeting; last-minute additions can be allowed under special circumstances (Herman, 1990).

Never is leadership more important than when the school board

president actually steps into the boardroom (Herman, 1990). The president presides at all meetings of the board and decides questions of order (National School Boards Association, 1970). As the individual responsible to orchestrate the corporate body, the president needs to maintain firm control over running the board meeting (National School Boards Association, 1970; Ficklen, 1985; Heller and Katz, 1985; Herman, 1990), preserve order, keep board meetings focused and productive, keep discussions to the subject at hand, bring to order members of the board and the audience who interrupt the speaker who has the floor, and to endeavor to conduct all business before the board with propriety and dispatch (National School Boards Association, 1970; Pennsylvania State School Boards Association, 1972; Ficklen, 1985; Thomas, 1985; Lewis, 1989). Ficklen (1985) stresses consistency; it is important that everyone knows what to expect from the board president at least in terms of how meetings will be run and how school business will be conducted. MacDonald (1983), Munnely (1983), Ficklen (1985), and Herman (1990) call for the school board president to encourage the board to adopt as a matter of board policy a set of rules under which board meetings will be conducted.

The school board is a lightning rod for controversy. Conflict and controversy are inevitable and the president must be prepared for them. When the board must deal with such difficult and divisive issues as school closings, labor contracts, employee grievances, and students or staff members who have

tested positive for the AIDS virus, sound board procedures will enable the president to handle those tense board meetings and public hearings when angry citizens descend (Billings, 1989). The board president must deal diplomatically with a variety of malcontents; it is the board president who most often is called on to referee board members' disputes and serve as a peacekeeper during meetings (Ficklen, 1985). Board members as well as community members look to the president to manage board mavericks and to prevent the three ring circus perception on the part of staff and community (Institute for Educational Leadership, 1986). Its the power of the chair that keeps meetings from degenerating into a circus when touchy topics are on the agenda (Ficklen, 1985).

A good board president is fair and gives all persons involved a chance to be heard (National School Boards Association, 1970; Institute for Educational Leadership, 1986; Lewis, 1989). A strong president does not allow one viewpoint to predominate, but seeks out the opinions of each board member during discussion, and prevents any individual on the board or in the audience from hogging the show (Heller and Katz, 1985; Institute for Educational Leadership, 1986). Everyone with a legitimate point of view ought to be allowed his fair share of time to present information on a touchy topic (Ficklen, 1985). Effective board presidents seek opinions and attempt to draw all board members into discussion related to important policy or operational issues to

insure that the issues are well reviewed (Herman, 1990).

Historically, school boards had complete control over the management of local schools (Institute for Educational Leadership, 1986; Lewis, 1989).

Although board members are no longer all-powerful, the need for strong leadership provided by the board president remains vital to a school system's success (Lewis, 1989). The board leadership has evolved into facilitating the work of the board and building consensus (Institute for Educational Leadership, 1986). In consensus building, the board president must clarify each agenda item for the benefit of the board, media, staff, and general public. The president also summarizes arguments and clarifies positions before bringing matters to a vote (National School Boards Association, 1970).

Gardner (1988) contends that among the tasks of leadership are serving as a symbol of the system management and representing the group. The board president sets the tone and shapes the public's perception of the school board; the president should be articulate on school matters, especially when it comes to speaking with members of the press (Ficklen, 1985). Generally, the school board president is the spokesperson for the board with the media (National School Boards Association, 1970; Ficklen, 1985; Heller and Katz, 1985; Institute for Educational Leadership, 1986; Herman, 1990).

School board presidents should be prepared and willing to devote a sufficiently large amount of time to the study of the problems of education in

their own district, as well as the state and nation at large, and to be able to interpret them to the electorate of the district (National School Boards Association, 1970). School board members as well as board presidents need to keep up to date through workshops, meetings, conventions, and journals (Ficklen, 1985). The school board president usually assumes responsibility for planning for the in-service training for board members (Heller and Katz, 1985).

School board presidents have the responsibility to call special meetings of the board as they are necessary (National School Boards Association, 1970). It is also the duty of the president to appoint all committees of the board except when instructed by the board to do otherwise (National School Boards Association, 1970; Pennsylvania School Boards Association, 1972). The school board president also assigns appropriate board members or staff members, usually through the superintendent, to assemble reports that may be required by the school board (Herman, 1990).

Feistritzer (1989) found that 99 percent of board presidents surveyed said that their superintendents influence their decision making, and 81 percent said that their superintendents have great influence on their decisions. This study points to the cohesive nature of the roles played by the superintendent and the school board president. There is a general acquiescence among board presidents that the president plays a critical role as a sounding board or lightning rod for the superintendent in anticipating board members' attitudes,

reactions, and probable actions in regard to superintendent and staff initiatives (Institute for Educational Leadership, 1986). The school board president and the superintendent meet prior to school board meetings to discuss and clarify agenda items, plan for the supplemental materials needs of board members, and discuss probable sources of conflict between board members and between the superintendent and board members (National School Boards Association, 1970; Ficklen, 1985; Heller and Katz, 1985; Lardner, 1985; Lewis, 1989).

The board president sets the tone for the board/staff relationship (Lewis, 1989). The board president must work well with the superintendent (Heller and Katz, 1985; Lardner, 1985), and work to keep communications open between the board and the superintendent (Heller and Katz, 1985). Part of the school board president's role in establishing a proper board/superintendent relationship is fostering a sense of integrity where the board and superintendent can be trusted to be forthright and honest with each other (Ficklen, 1985).

There is definitely a teaching role on the part of the board president, especially when new members come to the board (Ficklen, 1985). Leaders teach; teaching and leading are distinguishable occupations, but every great leader is clearly teaching, and every great teacher is leading (Gardner, 1988). The superintendent and the board president must educate and discipline board members and staff to the organizational policies (Institute for Educational Leadership, 1986). The board president must understand the

board/superintendent relationship (Heller and Katz, 1985; Ficklen, 1985; Institute for Educational Leadership, 1985). Hale (1988) found that school board members' perceptions of their role, their superintendents' role, and the role of their school board presidents contributed to the working relationship between school boards and superintendents. The fine line between what is policy and what is administration makes it essential that the board president be able to clarify such situations for the board at large (Ficklen, 1985).

Leaders do not normally create motivation out of thin air. They unlock or channel existing motives; they create a climate in which there is pride in making significant contributions to shared goals (Gardner, 1988). Foldesy (1983) said that among the roles of the school board president is that of motivator of the board members. Board presidents can do a great deal to help keep board members' enthusiasm high by eliminating unnecessary meetings, delegating tasks to administrators, providing agendas well in advance, and making sound recommendations based on board policy; it takes thoughtfulness and foresight, but it is possible to help board members remain dedicated, hard-working, and enthusiastic (Foldesy, 1983).

#### Leadership Attributes

Despite long argument and some evidence to the contrary, the consistency with which some traits have been linked to leaders and leadership situations, along with the magnitude of their correlations in studies, indicates

that certain traits are associated with leaders in leadership situations. The traits of intelligence, dominance, self-confidence, and high energy/activity level are most often mentioned and are commonly agreed on across reviewers (Immegart, 1988).

Stogdill (1948) published a study in which he reviewed 124 studies of psychological traits as they related to leaders. The research question under investigation was: What are the discrete psychological traits that can be said to distinguish leaders from followers? He identified the clusters of traits as:

1. Capacity (intelligence, alertness, verbal facility, originality, judgment)
2. Achievement (scholarship, knowledge, athletic accomplishments)
3. Responsibility (dependability, initiative, persistence, aggressiveness, self-confidence, desire to excel)
4. Participation ( activity, sociability, cooperation, adaptability, humor)
5. Status (socio-economic position, popularity)
6. Situation (mental level status, skills, needs and interests of followers, objectives to be achieved).

John W. Gardner, U.S. Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare from 1965 to 1968 has written extensively about leadership for 27 years. He (1988) has produced the following list of leadership attributes:

1. Physical vitality and stamina.

2. Intelligence and judgment in action.
3. Willingness (eagerness) to accept responsibility.
4. Task competence.
5. Understanding of followers/constituents and their needs.
6. Skill in dealing with people.
7. Need to achieve.
8. Capacity to motivate others.
9. Courage, resolution, steadiness.
10. Capacity to win and hold trust.
11. Capacity to manage, decide, set priorities.
12. Confidence.
13. Ascendencies, dominance, assertiveness.
14. Adaptability, flexibility of approach.

Georgiades (1986) listed Chester I. Barnard's five basic leadership qualities as important elements of school board membership: vitality and endurance, calculated decisiveness, persuasiveness, responsibility, and intelligence. Leaders must handle both tasks and relationships efficiently, and have a genuine concern and commitment to education (Georgiades, 1986). The National School Boards Association (1970) stated that the board president should have personal integrity, intelligence, and appreciation of the values of

good education; should be successful citizens willing and capable of assuming responsibility; should have ability to work with others; should have the courage of their convictions; should always vote their beliefs; and should be a champion of the public schools. Ficklen (1985) said that good board presidents are flexible and open to suggestions. Good board presidents manage to pay attention to details while pulling back and gaining a wider view of the school system, its policies, and its operating dynamics (Ficklen, 1985). Herman (1990) also indicated the flexibility of exemplary school board presidents who are constantly seeking options. Lewis (1989) stated that school board presidents must know their colleagues as individuals. Thomas (1985) said the school board president must communicate forcefully and clearly and be results oriented.

Attempts to determine the components of leader effectiveness have shifted from the study of leadership traits to a focus on leadership skills (Portnoy, 1986). Portnoy (1986) claims the effective leader has developed the knowledge, skills and temperament for working with people. The actual traits of the leader's personality appear to be less important than the ways the leader actually treats the people who follow. The knowledge includes an understanding of factors that determine the hows and whys of typical human behavior in any number of situations; the skills involve knowing how to redirect

human behavior from impulsive and self-serving actions into productive channels that can benefit both the worker as well as the organization; the temperament houses the capacity to base actions on forethought, purpose, and direction (Portnoy, 1986).

Gardner and Hatch (1989) describe the capacities to discern and respond appropriately to the moods, temperaments, motivations, and desires of other people as interpersonal intelligence which can be considered as a personality trait.

The National Association of Secondary School Principals (1986) established twelve generic skills that can be assessed and that are necessary to successful leadership in education:

1. Problem analysis: Ability to seek out relevant data and analyze complex information to determine the important elements of a problem situation; searching for information with a purpose.
2. Judgment: Ability to reach logical conclusions and make high quality decisions based on available information; skill in identifying educational needs and setting priorities; ability to evaluate critically written communications.
3. Organizational ability: Ability to plan, schedule, and control the work of others; skill in using resources in an optimal fashion; ability to deal with a volume of paperwork and heavy demands on one's time.

4. **Decisiveness:** Ability to recognize when a decision is required (disregarding the quality of the decision) and to act quickly.
5. **Leadership:** Ability to get others involved in solving problems; ability to recognize when a group requires direction, to interact with a group effectively and to guide them to the accomplishment of a task.
6. **Sensitivity:** Ability to perceive the needs, concerns, and personal problems of others; skill in resolving conflicts; tact in dealing with persons from different backgrounds; ability to deal effectively with people concerning emotional issues; knowing what information to communicate and to whom.
7. **Stress tolerance:** Ability to perform under pressure and during opposition; ability to think on one's feet.
8. **Ability to make a clear oral presentation of facts or ideas.**
9. **Written communication:** Ability to express ideas clearly in writing; to write appropriately for different audiences - students, teachers, parents, et al.
10. **Range of interest:** Competence to discuss a variety of subjects - educational, political, current events, economic, etc.; desire to actively participate in events.
11. **Personal motivation:** Need to achieve in all activities attempted; evidence that work is important to personal satisfaction; ability to be self-policing.
12. **Educational values:** Possession of a well-reasoned educational

philosophy; receptiveness to new ideas and change.

This chapter presented a review of the literature pertaining to the role and leadership attributes of school board presidents. Literature concerned with the role and leadership attributes of school board presidents is not abundant, but some consideration has been given by authors to what school board presidents do and what types of leaders they are.

## CHAPTER THREE

### METHOD

The purpose of this study was to determine the real and ideal role, and the real and ideal leadership attributes of school board presidents as perceived by school board presidents, by past presidents and by school board members. A secondary purpose was to determine if perceptions concerning the president's role and leadership attributes are related to selected variables. This chapter includes descriptions of the research method, population and sample characteristics, research design, measurement and method of analysis.

#### Population and Sample

A survey research method was used. The target population was school board members who subscribe to the American School Board Journal. The subscription list of 24,205 school board members (superintendents, education professors, librarians, etc. were deleted) provided by the National School Boards Association was used as a sampling frame. A 20% random sample stratified by national geographic region consisted of 4,841 local school board member subscribers to the American School Board Journal who were selected to be mailed a survey (See table 3.1).

Table 3.1

National School Board Association Membership By Region

Region	Membership	States	
Northeast	5515	Connecticut Delaware District of Columbia Maine Maryland Massachusetts New Hampshire	New Jersey New York Pennsylvania Rhode Island Vermont Virgin Islands
Central	8135	Illinois Indiana Iowa Kentucky Michigan	Minnesota Missouri Ohio Wisconsin
Southern	4230	Alabama Arkansas Florida Georgia Louisiana Mississippi North Carolina South Carolina	Tennessee Texas Virginia West Virginia
Western	3190	Colorado Kansas Montana Nebraska New Mexico	North Dakota Oklahoma South Dakota Wyoming
Pacific	3135	Alaska Arizona California Hawaii Idaho	Nevada Oregon Utah Washington

The nature of the target population is not unknown. Freeman, Underwood, and Fortune (1991) described the typical school board member as follows: He is male, between 41 and 50 years of age, is married, has one or more children attending public school. He is professionally employed with a family income of \$40,000 to \$49,000, and owns his own home in a suburban setting. He has been elected to a seven member board which governs a school system having an enrollment of 1,000 to 4,999 students. Some variation is noted across geographic regions, but nationally the population as reported in the annual American School Board Journal-Virginia Tech Surveys has changed little over the past 15 years excepting for a rise in income and the inclusion of slightly more women and minorities.

School board presidents have considerable board experience and knowledge of their communities. Seventy-eight percent have served on their boards four or more years, 78 percent have college or postgraduate degrees, 79 percent are over 40 years old, and 93 percent have lived in their communities 10 or more years (Institute for Educational Leadership, 1986). Demographically, school board presidents generally look like their cohort board members (Feistritzer, 1989). They are overwhelmingly white (97%), male (71%), in their late forties, married, and have children still at home; they have more education, make more money, and politically, are more conservative than the average American (Feistritzer, 1989).

### Instrumentation

The survey instrument (Appendix 1) contained three sections:

1. Demographic and personal information,
2. Role of the board president, and
3. Leadership attributes of the school board president.

The demographic portion of the questionnaire consisted of multiple choice questions soliciting information about communities, school systems, school boards, school board members, and school board presidents. This instrument, with little modification, has been used by NSBA in their national school board surveys for the last 15 years. Also in this section, school board members were asked to indicate if they currently hold the position of school board president, if they are a past president, or if they had ever been school board president.

