

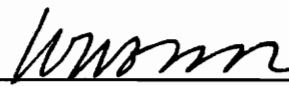
**A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY OF THE EVALUATION OF
PUBLIC SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS IN THE COMMONWEALTH OF
VIRGINIA: THE SCHOOL BOARD CHAIRPERSON'S PERSPECTIVE**

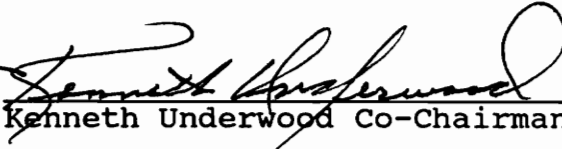
by

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Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
DOCTOR OF EDUCATION
in
Educational Administration

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March 1991

Blacksburg, Virginia

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Committee Co-Chairmen: Wayne Worner and Kenneth Underwood
Educational Administration

(ABSTRACT)

Statement of Problem: This research project was designed to study the policies and procedures used in the Commonwealth of Virginia to evaluate the public school superintendents from the perspective of the School Board chairperson. Specifically, the purposes of the study were: (1) to collect and summarize information describing the superintendent's evaluation policies, procedures and instruments utilized in Virginia Public Schools; (2) to compare existing policies and procedures in Virginia public schools for evaluating the superintendent of schools with those in the literature considered "best practice," (3) to determine if Virginia School Superintendent evaluation policies and procedures vary based on selected variables such as: size of school district, wealth of school district, and the gender of the school board's chairperson.

Research Procedures: A survey questionnaire was developed to collect data for the study. The population included all one hundred thirty public school board chairpersons in the

Commonwealth of Virginia. The questionnaire consisted of seventeen questions, nine of which required short answer responses, i.e., yes, no, do not know; eight questions allowed for open-ended responses.

Outcomes: This study revealed the primary sources of information for the superintendent's evaluation, the major purposes for evaluating, the types of instruments used, and compared nationally accepted "best" practice with practices in Virginia. In addition, this study disclosed the need for improved evaluation processes and procedures including use of: the superintendent's self-evaluation, the job description, jointly established goals and evaluation criteria, interim progress reports, a written summary report, and a professional improvement plan. This study also revealed that one-fifth of the school districts in the Commonwealth of Virginia have no procedure to evaluate the superintendent of schools. Another one-fifth have very informal procedures which are less than satisfactory and do not accomplish the purposes outlined in the literature.

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CHAPTER I

BACKGROUND OF STUDY

Evaluation of the superintendent is an important responsibility which too many boards of education handle poorly, infrequently, or not at all (Braddom, 1986, p. 28). Lewis observed that:

The practices are unclear and the principles are shoddy, and effective systems of evaluation do not exist in schools today with most administrators feeling very vulnerable about it (1982, p. 7).

Braddom supports this position with her statement:

evaluating your superintendent's job performance is one of the most important but least understood functions of the school board (1986, p. 28).

With the increasing emphasis on accountability, however, it is inevitable that school boards will no longer be able to escape the responsibility of seriously and competently evaluating the performance of their chief executive officer (Braddom, 1986, p. 29).

There is nothing new about a board of education's lack of concern for evaluating its superintendent. "What boards fail to recognize is the need for formal evaluation in that many administrators receive little substantial feed-back on their effectiveness" (Gorton, 1976, p. 415). Evaluation is implicit whenever a board makes a decision to extend the superintendent's contract, increase his/her salary or

determine not to renew his/her contract. What is new is the increasing interest in setting up formal procedures for evaluation as a regular and scheduled board activity and against standards agreed to by the evaluatee and the evaluators (Gorton, 1976, p. 415).

Redfern concluded that:

For too long, superintendent evaluation was extremely informal, "So long as everything is okay, you won't hear from us." Never sure how the board viewed his/her performance, the superintendent would ask, "Will I measure up? What if I don't?" Those gnawing questions have caused consternation for many school superintendents (1980, p. 1).

School boards have shared those concerns about evaluations because evaluation of the superintendent and the effectiveness of the district's program are important components in school governance. Redfern also asked, "What constitutes good performance? How can we measure it? These are vital questions for the school boards" (1980, p. 1).

Dittloff suggests that:

The superintendent evaluation should be a part of the planning process in which the school board has an integral role. Once needs are determined by the school board, mutual school board-superintendent objectives can be established. Using those objectives, superintendent's evaluation becomes more than a report on what the superintendent did or did not do. The process also becomes developmental, leading to improvements in programs and performance (1982, p. 41).

Gorton indicates that:

While school superintendents are directly responsible to their boards of education they must also be responsive to other audiences such as the students, the professional staff, the parents, and the school

community. School superintendents need to know how well their leadership and ideas for improvement have met the needs of the school system and the community (1976, p. 415).

Redfern goes on to note, "Although there are several reasons for the evaluation process, in most instances the process is linked to performance evaluation for contract renewal" (1980, p. 1).

Evaluating the Superintendent

Because of the importance of the position and the many audiences to whom they are responsible, superintendents must know how they will be judged. With the many different job tasks required to successfully operate a school system the leadership skills required are numerous and varied. The responsibility of the members of the board of education, as representatives of the community served, is to ensure that the superintendent has adequately fulfilled all of the responsibilities assigned to the position (Redfern, 1980, p. 3).

An examination of current doctoral dissertation studies related to the evaluation of the superintendent identified by a DIALOG computer search found that a majority of the dissertations focused on (a) the criteria used in the evaluation of the superintendent (Powell, 1982; Liddicoat, 1983), and (b) the frequency, procedures and instruments of the superintendent's evaluation (Brown, 1977; Gramitt, 1978;

Grill, 1978; Jess, 1981; Sloan, 1982; & Sarbaugh, 1982). A third group of studies attempted to gain a fuller picture by inquiring about the purpose of evaluating the superintendent in addition to determining criteria; procedures and instruments (Buchanan, 1981; Gould, 1982).

The findings reported in the dissertations coincided with the results of a 1982 American Association of School Administrators national survey which found that across the nation, informal verbal dialogue was used more often as the method of evaluating the superintendent than more formal approaches. However, it was also reported in the literature that (a) formalized evaluation procedures, (b) jointly set criteria, and (c) goals and objectives agreed upon by both the board of education and the superintendent at the outset of the evaluation period were recommended by both superintendent and board members (Cunningham & Hentges, 1982, p. 33).

Dr. Frank K. Flora, Executive Director of the Virginia Association of School Superintendents (VASS), suggests that:

Actually a written contract between the superintendent of schools and the school board should protect the interests of the public for a sound educational system. A definite understanding between the school board and the superintendent will establish a firm basis for a sound relationship between the two. Spelling out salary and fringe benefits is fairness to the superintendent while spelling out a well developed job description and effective evaluation procedures is fairness to the taxpayers. Good communications and clear understandings between a superintendent of schools and the school board are essential if you are

to produce a dynamic public education program for all children and youth (1990, p. 1).

Purpose of the Study

The purposes of this study were to: (a) describe the policies and procedures currently in place in the Commonwealth of Virginia for evaluating the superintendent of schools in each of the one hundred thirty local school divisions; (b) compare existing policies and practices in Virginia with those in the literature considered "best practice" nationally; and (c) determine whether Virginia school superintendents evaluation policies and procedures vary based on selected variables, such as size of district in average daily membership (ADM), expenditures per student in ADM, and gender of the chairperson of the school board.

Significance of the Study

Although public education in the Commonwealth of Virginia is primarily a function and responsibility of the state, the state has delegated the duties of establishing and maintaining a free public school system to school boards at local levels. Each local school board, along with its superintendent of schools, directs local public education and determines the educational needs and desires of the people in the school division. The school board and the superintendent have equally important roles in providing

leadership for the educational community, but the manner in which each fulfills the role differs. Fitzgerald endorsed the position that:

school boards are expected to govern school systems by establishing general policies, by distributing resources for instructional programs, and by overseeing the execution of established policies. The superintendent of schools, as the chief executive officer employed by the board, is responsible for the management of the school system, for organizing personnel and activities, for using school resources effectively, and for communicating with parents, board members, and school personnel (Fitzgerald, 1975, pp. 30-31).