The second portion of the questionnaire consisted of a list of possible roles of the school board president as reported in the literature. Items included in this section of the instrument were selected on the basis of their inclusion in the principal materials in the literature review (chapter 2) as well as one or more of the peripheral articles. The Matrix of Role Literature (Appendix 2) summarizes this information.

For each item respondents were asked to rank, on a five point scale (1 = never, 5 = always), the degree to which the president of their board should

engage in this activity (ideal) and the degree to which their board president does engage in the activity (real).

The leadership attributes section of the questionnaire solicited similar responses to a list of school board presidents' leadership attributes. Extensive literature searches uncovered no research pertaining specifically to the leadership attributes of school board presidents. Research pertaining to general leadership attributes was consulted as well as research relating to leadership attributes of leaders in education (principals, superintendents, and school board members). The attributes found in this literature appear to be applicable to the school board presidency according to the individual experiences and perceptions of those who have recently written about it (Ficklen, 1985; Herman, 1990; Lewis, 1989; and Thomas, 1985). Items identified in the Matrix of Leadership Attributes Literature (Appendix 3) were included in the instrument.

The instrument was reviewed by the dissertation committee and by the editorial staff of the American School Board Journal.

#### Instrument Distribution

The questionnaires were mailed with a cover letter and a self addressed, stamped envelope (Appendix 1). Responses were returned by mail to NSBA. No attempt at a second mailing or telephone follow-up was made in accordance with the American School Board Journal requirement of anonymity in studies

involving its subscribers.

The questionnaires were posted on or about March 7, 1991. Most were returned by the first of May, and, as in past years, a smaller number (130) were received as late as May 15 allowing wave analysis to examine the possibility of non-response bias. Differences between non-respondents views and second wave (late responses) were expected to parallel the differences between second wave (late responses) and first wave (timely responses.) First wave (timely responses) were compared to second wave (late responses) utilizing cross-tabulation procedures for all items on the questionnaire. Differences of 10% between waves were noted. No systematic differences were found in that comparison.

### Scoring

This study, in seeking to describe the perceived role of the school board president, sought to identify items central to understanding the role of the school board president.

Thus, a response to an item of 1 or 2 (1 = never) indicates a perception that the school board president does not engage or rarely engages in that activity; a response of 3 indicates the view that the activity is engaged in as often as is not. Respondents' choice of a 4 or 5 (5 = always) indicates that their school board president nearly always or always engages or should engage in the specified activities. Similar scoring of the school board presidents real and

ideal leadership attributes items was utilized where a response of 4 or 5 assigned to an item was taken to indicate that the school board president always or nearly displayed or should display that attribute.

### Analysis

The survey responses were entered into a data file for analysis by SPSS-X software. Responses were separated into three groups: (1)those who were school board presidents; (2)those who had, in the past, served as school board presidents; and (3)those who had never held the school board presidency. Percentages of responses were compiled for each demographic variable for presidents, past presidents, and school board members without presidential experience in order to describe each set of respondents.

Responses to the school board president's real and ideal role and real and ideal leadership attributes items as perceived by school board presidents, past presidents, and school board members were analyzed using percentages. Never and nearly never (1 and 2) and always and nearly always (4 and 5) responses were combined. This kind of grouping of the extreme values in five point scales is consistent with examples noted by Babbie (1983).

Items where 95% of school board presidents and past presidents responded that the president of their school board always or nearly always engaged in or should engage in an activity were considered as **crucial** to the understanding the real or ideal role of the school board president. Two thirds,

or 67%, of responding school board presidents and past presidents responding that the president of their school board always or nearly always engaged or should engage in an activity resulted in classification of the activity as **important** to the understanding of the school board president. Agreement of 95% and 67% of responding school board presidents that their school board president always or nearly always displays or should display a leadership attribute defined those items that were considered crucial and important to the real and ideal leadership attributes of the school board president. Similar analysis was utilized to define the items considered to be crucial and important to the real and ideal role and leadership attributes of the school board president as perceived by past school board presidents and by school board members.

There is evidence to suspect that men and women who occupy the school board presidency perceive their role and leadership attributes differently (Marshall and Heller, 1983), and that district size has an effect on school board presidents' perceptions of the presidency (I.E.L., 1986; Feistritz, 1989). With an understanding of the crucial and important aspects of the real and ideal role and leadership attributes of the school board president as perceived by presidents, past presidents, and members of the school board, variables which might influence these perceptions were also explored. Cross-tabulation procedures with the calculation of Chi-square and the level of significance were utilized to determine the relationship between school board members', school

board presidents', and past presidents' perceptions concerning the role and leadership attributes of their school board president and selected demographic variables. For each variable explored, 94 cross-tabulations were needed: four or five of those could be expected to yield a Chi-square statistic which was significant at the .05 level by chance. More than five significant Chi-squares out of the 94 cross-tabulations in a consistent pattern indicated a relationship between perceptions of the board president's real and ideal role and leadership attributes and that variable. Perceptions of presidents, past presidents and school board members were examined using cross-tabulations of responses with geographic region, school system enrollment, community type, gender, race, age, education attainment, number of terms served on the board, whether the board is elected or appointed, and method the board president was chosen.

For the cross-tabulation procedures, responses of always or nearly always (4 and 5) to role and leadership attributes items were combined and compared against never, nearly never, and neutral responses (1, 2, and 3). As Fowler (1988) suggests, this does more than convert the five point scale to a two point scale. It has the effect of changing a neutral or possibly favorable response of 3 to an unfavorable one. The question has been changed to "which of the following does your school board president always or nearly always do?" with a greater probability of an unfavorable response than a favorable one. Babbie (1983) cites examples of recoding schemes for cross-

tabulations where neutral responses were either excluded or lumped with unfavorable responses. This was also consistent with the previous definitions of critical and important, and was necessary to complete the analysis.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### FINDINGS

The purpose of this chapter is to present and analyze the data collected through the survey instrument entitled, "The 1991 National Survey of School Board Members." Chapter Four is divided into three sections. The first section describes the demographic characteristics of the respondents participating in the survey. The second section presents the findings for each research question. The third section presents a summary of the chapter.

#### Description of the Sample

The sample for this study consisted of 4,841 local school board member subscribers to the American School Board Journal who were selected at random to be mailed a survey. After eight weeks, 1,306, or nearly 27%, of the surveys were returned. Most of the questionnaires were returned before May 1, 1991; 130 were returned between May 1 and May 15. In an effort to test for non-response bias, responses to the first wave of 1176 instruments were compared to the second wave of 130 questionnaires utilizing cross-tabulation procedures. No meaningful differences were found. Reported in table 4.0.1 is the distribution of survey returns by geographic region.

Table 4.0.1

Distribution of Returned Surveys by Region

Region	Surveys			
	<u>Mailed</u>	<u>Returned</u>		<u>Total</u>
	No.	No.	%	%
Northeast	1103	285	25.8	21.8
Central	1627	476	29.3	36.9
Southern	846	198	23.4	15.3
Western	638	167	26.2	12.9
Pacific	627	164	26.2	12.7
Unidentified		16		1.2
Total	4841	1306		27.0

### Description of the Respondents

The percentage of responses by gender, ethnic designation, age, occupation, level of educational attainment, marital status, home ownership, number of terms served, method of board selection, and presidential experience are reported in table 4.0.2. Respondents to the 1991 National Survey of School Board Members tended to be male (62.4%), white (91.9%) between the ages of 41 and 60 (64.4%), of professional/managerial occupations (53.9%), held four-year or advanced college degrees (71%), were married (91.7%), owned their home (96.6%), had served one term or less (50.9%), had been elected to office (95.4%), and had never served in the capacity of school board president (60%).

School board presidents, past presidents, and school board members are subsets of these respondents. Their personal data are also summarized in tables 4.0.2. School board presidents who responded to this survey tended to be male (64.8%), white (90.6%), and between the ages of 41 and 60 (69.6%). They had professional/managerial occupations (56.2%), and 72.6% had four-year or advanced college degrees. Responding school board presidents were married (93.3%), owned their own home (98.5%), had served on the board for two terms or more (69.3%), and had been elected by the school board to be president (92.9%). School board presidents comprised 20.5% of the respondents to the 1991 National Survey of School Board Members.

Table 4.0.2

Personal Characteristics of Respondents

Characteristic	% Presidents N = 267	% Past Presidents N = 249	% Board Members N = 784	% Total N=1306
1. Gender				
Male	64.8	57.8	63.0	62.4
Female	35.2	41.8	36.5	37.1
No response	0	0.4	0.5	0.5
2. Ethnic Designation				
Black	3.7	4.4	4.7	4.5
White	90.6	92.8	92.1	91.9
Hispanic	3.0	1.6	1.4	1.8
American Indian	2.2	0.8	0.9	1.1
Oriental	0	0	0.1	0.1
Other	0	0	0.3	0.2
No response	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.5
3. Age				
25 or less	0.4	0	0.5	0.4
26 -35	5.6	1.6	6.9	5.6
36 - 40	11.6	5.6	20.4	15.8
41 - 50	46.8	43.0	45.9	45.6
51 - 60	22.8	29.7	14.0	18.8
Over 60	12.7	19.7	11.6	13.3
No response	0	0.4	0.6	0.5
4. Occupation				
Prof./mang.	56.2	56.2	52.3	53.9
Business owner	13.9	10.0	10.5	11.0
Clerical	1.1	4.0	3.3	3.0
Sales	2.6	2.4	2.6	2.5
Skilled trades	1.9	2.0	4.1	3.2
Laborer	0.7	0.4	1.3	1.0
Retired	11.6	13.3	11.6	11.9
Homemaker	6.7	8.4	9.2	8.5
Other	5.2	2.8	5.0	4.7
No response	0	0.4	0.3	0.3

Table 4.0.2 (Cont.)

Personal Characteristics of Respondents

Characteristic	% Presidents N = 267	% Past Presidents N = 249	% Board Members N = 784	% Total N=1306
5. Education Attainment				
Less than high sch.	0	0.4	0.9	0.6
High school	8.2	8.4	7.5	7.9
Post high school	19.1	19.7	20.8	20.1
Four-yr. degree	41.2	31.3	31.6	33.4
Advanced degree	31.1	39.8	38.9	37.6
No response	0.5	0.4	0.3	0.4
6. Married				
Yes	93.3	92.0	91.2	91.7
No	6.7	7.6	8.4	7.9
No response	0	0.4	0.4	0.4
7. Home				
Own	98.5	97.2	95.9	96.6
Rent	1.5	1.6	3.7	2.8
No response	0	1.2	0.4	0.5
8. Terms served				
Less than one	15.0	2.4	49.9	33.5
One term	15.7	12.0	19.0	16.9
Two terms	30.7	34.1	19.5	24.6
Three terms	15.4	20.5	6.6	11.1
More than three	23.2	30.1	4.1	12.9
No response	0	0.8	0.9	0.9
9. Board selection				
Elected	97.0	96.8	94.8	95.4
Appointed	2.6	2.8	4.6	3.8
Mixed	0.4	0	0.1	0.2
No response	0	0.4	0.5	0.6

Table 4.0.2 (Cont.)

Personal Characteristics of Respondents

Characteristic	% Presidents N = 267	% Past Presidents N = 249	% Board Members N = 784	% Total N=1306
10. President chosen				
Elected by voters	1.1	2.4	2.3	2.1
Popular vote leader	0	0	0.1	0.1
Elected by board	92.9	81.9	93.6	91.0
Board tenure	0	0.4	0.8	0.5
Board takes turns	6.0	15.3	2.9	6.0
No response	0	0	0.3	0.4
11. Presidential experience				
Board president	100			20.4
Past president		100		19.1
Board member			100	60.0
No response				0.5

Past school board presidents who responded to this survey tended to be male (58.1%), white (93.1%), and between the ages of 41 and 60 (72.9%). They had professional/managerial occupations (56.5%), and 71.4% had four-year or advanced college degrees. Responding past school board presidents were married (92.3%), owned their own home (98.4%), had served on the board for two terms or more (85.4%), and served on school boards where the president has been elected by the school board (81.9%). Past school board presidents comprised 19.2% of the respondents to the 1991 National Survey of School Board Members.

#### Findings for Research Questions

Responses to the school board president's real and ideal role and real and ideal leadership attributes items as perceived by school board presidents and past presidents and by school board members were analyzed using percentages. Never and nearly never response options (1 and 2) and always and nearly always response options (4 and 5) were combined.

Items where 95% of school board presidents responded that the president of the school board always or nearly always engages or should engage in that activity were considered as **crucial** to the understanding the real or ideal role of the school board president. Two thirds, or 67%, of responding school board presidents responding that the school board president always or nearly always engages or should engage in that activity identified

**important** real or ideal role items of the school board president. Similar analysis was utilized to define the items considered to be **crucial** and **important** leadership attributes of the school board president as perceived by school board presidents.

The responses of past school board presidents and school board members were analyzed to determine the real and ideal role and leadership attributes perceived by them to be crucial and important to understanding the school board presidency.

**Research Question 1a: What is the real and ideal role of the school board president as perceived by school board members?**

Reported in table 4.1.1 are school board members' responses to the real and ideal role of the school board president. Only one of the 22 items, "presides over the school board meeting," was perceived by school board members to be crucial to the real role of the school board president. Three of the 22 items were perceived by school board members to be important: "maintains order during school board meetings;" "keeps meetings focused" and "serves as board spokesman."

School board members perceived three out of the 22 items to be crucial to the ideal role of the school board president and 12 of the 22 to be important to the ideal role of the school board president.

School board members' responses suggest that they believe that the

Table 4.1.1

School Board Members' Responses to Role Items

#	Item	Real				Ideal			
		% 1&2	% 3	% 4&5	% NR¥	% 1&2	% 3	% 4&5	% NR¥
25.	Builds agenda	38.6	25.0	36.4	4.0	10.9	29.8	59.3	5.4
26.	Distributes agenda	32.7	14.2	53.1	4.0	19.1	10.1	70.8	5.7*
27.	Supplies supplemental materials	33.0	21.2	45.7	5.7	14.9	15.7	69.4	7.5*
28.	Sets agenda deadline	38.9	18.1	43.0	6.9	18.9	19.7	61.3	8.9
29.	Presides over board meetings	1.3	3.1	95.6	4.5**	0.1	1.2	98.6	6.4**
30.	Maintains order during meetings	3.7	11.4	85.0	5.7*	0.4	1.7	97.9	7.3**
31.	Keeps meetings focused	8.7	23.6	67.8	5.9*	0	1.7	98.3	7.9**
32.	Establishes meeting rules	17.1	22.7	60.2	5.7	4.4	10.8	84.8	7.9*
33.	Facilitates board work	18.8	27.6	53.7	6.1	0.8	9.7	89.5	8.0*
34.	Builds consensus at meetings	19.1	25.6	55.3	5.2	2.7	11.0	86.3	6.9*
35.	Plans board in-service	65.1	22.0	12.9	6.0	10.3	33.7	56.0	7.5

¥ Percent of total respondents failing to respond to that item.