Nunnery has stated that:

In the execution of their respective duties, it is incumbent upon both the board of education and the superintendent to develop unity and harmony in dealing with school problems, to agree on the particular duties of the board and of the superintendent, to grow in understanding of the educational community being served, and to develop respect for each other and for the contribution each member makes to the total effort (1984, pp. 20-21).

Constant attention to school issues and problems and the rapid rate of change in contemporary management technology, however, generate tension between the board of education and the superintendent of schools.

This study of how superintendents are evaluated should be of primary interest to local school boards searching for methods to improve their board/superintendent relationship through the evaluation process. Local boards of education are realizing the value of having an evaluation system which has an approved policy, established procedures, a set of

criteria, and jointly determined goals and objectives against which their superintendent's performance can be measured. The evaluation process lets superintendents know where they stand and it lets board members know how well the district is progressing toward its predetermined goals (Redfern, 1980, pp. 4-5).

Definition of Terms

Superintendent: The chief executive officer of a school system. In the Commonwealth of Virginia, this individual is appointed by the school board, and serves at the discretion of the school board.

School Board: An appointed body of local government possessing legal power to govern a local school district. The board of a public school system is an agency of government created by the state legislature. Its principal functions are policy-making, appraising, legislating, financing, and authorizing.

School Board Member: An individual member of a school board.

Evaluation: The appraisal of results, events, or behaviors in terms of predetermined goals or objectives. The act of comparing desired outcomes with actual outcomes; a measure of effectiveness or efficiency.

Criteria: The standards by which the superintendent's performance is evaluated.

Job Description: A written document that identifies the duties to be performed by the superintendent.

Formal Evaluation: A procedure that ensures validity in the process of collecting and analyzing information about past activities and events in order to plan and control future activities and events.

Informal Evaluation: A procedure of irregular or unofficial process of collecting and analyzing information about past activities and events in order to plan and control future activities and events.

Assumptions

The procedures used by boards of education to evaluate the superintendent's performance were not consistent in all districts.

Although the procedures of evaluation may vary from school district to school district there are significant duties that should be incorporated into the superintendent's evaluation procedure.

The evaluation procedures currently used by most boards of education do not adequately measure the total desired job performance of the superintendent.

Also, selected variables such as size and wealth of school districts, and gender of chairperson of the local school board have a determined effect on the procedures employed.

Delimitations

This study was limited to one hundred thirty school divisions in the Commonwealth of Virginia. Two districts were not included because they were the home district of the researcher of this study and that of a researcher conducting a companion study. Also excluded were city school board chairpersons of jointly operated districts in Bedford City/Bedford County, Emporia City/Greensville County, Fairfax City/Fairfax County, South Boston City/Halifax County and Williamsburg City/James City County where one superintendent operates both districts and the larger governmental structure, the county system, has operational control.

Only one person, the local school board chairperson, from the board of education in each school division was requested to complete the survey instrument.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

A review of the literature related to appraisal methods for evaluating the Superintendent of School's performance is presented in this chapter. It is organized into four sections as follows:

1. Reasons for Evaluating the Superintendent of Schools
2. Criteria for Evaluating the Superintendent of Schools Performance
3. Development of a Plan for the Superintendent's Evaluation
4. Methods of Evaluating Superintendent Performance.

Reasons for Evaluating the Superintendent of Schools

Evaluating the Superintendent of Schools is one of the most important and difficult challenges facing school boards today (Genck, 1983, p. 210). The important reasons for this were summarized by Redfern:

Evaluation plays many roles. It is motivational. It is an aid to planning. It is developmental. It aids in communication. And ultimately, effective evaluation helps to assure a good education for students in our nation's school (1980, p. 71).

The American Association of School Administrators and the National School Boards Association stated that the evaluation process will provide:

1. An annual written assessment of the current status of the superintendent's performance.
2. A continuing record of the effectiveness of the superintendent.
3. Tangible evidence upon which to base decision to renew the superintendent's contract and set his/her salary.
4. Documentation to be used when the superintendent's contract may be renewed or termination action is under consideration.
5. Opportunity for the superintendent to discuss the results of his/her evaluation with the board (1980, p. 24).

As the demand for accountability in education increases, evaluation of the Superintendent of Schools is a logical first step. In business, especially where the free market functions, employers demand an accounting of performance. Likewise, the board of education is concerned with employee accountability. The superintendent's evaluation is the procedure utilized by the board of education to meet this concern for accountability (Lamb, 1972, p. 15).

Buchanan suggests that evaluation is the basis for fluid accountability:

In light of the increased accountability necessary in these times and the need to deal with conflicting views of people and programs under the direction of the

superintendent, a formal, written critical evaluation should be conducted (1981, pp. 41-42).

Greene contended that more dollars for education will not become available until the public confidence is restored in the educational institutions and their leaders and what is happening in schools. He concluded that the public is unanimous in demanding educational accountability. The public expectation is for a reasonable return on any additional investment (1972, p. 5). The Michigan Association of School Administrators also observed that trends in business and industry prompted a widespread thrust for accountability and the quest for more effective appraisal systems of the school superintendent (1975, p. 4).

The American Association of School Administrators, in a 1977 publication, made this significant statement:

The entire accountability movement in education signals a new level of sophistication about performance information, its quality and use, and its communication to these having direct and indirect involvement in the educational operation (1977, p. 9).

Gerald Glaub shared Buchanan's and Greene's view of accountability and evaluation and he proposed that it also had other benefits such as:

1. Help the board and superintendent agree on what is expected of each other, enabling the board to function as policy maker and the superintendent as chief executive.
2. Help the board perceive its own performance more closely.

3. Encourage improved performance, helping the superintendent grow as demands of the job grow.
4. Allow the board and superintendent to deal with differences other than during a crisis.
5. Force the board and superintendent to plan for the future.
6. Enable the board to make informed decision about contract renewal and compensation.
7. Provide a defense against the superintendent's critics (1983, p. 7).

Another area where research studies and literature have indicated that a consensus by the superintendent and the members of the board of education do not exist is the role of the superintendent and board. The perceptions about the superintendent's latitude of authority, budget preparation, policy initiation is noted in Pabian's research in 1971 (p. 26). Tippet's study which corroborates a role discrepancy between the superintendent and board of education is noted and this lack of consensus in defining the roles is further grounds for conflict (1981, p. 3).

In 1980, the National School Board Association joined the American Association of School Administrators in publishing a pamphlet, Roles and Relationships: School Boards and Superintendents. That document stressed the importance of establishing a communication system and of stating the nature of the board-superintendent relationship in writing. In addition it outlined a general framework

which lists specific responsibilities for boards. One of those responsibilities is:

To hold the superintendent responsible for the administration of the school through regular constructive written and oral evaluations of the superintendent's work. Effective evaluation is an ongoing effort and should be linked to goals established by the board with the assistance of the superintendent (1980, p. 3).

In summary, Booth and Glaub stated that a majority of boards want appraisal to accomplish one or more of the following:

1. Appraisal should open communication.
2. Appraisal should identify . . . problems in district operation or performance or behavior which a superintendent must correct in order to meet reasonable school board expectations.
3. A good appraisal system enables the board and superintendent to chart a course for the district and enables the board to hold the superintendent accountable for following that course.
4. Appraisal should produce a written record that serves as a defense against critics of the superintendent (1978, pp. 37-38).

The National School Board Association and the American Association of School Administrators noted that, "a sound evaluation program serves the best interests of both the superintendent and the board. At its best, cooperative evaluation builds a strong bond of mutual interest in superintendent-board relations" (1980, p. 18).

Research also supports the value of formalized evaluation procedures for the superintendency. Sarbaugh

recommended that one way that the superintendent job satisfaction can be increased is to employ a formal evaluation process based upon agreed goals and objectives. Sarbaugh's study revealed that:

Improved performance is the most common purpose of the evaluation process and better understanding and a more harmonious working relationship between the superintendent and the board are the most frequent outcomes (1982, p. 41).

Sarbaugh's rationale for evaluating the superintendent of schools was concisely established in the purposes for evaluation of chief school administrator. The purposes listed were: (a) to promote professional excellence, (b) to improve the quality of education; and (c) to provide for a review of the superintendent's performance (1982, pp. 40-41).

In conclusion, R. E. Anderson, Professor of Educational Administration at Wichita State University, wrote, "A sound personnel evaluation process should commence with the top position in the school system" (1988, pp. 29-32).

Criteria for Evaluating the Superintendent of Schools Performance

Genck and Klingenberg was concerned that the superintendent's evaluation focus on performance and that criteria for the evaluation be directed toward performance (1978, p. 174). Jones stipulated that the superintendent's

evaluation process should proceed from the superintendent's job description, school board policies and district goals (1981, p. 5).

Several sources have cited the major areas of concerns and responsibilities that should serve as a basis for the evaluation of the superintendent by the board. In a 1974 article entitled, "How to Monitor Your Management Performance," Fredric Genck and Allen Klingenberg listed eight essential areas of school operations that school boards should use to evaluate the superintendent. These eight areas are:

1. Management effectiveness.
2. Staffing and personnel development.
3. Financial status.
4. Long and short-range planning.
5. Educational programs.
6. Board operations.
7. Communications.
8. Supportive operations (1974, p. 23).

Booth and Glaub in their work on superintendent evaluation for the Illinois Association of School Boards took the original list of management functions of Genck and Klingenberg and reorganized them into the administrative functions as follows:

1. Policy development.

2. Personnel management.
3. Instructional program.
4. Pupil services.
5. Budget and finance.
6. School physical plant.
7. Public relations.
8. Board operations (1978, p. 60).

The American Association of School Administrators and National School Board Association in their 1980 publication Evaluating the Superintendent took the same general areas used by Genck and Klingenberg in 1974 (revised by Booth and Glaub in 1978) and reorganized them into nine responsibility areas that could be used as criteria in the evaluation of the district superintendent. The American Association of School Administrators divided the nine responsibility areas into sub-areas and recommended that they be used as a guide by school boards to evaluate the overall effectiveness of their superintendents. The areas and sub-areas are as follows:

1. Board Relations.
 - a. Preparation of reports and materials for the board.
 - b. Presentation of reports to board.
 - c. Recommendations to the board.
 - d. Responding to requests from the board.
 - e. Keeping the board informed about operations in district.
 - f. Implementation of board actions.

2. Security-Public Relations.
 - a. Contacts with media.
 - b. Interpreting district problems and concerns to community and public.
 - c. Interpreting the educational program to the community.
 - d. Responding to concerns of community.
 - e. Periodic communications (publications, reports, newsletters, etc.) to community.
3. Staff Personnel Management.
 - a. Employment of personnel.
 - b. Utilization of employed personnel.
 - c. Administration of personnel policies and procedures.
 - d. Administration of salary and benefits program.
 - e. Direction of employee relations program.
 - f. Administration of preschool evaluation programs.
4. Business and Fiscal Management.
 - a. Determination of education needs of district.
 - b. Forecasting financial requirements.
 - c. Budget preparation.
 - d. Management of budget allocations.
 - e. Cost of accounting and cost effectiveness management.
 - f. Procurement of equipment, materials, supplies, etc.
 - g. Financial reporting.
5. Facilities Management.
 - a. Planning and providing physical facilities.
 - b. Management of maintenance of buildings and grounds.
 - c. Providing for the security and safety of personnel and property.
 - d. Planning for and managing modifications, renovations, expansions, and discontinuation of facilities.
 - e. Directing the utilization of facilities.

6. Curriculum and Instructional Management.
 - a. Keeping current with trends and developments in curriculum and instruction.
 - b. Initiating new programs, modifying existing ones, and discontinuing others.
 - c. Direction of supervision of instruction.
 - d. Monitoring effectiveness of instructional programs.
 - e. Assessment of effectiveness of instructional programs.
 - f. Planning and direction of inservice and staff development.
 - g. Management of state and federal programs and projects.
7. Management of Student Services.
 - a. Providing comprehensive student personnel services.
 - b. Management of enrollment and attendance policies and procedures.
 - c. Management of student behavior and discipline.
 - d. Providing for health and safety of students.
 - e. Liaison with community agencies concerned with students services.
8. Comprehensive Planning.
 - a. Developing and implementing short and long-range planning.
 - b. Training administrators and supervisors in planning.
 - c. Accountability procedures.
 - d. Evaluation of planning results.
9. Professional and Personal Development.
 - a. Keeping self current professionally.
 - b. Representing district at local, state, and national meetings of interest to education.
 - c. Contributions to profession by writing and speaking.
 - d. Participation in local, state, and national professional organizations (1980, pp. 42-44).

The California School Board Association developed and published a list of performance indicators which were

considered as criteria for the measurement of the superintendent's job performance. Those indicators of performance were stated as follows:

- I. Organization for the Administration of the School System.
- II. Curriculum and Instruction.
- III. Responsibilities to each Learner's Needs and Aspirations.
- IV. Employee and Pupil Personnel Services.
- V. Personnel
- VI. School Plant Planning and Management.
- VII. Business and Financial Management.
- VIII. Community Relationships.
- IX. Superintendent as Administration of the District (1985, p. 941).

In summary, as superintendents and school boards enter the 1990's, the boards are basing their superintendent's evaluations on a set of managerial responsibilities that cover the scope of school district operations. The responsibilities have their origins in district goals, superintendent job descriptions, superintendent contracts, and in the line and staff organization of the school districts. Because school boards cannot evaluate all aspects of the performance of the superintendent, boards are designating the most critical areas of operational concerns and evaluating how well the superintendent manages the designated areas. Hopefully, the areas being evaluated are

both measurable and within the scope of control of the superintendent. School boards make policies and superintendent's execute the policies made by the boards. In turn, the superintendent, through a system of performance evaluation is held accountable by the school board for how efficiently and effectively he is able to administer the policies legislated by the board of education.

Development of a Plan for the Superintendent's Evaluation

Bolton predicted that if an administrator evaluation was to be successful three steps or main phases of a well-defined process would be essential:

1. Planning for Evaluation, which involves analysis of a specific situation, establishment of purpose for evaluation, setting goals and specific objectives, and deciding upon means for measuring the processes used and the eventual outcomes.
2. Collecting Information, which involves monitoring and measuring the activities planned and the outcomes that result from the activities.
3. Using Information, which includes communication regarding the analysis and interpretation of information, as well as making decisions about the next step to be taken (1980, pp. 15-39).

Redfern emphasized that to design and develop a good evaluation program one must determine the thrust of the program to clarify the purposes and the desired outcome. He contended that both the superintendent and the board will have certain expectations of the superintendent's evaluation process. Redfern suggested that both parties be involved in

developing the list of purposes and recommended the following evaluation process:

1. Describe clearly the duties and responsibilities of the superintendent.
2. Clarify the board's expectations of his/her performance.
3. Enable the superintendent to know how he/she stands with the board.
4. Identify both areas of strengths, and weaknesses, in the superintendent's performance.
5. Improve communications between the board and superintendents.
6. Provide ways by which needs for improvement can be met.
7. Foster a high level between the superintendent and the board.
8. Enable the board to hold the superintendent accountable for carrying out its policies and responding to its priorities (1980, pp. 23-24).

Redfern went on to state that if the purposes for the evaluation process are clear then the resulting outcomes will also be clear. He listed the following outcomes which should result from utilizing the evaluation process shown above.

1. An annual written assessment of the current status of the superintendent's performance.
2. A continuing record of the effectiveness of the superintendent.
3. Tangible evidence upon which to base decisions to renew the superintendent's contract and set his/her salary.

4. Documentation to be used when the superintendent's contract may not be renewed or termination action is under consideration.
5. Opportunity for the superintendent to discuss the results of his/her evaluation with the board (1980, p. 24).

Redfern also indicated the assessment of the superintendent should include two important dimensions:

1. Identification of priority goals, and objectives in curriculum improvement, educational management, school and community relations, and fiscal responsibility; and,
2. Completion of a yearly evaluation, including concrete information and data delineating the effectiveness of the superintendent attaining the identified goals and objectives (1980, p. 28).