\* Important

\*\* Crucial

Table 4.1.1 (Continued)

School Board Members' Responses to Role Items

#	Item	Real				Ideal			
		% 1&2	% 3	% 4&5	% NR¥	% 1&2	% 3	% 4&5	% NR¥
36.	Calls special board meetings	22.5	25.5	52.0	5.4	7.5	27.8	64.8	7.7
37.	Appoints board committees	25.6	15.3	59.1	5.7	11.3	18.2	70.5	8.4*
38.	Serves as board spokesman	8.2	15.5	76.3	5.1*	2.2	11.4	86.4	6.9*
39.	Assigns reports to admin. staff	38.3	22.5	39.2	4.7	17.7	16.9	65.3	7.3
40.	Acts as sounding board for supt.	26.5	30.1	43.5	5.5	9.1	22.3	68.6	7.4*
41.	Serves as rubber stamp for supt.	61.5	18.8	19.7	5.2	85.6	9.5	4.9	7.1*
42.	Instructs board on supt. relations	47.6	32.3	20.1	5.5	18.8	27.9	53.3	7.8
43.	Keeps supt. communications open	21.0	20.5	58.5	4.7	3.3	10.5	86.2	6.6*
44.	Orients new board members	53.2	23.7	23.1	5.1	7.8	21.5	70.7	7.3
45.	Motivates board members	44.3	29.3	26.5	4.6	4.7	17.1	78.2	6.8*
47.	Evaluates staff	61.7	19.3	19.0	6.0	42.6	18.8	38.6	8.2

¥ Percent of total respondents failing to respond to that item.

\* Important

\*\* Crucial

president of the school board should be doing more than they perceive him to actually be doing (real role). School board members agreed that the school board president should be (ideal role) most active in the board room where he "presides over the school board meeting," "maintains order during school board meetings," and "keeps meetings focused." School board members responses to the ideal role items suggest that the president's current role should be expanded to include a more active relationship with the superintendent and to provide additional services to board members.

Of school board members who responded to "serves as a rubber stamp for the superintendent," 84.8% reported that they believe the president of the school board should never or nearly never engage in this activity. Not engaging in this activity is considered to be an important role characteristic of the ideal school board president.

The responses of school board members to the item "evaluates staff," suggest that they did not perceive that to be important to the real or ideal role of the school board president. Comments written on the returned surveys by school board members suggest that the board president is, and should only be, involved in the evaluation of the superintendent. Similiar comments accompanying a high rating suggest this item was interpreted in a variety of ways. It does appear however, that raters agree the board president should be involved in the evaluation of the superintendent and is not, and should not be,

involved in the evaluation of other school staff.

**Research Question 1b: What is the real and ideal role of the school board president as perceived by school board presidents?**

Reported in table 4.1.2 are the responses of school board presidents to the real and ideal role items. School board presidents found two of the 22 items to be crucial to the real role of the president and nine of 22 items to be important. "Presides over school board meetings" and "maintains order during meetings" are crucial to the real role of the school board president. "Keeps meeting focused," "establishes rules for conduct of the meetings," "facilitates the work of the board," "works during school board meeting to build a consensus," "appoints board members to board committees," "serves as board spokesman," "acts as a sounding board or lightning rod for the superintendent in anticipating board members' attitudes, reactions and probable actions to administrative initiatives," and "keeps communications between the board and the superintendent open" are perceived by board presidents as important roles of the school board president.

Although school board presidents believed the real role of the president of the school board to be broader than the role perceived by other school board members, they too saw the school board president's ideal role to be greater than their current role. School board presidents indicated that six of the 22 items, "presides over the school board meeting," "maintains order during school

Table 4.1.2

School Board Presidents' Responses to Role Items

#	Item	Real				Ideal			
		% 1&2	% 3	% 4&5	% NR¥	% 1&2	% 3	% 4&5	% NR¥
25.	Builds agenda	31.8	24.0	44.2	3.4	15.9	28.2	56.0	5.6
26.	Distributes agenda	27.6	12.1	60.3	3.7	20.0	11.2	68.8	6.4*
27.	Supplies supplemental materials	23.8	20.7	55.5	4.1	16.3	15.5	68.1	6.0*
28.	Sets agenda deadline	35.6	18.4	46.0	6.4	20.4	21.6	58.0	8.2
29.	Presides over board meetings	0.4	0	99.6	2.2**	0.4	0	99.6	5.2**
30.	Maintains order during meetings	0	3.8	96.2	2.6**	0	0.4	99.6	5.2**
31.	Keeps meetings focused	0.4	9.7	90.0	3.0*	0	0.8	99.2	5.2**
32.	Establishes meeting rules	5.9	13.4	80.7	4.9*	4.0	9.6	86.3	6.7*
33.	Facilitates board work	4.7	18.7	76.7	3.7*	1.2	8.0	90.8	6.7*
34.	Builds consensus at meetings	1.9	12.5	85.6	3.7*	1.2	6.8	92.0	6.7*
35.	Plans board in-service	45.7	28.8	24.5	3.7	12.9	30.9	56.2	6.7

¥ Percent of total respondents failing to respond to that item

\* Important

\*\* Crucial

Table 4.1.2 (Continued)

School Board Presidents' Responses to Role Items

#	Item	Real				Ideal			
		% 1&2	% 3	% 4&5	% NR¥	% 1&2	% 3	% 4&5	% NR¥
36.	Calls special board meetings	16.0	21.0	63.0	3.7	9.6	21.2	69.2	6.4*
37.	Appoints board committees	16.1	11.0	72.9	4.5*	8.1	15.3	76.6	7.1*
38.	Serves as board spokesman	3.5	14.7	81.8	3.4*	2.4	9.6	88.0	6.0*
39.	Assigns reports to admin. staff	34.6	20.0	45.4	2.6	28.4	19.2	52.4	6.4
40.	Acts as sounding board for supt.	6.2	17.9	75.9	3.7*	4.0	9.9	86.1	5.6*
41.	Serves as rubber stamp for supt.	85.4	11.9	2.7	2.6*	86.3	10.2	3.5	4.5*
42.	Instructs board on supt. relations	22.0	39.2	38.8	4.5	9.6	27.3	63.1	6.7
43.	Keeps supt. communications open	2.3	14.8	82.8	4.1*	0.4	7.6	92.0	6.4**
44.	Orients new board members	30.4	28.0	41.6	3.7	8.4	20.8	70.8	6.4*
45.	Motivates board members	10.2	38.8	52.0	4.9	2.4	15.4	82.2	7.5*
47.	Evaluates staff	61.6	15.9	22.5	3.4	55.6	15.5	29.0	5.6

¥ Percent of total respondents failing to respond to that item

\* Important

\*\* Crucial

board meetings," "keeps meetings focused," "facilitates the work of the board," and "keeps communications between the board and the superintendent open" as crucial to the ideal role of the president of the school board. Of the 22 role items, nine were perceived by school board presidents as being important to the ideal role of the school board president. The items "establishes rules for the conduct of the meetings," "appoints board members to board committees," "serves as board spokesman" and "acts as a sounding board for the superintendent," were perceived to be so important to the school board president's real role. In addition, "ensures distribution of the agenda far enough in advance of school board meetings," "ensures pertinent supplemental materials are supplied with the meeting agenda," "calls special meeting of the board," "provides for the orientation of new board members," and "motivates board members" were perceived as important to the ideal role of the school board president.

Of the school board presidents who responded, 85.4% indicated that the school board president never or almost never "acts as a rubber stamp for the superintendent" and 86.3% responded that the school board president should never or almost never "act as a rubber stamp for the superintendent."

School board presidents who responded to "evaluates staff," did not perceive this to be important to the real or ideal role of the school board president. Comments written on the returned surveys by school board

presidents suggest that the item may have been misinterpreted by this group as well. It is clear, however, that school board presidents perceive that they are and should be involved in the evaluation of the superintendent to some degree, and are not and should not be involved in the of evaluation of other school staff.

**Research Question 1c: What is the real and ideal role of the school board president as perceived by past school board presidents?**

Past school board presidents (table 4.1.3) perceived only one of 22 role items, "presides over the school board meeting," as crucial to understanding the real role of the school board president. "Maintains order during meetings," "serves as board spokesman," and "does not serve as a rubber stamp for the superintendent" were perceived by past school board presidents as important to understanding the real role of the school board president.

Like school board members and school board presidents, past presidents perceived the president's ideal role as broader than the real role. "Presides over the school board meeting," "maintains order during meetings," and "keeps meetings focused" were perceived by past presidents as crucial to the understanding of the ideal role of the school board president. "Ensures distribution of the agenda far enough in advance of school board meetings," "ensures pertinent supplemental materials are supplied with the meeting agenda," "establishes rules for conduct of the meetings," "facilitates the work of

Table 4.1.3

Past School Board Presidents' Responses to Role Items

#	Item	Real				Ideal			
		% 1&2	% 3	% 4&5	% NR¥	% 1&2	% 3	% 4&5	% NR¥
25.	Builds agenda	39.6	20.4	40.0	3.6	12.1	28.9	59.1	6.8
26.	Distributes agenda	32.5	9.6	57.9	3.6	20.3	10.8	69.0	6.8*
27.	Supplies supplemental materials	36.3	19.7	44.0	6.0	17.8	14.7	67.6	9.6*
28.	Sets agenda deadline	41.4	16.0	42.6	4.8	18.0	17.5	64.5	8.4
29.	Presides over board meetings	1.3	3.3	95.4	4.0**	0.4	0.9	98.7	8.0**
30.	Maintains order during meetings	4.2	11.3	84.5	4.0*	0	0.9	99.1	7.6**
31.	Keeps meetings focused	9.1	25.9	65.1	6.8	0.9	2.3	96.8	10.8**
32.	Establishes meeting rules	15.6	22.4	62.0	4.8	5.2	12.2	82.5	8.0*
33.	Facilitates board work	16.1	29.2	54.7	5.2	2.6	9.7	87.7	8.8*
34.	Builds consensus at meetings	15.7	28.5	55.7	5.6	1.8	8.8	89.4	9.2*
35.	Plans board in-service	61.3	24.4	14.3	4.4	15.9	28.3	55.8	9.2

¥ Percent of total respondents failing to respond to that item

\* Important

\*\* Crucial

Table 4.1.3 (Continued)

Past School Board Presidents' Responses to Role Items

#	Item	Real				Ideal			
		% 1&2	% 3	% 4&5	% NR¥	% 1&2	% 3	% 4&5	% NR¥
36.	Calls special board meetings	22.1	27.9	50.0	3.6	9.2	29.7	61.1	8.0
37.	Appoints board committees	19.6	15.3	65.1	5.6	10.2	17.8	72.0	9.6*
38.	Serves as board spokesman	9.7	19.1	71.2	5.2*	3.5	12.8	83.7	8.8*
39.	Assigns reports to admin. staff	44.0	21.4	34.6	6.0	30.8	18.5	50.7	8.8
40.	Acts as sounding board for supt.	22.0	28.8	49.2	5.2	5.8	18.1	76.1	9.2*
41.	Serves as rubber stamp for supt.	72.2	17.3	10.5	4.8*	92.1	5.3	2.6	8.8
42.	Instructs board on supt. relations	55.1	27.8	17.1	6.0	22.8	29.5	47.8	10.0
43.	Keeps supt. communications open	24.4	25.6	50.0	4.4	3.1	11.8	85.1	8.4*
44.	Orients new board members	50.2	27.7	22.1	5.6	12.0	16.4	71.6	9.6*
45.	Motivates board members	41.4	31.2	27.4	4.8	7.5	18.1	74.4	8.8*
47.	Evaluates staff	72.6	13.0	14.3	7.6	59.5	14.5	25.9	11.6

¥ Percent of total respondents failing to respond to that item

\* Important

\*\* Crucial

the board," "works during school board meetings to build a consensus," "appoints board committees," "serves as board spokesman," "acts as a sounding board for the superintendent," "keeps communications between the board and the superintendent open," "provides for the orientation of new board members," and "motivates board members" were perceived by past school board presidents as important role characteristics of the ideal board president .

Not serving as a rubber stamp for the superintendent was rated as important as real role item and crucial to the ideal role of the school board president.

Past presidents provided comments next to their responses to "evaluates staff" similar to those provided by school board members and presidents.

Where the item may have been misinterpreted, the responses suggest that the school board president does not and should not engage in evaluation of staff other than the superintendent.

**Research Question 2a: What are the real and ideal leadership attributes of school board presidents as perceived by school board members?**

Using the 95% standard, none of the leadership attributes chosen for inclusion in the 1991 National Survey of School Board Members were perceived by school board members as crucial to understanding the real leadership attributes of the school board president.

Table 4.2.1

School Board Members' Responses to Leadership Attributes Items

#	Item	Real				Ideal			
		% 1&2	% 3	% 4&5	% NR¥	% 1&2	% 3	% 4&5	% NR¥
48.	Self-confidence	7.0	23.9	69.2	4.8*	0.3	4.5	95.2	6.6**
49.	Physical vitality and stamina	8.4	23.1	68.5	4.8*	1.2	11.3	87.5	7.1*
50.	Written communication skills	20.1	28.7	51.2	6.8	1.2	9.7	89.1	7.8*
51.	Oral communication skills	12.8	24.7	62.5	5.1	0.3	1.8	98.0	6.5**
52.	Skill in interpersonal relations	20.3	30.8	48.9	7.1	0.6	4.2	95.3	8.4**
53.	Ability to win and hold trust	18.1	25.9	56.1	5.4	0.1	3.6	96.3	7.0**
54.	Ability to influence people	16.1	36.2	47.7	5.1	2.2	13.9	83.9	7.1*
55.	Ability to motivate people	23.1	35.7	41.2	5.6	1.1	6.6	92.3	7.1*
56.	Ability to resolve conflicts	21.9	30.7	47.4	7.4	0.6	3.6	95.8	9.1**
57.	Flexibility and adaptability	19.8	28.4	51.8	6.1	0.4	5.7	93.9	7.8*
58.	Stress tolerance	17.1	27.0	56.0	5.9	0.3	6.2	93.5	7.4*
59.	Ability to analyze events	19.2	28.7	52.1	5.2	0	5.1	94.5	7.0*
60.	Makes hard data judgments	11.8	22.8	65.4	6.1	0.3	3.3	96.4	7.7**

Table 4.2.1 (Continued)

School Board Members' Responses to Leadership Attributes Items

#	Item	Real				Ideal			
		% 1&2	% 3	% 4&5	% NR¥	% 1&2	% 3	% 4&5	% NR¥
61.	Makes intuitive judgments	16.6	31.3	52.1	5.7	11.7	22.8	65.5	7.7
62.	Organizes resources	18.7	32.3	49.0	5.7	1.0	5.4	93.7	7.5*
63.	Planning ability	22.1	31.1	46.8	5.7	0.5	5.1	94.4	7.1*
64.	Gather info for decisions	20.2	29.8	50.0	5.9	2.1	7.6	90.3	7.7*
65.	Decision making ability	10.1	18.3	71.6	5.4*	0.3	2.9	96.8	7.4**
66.	Envisions schooling	14.2	24.2	61.6	5.6	0.6	3.4	96.0	7.3**
67.	Knowledge of schooling	11.6	21.6	66.8	5.5	0.7	6.5	92.9	7.1*
68.	Ability to evaluate people	17.8	31.8	50.4	5.9	1.5	7.0	91.4	7.5*
69.	Ability to evaluate programs	18.3	32.7	49.0	5.7	2.2	9.6	88.2	7.1*
70.	Accepts responsibility	7.9	10.7	81.4	4.7*	0.1	2.9	97.0	6.6**
71.	Willing to help others	13.8	21.2	65.0	5.0	1.5	6.4	92.1	6.9*
72.	Shows caring for people	12.9	14.9	72.2	5.0*	0.5	3.1	96.3	6.8**

1 % NR = percent of total respondents failing to respond to that item

\* Important

\*\* Crucial

School Board members who have never been school board president, and who rated the real leadership attributes items, indicated that five of the 25 leadership attributes were important leadership attributes of their school board president. The responses to the leadership attributes are reported in table 4.2.1. The five leadership attributes of school board presidents rated as important were: "self-confidence," "physical vitality and stamina," "ability to make decisions," "willingness to accept responsibility," and "demonstration of caring for people."