The National School Board Association has developed a summary check list which could be used by the board for the development of the superintendent's evaluation. This checklist included the following items:

1. The standards by which the superintendent's performance is to be judged are understood by the superintendent and the members of the board.
2. Both parties agree on a time and place for the evaluation.
3. The board will develop an establishment criteria which will evaluate both strengths and weaknesses.
4. Both parties agreed that the evaluation is a regularly scheduled event.
5. Both parties will participate. The board will assess the superintendent. The superintendent will use the agreed upon standards.
6. If the evaluation form does not address a matter the board wished to discuss, the superintendent will be given the right to respond.

7. Both parties must decide and agree upon the method of evaluation.
8. The final evaluation will be in written form and adequate objective documentation provided for all conclusions drawn.
9. Both parties agree that a judgment criteria might be deleted from the process because of extenuating circumstances which might preclude the superintendent from performing the function (1982, p. 40).

Bippus also expressed that by setting up a clear and logical evaluation system it will improve the working relationship between the board and the superintendent. Such a system should enhance the superintendent's performance and improve the effectiveness of the board. Bippus recommended four steps be included in the development of the evaluation system of the superintendent:

1. Set clear goals for, and board expectations of, your superintendent.

The goals can best be developed by reviewing the school district's goals and objectives, and the goals the superintendent expects to accomplish for the year. A mutual agreement will best serve the evaluation process.

2. Follow-up on your board's goals for the superintendent.
3. Interview other administrators in the system to find out how they think the superintendent is doing, seek suggestions for improvement.
4. Evaluate the information, draw conclusions and present them to the superintendent (1985, pp. 41-43).

Methods of Evaluating Superintendent Performance

The literature suggests that a variety of formats and instruments have been employed in the evaluation process by boards of education. They have used methods and instruments ranging from informal discussion between the board and superintendent to a formal format to evaluate and appraise the performance of the superintendent (Lewis, 1982, pp. 7-8).

Robinson, in an Educational Research Services study, suggested that:

Superintendents are typically evaluated by one or more of the following methods: checklists and rating scales; management by objectives; written statements; or informal evaluation procedures. Each of these methods has advantages and potential pitfalls. Local boards of education and superintendents should examine the pros and cons of each approach before selecting the method or methods that best suit their specific districts' needs (1990, p. 6).

A checklist and rating scale is a list of desirable personal traits, duties, and responsibilities with ratings, such as above average, satisfactory, and needs improvement, after each category. The evaluator indicates his judgment of how well the duties were performed (Kowalski, 1981, p. 23).

Booth & Glaub found the most common or traditional superintendent evaluation system to be the checklist and rating scales (1978, pp. 29-34). Jones concurred with Booth and Glaub and reasoned that the ease and quickness, the

gathering of specific data, and the appearance of exactitude were the reasons for the checklist and rating scales popularity among school boards (1981, pp. 29-30). Redfern summarized this idea by saying:

. . . In essence they were little more than "adult report cards," Because they were a post performance evaluation, the only way the person being evaluated could improve was to "wait until next year." This deficiency prompted a movement toward pre-planning and periodic evaluation by the board (1980, p. 10).

Sarbaugh looked at check lists that rate traits or characteristics as having several weaknesses:

1. In rating traits, board members are required to make subjective judgments; therefore, the evaluation is not based on fact--rather it is based on opinion.
2. Secondly, there is not a consensus about the exact meaning of the rating descriptors (i.e., average, excellent, poor).
3. A third weakness is that possessing a skill is no guarantee that performance of this skill is exercised.
4. A fourth weakness is that scores are sometimes misleading. Unweighted scores of evaluation criteria do not reflect board priorities or importance (1982, p. 43).

In summary, the "common objective to evaluating traits and skills . . . is that they reflect the person's suitability for being a superintendent. They do not look at effectiveness or results" (Booth & Glaub, 1978, pp. 29-31).

Management by objective models have gained in popularity as concerns about accountability in education have increased. This model is intended to facilitate

accountability by emphasizing results achieved and expected future growth. Management by objectives is a management system in which the decision makers set down in writing what they are going to do, how they are going to do it, when the goals will be completed, and how the results will be measured. The process requires all the managers in an organization to pursue common goals and to identify each person's responsibilities in that pursuit (Booth & Glaub, 1978, p. 32).

In general, school systems that employ management by objectives techniques structure their procedures for evaluation as follows:

- **Statement of Objectives:** a set of mutually agreed-upon objectives and expected results. The statement often includes a designated calendar of dates for fulfilling the objectives and specifies the person(s) responsible for accomplishing the tasks.
- **Standards of Performance:** a description of activities to be performed or standards of behavior to be expected in order to achieve the objectives.
- **Measurements to Be Applied:** a description of the measurement used to assess progress.
- **Results:** a listing of outcomes and a comparison of results with original intentions.
- **Performance Rating:** an appraisal of the evaluatee's overall performance to identify areas that need improvement. At this point the statements of objectives are reassessed and adjusted if necessary (Raia, 1974, p. 199; Ricketts, 1973, pp. 70-73).

Booth and Glaub contend that the school board, in this way, evaluates the superintendent's results in reaching agreed-upon goals, solving agreed-upon problems, and making agreed-upon improvements. The advantages they list for such a results-oriented approach are:

1. The superintendent has a standard of evaluation based on special characteristics of his own job, jointly agreed upon with his board.
2. It emphasized the future--which can be changed--not the past.
3. By formal planning, it clarifies responsibilities, organizes jobs, and corrects problems in advance.
4. It shifts the board from merely criticizing to helping the superintendent improve.
5. It allows for the nonconformist who gets results with unconventional methods.
6. It increases the superintendent's control over his environment and reduces his dependency on the board.
7. It gives the school board a positive and constructive means for guiding the school district by linking evaluation with the total management system (1978, p. 34).

Booth and Glaub discuss several precautions that should be exercised with the management by objective approach. Unless the school board has already defined specific goals for the school district, it will have difficulty identifying appropriate objectives for the superintendent. Care should be taken that the agreed-upon objectives are neither too philosophical nor too trivial. If they are too philosophical, they cannot be measured accurately. If they

are too trivial, they will not reflect the district's highest priorities. The construction of goals and objectives can become an absorbing exercise; therefore, the persons involved should bear in mind that goal construction is not an end in itself, but a means of establishing direction for action and measurement of performance (Booth & Glaub, 1978, pp. 32-33).

Written statement or essay method of evaluation is one of the most popular with boards of education but has been less extensively used in recent years. In applying this system, each individual board member writes a statement assessing the superintendent's strengths and weaknesses based upon previously agreed upon criterion. The board may compile statements into a composite appraisal or report each on their individual merits. The board, as a unit, then confers and allows the superintendent to respond to the evaluation statements (Redfern, 1980, p. 9).

The major drawback of essay evaluation is the variability in length and content. The latitude for ambiguous, fence-straddling statements is also great (Redfern, 1980, p. 9).

The principal benefit of the written statement evaluation is that it allows for elaboration and far-ranging commentary on specific aspects of the superintendent's performance. Such descriptive detail is not possible with a

checklist or a rating scale. However, each evaluator should take care that the comments are not overly long, unfocused, or lacking in specific conclusions (Braddom, 1986, pp. 28-29).

Informal discussion methods are dialogues between the superintendent and one or more members of the board of education. This form of evaluation is still used extensively throughout the nation. Sarbaugh's study revealed that the evaluation of the superintendent's performance in North Carolina is largely a very informal process occurring most frequently "as the board sees a need" (1982, p. 41). Buchanan found in his random sample of sixty-two school districts from across the State of Indiana that "most school districts in Indiana evaluate their superintendent in an informal procedure" (1981, pp. 41-42). Jess's research found that "most class II and III school districts in Nebraska do not formally evaluate the superintendent's performance" (Jess, 1981, p. 42). Of the four hundred ninety-three public school superintendents surveyed nationwide by Sloan, fifty percent of the responding districts used informal evaluation (1982, p. 43).