School board members who have never been a school board president did not discriminate among ideal leadership attributes. Of the 25 items, school board members found 10 to be crucial and 14 to be important as ideal leadership attributes of the school board president. "Ability to make judgments based on gut feelings" was the only leadership attribute that was neither crucial nor important to the ideal president, and even that was close with 65.5% of school board members responding that the school board president should always or nearly always display that attribute.

**Research Question 2b: What are the real and ideal leadership attributes of the school board president as perceived by school board presidents?**

The responses of school board presidents to the real and ideal leadership attributes items are reported in table 4.2.2. School board presidents

perceived one of the 25 leadership attributes to be a crucial real leadership attribute of the school board president namely, "willingness to accept responsibility."

Of the 25 leadership attributes chosen for inclusion in the real leadership attributes section of the questionnaire, 24 were perceived by school board presidents as crucial or important to understanding the real leadership attributes of the school board president. Only one of the 25 real leadership attributes, "ability to evaluate programs," was not perceived to be important as a real leadership attribute of the school board president. It should be noted, however, that almost 60% of the responding school board presidents responded that the school board president always or nearly always displays this attribute.

School board presidents did not discriminate among ideal leadership attribute items. Of the 25 leadership attribute items, 14 were perceived by school board presidents to be crucial ideal leadership attributes of the school board president, and 10 of 25 were perceived to be important. Of the important or crucial ideal leadership attributes, all received responses of 4 or 5 from over 90% of the school board presidents. While only the "ability to make judgments based on gut feelings" was not perceived to be important, 65.6% of school board presidents said that the president of the school board should always or nearly always display that attribute as well.

Table 4.2.2

School Board Presidents' Responses to Leadership Attributes Items

#	Item	Real				Ideal			
		% 1&2	% 3	% 4&5	%1 NR	% 1&2	% 3	% 4&5	%1 NR
48.	Self-confidence	0	14.0	86.0	6.4*	0	1.2	98.8	5.6**
49.	Physical vitality and stamina	2.0	15.1	82.9	5.6*	0.4	7.9	91.7	5.6*
50.	Written communication skills	2.0	21.1	76.9	6.0*	0	7.6	92.4	6.7*
51.	Oral communication skills	2.4	19.4	78.2	5.6*	0	2.0	98.0	6.0**
52.	Skill in interpersonal relations	1.6	19.8	78.6	7.1*	0.8	2.0	97.2	7.1**
53.	Ability to win and hold trust	0	13.3	86.7	6.7*	0	3.2	96.8	6.7**
54.	Ability to influence people	0.8	30.0	69.2	6.4*	0.4	8.0	91.6	6.4*
55.	Ability to motivate people	2.4	28.0	69.6	6.4*	0.4	3.6	96.0	6.4**
56.	Ability to resolve conflicts	1.2	24.7	74.1	9.0*	0.4	2.5	97.1	8.6**
57.	Flexibility and adaptability	1.6	20.9	77.5	6.7*	0	2.8	97.2	6.7**
58.	Stress tolerance	3.6	19.8	76.5	7.5*	0.4	3.2	96.4	7.5**
59.	Ability to analyze events	0.8	24.1	75.1	6.7*	0	1.6	98.4	6.7**
60.	Makes hard data judgments	0.4	8.5	91.1	7.9*	0	2.1	97.9	9.0**

Table 4.2.2 (Continued)

School Board Presidents' Responses to Leadership Attributes Items

#	Item	Real				Ideal			
		% 1&2	% 3	% 4&5	% <sup>1</sup> NR	% 1&2	% 3	% 4&5	% <sup>1</sup> NR
61.	Makes intuitive judgments	5.2	24.2	70.6	7.1*	10.1	24.3	65.6	7.5
62.	Organizes resources	2.8	25.6	71.6	6.4*	1.2	4.8	94.0	6.7*
63.	Planning ability	4.0	24.8	71.2	6.4*	0.8	3.2	96.0	6.4**
64.	Gather info for decisions	2.8	21.6	75.6	6.4*	1.6	7.6	90.8	6.4*
65.	Decision making ability	0	8.1	91.9	7.1*	0	.4	99.6	6.7**
66.	Envisions schooling	1.6	19.3	79.1	6.7*	0	6.8	93.2	6.7*
67.	Knowledge of schooling	2.4	22.4	75.2	6.4*	0	7.2	92.8	6.7*
68.	Ability to evaluate people	0.8	20.4	78.8	6.4*	0.4	7.3	92.3	7.1*
69.	Ability to evaluate programs	6.0	34.4	59.6	6.4	.08	8.8	90.4	6.4*
70.	Accepts responsibility	0	2.4	97.6	6.4**	0	1.6	98.4	6.7**
71.	Willing to help others	0.8	6.8	92.4	6.4*	0	5.2	94.8	6.7*
72.	Shows caring for people	0.8	6.0	93.2	6.4*	0.4	1.6	98.0	6.4**

1 % NR = percent of total respondents failing to respond to that item

\* Important

\*\* Crucial

**Research Question 2c: What are the real and ideal leadership attributes of the school board president as perceived by past school board presidents?**

Past school board presidents were less charitable of the school board president's real leadership attributes than school board members and school board presidents. They perceived only two of the 25 leadership attributes, "willingness to accept responsibility" and "demonstration of caring for people," to be important to understanding the real leadership attributes of the school board president and none were perceived to be crucial.

Of the 25 ideal leadership attributes, past school board presidents perceived seven, "self-confidence," "oral communication skills," "ability to win and hold trust," "ability to make judgments based on hard data," "ability to make decisions," "willingness to accept responsibility," and "demonstration of caring for people," as crucial to understanding the ideal leadership attributes of the school board president. Seventeen of the remaining 18 attributes are perceived by past presidents to be important.

Only "ability to make judgments based on gut feelings" was not considered as an important ideal leadership attribute but 64% of the responding past presidents responded that the board president should always or nearly always display that attribute.

Table 4.2.3

Past School Board Presidents' Responses to Leadership Attributes Items

#	Item	Real				Ideal			
		% 1&2	% 3	% 4&5	%1 NR	% 1&2	% 3	% 4&5	%1 NR
48.	Self-confidence	7.1	28.6	64.3	4.4	0	3.5	96.5	7.2**
49.	Physical vitality and stamina	9.2	29.4	61.3	4.4	0.9	17.0	82.2	7.6*
50.	Written communication skills	20.9	32.5	46.6	6.0	1.3	14.0	84.7	8.0*
51.	Oral communication skills	13.6	25.5	60.9	5.6	0	3.1	96.9	8.4**
52.	Skill in interpersonal relations	20.7	31.0	48.3	6.8	0.9	4.9	94.2	10.0*
53.	Ability to win and hold trust	20.3	23.3	56.4	5.2	0	4.8	95.2	8.8**
54.	Ability to influence people	18.2	37.7	44.1	5.2	1.8	13.3	85.0	9.2*
55.	Ability to motivate people	23.9	35.9	40.2	6.0	0.9	6.6	92.5	8.8*
56.	Ability to resolve conflicts	19.5	38.5	42.0	7.2	0	6.8	93.2	10.8*
57.	Flexibility and adaptability	21.2	25.0	53.8	5.2	0.4	5.3	94.3	8.8*
58.	Stress tolerance	15.9	30.2	53.9	6.8	0.4	9.8	89.7	10.0**
59.	Ability to analyze events	20.4	32.3	47.2	5.6	0.4	6.6	93.0	8.8*
60.	Makes hard data judgments	13.2	21.8	65.0	6.0	0.4	3.5	96.0	9.2**

Table 4.2. 3 (Continued)

Past School Board Presidents' Responses to Leadership Attributes Items

#	Item	Real				Ideal			
		% 1&2	% 3	% 4&5	% <sup>1</sup> NR	% 1&2	% 3	% 4&5	% <sup>1</sup> NR
61.	Makes intuitive judgments	21.5	31.2	47.3	4.8	11.4	24.6	64.0	8.4
62.	Organizes resources	20.3	36.9	42.8	5.2	0.4	10.6	89.0	8.8*
63.	Planning ability	22.0	34.3	43.6	5.2	0	6.2	93.8	9.2*
64.	Gather info for decisions	18.4	28.6	53.0	6.0	2.2	7.6	90.2	10.0*
65.	Decision making ability	13.1	21.1	65.8	4.8	0	3.5	96.5	8.4**
66.	Envisions schooling	14.0	24.7	61.3	5.6	0.4	6.1	93.4	8.4*
67.	Knowledge of schooling	13.2	25.1	61.7	5.6	0.9	9.2	89.9	8.4*
68.	Ability to evaluate people	18.6	34.3	47.0	5.2	3.5	6.6	89.9	8.8*
69.	Ability to evaluate programs	16.1	36.0	47.9	5.2	0.9	10.1	89.0	8.4*
70.	Accepts responsibility	9.7	16.5	73.3	5.2*	0	3.5	96.5	8.8**
71.	Willing to help others	15.6	22.4	62.0	4.8	0.4	5.3	94.3	8.4*
72.	Shows caring for people	13.6	18.2	68.2	5.2*	0	4.8	95.2	8.8**

1 % NR = percent of total respondents failing to respond to that item

\* Important

\*\* Crucial

**Research Question 3: How are the role and leadership attributes of the school board president as perceived by school board presidents, past presidents, and school board members related to selected variables?**

Cross-tabulation procedures including the calculation of Chi-squares were used to investigate relationship of demographic factors with the perceptions of presidents, past presidents, and members of the school board concerning the real and ideal role and leadership attributes of the school board president. Perceptions of school board presidents, past presidents, and other board members were cross-tabulated with geographic region, school system enrollment, community type, gender, race, age, education attainment, income, number of terms served on the board, board member selection (elected or appointed), and method of selecting the board president are described below.

Presidents by Gender

The cross-tabulation procedure with the calculation of Chi-square and level of significance was used to determine whether school board presidents differed in their responses to real and ideal role and leadership attributes items by gender. Always and nearly always responses to real and ideal role and leadership attributes were combined and compared against never, nearly never, and neutral responses.

Of the 94 cross-tabulations (22 roles and 25 leadership attributes with

responses for both the real and ideal) conducted, four or five might be expected to be significant due to chance. Significant Chi-square values were obtained for 17 of the 94 cross-tabulations indicating differences in school board presidents' perceptions concerning the real and ideal role and leadership attributes of the school board president by gender. These results are summarized in table 4.3.1. In every case but one where statistically significant differences in responses occurred, women presidents saw their role as more active than did the men presidents.

About 54% of the female school board presidents who responded indicated that the school board president always or nearly always "builds the agenda for school board meetings" as compared to about 39% of the males. Also, of the responding school board presidents, almost 65% responded that the board president should always or nearly always build the agenda. Of school board presidents, the women felt more strongly than men about the importance of agenda building as a part of both the real and ideal role of the school board president.

The importance to the president's ideal role of "ensures distribution of the agenda far enough in advance of school board meetings" was perceived more strongly by women who are school board presidents than men. About 77% of the responding female board presidents responded that the board president always or nearly always should "ensure distribution of the agenda far enough in

Table 4.3.1

Always or Nearly Always Responses of Presidents to  
Roles and Leadership Attributes by Gender

Significant Items	N =	<u>Real</u>		<u>Ideal</u>	
		Male	Female	Male	Female
		173 %	94 %	173 %	94 %
<u>Roles</u>					
25. Builds agenda		39	54		
26. Distributes agenda				65	77*
27. Supplies supplemental materials				64	77*
28. Sets agenda deadline		38	61	53	68*
31. Keeps meetings focused		87*	96**		
35. Plans board in-service		19	36	51	67*
44. Orients new board members		36	52	66	80*
47. Evaluates staff		27	15	20	34
<u>Leadership Attributes</u>					
49. Physical vitality and stamina				89*	97**
66. Envisions schooling		75*	87*		
69. Ability to evaluate programs		55	68*		
* Important item					
** Crucial item					

advance of school board meetings." Only about 65% of the responding male board presidents responded similarly.

Almost 77% of the responding female school board presidents responded that the board president always or nearly always should "ensure pertinent supplemental materials are supplied with the meeting agenda" compared to about 64% of the responding males. Supplying supplemental materials with the agenda was perceived by women in the presidency to be important to role of the ideal school board president more so than men who occupy that position.

Almost 61% of the responding female school board presidents responded that they always or nearly always "set a deadline before the meeting for placing items on the agenda." Only about 38% of male school board presidents responded that they always or nearly always engaged in this activity. Women also felt more strongly about the importance of setting an agenda deadline (ideal role). Almost 68% responded that the school board president should always or nearly always set an agenda deadline, but only about 53% of school board presidents who are men indicated that the school board president should always or nearly always engage in agenda deadline setting.

Almost 96% of the responding school board presidents who are women responded that the board president always or nearly always "keeps meeting focused" compared to about 87% of the responding males. School board

presidents who are female perceived the board president to do a better job of keeping meetings focused than do the men.

For both the real and ideal role of the board president, female board presidents attached a greater importance to "assumes responsibility for planning in-service training for board members" than did males. Of the responding female presidents, 36% responded that the school board president always or nearly always assumes that responsibility compared to about 19% of the responding presidents who are male. About 67% of the responding women presidents responded that the board president should always or nearly always "assume responsibility for planning in-service training for board members." Only about 51% of the responding men responded similarly.

Almost 52% of the female school board presidents who responded indicated that the school board president always or nearly always "provides for the orientation of new board members." Only about 36% of the responding male school board presidents indicated that the school board president always or nearly always does this. About 80% of the responding female school board presidents responded that the board president should always or nearly always "provide for the orientation of new board members" compared to about 66% of the responding men.

Almost 15% of the responding female school board presidents and past presidents perceived that the president of the school board always or nearly

always "evaluates staff" compared to about 27% of the males, while only about 20% of the females responded that the school board president should always or nearly always "evaluate staff" compared to about 34% of the males. More women felt that the board president engages in the evaluation of staff than did men; while men more than women felt the school board president should evaluate staff. Caution is exercised here due to the comments written on the returned questionnaires suggesting that this item may have been misinterpreted.

"Physical vitality and stamina" is an ideal leadership attribute of the school board president that is perceived differently by male and female presidents. Almost 97% of responding females indicated the president of the school board should always or nearly always display "physical vitality and stamina," where about 89% of responding males gave similar responses.