Jess's study concluded that "there is a growing interest in formally evaluating the superintendent's performance. However, the actual practice was not keeping pace with the expressed interest" (Jess, 1981, p. 42). In

the same vein Sarbaugh found that: "Both superintendents and board chairmen view formal evaluation as having numerous positive and practically no negative effects, and are aware of the desirability of more formalized procedures" (Sarbaugh, 1982, p. 41).

In summary of the foregoing review of the literature there is clear support for evaluating the superintendent's performance. Many persons observe the performance of the superintendent but the board of education cannot assume the casual observations of others to be a valid and objective evaluation of the superintendent's performance. The review of the literature indicated that even though board members are reluctant to evaluate the superintendent's performance, it is their duty and obligation to perform this task.

Performance evaluation helps the superintendent clarify the school board's expectations, duties, and the goals of the school system. The evaluation process also helps the school board to better understand the superintendent's leadership style and the operation of the school system.

The literature is clear that the evaluation process should be outlined in written procedures and policies and should be based upon mutually agreed upon goals and objectives that are derived from the superintendent job description. The evaluation should be a formal procedure conducted within a specified time period with input from

several sources and include a formal post-evaluation conference. Finally, frequent on-the-job observations should be supplemented with a complete review of the products/artifacts produced by the superintendent. Board and superintendent inservice and training on the elements of an effective evaluation process are considered a necessary component of the superintendent's evaluation procedure. Once these steps have been completed, the process should be recorded in the contract between the superintendent and school board.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter describes the methodology employed in this study, states the purposes, traces the development of the study, describes the population, outlines the process by which the instrument was developed, and describes the data collection and analysis procedures.

Research Methodology

Descriptive research was used in this study:

Descriptive research describes what is. It also involves the description, recording, analysis, and interpretation of conditions that now exist. It often involves some type of comparison or contrast and may attempt to discover cause-effect relationships that exist (Best, 1970, p. 15).

The purpose of descriptive research is to collect data from a sample or population in order to answer questions regarding the relative incidence, distribution, and interrelation of variables identified for study (Wiersma, 1980, p. 6):

No category of educational research is more widely used than the type variously known as descriptive, survey, or narrative research. This is a broad classification comprising a variety of specific techniques and procedures, all similar from the standpoint of purpose--namely to establish the

status of the phenomenon under investigation (Mouly, 1970, p. 234).

Babbie has identified three general objectives of this type of research.

1. Description. The ability to make descriptive assertions about the distribution of traits among a carefully selected sample or population of respondents and to infer a comparable description to the larger population.

2. Explanation. The ability to make explanatory assertions about the population.

3. Exploration. The ability to search for additional possibilities (1973, p. 101).

This study surveyed the entire population of school board chairpersons in Virginia by means of a mailed questionnaire (Appendix A). The study was supported by the Virginia School Board Association (VSBA), the Virginia Association of School Superintendents (VASS), and the Virginia Department of Education. Results will be made available to all school boards and superintendents of schools in the Commonwealth of Virginia, if requested, through their state headquarters in Charlottesville, Virginia:

Among the major advantages of a questionnaire is that it permits wide coverage at a minimum expense both in money and effort. It not only affords wider geographic coverage but it also reaches persons who are difficult to contact. This greater coverage makes for greater validity in the

results through promoting the selection of a larger and more representative sample or population (Mouly, 1970, p. 242).

A questionnaire was used to gather information which described procedures and policies related to superintendent evaluation in Virginia's public schools. The information gathered was used to compare existing procedures and policies in the Commonwealth of Virginia with "best practice" described in the literature and to determine whether those procedures, and policies in Virginia varied according to selected variables, such as size of the district, expenditures per student, and gender of the school board chairperson.

Study Design

There were three components of this study. The first was to collect and describe the policies and procedures currently in place to evaluate the superintendents in the public schools of the Commonwealth of Virginia from the perspective of the school board chairperson. While several options/possibilities existed relative to how such information could be collected (e.g., review of documents, survey of superintendents, survey of school board members), the decision was made to study the superintendent evaluation procedures from the perspective of the Chairman of the local School Board in the Commonwealth of Virginia. This was

accomplished by surveying the entire population of local public School Board Chairpersons in the Commonwealth of Virginia. The survey contained questions specifically related to the superintendent's evaluation; policies and procedures used in the local school divisions.

The second portion of this study sought to compare existing policies and procedures in Virginia against those described in the literature as preferred or "best practice" (Appendix F). This was accomplished by comparing the results obtained through the survey of the one hundred thirty chairpersons with those criteria reported in the literature as the "best practices." The analysis consists of a direct comparison between reported practice in Virginia and "ideal or best practice" nationally.

The third dimension of this study examined whether Virginia school superintendent evaluation policies and procedures vary based on selected variables such as size, in Average Daily Membership (ADM), of the district; wealth, in expenditures per ADM, in the district; and gender of school board chairperson. This was accomplished by comparing responses of chairpersons from school divisions whose size and wealth varied according to pre-established criteria and the gender of the responding chairpersons.

Population

The population consisted of the school board chairpersons from one hundred thirty school divisions in the Commonwealth of Virginia. There are ninety-five counties, thirty-three cities, and two town districts with one hundred thirty different school board chairpersons in this study. Combination school divisions exist in Bedford City/Bedford County, Emporia City/Greensville County, Fairfax City/Fairfax County, South Boston City/Halifax County and Williamsburg City/James City County, with one superintendent of schools serving both school districts and school boards, and only the county board was surveyed. A list of all school board chairpersons, their home addresses and telephone numbers was compiled by the Virginia School Board Association in Charlottesville, Virginia. This list was compared with the Virginia Department of Education listing of all public school districts as reported in the Virginia Education Directory, 1990, to determine all school divisions were included.

According to this list there were one hundred thirty-seven local school divisions in the Commonwealth of Virginia with superintendents employed as their chief executive officer and an operational school board with a chairperson during the 1990-1991 school year. The entire population was surveyed except for the school district where the researcher

is employed (Colonial Heights); the district in which the superintendent of schools is conducting a companion study (Suffolk City); Bedford, Emporia, Fairfax, South Boston, and Williamsburg City school divisions in which students are educated by the county system.

Instrumentation

A questionnaire (Appendix A) was developed for use in this study. This questionnaire was developed through a review of literature. Items were selected based upon an examination of the literature which identified ideal or "best practice" policy and procedures for evaluating superintendents of schools. The items included those most often listed/identified in the literature (Appendix F).

The draft instrument was reviewed and revised by members of the doctoral committee and field tested to determine its utility. This testing was accomplished by administering the survey to ten previous school board chairpersons in Colonial Heights and surrounding school districts in Central Virginia.

It was important to determine strengths and weaknesses of the questionnaire; therefore, a six item evaluation form (Appendix B) was given to all ten subjects in the pilot test population. An analysis of the evaluation form results indicated the survey collected information without problems

in clarity, ambiguity or bias on the part of the researcher. The responses (Table 1) with yes percentages in parentheses, indicated that the questionnaire was easy to follow (100%), the directions were clear (100%), the meaning of each question was understood (90%), the response options for each question were adequate (90%), there was no suggestion of bias on the part of the researcher (100%), and the length was not excessive (100%).

The revised questionnaire was commercially printed using a Desk Top publishing system. It contained a cover page followed by six pages containing seventeen questions. The questionnaire was on 8 3/4" X 11 3/4" standard, high quality, off white paper.

Nine questions were of short answer responses (i.e., yes, no, do not know), eight questions allowed for open-ended responses.

Data Collection Procedures

The questionnaire was mailed (December 6, 1990) to one hundred thirty local school board chairpersons in the Commonwealth of Virginia. The participants were selected from a complete list of local public school board chairpersons provided by the Virginia School Board Association and cross-checked with the Virginia Education Directory 1990-91.

Table 1. Frequencies and Percentages of Responses of Former Board Chairpersons to Pilot Questionnaire Evaluation Form

(N=10)

Questionnaire Items	Frequency of Yes Responses	Percentage of Yes Responses
1. Is format easy to follow?	10	100
2. Are directions clear?	10	100
3. Is meaning of each question clear?	9	90
4. Are response options adequate?	9	90
5. No suggestion of bias by researcher evidence?	10	100
6. Length of survey appropriate?	10	100

Surveyed chairpersons were requested to complete the questionnaire according to the instructions given and encouraged to return the results as soon as possible. A suggested deadline of (December 20, 1990) was given to all participants to provide for the timely return of responses. Each questionnaire was coded by affixing a three digit code matching the school division code listed in the Virginia Education Directory 1990-91 on the front cover of the questionnaire.