"Ability to envision what schooling should be" was more important to the understanding of the real role of the school board president for female board presidents than male board presidents. About 87% of the responding female school board presidents responded that the board president always or nearly always displays "ability to envision what schooling should be" compared to only 75% of the male board presidents who responded.

Female school board presidents attached a greater importance to "ability to evaluate programs" than did males. About 55% of male and about 68% of

female school board presidents responded that the school board president always or nearly always displays "ability to evaluate programs."

#### Presidents by School System Enrollment

Cross-tabulation procedures were utilized to investigate the relationship between the real and ideal role and leadership attributes of the school board president and the school system enrollment size of school board presidents. Never, nearly never, and neutral responses to real and ideal role and leadership attributes were combined as were always and nearly always responses. Choices of school system enrollment were collapsed into two classes: (1) fewer than 5,000 students and (2) 5,000 students or more.

Of 94 cross-tabulations run, 6 were significant at the .05 level: four or five can be expected to be significant by chance. There is a difference in the perceptions of school board presidents serving school systems with enrollments of less than 5,000 students and those serving school systems with 5,000 or more students concerning the real and ideal role and leadership attributes of the school board president. Summarized in table 4.3.2 are the results of the cross-tabulations of school board presidents' perceptions of real and ideal role and leadership attributes items by school system enrollment. In every case where statistical significant differences in responses occur, presidents from larger districts saw a more active role for themselves than did their counterparts in smaller districts.

About 62% of the responding school board presidents serving school systems enrolling 5,000 or more students responded that the school board president always or nearly always "sets a deadline before the meeting for placing items on the agenda" compared to about 41% of those serving systems enrolling less than 5,000 students. About 72% of the responding presidents serving the larger systems responded that the board president always or nearly always should set an agenda deadline compared to about 54% of the responding board presidents serving smaller systems.

School board presidents serving larger systems perceived that the board president should be more involved in the planning in-service training for board members. Almost 68% of the responding board presidents who serve school systems enrolling 5,000 or more students responded that the school board president should always or nearly always "assume responsibility for planning in-service training for board members." Only about 52% of the responding school board presidents who serve school systems enrolling less than 5,000 students responded that the board president should always or nearly always assume this responsibility.

The school board president's "ability to influence people" is a real leadership attribute that appears to be more important to board presidents in larger school systems than to those who serve in smaller ones. Almost 85% of the school board presidents responding from school systems enrolling 5,000 or

Table 4.3.2

Always or Nearly Always Responses of Presidents to  
Roles and Leadership Attributes by School System Enrollment

Significant Items	N =	<u>Real</u>		<u>Ideal</u>	
		Small	Large	Small	Large
		186	80	186	80
		%	%	%	%
<hr/>					
<u>Roles</u>					
28.	Sets agenda deadline	41	62	54	72*
35.	Plans board in-service			52	68*
38.	Serves as board spokesman	78*	92**		
<hr/>					
<u>Leadership Attributes</u>					
54.	Ability to influence people	64	85*		
61.	Makes intuitive judgments	67*	81*		

\* Important item

\*\* Cricial item

Small = enrolling less than 5,000 students

Large = enrolling 5,000 students or more

more students responded that the board president always or nearly always displays "ability to influence people," compared to about 64% of the board presidents responding from school systems with enrollment under 5,000 students.

Of the school board presidents who responded, 81% of those serving school systems enrolling 5,000 or more students responded that the board president always or nearly always displays "ability to make judgment based on gut feelings" compared to about 67% of the board presidents who serve systems enrolling less than 5,000 students. "Ability to make judgment based on gut feelings" appears to be more important to board presidents in larger systems than in smaller systems.

There were no significant differences in the perceptions of school board presidents concerning the board president's real and ideal role and leadership attributes by community type, ethnic designation, age, level of education attainment, number of terms served, whether the school board is elected or appointed, or the method for choosing the school board president.

#### Past Presidents by School System Enrollment

Cross-tabulation procedures and the calculation of Chi-squares were utilized to determine the relationship of past school board presidents' perceptions to the real and ideal role and leadership attributes with the school system enrollment variable. Never, nearly never, and neutral responses were

combined as were responses of always and nearly always. To reduce the incidence of cells with expected frequencies of less than five enrollment categories were collapsed into two groups: (1) those systems enrolling less than 5,000 students and (2) those enrolling 5,000 students or more.

Significant results were obtained for 11 of the 94 cross-tabulations run indicating differences in the perceptions of past school board presidents concerning the real and ideal role of the school board presidents and their leadership attributes by school system size. The results of these cross-tabulations summarized in table 4.3.3. In every case of a statistically significant difference in responses, past presidents serving large school systems (5,000 students or more) saw a more active role (real and ideal) for their board president than did their counterparts serving small systems (less than 5,000 students).

Of the past presidents responding, 50% who serve school systems enrolling 5,000 or more students responded that the board president always or nearly always "builds the agenda for school board meetings" compared to 34% of those who serve school systems enrolling less than 5,000.

Advance distribution of the agenda was perceived by past presidents as more important to the real and ideal role of the school board president who serves larger systems than those who serve small systems. About 67% of the responding past presidents serving systems that enroll 5,000 student or more

Table 4.3.3

Percentages of Always or Nearly Always Responses of Past Presidents to Roles and Leadership Attributes by School System Enrollment

Significant Items	N =	<u>Real</u>		<u>Ideal</u>	
		Small	Large	Small	Large
		250	96	250	96
		%	%	%	%
<u>Roles</u>					
25.	Builds agenda	34	50		
26.	Distributes agenda	52	67*	63	78*
28.	Sets agenda deadline	36	53	56	74*
35.	Calls special board meetings			56	70*
37.	Appoints board committees	30	43		
39.	Assigns reports to admin. staff	28	42		
40.	Acts as sounding board for supt.	43	58		
42.	Instructs board on supt. relations			42	57
44.	Orients new board members			67*	79*

\* Important item

\*\* Crucial item

Small = enrolling less than 5,000 students

Large = enrolling 5,000 students or more

responded that the board president always or nearly always "ensures distribution of the agenda far enough in advance of school board meetings" compared to about 52% of the responding past presidents serving systems that enroll less than 5,000 students. Almost 78% of the responding past presidents who serve systems enrolling 5,000 or more students responded that the school board president should always or nearly always "ensure distribution of the agenda far enough in advance of school board meetings" compared to about 63% of those who serve systems enrolling less than 5,000 students.

Past school board presidents who serve school systems enrolling 5,000 or more students were more likely to indicate "setting a deadline before the meeting for placing items on the agenda" was important than were past presidents who serve school systems enrolling less than 5,000 students. About 53% of the responding past presidents from larger systems said that the board president always or nearly always "sets a deadline before the meeting for placing items on the agenda," and about 74% responded that the president should always or nearly always set an agenda deadline. Only about 36% of the past presidents who serve smaller systems responded that the board president always or nearly always "sets a deadline before the meeting for placing items on the agenda," and about 56% responded that the board president should always or nearly always "set a deadline before the meeting for placing items on the agenda."

About 70% of the responding past presidents serving school systems enrolling 5,000 or more students indicated that the board president should always or nearly always "call special meetings of the school board" compared to about 56% of the past presidents who serve school systems enrolling less than 5,000 students. Calling special meetings was perceived by past presidents to be more important to the ideal role of the school board president in larger school systems than in smaller ones.

About 43% of the responding past presidents who serve school systems enrolling 5,000 or more students indicated that the school board president always or nearly always "assigns board members to board committees" compared to only 30% of those who serve school systems enrolling 5,000 students or less.

Past presidents from larger school systems perceived that the school board president "acts as a sounding board for the superintendent" as more important than did past presidents from smaller school systems. Of those responding, about 58% serving school systems that enroll 5,000 students or more responded that the school board president always or nearly always "acts as a sounding board or lightning rod for the superintendent in anticipating board members' attitudes, reactions, and probable actions to administrative initiatives" compared to about 43% of those who serve school systems enrolling less than 5,000 students.

"Instructs board members on appropriate board/superintendent relationships" was perceived by past presidents to be more important to the school board president's ideal role in larger school systems than in small ones. Of the responding past presidents who serve school systems enrolling 5,000 or more students, almost 57% responded that the school board president should always or nearly always "instruct board members on appropriate board/superintendent relationships" compared to 42% of the responding past presidents serving school systems enrolling less than 5,000 students who responded similarly.

Past presidents from larger systems perceived the ideal role of the board president to include the orientation of new board members to a greater extent than past presidents from small systems. About 79% of the past presidents who responded from school systems enrolling 5,000 or more students responded that the school board president should always or nearly always "provide for the orientation of new board members." About 67% of the responding past presidents who serve school systems enrolling less than 5,000 students responded in a similar manner.

#### Past Presidents by Method President is Chosen

Cross-tabulation procedures, Chi-square, and significance tests were used to determine whether past school board presidents differed in their perceptions of the board president's real and ideal role and leadership

attributes according to the method the school board president is chosen. Never, nearly never, and neutral responses as well as always and nearly always responses to role and leadership attributes items were combined. Responses to the method for choosing the school board president were collapsed such that those elected by voters, the leading popular vote getter, and those elected by the school board (elected) were combined and compared against those chosen by tenure on the school board and those where each board member take a turn (ceremonial).

Of the 94 cross-tabulations conducted, four or five Chi-squares could be expected due to chance. Significant Chi-square values were obtained for eight of the 94 cross-tabulations indicating differences in past school board presidents' perceptions concerning the real and ideal role and leadership attributes of the school board president by method for choosing the board president. These results are summarized in table 4.3.4. In each case where a statistically significant difference in responses occurs, past presidents serving on boards where the president is elected perceived their board president to be more actively involved than did past presidents serving boards that selected their presidents in other ways.

Differences were found in past presidents' perceptions of the president's real and ideal role of agenda building by method the president is chosen. About 43% of the responding past presidents serving on boards where the

president is elected by some means responded that the school board president always or nearly always "builds the agenda for school board meetings" while about 43% of the responding past presidents serving on boards where the president is chosen ceremoniously by tenure or board member turn taking responded that the president always or nearly always "builds the agenda for school board meetings." About 64% of the responding past presidents serving on school boards where the president is elected responded that the board president should always or nearly always "build the agenda for school board meetings" compared to about 32% of the past presidents who serve on boards with ceremoniously chosen presidents.

Elected presidents, according to the responding past presidents, do a better job of supplying pertinent material with the agenda. About 48% of the responding past presidents who serve on boards with elected presidents responded that their school board president always or nearly always "ensures pertinent supplemental materials are supplied with the meeting agenda" compared to about 22% of those who serve on boards with ceremoniously chosen presidents.

Setting agenda deadlines was perceived by past presidents serving on boards with elected presidents as more important to the board president's ideal role than past presidents serving on boards with ceremoniously chosen presidents. About 67% of the responding past presidents who serve on boards

Table 4.3.4

Always or Nearly Always Responses of Past Presidents' to  
Roles and Leadership Attributes by Method President is Chosen

Significant Items	N =	<u>Real</u>		<u>Ideal</u>	
		Elec.	Cer.	Elec.	Cer.
		210 %	39 %	210 %	39 %
<u>Roles</u>					
25. Builds agenda		43	22	64	32
27. Supplies supplemental materials		48	22		
28. Sets agenda deadline		67*	50		
38. Serves as board spokesman		74*	56	86*	71*
<u>Leadership Attributes</u>					
42. Instructs board on supt. relations		51	27		
50. Written communication skills		50	16		
* Important item					
** Crucial item					

with elected presidents responded that the president should always or nearly always set a deadline before the meeting for placing items on the agenda compared to 50% of the responding past presidents serving on boards where the president is chosen ceremoniously by tenure or turn taking.

About 74% of the responding past presidents who serve on boards with elected presidents responded that the board president always or nearly always "serves as board spokesman" compared to only 56% of the past presidents who serve on boards where the presidents were not elected. About 86% of the responding past presidents serving on boards with elected presidents responded that the president should always or nearly always "serve as board spokesman," while about 71% of the past presidents who serve on boards where the president is chosen in other ways responded in a similar manner.

About 51% of the responding past presidents who serve on boards with elected presidents responded that the board president should always or nearly always "instruct board members on appropriate board/superintendent relationships" compared to 27% of the responding past presidents who serve on board with selected presidents.

Past presidents perceived elected presidents to have better "written communication skills" than ceremoniously chosen presidents. About 50% of the responding past presidents who serve on boards with elected presidents responded that the board president always or nearly always displays "written

communication skills" compared to about 16% of the responding past presidents who serve on boards where the president is chosen ceremoniously by tenure on the board or by board members taking turns.

#### School Board Members by Geographic Region

School board members' responses of always or nearly always to real and ideal role and leadership attributes of the school board president were combined and compared to never, nearly never, and neutral responses using cross-tabulation procedures by the geographic region of the country.

Significant results were found for 12 of the 94 cross-tabulation procedures and are summarized in table 4.3.5. In nearly every case (10 out of 12) of a statistically significant difference in responses, board members who serve on boards located in the southern region perceived their president to be more active than board members from other regions.

Of school board members responding, about 62% in the south and 43% in the pacific regions responded that the school board president always or nearly always "ensures distribution of the agenda far enough in advance of school board meetings" (53% in northeast, 50% in the central region and 58% in the west). About 82% of responding school board members serving southern school systems responded that the president of the school board should always or nearly always "ensure distribution of the agenda far enough in advance of school board meetings" compared to almost 58% of school board members in

the pacific region (73% in the northeast, 67% in the central, and 73% in the west).

About 54% of school board members in the southern region and 52% in the northeast responded that the school board members always or nearly always "ensures pertinent supplemental materials are supplied with the meeting agenda" compared to about 38% of school board members in the pacific region, 41% in the central, and 41% in the west.

Almost 56% of school board members from the southern region responded that the school board president always or nearly always "sets a deadline before the meeting for placing items on the agenda" compared to about 37% of school board members from the pacific region, 38% percent in the northeast, 41% in the central, and 46% in the west. About 72% of school board members serving southern school systems responded that the president of the school board always or nearly always should "set a deadline before the meeting for placing items on the agenda" compared to 54% of school board members from the central region, 61% in the northeast, 70% in the west, and 63% in the pacific regions.

Almost 62% of school board members serving southern school systems responded that the school board presidents always or nearly always "facilitates the work of the board" compared to almost 38% of school board members serving pacific school systems, 54% in the northeast, 54% in the central, and

Table 4.3.5

Always or Nearly Always Responses of Board Members to  
Roles and Leadership Attributes by Geographic Region

Significant Item	N =	<u>Real</u>					<u>Ideal</u>				
		North	Cent.	South	West	Pacific	North	Cent.	South	West	Pacific
		173	290	117	102	101	173	290	117	102	101
<u>Roles</u>											
26.	Distributes Agenda	53	50	62	50	43	73*	67*	82*	73*	58
27.	Supplies supplemental materials	52	41	54	41	38					
28.	Sets agenda deadline	38	41	56	46	37	61	54	72*	70*	63
33.	Facilitates board work	54	54	62	52	38					
35.	Plans board in-service	11	9	23	15	13					
37.	Appoints board committees	62	68*	56	48	39					
42.	Instructs board on supt. relations	27	17	24	18	11					
45.	Motivates board members	25	26	38	19	23					
<u>Leadership attributes</u>											
48.	Self confidence	62	73*	70*	73*	68*					
54.	Ability to influence people	42	50	58	42	42					

\* Important item

\*\* Crucial item

52% in the west regions.

Almost 23% of school board members serving southern school systems responded that the school board president always or nearly always "assumes responsibility for planning in-service training for board members" compared to about 9% of school board members from central school systems, 11% in the northeast, 15% in the west, and 13% in the pacific regions.

Almost 68% of school board members serving school systems in the central region responded that the school board president always or nearly always "appoints board members to board committees" compared to about 39% of school board members serving pacific school systems, 62% in the northeast, 56% in the south, and 48% in the west regions.

Approximately 27% of school board members serving school systems in the northeast responded that the president of the school board always or nearly always "instructs board members on appropriate board/superintendent relationships" compared to about 11% of school board members serving pacific systems 17% in the central, 24% in the south, and 18% in the west regions.

Nearly 38% of school board members serving school systems in the southern region responded that the school board president always or nearly always "motivates board members" compared to about 19% of school board members serving western systems, 25% in the northeast, 26% in the central, and 23% in the pacific regions.

Almost 73% of school board members serving school systems in the central region of the country responded that the school board president always or nearly always displays "self-confidence" compared to about 62% in the northeast, 70% in the south, 73% in the west, and 68% in the pacific regions.

About 58% of school board members serving southern school systems responded that the school board president always or nearly always displays "ability to influence people" compared to almost 42% of school board members serving school systems in the northeast, 50% in the central, 42% in the west, and 42% in the pacific region.

#### Board Members by Gender

Perceptions of school board members to real and ideal role and leadership attributes (never, nearly never, and neutral responses were combined and compared against the combined always and nearly always responses) by gender yielded significant relationships ( $p < .05$ ) for 11 out of 94 cross-tabulation procedures. Where four or five significant Chi-square are expected by chance, 11 significant Chi-squares (table 4.3.6) indicates a significant relationship between school board members' responses to role and leadership attributes items and gender although no consistent patterns were discernable.

Of the responding male school board members, almost 47% indicated that the school board president always or nearly always "sets a deadline before

Table 4.3.6  
Always or Nearly Always Responses of Board Members to  
 Roles and Leadership Attributes by Gender

#	Significant Items	<u>Real</u>		<u>Ideal</u>	
		N =	Male	Female	Male
		471	286	471	286
<u>Roles</u>		<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>
28.	Sets agenda deadline	47	37		
30.	Maintains order during meetings			99**	96**
36.	Calls special board meetings	55	46		
38.	Serves as a rubber stamp	16	26		
45.	Motivates board members			75*	84*
<u>Leadership attributes</u>					
49.	Physical vitality and stamina			85*	92*
50.	Written communication skills			87*	92*
53.	Ability to win and hold trust			59	51
61.	Makes intuitive judgments	56	46		
66.	Envisions schooling			65	56
*	Important item				
**	Crucial Item				

the meeting for placing items on the agenda" compared to about 37% of the responding female school board members.

Almost 99% of the male school board members who responded indicated that the school board president always or nearly always should "maintain order during school board meetings" compared to about 96% of the responding female school board members.

Of the responding school board members, 55% of the males and almost 46% of the females responded that the president of the school board always or nearly always "calls special meeting of the board."

About 16% of the responding male school board members and almost 26% of the female school board members responded that the school board president always or nearly always "serves as a rubber stamp for the superintendent." The president of the school board should always or nearly always "motivate board members" according to almost 75% of the male and 84% of the female school board members who responded.

Almost 92% of the responding female school board members responded that the school board president should always or nearly always display "physical vitality and stamina" compared to 85% of the responding males.

About 92% of the female school board members who responded indicated that the school board president should always or nearly always display "written communication skills" compared to 87% of the male school

board members. The president of the school board should always or nearly always display "ability to win and hold trust" according to almost 51% of the female school board members who responded compared to about 59% of the males.

Almost 56% of the male school board members and 46% of the female school board members who responded indicated that the school board president always or nearly always displays "ability to make judgments based on gut feelings."

Of the responding male school board members, almost 65% indicated that the school board president should always or nearly always display "ability to envision what schooling should be" compared to 56% of the female school board members who responded.

#### Board Members by Age

Of 94 cross-tabulation procedures of school board members' perceptions of the board president's role and leadership attributes by age (table 4.3.7) 12 yielded significant Chi-squares when only four or five would be expected by chance. Due to the small frequency of school board members aged 25 or less, these respondents were grouped with those in the 26 to 35 category to reduce the incidence of cells having expected frequencies less than five. In many of the cases (nine) where statistically significant differences in responses occur, the general trend was for older board members to perceive their president as

Table 4.3.7

Always or Nearly Always Responses of Board Members to  
Roles and Leadership Attributes by Age

Significant Items	N =	<u>Real</u>					<u>Ideal</u>				
		<u>&lt;35</u>	<u>36-40</u>	<u>41-50</u>	<u>51-60</u>	<u>&gt;60</u>	<u>&lt;35</u>	<u>36-40</u>	<u>41-50</u>	<u>51-60</u>	<u>&gt;60</u>
<u>Roles</u>		<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>
26. Distributes agenda		42	45	53	57	69*	63	65	71*	75*	82*
30. Maintains order during meetings		77*	79*	87*	88*	89*					
31. Keeps meetings focused		61	58	70*	72*	77*					
32. Establishes meeting rules							91*	82*	86*	88*	74*
36. Calls special board meetings							58	62	61	72*	78*
37. Appoints board committees		55	52	57	70*	71*	64	63	70*	80*	83*
38. Serves as board spokesman		66	70*	79*	81*	79*					
47. Evaluates staff		16	16	19	29	12					
<u>Leadership attributes</u>											
49. Physical vitality and stamina							89*	82*	88*	92*	95**
57. Flexibility and Adaptability		45	59	49	64	61					
* Important item											
** Crucial item											

being more active than did younger board members.

The percentage of responding school board members indicating that the school board president always or nearly always "ensures distribution of the agenda far enough in advance of the school board meetings" increases with age. About 42% of school board members less than 35 years of age, 45% of those 36 to 40, 53% from age 41 to 50, 57% from 51 to 60, and 69% over 60 responded in this manner. Almost 63% of school board members less than 35 years of age, 65% from 36 to 40, 71% from 41 to 50, 75% from 51 to 60, and 82% of responding school board members indicated that the school board president always or nearly always should "ensure distribution of the agenda far enough in advance of school board meetings."

The president of the school board "maintains order during school board meetings" according to almost 77% of responding school board members less than 35 years of age, 79% from ages 36 to 40, 87% from 41 to 50, 88% from 51 to 60 years, and about 89% of responding school board members over age 60.

Only about 58% of school board members from age 36 to 40 years responded that the president of the school board "keeps meetings focused" compared to almost 77% over age 60 (61 of age less than 35, 70% from 41 to 50 years, and 72% from 51 to 60 years).

Nearly 91% of school board presidents less than 35 years of age responded that the school board president should always or nearly always

"establish rules for conduct of the meetings" compared to only 74% of those over age 60. About 82% from age 36 to 40, 86% from age 41 to 50, and almost 88% of school board members from age 51 to 60 responded similarly.

About 58% of responding school board members less than 35 years of age responded that the school board president always or nearly always should "call special meetings of the school board" compared to 78% of those over 60, about 62% of ages 36 to 40, 61% of ages 41 to 50, and 72% from 51 to 60 years of age.

Almost 52% of responding school board members from 36 to 40 years of age responded that the school board president always or nearly always "appoints board members to board committees" compared to almost 71% over age 60, about 55% less than 35 years of age, 57% from 41 to 50, and 70% from 51 to 60 years of age. About 64% of school board members younger than 35, 63% from 36 to 40, 70% from 41 to 50, 80% from 51 to 60, and 83% of responding school board members over 60 years of age responded that the school board president always or nearly always should "appoint board members to board committees."

Older school board members who responded feel more strongly that the school board president "serves as school board spokesman." About 66% of school board members less than 35, 70% from 36 to 40, 79% from 41 to 50, 81% from 51 to 60, and 79% over 60 years of age who responded indicated

that the school board president always or nearly always "serves as school board spokesman."

About 16% of the responding school board members less than 35 and from 36 to 40 years of age, 19% from 41 to 50, 29% from 51 to 60, and 12% over 60 responded that the president of the school board always or nearly always "evaluates staff." Caution is exercised here; this item may have been misinterpreted.

Older school board members feel more strongly about "physical vitality and stamina" than do younger board members. Almost 89% of school board members less than 35, 82% from 36 to 40, and almost 88% from 41 to 50 years of age responded that the school board president always or nearly always should display "physical vitality and stamina" compared to 92% of those responding from 51 to 60 and 95% of those over 60 years of age.

Almost 45% of the responding school board members less than 35, 59% from 36 to 40, and almost 49% from 41 to 50 years of age responded that the school board president always or nearly always displays "flexibility and adaptability to changing conditions" compared to 64% of those from 51 to 60 and almost 61% over age 60.

#### Board Members by School System Enrollment

Cross-tabulation procedures with the calculation of Chi-square and level of significance were utilized to investigate the relationship between

perceptions of the real and ideal role and leadership attributes of the school board president by the school system enrollment for school board members. Never, nearly never, and neutral responses to the real and ideal role and leadership attributes were combined, and responses of always and nearly always were combined. Choices of school system enrollment were collapsed into two classes: (1) fewer than 5,000 students and (2) 5,000 students or more.

Of 94 cross-tabulation procedures run, seven were significant at the .05 level: four or five would be expected to be significant by chance. There is a difference in the perceptions of school board members serving school systems with enrollments of less than 5,000 students and those serving school systems with 5,000 or more students concerning the real and ideal role and leadership attributes of the school board president. Summarized in table 4.3.8 are the results of the cross-tabulation procedures of school board members perceptions of real and ideal role and leadership attributes items by school system enrollment. No trends in the responses of board members by system size in a consistent direction were discernable.

There is a difference in school board members' perceptions of the role of the school board president by school system enrollment with board members who serve larger systems placing greater importance to understanding the real role of advance distribution of the agenda than board members from smaller systems. About 62% of the responding school board members who serve

Table 4.3.8

Percentages of Always or Nearly Always Responses of Board Members to Roles and Leadership Attributes by School System Enrollment

#	Significant Items	N =	<u>Real</u>		<u>Ideal</u>	
			Small	Large	Small	Large
			549	235	549	235
	<u>Roles</u>		%	%	%	%
26.	Distributes agenda		50	62		
27.	Supplies supplemental materials		43	54		
39.	Assigns reports to admin. staff		68*	58		
	<u>Leadership attributes</u>					
50.	Written communication skills		49	58	88*	93*
70.	Accepts responsibility				96**	100**
71.	Willingness to help others		67*	59		
*	Important item					
**	Crucial item					

school systems enrolling 5,000 or more students responded that the board president always or nearly always "ensures distribution of the agenda far enough in advance of school board meetings" compared to about 50% of the board members responding from school systems that enroll less than 5,000.

School board members who serve school systems enrolling 5,000 or more students perceived more strongly than board members serving school systems enrolling less than 5,000 students that the board president always or nearly always "ensures pertinent supplemental materials are supplied with the meeting agenda." Almost 54% of the board members serving the larger systems responded with the president always or nearly always "ensures pertinent supplemental materials are supplied with the meeting agenda" compared to about 43% of those from smaller systems.

School board members from larger school systems did not feel as strongly as board members from smaller systems about the importance of "assigns administrative staff to compile reports/materials needed by the board" to understanding the ideal role of the school board president. About 58% of the responding board members serving systems that enroll 5,000 or more students responded that the board president should always or nearly always "assign administrative staff to compile reports/materials needed by the board" compared to almost 68% of the responding board members who serve school systems that enroll less than 5,000 students.

"Written communication skills" are perceived by the responding school board members to be more important to the real and ideal role of the board president in school systems enrolling 5,000 students or more than school systems enrolling less than 5,000 students. About 58% of the responding board members from large systems responded that the board president always or nearly always displays "written communication skills" while almost 93% of these responded that the board president should always or nearly always display "written communication skills." This is compared to almost 49% of the responding school board members serving smaller systems who responded that the board president always or nearly always displays "written skills and almost 88% who responded that the president should always or nearly always display "written communication skills."

Almost all (99.5) of the board members who responded from school systems that enroll 5,000 or more students indicated that the board president should always or nearly always display "willingness to accept responsibility" compared to about 96% of those who serve school systems enrolling less than 5,000 students. Although statistically significant, this difference in the perceptions of board members serving larger and smaller systems may not be meaningful.

"Willingness to help others with their problems" was more important to understanding the real role of the school board president in smaller systems

than in larger ones according to the school board members who responded. Of the responding school board members serving school systems that enroll less than 5,000 students, 67% responded that the board president always or nearly always displays "willingness to help other with their problems" compared to about 59% of those who responded from school systems enrolling 5,000 or more students.

#### Board members by Education Attainment

Summarized in table 4.3.9 are the significant Chi-squares regarding school board members perceptions of the school board president's real and ideal role and leadership attributes by level of educational attainment. Always or nearly always responses to the role and leadership attributes items were compared to other responses and level of education attainment of less than high school was combined with high school graduate response option to reduce the incidence of cells having expected frequencies of less than five.

Of the 94 cross-tabulation procedures, seven had significant results (four or five are expected due to chance) indicating differences in school board members perceptions of the school board president's real and ideal role and leadership attributes by level of educational attainment.

The importance to the real role of the school board president of "maintains order during school board meetings" increased with education according to the perceptions of the responding school board members. Of

Table 4.3.9

Always or Nearly Always Responses of Board Members to  
Role and Leadership Attributes by Educational Attainment

#	Significant items	N =	<u>Real</u>				<u>Ideal</u>			
			H.S. or less 67	Post H.S. 157	4 yr Coll. 252	Adv. deg. 294	H.S. or less 67	Post H.S. 157	4 yr Coll. 252	Adv. Deg. 294
<u>Roles</u>			<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>
30.	Maintains order during meetings		78*	80*	88*	87*				
44.	Orients new board members		37	23	20	23				
47.	Evaluates staff		30	23	21	13	50	46	37	34
<u>Leadership attributes</u>										
54.	Ability to influence people						67*	84*	84*	88*
61.	Makes intuitive judgments		43	51	58	53				
72.	Shows caring for people		68*	62	75*	77*				

95

those responding, about 78% of with levels of education of high school graduate or less responded that the board president always or nearly always "maintains order during school board meeting." About 80% of those with post high school training, 88% with four year degrees, and about 87% of those with advanced college degrees responded similarly.

About 37% of the responding school board members who are high school graduates or less, about 23% of board member with post high school training, about 20% of the responding board members with four year college degrees, and about 23% of the responding board members with advanced college degrees responded that the board president always or nearly always "provides for the orientation of new board members." There were differences in the perceptions of school board members concerning the board president's role of orienting new board members by education attainment.