Included in the initial mailing package, in addition to the questionnaire, was a cover letter which encouraged a prompt response and assured confidentiality (Appendix C).

The package for each participant contained one letter, one questionnaire, and a return-addressed, stamped 9" x 12" envelope, mailed in an 11 1/2" x 14" clasped envelope. The participant's name, school division, division code number, and home address, as listed on files at the office of the Virginia School Board Association (VSBA) in Charlottesville, was affixed to the outside envelope.

All participants not responding to the questionnaire in fourteen days after the initial mailing, as recommended by Dillman (1978, pp. 180-90), received a follow-up 5" x 8" machine printed postcard (Appendix D). The postcard reminded participants of the need to respond and served to express gratitude to those who had already replied.

The third contact consisted of a duplication of the first contact except that bold letters stating "THIRD REQUEST" were stamped across the follow-up letter (Appendix E). This survey was sent on December 31, 1991.

A telephone call was made to all of those participants who had not responded to the three prior requests thirty-nine days after the initial mailing. If no survey was returned by January 15, 1991, the researcher conducted a telephone interview.

Analysis of Data

The information/data collected through the survey questionnaire are reported in frequencies and percentages of responses in tables one through fifteen. The tables are aligned to coincide with the purposes of the study which were: (a) describe the policies and procedures currently in place in the Commonwealth of Virginia for evaluating the superintendent of schools in each of the one hundred thirty local school divisions; (b) compare existing policies and practices in Virginia with those in the literature considered "best practice" nationally; and (c) determine whether Virginia school superintendents evaluation policies and procedures vary based on selected variables, such as size of district in average daily membership (ADM), expenditures per student in ADM, and gender of the

chairperson of the school board. A plus or minus fifteen percent difference between the mean of the group and the individual item response was used to determine significance in question c.

The data sources for the three components of this study are indicated below. Tables in which data are reported are noted as well.

Purpose 1. Describe the policies and procedures currently in place in the Commonwealth of Virginia for evaluating the superintendent of schools.

<u>Variable</u>	<u>Table</u>	<u>Survey Item</u>
Does the board evaluate?	4	1
Does the board have a written policy?	4	2
Does the board have a written procedure?	4	3
Is there a formal procedure?	6	4
Are goals mutually agreed on?	6	5
Are procedures in contract?	7	6
Is there a job description?	7	7
Is evaluation based on job description?	7	8
Was board trained prior to evaluation?	9	9
Is there a formal evaluation procedure?	10	10
Is the evaluation completed annually?	10	11
Was evaluation developed by school board?	5	12
Is evaluation input received?	8	13
Are there on-the-job observations?	11	15
Are on-the-job observations formal?	11	16
Does evaluation include review of product/artifact?	6	14
Is there a formal post conference?	10	17

Purpose 2. Compare existing policies and procedures in Virginia public schools for evaluating the superintendent of schools with those in the literature considered "best practice." Results of the survey conducted to accomplish the first purpose of the study were compared with 17 elements of superintendent's evaluation procedures deemed to be "best practice" based upon a review of the literature (Appendix F). The analysis consists of direct comparison of each practice recommended in the literature with those same practices in Virginia.

Purpose 3. Determine whether Virginia school superintendent's evaluation varies based on selected variables such as gender of chairperson, size and wealth of division.

<u>Variable</u>	<u>Table(s)</u>	<u>Data Source</u>
Size of division	3, 12	<u>Facing Up</u> and survey
Wealth of division	3, 13	<u>Facing Up</u> and survey
Gender of chairperson	3, 14	<u>Virginia School Board Association</u> and survey

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

Introduction

The data collected are presented in this chapter. The outline which follows coincides with the purposes of the study which were:

1. Describe the policies and procedures currently in place in the Commonwealth of Virginia for evaluating the superintendents of schools.

2. Compare existing policies and procedures in the Commonwealth of Virginia with those in the literature considered "best practices" nationally.

3. Determine whether Virginia School Superintendents evaluation policies and procedures vary based on selected variables such as size of district in average daily membership (ADM), expenditures per student in ADM, and gender of chairperson of the local school boards in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

The information and data used in this chapter were collected through a review of literature and a survey questionnaire mailed to one hundred thirty school board chairpersons in the Commonwealth of Virginia. Each person selected was mailed a survey booklet which contained a cover

letter, seventeen questions, and a direction and information section (Appendices A and C). One hundred twenty-six responses were received from the one hundred thirty participants. Four chairpersons were unable or unwilling to answer the survey questionnaire and the superintendent of schools was used to gather the information and complete the survey.

Four contacts were made with the population in an effort to obtain these data (Table 2). The first mailing produced fifty-four replies or a response rate of forty-two percent. In response to the second mailing which consisted of a white 5" X 8" machine printed post card reminder (Appendix D), seventeen surveys or an additional thirteen percent response was produced. The third contact consisted of a duplication of the first contact with bold letters stamped across the follow-up cover letter of the survey stating "third request." From this mailing thirty-one surveys were received for another twenty-four percent. The final contact consisted of a phone call by the researcher to the remaining twenty-eight nonrespondents. Twenty-four or eighteen percent were willing to respond to the call. Data for the remaining four or three percent were collected by using survey data collected from the superintendent of schools. A total of one hundred thirty chairpersons were

Table 2. Frequencies and Percentages of Responses to Survey Questionnaire and Follow-up Requests

(N=130)

<u>Questionnaire Items</u>	<u>Frequency of Responses</u>	<u>Percentage of Responses</u>
First Contact	54	42
Second Contact	17	13
Third Contact	31	24
Fourth Contact	24	18
Superintendent Responses	4	3
Total	130	100

contacted by the researcher; one hundred twenty-six completed surveys were collected. Responses from four systems were collected from the superintendent of schools. These data were included in the study and, due to the limited number of responses collected in this manner, it is believed that no (or very limited) bias has been introduced. The total responses used in this study were one hundred thirty.

Demographic information about the participants is reported in Table 3. Ninety-six or seventy-four percent of the chairpersons were male and thirty-four or twenty-six percent of the chairpersons were female. Forty-four, or thirty-four percent, were from large school divisions (over 4500 pupils), forty or thirty-one percent were chairpersons from medium size divisions (2501-4500 students) and forty-six or thirty-five percent represented in systems of less than 2500 students. The per pupil expenditure in each division was reported as a dollar amount when compared with Average Daily Membership (ADM). Twenty-two or seventeen percent of the chairpersons represented school divisions spending \$4501 and up, thirty-three or twenty-five percent were from divisions which spent between \$4001 to \$4500, and seventy-five or fifty-eight percent represented school divisions which spent less than \$4000 per pupil in Average Daily Membership.

Table 3. Demographic Profile of Responding Chairpersons of Public School Boards in the Commonwealth of Virginia

(N=130)

<u>Variable</u>	<u>Frequency of Responses</u>	<u>Percentage of Responses</u>
<u>Gender**</u>		
Male	96	74
Female	34	26
Total	130	100
<u>Type of Division in Average Daily Membership (ADM)*</u>		
Small (0-2500)	46	35
Medium (2501-4500)	40	31
Large (4501 and up)	44	34
Total	130	100
<u>Division's Per Pupil Expenditures in Average Daily Membership (ADM)*</u>		
Up to \$4000	75	58
\$4001 to \$4500	33	25
\$4501 and above	22	17
Total	130	100
<u>Chairperson's Experience as Board Member**</u>		
1-4 years	42	32
5-8 years	61	47
9 years and up	27	21
Total	130	100

*Facing Up-24, Statistical Data on Virginia's Public Schools, 1988-89 School Year, Department of Education, August 1990.

**Virginia School Boards Association (VSBA) Headquarters, Membership List File, Charlottesville, Virginia.

In response to years experience as a school board member, forty-two or thirty-two percent had served from one to four years; sixty-one or forty-seven percent had served from five to eight years; and twenty-seven or twenty-one percent had served nine years or more.

Describe the policies and procedures currently in place in the Commonwealth of Virginia for evaluating the superintendent of schools.

Does your board evaluate the superintendent of schools?

Table 4 illustrates that one hundred four or eighty percent of the respondents reported that the superintendent was evaluated and twenty-six or twenty percent stated that no evaluation was performed by the school board on their chief executive officer.

In the Commonwealth of Virginia, school board chairpersons also reported that forty-eight or thirty-seven percent had a written policy, while seventy-nine or sixty-one percent stated there was no written policy. Two percent did not know whether a written policy existed or not.

The chairpersons of school boards in the Commonwealth of Virginia stated that there was a written procedure in place in sixty or forty-six percent of the school systems; sixty-eight or fifty-two percent stated that there was no written procedure in place; and two respondents did not know

Table 4. Frequencies and Percentages of Yes Responses to Questions Dealing With Evaluation and Written Policies and Procedures of Superintendent Evaluation in the School Division in the Commonwealth of Virginia

(N=130)

<u>Questionnaire Items</u>	<u>Frequency of Responses</u>	<u>Percentage of Responses</u>
Does Your Board Evaluate?		
Yes	104	80
No	26	20
Total	130	100
Is There a Written Policy?		
Yes	48	37
No	79	61
Do Not Know	3	2
Total	130	100
Is There Written Procedure?		
Yes	60	46
No	68	52
Do Not Know	2	2
Total	130	100

if written procedures existed. The number of responses in Table 4 is equal to the total one hundred thirty (130) chairpersons in the study. In the following tables (5 through 11) percentages and frequencies are reported only for those who indicated an evaluation system is in place. The original purpose of the study was to look at those school divisions in Virginia with evaluation policies and procedures in place in order to describe practices in Virginia and compare them with the literature or "best practice." Therefore, the total number used for this purpose is one hundred four of the original one hundred thirty respondents.

Who was responsible for the development of the superintendent's evaluation?

Table 5 demonstrates that of the one hundred four or eighty percent who had an evaluation system in place, eighty-four or eighty-one percent stated that the members of the school board were responsible for its development. Thirty-five or thirty-four percent said the evaluation was developed by the chairman of the school board, forty-seven or forty-five percent listed the superintendent of schools, and thirteen or thirteen percent said the evaluation was developed by a consultant. Parents, teachers and others were listed less than two percent of the time. Twenty-five

Table 5. Frequencies and Percentages of Responses Concerning Who Participated in the Development of the Superintendent Evaluation Policies and Procedures in the Commonwealth of Virginia

(N=104)

Questionnaire Items	Frequency of Responses*	Percentage of Responses**
Superintendent Evaluation Developed By:		
Chairperson	35	34
Superintendent	47	45
Members of School Board	84	81
Consultant	13	13
Parents	1	1
Teachers	2	2
Other***	2	2

*Frequency of responses number more than one hundred four because of multiple answers.

**Percentage of responses exceeds one hundred percent because of multiple answers.

***Explanations received were:

- a) Virginia School Board Association Workshop
- b) Virginia School Board Association Article
- c) Workshop by Local School Board
- d) Sub-committee of Local School Board
- e) Each Member of Local School Board Has His Own Process

or twenty-four percent stated that there was a combination effort of chairperson, school board members, and superintendents responsible for the development of the superintendent evaluation. The responses and frequencies total more than one hundred four and one hundred percent because the survey question permitted multiple responses.

How was the superintendent's evaluation devised?

Table 6 provides information about the establishment of mutually agreed upon goals in the evaluation process. Eighty-two or seventy-nine percent said goals are determined and agreed on at the beginning of the evaluation cycle. Twenty-two or twenty-one percent reported there was no mutual agreement on goals. When asked if a formal conference was held with the superintendent to establish these goals, the greater number, seventy-three or seventy percent, said goals were developed through a formal conference, while thirty-one or thirty percent indicated that there was no formal conference to set goals. According to chairpersons, products/artifacts are used in some school divisions. Most, however, do not report use of products/artifacts in the superintendent's evaluation system. As found in Table 6, fifteen or fourteen percent reported using products/artifacts, and eighty-nine or eighty-six percent did not report using such information.

Table 6. Frequencies and Percentage of Responses to Items on Establishing Goals and Using Products/Artifacts as a part of the Superintendent's Evaluation in the School Divisions in the Commonwealth of Virginia

(N=104)

Questionnaire Items	Frequency of Responses	Percentage of Responses
Are Performance Goals Mutually Agreed Upon?		
Yes	82	79
No	22	21
Do Not Know	0	0
Total	104	100
Are Goals Established in Formal Conference at Beginning of Cycle?		
Yes	73	70
No	31	30
Total	104	100
Does Evaluation Include Review of Products/Artifacts or Presentations?*		
Yes	15	14
No	89	86
Total	104	100

*Explanations received were:

- a) Every product of school system is "fair game" was mentioned by six chairpersons
- b) Superintendent's Annual Report
- c) Budget documents
- d) Presentations and fact sheets provided by superintendent
- e) Newspapers, newsletters, and presentations

Table 7 illustrates that seventy-five or seventy-two percent of the respondents reported that a job description for the superintendent exists. Twenty or nineteen percent of the chairpersons reported they do not have a job description for the superintendent of schools, and nine or nine percent did not know whether a job description existed. Of those who said a job description did exist, most (fifty-eight or fifty-six percent) agreed their evaluation was based on the job description. Thirty-one or thirty percent indicated the superintendent's evaluation was not based on the job description while fifteen or fourteen percent did not know.

As noted in Table 7, few chairpersons, nineteen or eighteen percent, reported their superintendent has a contract which outlines the evaluation process. Six or six percent reported that they do not know, and seventy-nine or seventy-six percent reported that evaluation is not outlined in the superintendent's contract.

Who provides input into the evaluation?

The data in Table 8 suggest that the superintendent's evaluation receives input from a variety of sources in most situations, but most respondents, one hundred or ninety-six percent said it is handled by school board members. The data also illustrate that thirty-six percent of

Table 7. Frequencies and Percentages of Responses Related to Use of Job Description for Evaluation and Evaluation Specified as a Part of the Superintendent's Contract in the School Divisions in the Commonwealth of Virginia

(N=104)

<u>Questionnaire Items</u>	<u>Frequency of Responses</u>	<u>Percentage of Responses</u>
Does a Job Description for Superintendent Exist?		
Yes	75	72
No	20	19
Do Not Know	9	9
Total	104	100
Is Evaluation Based on Job Description?		
Yes	58	56
No	31	30
Do Not Know	15	14
Total	104	100
Is Evaluation Outlined in Superintendent's Contract?		
Yes	19	18
No	79	76
Do Not Know	6	6
Total	104	100

Table 8. Frequencies and Percentages of Responses
 Indicating Who Provides Input Into Formal
 Superintendent's Evaluation in School Divisions in
 the Commonwealth of Virginia

(N=104)

Questionnaire Items	Frequency of Responses*	Percentage of Responses**
Input Into Formal Evaluation Includes:		
Board Members	100	96
Principals	14	14
Central Office Personnel	12	12
Teachers	10	10
Superintendent	37	36
Students	3	3
Consultants	0	0
Community	10	10
Others***	0	0

*Frequency of responses number more than one hundred four because of multiple answers.

**Percentage of responses exceeds one hundred percent because of multiple answers.

***Explanations received were:

- a) Two chairpersons reported information gathered from school employees by superintendent is shared with school board members
- b) Citizens contact with school board members

superintendents, fourteen percent of central office personnel, twelve percent of principals, ten percent of community, ten percent of teachers, and three percent of students provide input into the evaluation of the superintendent.

Is training provided for participants in evaluation procedures?

Only fourteen of the chairpersons, approximately fourteen percent, reported that training was available prior to their conducting the evaluation of the superintendent of schools. Ninety or eighty-six percent responded that no training had been received. Table 9 provides the data regarding training prior to conducting the superintendent's evaluation.