The importance responding board members attached to "evaluates staff" to the board president's real and ideal roles decreased with increased levels of education. Almost 30% of those with high school education or less, almost 23% with post high school training, about 21% with four year college degrees, and about 13% of those with advance college degrees responded that the board president always or nearly always "evaluates staff." About 50% with high school or less, about 46% with post high school training, almost 37% with four year college degrees, and almost 34% with advanced college degrees

responded that the board president should always or nearly always "evaluate staff." Caution is taken here because comments provided by school board members in longhand near their responses to this item indicate that the item may have been misinterpreted.

The importance that school board members attach to "ability to influence people" to the board president's ideal leadership attributes increases with increased education attainment. About 67% of the responding school board members with high school educations or less, about 84% of those with post high school training, about 84% with four year college degrees, and almost 88% of those with advanced college degrees responded that the board president should always or nearly always display "ability to influence people."

Perceptions of responding board members concerning the board president's intuitive judgement also differed by level of educational attainment. About 43% of those with post high school training responded that the school board president always or nearly always displays "ability to make judgments based on gut feelings" compared to almost 58% of the responding board members with four year college degrees. About 51% of the responding board members with high school educations or less and almost 53% with advanced college degrees responded in a similar fashion.

About 68% of the responding board members with high school educations or less and about 62% of those with post high school training, about

75% with four year college degrees, and about 77% of those with advanced college degrees responded that the board president always or nearly always "demonstrates caring for people."

#### Respondents by Presidential Experience

Summarized in Appendix 4 are the results of significant ( $p = .05$ ) 57 out of the 94 cross-tabulation procedures of respondents' (presidents, past presidents and school board members) perceptions concerning the school board president's role and leadership attributes by the responses to whether they are currently school board president, past president, or never been school board president. Current school board presidents give more favorable ratings of themselves in their current role than do past presidents and school board members, and past school board presidents tend to respond more like school board members than school board presidents.

#### Summary

This chapter has presented descriptions of the demographic and personal characteristics of the responding school board members and school board presidents and past president respondents. Also included in this chapter were the findings of this study with respect to each research question. Results to research question one identified the crucial and important elements of the school board president and perceived by school board members and by school board presidents and past presidents. Results to research question two

identified the crucial and important leadership attributes of the school board presidents as perceived by school board members and by school board presidents and past presidents. Research question three established the relationships between selected demographic variables and respondents' views of the real and ideal role and the real and ideal leadership attributes of the school board president.

CHAPTER FIVE  
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS  
FOR FURTHER STUDY

This chapter includes a review of the purpose of the study, a restatement of the research questions, a description of the research methods employed, a summary of the findings, and conclusions based upon an analysis of the data. Recommendations are also included.

Summary

The purpose of the study was to determine the real and ideal role and the real and ideal leadership attributes of the school board members serving as board presidents in National School Board Association member school districts. A second purpose was to examine the relationship of those roles and attributes to selected demographic variables. This study utilized survey research methods to investigate the questions inherent in the purpose.

The instrument for this study was developed primarily through a review of the related literature. Respondents were asked to rate each role item and each leadership attribute item on a five point scale, with 1 designating never and 5 designating always, according to the degree to which the president of their school board engages in and should engage in the specific activity or displays and should display the measured attribute. Data were processed using the

Statistical Program for the Social Sciences (SPSS-X). Items where 95% of the respondents indicated that the school board president always or nearly always engages in an activity were deemed crucial real roles of the school board president. Items where 95% of the respondents indicated that the school board president should always or nearly always engage in were deemed crucial ideal roles. Real and ideal roles always or nearly always applying to school board president as indicated by 67% of the respondents were identified as important. The real and ideal leadership attributes of the school board president were evaluated similarly. Cross-tabulations, Chi-squares and tests of significance were utilized to investigate the relationships between selected variables and responses of board presidents, past presidents, and school board members with respect to their perceptions of the real and ideal role and real and ideal leadership attributes of their school board president.

### Findings

School board members perceive the board president's real role to consist of the highly visible activities of "presiding over board meetings," "maintaining order during meetings," "keeping meetings focused," and "serving as the board spokesman." They believe the board president's ideal role should include not only the highly visible activities but also services to board members like "distributing the agenda along with pertinent supplemental materials,"

Table 5.1

Summary of Crucial and Important Roles

	Presidents		Past Presidents		Board Members	
	Real	Ideal	Real	Ideal	Real	Ideal
25. Builds agenda						
26. Distributes agenda		I		I		I
27. Supplies supplemental materials		I		I		I
28. Sets agenda deadline						
29. Presides over board meetings	C	C	C	C	C	C
30. Maintains order during meetings	C	C	I	C	I	C
31. Keeps meetings focused	I	C		C	I	C
32. Establishes meeting rules	I	I		I		I
33. Facilitates board work	I	I		I		I
34. Builds consensus at meetings	I	I		I		I
35. Plans board in-service						
36. Calls special board meetings		I				
37. Appoints board committees	I	I		I		I
38. Serves as board spokesman	I	I	I	I	I	I
39. Assigns reports to admin. staff						
40. Acts as sounding board for supt.	I	I		I		I
41. Serves as rubber stamp for supt.	I	I	I	I		I
42. Instructs board on supt. relations						
43. Keeps supt. comm. open	I	C		I		I
44. Orients new board members		I		I		
45. Motivates board members		I		I		I
47. Evaluates staff						
I	Important					
C	Crucial					

Table 5.1 (Continued)

Summary of Crucial and Important Leadership Attributes

	Presidents		Past Presidents		Board Members	
	Real	Ideal	Real	Ideal	Real	Ideal
48. Self-confidence	I	C		C	I	C
49. Physical vitality and stamina	I	I		I	I	I
50. Written communication skills	I	I		I		I
51. Oral communication skills	I	C		C		C
52. Skill in interpersonal relations	I	C		I		C
53. Ability to win and hold trust	I	C		C		C
54. Ability to influence people	I	I		I		I
55. Ability to motivate people	I	C		I		I
56. Ability to resolve conflicts	I	C		I		C
57. Flexibility and adaptability I	C		I		I	
58. Stress tolerance	I	C		C		I
59. Ability to analyze events	I	C		I		I
60. Makes hard data judgments	I	C		C		C
61. Makes intuitive judgments	I					
62. Organizes resources	I	I		I		I
63. Planning ability	I	C		I		I
64. Gather info for decisions	I	I		I		I
65. Decision making ability	I	C		C	I	C
66. Envisions schooling	I	I		I		C
67. Knowledge of schooling	I	I		I		I
68. Ability to evaluate people	I	I		I		I
69. Ability to evaluate programs		I		I		I
70. Accepts responsibility	C	C	I	C	I	C
71. Willingness to help others	I	I		I		I
72. Shows caring for people	I	C	I	C	I	C

I Important  
C Crucial

"establishing rules for the conduct of board meetings," "facilitating board work," "building consensus at meetings appointing board committees," "orienting new board members," and "motivating board members." Additionally, board members believe the ideal role of the board president should include activities related to superintendent relations such as "not serving as a rubber stamp for the superintendent" and "keeping communications open between the board and the superintendent."

School board presidents perceived that their current role includes highly visible activities. "Presiding over board meetings" and "maintaining order during meetings" were perceived by board presidents to be crucial roles. "Keeping meeting focused," "establishing rules for the conduct of meetings," "consensus building during meetings," and "serving as board spokesman" are among the highly visible activities that are viewed as important roles of the school board president as they perceive it. Also included in the school board president's real role as perceived by board presidents themselves are board member service activities such as "appointing board committees" and superintendent relations activities like "acting as a sounding board" and "not serving as a rubber stamp for the superintendent."

School board presidents believe the ideal role of the board president should include the additional highly visible activity of "calling special board meetings," additional board member services like "distribution of the agenda

along with pertinent supplemental materials," "orienting new board members," and "motivating board members."

Past school board presidents perceive the current role of their board presidents more critically than do the presidents and other board members. "Presiding over the board meeting" is the only activity they perceive as crucial to the president's role and "maintaining order at the meetings," "serving as board spokesman," and "not serving as a rubber stamp for the superintendent" are viewed as the only activities deemed important to the president's current role. With the exception of few items, school board members, past presidents, and presidents agree on the ideal role of the school board president. In addition to the activities perceived by past presidents to be crucial and important to the president's real role, the ideal role includes such highly visible activities as "appointing board members to committees," "keeping meetings focused," "establishing meeting rules," and "facilitating board work." Expanded board member services of "distributing the agenda along with pertinent supplemental materials," "orienting new board members," and "motivating board members" are included by past presidents among the important ideal roles of the school board president. Past presidents also perceive the board president's ideal role to include superintendent relations activities such as "acting as a sounding board for the superintendent" and "keeping communication open between the board and the superintendent."

School board members perceive the board president to display few of the generic attributes of leaders. "Self-confidence," "physical vitality and stamina," "ability to make decisions," "acceptance of responsibility," and "caring for people" are perceived by board members as important current leadership attributes of school board presidents. All of the attributes included on the survey (except for "ability to make judgments based on gut feeling") are perceived by board members to be either crucial or important ideal leadership attributes of the board president.

School board presidents perceived all of the listed leadership attributes except for "ability to evaluate programs," to be important to the real leadership attributes of the board president, and all but "ability to make judgments based on intuitive feelings" as crucial or important to the ideal leadership attributes of the board president.

Past school board presidents were the most discriminating among leadership attributes of the three groups. Only "demonstrates caring for people" was reported by past presidents to be an important real leadership attribute of school board president. None of the board president's current leadership attributes are considered by past presidents to be crucial. Past presidents' views of the ideal leadership attributes were similar to those of the presidents and board members even though their ratings tended to be slightly lower than either of the other groups.

Cross-tabulations, Chi-square, and tests of significance revealed relationships between respondents perceptions concerning the board president's real and ideal role and leadership attributes and some of the selected demographic variables. Where statistically significant response differences were noted among responding presidents, women saw their role as more active than did men presidents. Also, board presidents who responded from larger (5,000 students or more) districts saw a more active role for themselves than did their counterparts in smaller (less than 5,000 students) districts.

Where statistically significant response differences were noted among responding past presidents, those from larger school systems saw a more active role (real and ideal) for their board president than did those from smaller systems, and those serving boards that have elected presidents saw a more active role for their president than did the past presidents who serve on boards that select their president in other ways.

Relationships between the responses of other school board members and some of the selected demographic variables were also noted. Where statistically significant differences occur, school board members from the southern region tended to see a more active role for their board presidents than did board members from other geographic regions and there was a general tendency for older board members to see a more active role for their presidents

than do younger board members. Although statistically significant differences in board member responses were found by gender, school system enrollment, and educational attainment no discernible patterns in these were evident.

### Conclusions

There is general consensus across board members, past presidents and presidents, concerning the ideal role and leadership attributes of school board presidents. Most of the 22 roles and 25 leadership attributes specified in the study are important or crucial ideal roles for the school board president. School board presidents should do and be many things and should do them and be them most the time.

There is marginal disagreement concerning the current (real) roles and leadership attributes of the school board president. This study has arrived at the not surprising discrepancy between the perceptions of those who do a job and those who watch that job being done. Board presidents view themselves as performing most of the roles and displaying most of the attributes at reasonable levels. Other board members do not affirm those behaviors to the same degree.

Survey results were expected to indicate that past presidents would respond similarly to current presidents. The results, however, found past presidents ratings of their president to be lower than the presidents' ratings of themselves and of the ratings of other board members.

## Recommendations

Survey results suggest that high expectations have been established for school board presidents. These may serve as a benchmark for board presidents to compare their performance.

The National School Board Association should make use of this information to begin to develop materials for the inservice of board presidents. However, the magnitude of the ideal roles and leadership attributes along with the variability of perceptions concerning the president's current role make it difficult to determine what training is necessary.

Questions remain for future researchers. With the ideal role and leadership attributes of the school board president having been established, there is still disagreement between board presidents and other board members concerning the role and leadership attributes of current presidents. The perceptions of superintendents may shed additional light as might direct observation of school board presidents and task analysis of the school board presidency. Additionally, if board presidents commit themselves to the ideal roles and leadership attributes, which one or ones should be implemented first; which are most important; which, if any, hold the greatest promise for impacting the effective governance of schools?

What school board presidents do and what kinds of leaders they are is

still not well known even though what they should do and what kinds of leaders they should be has been clarified by this study. The conclusions are few; questions remain.

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Appendix A

THE AMERICAN  
**SCHOOL  
BOARD**  
JOURNAL

1680 DUKE STREET  
ALEXANDRIA, VA 22314  
(703) 838-6722

Dear Subscriber,

Please take a minute to help your magazine, The American SCHOOL BOARD Journal, promote a greater understanding and deeper appreciation of school board service. Help us by completing the enclosed survey. At the same time, you'll be making your views count among other school leaders across North America.

For the last 14 years, SCHOOL BOARD and Virginia Tech have questioned school board members about their concerns and the special challenges they face.

Here's your chance to stand up and be counted, too.

The survey results, which will be featured in our January 1992 issue, traditionally are publicized from coast to coast by the national wire services and local news media. This exposure helps promote the importance of board service and calls attention to the achievements and concerns of local school leaders such as yourself.

Your participation is crucial for the survey to be valid. Only a select number of board members were chosen to receive this survey, so it's essential that you take a minute now to complete it.

A postage-paid, self-addressed envelope is included for your convenience. All individual responses will be kept confidential.

I know you're busy, so I'm especially grateful for your time and cooperation.

Cordially,

Gregg W. Downey  
Editor-in-chief

P.S. To be eligible to win a five-book treasury of ideas and advice, affix your mailing label to the postage-paid envelope when you mail your survey back. After the surveys are removed, we'll pick five envelopes at random. The lucky winners will receive the following value-packed books: *Becoming a Better Board Member*, *School Boards and the Ballot Box*, *Board Member Planner*, *Time For Curriculum*, and *School Board Success: Right from the Start*.

## 1991 NATIONAL SURVEY OF SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS

### DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

*Directions:* Please respond with the following information.

1. In what state is your school system located? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Describe the approximate size of your school system's enrollment by checking one of the following:
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Fewer than 1,000
  - \_\_\_\_\_ 1,000 to 4,999
  - \_\_\_\_\_ 5,000 to 9,999
  - \_\_\_\_\_ 10,000 to 24,999
  - \_\_\_\_\_ 25,000 or more
3. Describe the community your school district serves by checking one of the following:
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Urban
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Suburban
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Rural
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Small town
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Other (please specify)

### PERSONAL INFORMATION

*Directions:* Please respond with the following information.

4. Are you \_\_\_\_\_ male? \_\_\_\_\_ female?
5. Are you
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Black
  - \_\_\_\_\_ White
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Hispanic
  - \_\_\_\_\_ American Indian
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Oriental
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Other (please specify)
6. Age
 

_____ 25 or less	_____ 41-50
_____ 26-35	_____ 51-60
_____ 36-40	_____ Over 60
7. What is your current occupation?
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Professional/managerial
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Business owner
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Clerical
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Sales
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Skilled trades
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Laborer
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Retired
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Homemaker
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Other (please specify)

8. What is your highest education attainment?
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Less than high school graduate
  - \_\_\_\_\_ High school graduate
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Post high school training
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Four-year college degree
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Advanced college degree

9. What is your family income?
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Less than \$20,000
  - \_\_\_\_\_ \$20,000 to \$29,999
  - \_\_\_\_\_ \$30,000 to \$39,999
  - \_\_\_\_\_ \$40,000 to \$49,999
  - \_\_\_\_\_ \$50,000 to \$59,999
  - \_\_\_\_\_ \$60,000 to \$69,999
  - \_\_\_\_\_ \$70,000 to \$79,999
  - \_\_\_\_\_ \$80,000 to \$89,999
  - \_\_\_\_\_ \$90,000 to \$99,999
  - \_\_\_\_\_ \$100,000 to \$149,999
  - \_\_\_\_\_ \$150,000 or more

10. Are you married? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No
11. How many children do you have in public school (K-12) at this time? \_\_\_\_\_
12. Do you own or rent your home?
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Own \_\_\_\_\_ Rent

### SCHOOL BOARD INFORMATION

*Directions:* Please respond with the following information.

13. How many years have you served on the school board? \_\_\_\_\_
14. How many terms have you served on the school board?
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Less than one term
  - \_\_\_\_\_ One term
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Two terms
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Three terms
  - \_\_\_\_\_ More than three terms
15. How many members of your school board are \_\_\_\_\_ men? \_\_\_\_\_ women?
16. How many members of your school board are
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Black
  - \_\_\_\_\_ White
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Hispanic
  - \_\_\_\_\_ American Indian
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Oriental
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Other (please specify)

17. Are members of your school board  
 \_\_\_\_\_ elected? \_\_\_\_\_ appointed?

18. How is your school board president chosen?  
 \_\_\_\_\_ elected by voters  
 \_\_\_\_\_ leading popular vote getter  
 \_\_\_\_\_ elected by school board  
 \_\_\_\_\_ tenure on the school board  
 \_\_\_\_\_ each board member takes a turn

19. Please check one:  
 \_\_\_\_\_ I am currently the school board president.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ I was formerly the school board president.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ I never have been the school board president.

20. Has your board made final purchasing decisions in any of the following categories in the past 12 months? (Check all that apply.)  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Athletic, gym, playground equipment  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Audiovisual equipment  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Building products/services  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Classroom equipment  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Communication signal and alarm systems  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Computer hardware or software  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Curriculum materials  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Financial and employee benefits  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Flooring and floor covering  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Food service  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Heating/air conditioning/ventilation  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Insurance  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Maintenance  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Music  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Transportation

21. Which of the following publications are mailed to you personally? Which ones are passed on to you? Which do you read regularly? (Check all that apply.)

Mailed to me personally	Passed on to me	I read regularly	
_____	_____	_____	NASSP Bulletin
_____	_____	_____	Executive Educator
_____	_____	_____	School Administrator
_____	_____	_____	American School Board Journal
_____	_____	_____	Phi Delta Kappan
_____	_____	_____	Educational Leadership
_____	_____	_____	Principal
_____	_____	_____	American School & University
_____	_____	_____	School and College
_____	_____	_____	School Board News

22. Is a major construction or renovation project planned for your school system during the next 12 months?  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

If yes, what is the estimated cost of this construction?  
 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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**ISSUES**

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*Directions:* Please respond to the following.

23. From the following list, please rank the top three most pressing concerns in your school district. (Place 1 next to your most pressing concern; 2 next to your second most pressing concern; and 3 next to your third most pressing concern.)

- \_\_\_\_\_ Integration/busing
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Use of drugs
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Declining enrollment
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Crime/vandalism
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Management/leadership
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Facilities
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Personnel relations
  - \_\_\_\_\_ State mandates
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Curriculum development
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Large schools/overcrowding
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Pupils' lack of interest/truancy
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Poor curriculum/poor standards
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Difficulty of getting good teachers
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Parents' lack of interest
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Lack of respect for other students/teachers
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Collective bargaining
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Other (please specify)
-

24. To what extent are the following concerns becoming a serious problem in your district? (On a scale of 1 to 5, please circle the most appropriate number: 1 = low impact, 5 = high impact.)

	Low Impact				High Impact
Declining real estate values	1	2	3	4	5
Increased cost of fuel	1	2	3	4	5
Tax revolts	1	2	3	4	5
Shortfalls of state funding	1	2	3	4	5
Disputes involving ethnocentric or multicultural curriculum	1	2	3	4	5
Political pressures to alter the curriculum and/or materials (e.g., AIDS education, sex education, textbooks, contents of library)	1	2	3	4	5

### SCHOOL BOARD PRESIDENTS' ROLES

**Directions:** There are no right answers to these questions. We are interested in your views concerning the role and function of the school board president/chair. In the left column, labeled "Real," rate the degree to which your school board president actually does engage in each activity (1 = never, 5 = always). In the right column, labeled "Ideal," rate the degree to which you believe board presidents should engage in each activity.

	Real					Ideal						
	Never	1	2	3	4	5	Never	1	2	3	4	5
25. Builds the agenda for school board meetings <i>56</i>	✓	1	2	3	4	5	✓	1	2	3	4	5
26. Ensures distribution of the agenda far enough in advance of school board meetings	✓	1	2	3	4	5	✓	1	2	3	4	5
27. Ensures pertinent supplemental materials are supplied with the meeting agenda <i>100</i>	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	5	
28. Sets a deadline before the meeting for placing items on the agenda	✓	1	2	3	4	5	✓	1	2	3	4	5
29. Presides over the school board meeting	1	2	3	4	5	5	1	2	3	4	5	5
30. Maintains order during school board meetings	1	2	3	4	5	5	1	2	3	4	5	5
31. Keeps meetings focused <i>108</i>	1	2	3	4	5	5	1	2	3	4	5	5
32. Establishes rules for conduct of the meetings	1	2	3	4	5	5	1	2	3	4	5	5
33. Facilitates the work of the board	1	2	3	4	5	5	1	2	3	4	5	5
34. Works during school board meetings to build a consensus	1	2	3	4	5	5	✓	1	2	3	4	5
35. Assumes responsibility for planning in-service training for board members <i>116</i>	1	2	3	4	5	5	✓	1	2	3	4	5
36. Calls special meetings of the school board	1	2	3	4	5	5	1	2	3	4	5	5
37. Appoints board members to board committees	1	2	3	4	5	5	1	2	3	4	5	5
38. Serves as board spokesman	✓	1	2	3	4	5	✓	1	2	3	4	5
39. Assigns administrative staff to compile reports/materials needed by the board <i>124</i>	1	2	3	4	5	5	1	2	3	4	5	5
40. Acts as a sounding board or lightning rod for the superintendent in anticipating board members' attitudes, reactions, and probable actions to administrative initiatives	1	2	3	4	5	5	1	2	3	4	5	5
41. Serves as a rubber stamp for the superintendent <i>128</i>	1	2	3	4	5	5	1	2	3	4	5	5
42. Instructs board members on appropriate board/superintendent relationships	1	2	3	4	5	5	1	2	3	4	5	5
43. Keeps communications between the board and the superintendent open <i>132</i>	1	2	3	4	5	5	1	2	3	4	5	5
44. Provides for the orientation of new board members	1	2	3	4	5	5	1	2	3	4	5	5
45. Motivates board members	1	2	3	4	5	5	1	2	3	4	5	5
46. Encourages board	1	2	3	4	5	5	1	2	3	4	5	5
47. Evaluates staff <i>140</i>	1	2	3	4	5	5	1	2	3	4	5	5

**SCHOOL BOARD PRESIDENTS' LEADERSHIP ATTRIBUTES**

**Directions:** This section seeks to explore the leadership attributes of the school board president/chair. In the left column, labeled "Real," rate the degree to which your school board president actually does display each attribute (1 = never, 5 = always). In the right column, labeled "Ideal," rate the degree to which you believe school board presidents should display each attribute (1 = never, 5 = always).

	Real					Ideal					
	Never	1	2	3	4	5	Never	1	2	3	4
48. Self-confidence	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	
49. Physical vitality and stamina	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	
50. Written communication skills	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	
51. Oral communication skills	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	
52. Skill in interpersonal relations	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	
53. Ability to win and hold trust	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	
54. Ability to influence people	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	
55. Ability to motivate people	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	
56. Ability to resolve conflicts	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	
57. Flexibility and adaptability to changing conditions	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	
58. Stress tolerance	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	
59. Ability to analyze conditions, potential outcomes, and consequences of events	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	
60. Ability to make judgments based on hard data	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	
61. Ability to make judgments based on gut feelings	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	
62. Ability to organize resources to accomplish tasks, achieve objectives, and solve problems	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	
63. Ability to set goals, establish procedures, and focus resources on achieving them (planning)	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	
64. Ability to gather information needed for decision making	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	
65. Ability to make decisions	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	
66. Ability to envision what schooling should be	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	
67. Knowledge of schooling	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	
68. Ability to evaluate people	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	
69. Ability to evaluate programs	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	
70. Willingness to accept responsibility	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	
71. Willingness to help others with their problems	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	
72. Demonstration of caring for people	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	

**Thank you for your help.**

Please use the enclosed postage-paid envelope to return the survey.  
 Or mail it to:  
 The American School Board Journal  
 1680 Duke Street  
 Alexandria, Virginia 22314

Appendix B

Matrix of Literature on the School Board President's Role

Author	<u>Items</u>													
	<u>25</u>	<u>26</u>	<u>27</u>	<u>28</u>	<u>29</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>31</u>	<u>32</u>	<u>33</u>	<u>34</u>	<u>35</u>	<u>36</u>	<u>37</u>	<u>38</u>
NSBA '70	√	√	√		√	√	√					√	√	√
PSBA '72	√	√				√							√	
Foldesy '83	√	√												
MacDonald '83	√							√						
Munnely '83								√						
Ficklen '85	√		√		√	√	√	√		√	√			√
Heller, Katz '85					√						√			√
Lardner '85														
Thomas '85	√					√	√							
I.E.L. '86	√	√				√			√					√
Gardner '88	√													√
Billings '89	√													
Feistritz '89														
Lewis '89	√													
Herman '90	√		√	√	√	√		√						√

Appendix B (Continued)

Matrix of Literature on School Board Presidents Role  
(Cont.)

<u>Author</u>	<u>Items</u>								
	<u>39</u>	<u>40</u>	<u>41</u>	<u>42</u>	<u>43</u>	<u>44</u>	<u>45</u>	<u>46</u>	<u>47</u>
NSBA '70		√							
PSBA '72									
Foldesy '83							√		
MacDonald '83									
Munnely '83									
Ficklen '85	√		√	√					
Heller, Katz '85	√			√					
Lardner '85					√				
Thomas '85									
I.E.L. '86		√		√				√	
Gardner '88							√		
Billings'89									
Feistritz '89		√	√						
Lewis '89		√							
Herman '90									

Appendix C

Matrix of Literature on School Board Presidents'  
Leadership Attributes

Author	<u>Item #</u>														
	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	
Stogdill '48		√		√	√								√	√	
NSBA '70					√										
Ficklen '85										√					
Gardner '88	√	√			√	√	√	√		√	√			√	
Georgiades '86		√			√		√								
NASSP '86			√	√	√		√	√	√		√	√	√	√	
Portnoy '86				√	√		√	√							
Immegart '88	√	√					√	√							
Gardner '89	√	√			√	√	√	√		√	√			√	
Gardner, Hatch '89		√			√										
Lewis '89					√										
Herman '90										√					
VT-Danforth '90	√	√	√	√	√		√	√		√		√	√	√	

Appendix C (Continued)

Matrix of Literature on School Board Presidents'  
Leadership Attributes  
(Cont.)

Author	<u>Item #</u>											
	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	
Stogdill '48						√						
NSBA '70					√							
Ficklen '85												
Gardner '88	√	√							√	√	√	
Georgiades '86				√					√			
NASSP '86	√	√	√	√	√	√				√	√	√
Portnoy '86					√					√	√	√
Immegart '88	√	√							√	√	√	√
Gardner '89												
Gardner, Hatch '89												
Lewis '89												
Herman '90												
VT-Danforth '90	√	√	√	√		√	√	√	√	√	√	√

Appendix D

Percentages of Always or Nearly Always Responses of Respondents to Roles and Leadership Attributes by Presidential Experience

#	Significant Items	N =	Real			Ideal		
			Past Pres. 267	Past Pres. 249	Bd. Mem. 784	Past Pres. 267	Past Pres. 249	Bd. Mem. 784
	<u>Roles</u>		<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>
27.	Supplies supplemental materials		56	44	46			
29.	Presides over board meetings		100**	95**	96**			
30.	Maintains order during meetings		96**	85*	85*			
31.	Keeps meetings focused		90*	65	68*			
32.	Establishes meeting rules		81*	62	60			
33.	Facilitates board work		77*	55	54			
34.	Builds consensus at meetings		86*	56	55	92*	89*	86*
35.	Plans board in-service		25	14	13			
36.	Calls special board meetings		63	50	52			
37.	Appoints board committees		73*	65	59			
38.	Serves as board spokesman		82*	71*	76*			
39.	Assigns reports to admin. staff		45	35	52	52	51	65
40.	Acts as sounding board for supt.		76*	49	46	86*	76*	69*
41.	Serves as rubber stamp for supt.		3	11	20			
42.	Instructs board on supt. relations		39	17	20	36	48	53
43.	Keeps supt. communications open		83*	50	59	92*	85*	86*
44.	Orients new board members		42	22	23			
45.	Motivates board members		52	27	27			
47.	Evaluates staff		29	26	39			

\* Important item

\*\* Crucial item

Appendix D (Continued)

Always or Nearly Always Responses of Respondents to  
Roles and Leadership Attributes by Presidential Experience

#	Significant Items	N =	<u>Real</u>			<u>Ideal</u>		
			Pres. 267	Past Pres. 249	Bd. Mem. 784	Pres. 267	Past Pres. 249	Bd. Mem. 784
	Leadership attributes		%	%	%	%	%	%
48.	Self-confidence		86*	64	69*	99**	97**	95**
49.	Physical vitality and stamina		83*	63	69*	92*	82*	88*
50.	Written communication skills		77*	47	51	92*	85*	89*
51.	Oral communication skills		78*	61	63			
52.	Skill in interpersonal relations		79*	48	49			
53.	Ability to win and hold trust		87*	56	56			
54.	Ability to influence people		69*	44	48	92*	85*	84*
55.	Ability to motivate people		70*	40	41			
56.	Ability to resolve conflicts		74*	42	47			
57.	Flexibility and adaptability		78*	54	52			
58.	Stress tolerance		77*	54	56	96**	90*	94*
59.	Ability to analyze events		75*	47	52	98**	93*	95**
60.	Makes hard data judgments		91*	65	65			
61.	Makes intuitive judgments		71*	47	52			
62.	Organizes resources		72*	43	49	94	89*	94*
63.	Planning ability		71*	44	47			
64.	Gather info for decisions		76*	53	50			
65.	Decision making ability		92*	66	72*	100**	97**	97**
66.	Envisions schooling		79*	61	62			
67.	Knowledge of schooling		75*	62	67*			
68.	Ability to evaluate people		79*	47	50			
69.	Ability to evaluate programs		60	50	49			
70.	Accepts responsibility		98**	74*	81*			
71.	Willingness to help others		92*	62	65			
72.	Shows caring for people		93*	68*	72*			

\* Important item

\*\* Crucial item

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