How often are superintendents formally evaluated?

The data in Table 10 indicate that a majority of the chairpersons reported that a regular cycle of informal evaluation for the superintendent of schools occurs on a regular annual basis. Fifty-nine or fifty-seven percent reported that there is an informal evaluation and forty-five or forty-three percent stated that there is a formal evaluation procedure. When looking at the results of the survey about the cycle of the superintendent evaluation,

Table 9. Frequencies and Percentages of Responses to Chairpersons Receiving Training Prior to Evaluating Superintendents of Schools in School Divisions in the Commonwealth of Virginia

(N=104)

<u>Questionnaire Items</u>	<u>Frequency of Responses</u>	<u>Percentage of Responses</u>
Are Evaluators Trained to Evaluate?		
Yes	14	14
No	90	86
Total	104	100

Explanations received included:

- a) Five chairpersons implied Virginia School Board Association (VSBA) workshop.
- b) Two chairpersons reported employee workshop
- c) Local school board workshop
- d) Four chairpersons stated National School Board Association (NSBA) workshop
- e) Education degree work
- f) National School Board Journal

Table 10. Frequencies and Percentages of Responses to the Type, Frequency, and Follow-up Procedures of the Evaluation of Superintendent of Schools in the Commonwealth of Virginia

(N=104)

<u>Questionnaire Items</u>	<u>Frequency of Responses</u>	<u>Percentage of Responses</u>
The Superintendent's Evaluation is:		
Formal	45	43
Informal	59	57
Total	104	100
Cycle of Superintendent Evaluation is:		
Semiannually	7	7
Annually	89	85
Bi-annually	3	3
*Other	5	5
Total	104	100
Is There a Formal Conference at Conclusion of the Cycle?		
Yes	89	85
No	13	13
Do Not Know	2	2
Total	104	100

*Explanations received were:

- a) Three chairpersons reported once every four years.
- b) Every three months (quarterly).
- c) Not scheduled (Can take place any time school board feels a need).
- d) Upon review of superintendent's contract.

eighty-nine or eighty-five percent said it occurred on an annual basis. Less than seven percent reported to have a cycle of either semi-annually, bi-annually, or other. When asked if a formal conference is held at the conclusion of the superintendent evaluation cycle, eighty-nine or eighty-five percent reported it was, while thirteen or thirteen percent said it was not done. Two respondents did not know whether it was or was not done.

Does evaluation include observation?

Table 11 presents evidence that on-the-job observations are a major part of the evaluation cycle. Sixty-six or sixty-three percent said they were, but thirty-six or thirty-five percent said that on-the-job observations are not a part of the evaluation process, while two did not know. By a wide margin, the observations were described as informal (ninety-seven or ninety-three percent) as opposed to seven or seven percent who reported formal observations.

As a follow-up question, chairpersons were asked if they would like to make statements or comments about their superintendent evaluation program. The following is a list of those responses with the number making each response indicated following the comment:

- a) Superintendent job is "hot spot" and boards need to evaluate and become a partner in the operation of the local school (2).

Table 11. Frequencies and Percentages of Responses Reporting Use of On-the-Job Observations of Superintendent of Schools for Evaluation Purposes in the Commonwealth of Virginia

(N=104)

<u>Questionnaire Items</u>	<u>Frequency of Responses</u>	<u>Percentage of Responses</u>
Is On-The-Job Observation a Part of Evaluation Cycle?		
Yes	66	63
No	36	35
Do Not Know	2	2
Total	104	100
The Observation is:		
Formal	7	7
Informal	97	93
Total	104	100

- b) Development of superintendent evaluation is most important process in our school system (2).
- c) A very hard process to work with.
- d) The school board's tool for working with school superintendent (8).
- e) Only needed every four years.
- f) Chairperson not very pleased with present procedure for superintendent evaluation (2).
- g) An open process for boards and superintendents.
- h) Not very meaningful (2).
- i) Locally developed is best procedure.
- j) No procedure in place but a real need exists (7).
- k) Evaluation should not be tied to superintendent's contract.
- l) Evaluation is tool used by school board to get feedback from school division staff.
- m) Superintendent of schools does not want an evaluation process (2).

Compare existing superintendent's evaluation policies and procedures in Virginia with those in the literature considered "Best Practice" nationally

A summary of the Chapter II literature review, indicates a strong desire by school boards and superintendents nationally to have a superintendent evaluation process. The evaluation of superintendents is evolving toward a more formal process. This evolution appears to be a result of the increased focus nationally on schools which in turn is increasing demands for accountability. Formal evaluation of the superintendent is becoming a mechanism of accountability and a leadership tool for setting goals in school systems.

Nationally, the literature suggested that the superintendent evaluation process should include the

seventeen attributes listed in Appendix G. In the second part of this study, Virginia superintendent evaluation process from the board chairperson's perspective is compared with the seventeen attributes (Appendix G) considered "best practice" nationally.

The superintendent evaluation matrix (Appendix F) lists the seventeen attributes or "best practices" nationally, and denotes how these attributes are viewed by authorities in the literature. A summarization of this matrix (Appendix F) demonstrates some trends with respect to national views on the evaluation of superintendents. There is unanimous support for an annual superintendent evaluation process written in policy and procedures based on mutually agreed upon goals established in formal conference which was tied to a functioning job description. Although not unanimous, there is support for other attributes such as board training, superintendent contract, on-the-job observation, review of superintendent product/artifact, and involvement of other interest groups in development and practice of the evaluation procedures.

The comparison of Virginia practices with "best practices" described in the literature is based upon the assumption that the 17 attributes identified in the literature are desirable and should be a part of the process for evaluating superintendents. As noted earlier, nearly

twenty percent of Virginia's school divisions report no processes or procedures are in place to evaluate the superintendent.

Was there an evaluation of the superintendent of schools?

In Virginia, approximately eighty percent of school board chairpersons report superintendent evaluation takes place in their school system. One hundred four or eighty percent of the school board chairpersons in Virginia report they evaluate the superintendent of schools. Approximately one in five or twenty percent reported they do not evaluate the superintendent in their school divisions.

Written policy and procedures in place?

Chairpersons of Virginia School Boards report by a substantial number, seventy-nine or sixty-one percent of those which evaluate superintendents, that written policies currently do not exist while forty-eight or thirty-seven percent report that a written policy is in place. With results approximately the same, sixty or forty-six percent reported having a written procedure for superintendent evaluation; sixty-eight or fifty-two percent reported no written procedures, and two percent don't know about their procedures.

Who was responsible for development of evaluation plan?

Eighty-one percent of the chairpersons in Virginia reported that the development of the superintendent's evaluation process was the result of the members of school board, while forty-five percent stated it was developed by the superintendent. Thirty-three percent reported it was developed by the chairperson of the board.

How was the evaluation process developed?

In Virginia, with respect to the development of the superintendent's evaluation process, several factors were reviewed. In response to mutually developed performance goals as a part of the superintendent evaluation process, seventy-nine percent of the chairpersons agreed they exist. Twenty-one percent indicated mutually developed performance goals were not included. These goals, where they exist, are established during a pre-evaluation conference in seventy percent of the cases. In thirty percent of the school divisions there was no pre-evaluation conference held to establish goals.

Use of products or artifacts and job descriptions as a part of the superintendent evaluation process in Virginia

In Virginia, eighty-six percent of the chairpersons reported no use of products or artifacts, while only

fourteen percent of the chairpersons reported their use in the evaluation process. Job descriptions were used in the superintendent's evaluation in fifty-six percent of the school divisions, thirty percent had no job description, and fourteen percent reported they did not know if a job description was used.

Who are the evaluators?

Almost unanimously, the chairpersons reported that school boards and chairpersons influence the superintendent's evaluation but receive input, in some cases, from principals, fourteen percent; central office personnel, twelve percent; teachers, ten percent; and the community, ten percent. The most often mentioned group was school board members with ninety-six percent of the school divisions reporting their input into superintendent's evaluation process followed by the superintendent's input which was listed in thirty-six percent of the responses.

Is training provided for the evaluator?

The majority, eighty-six percent, of chairpersons reported that they had not received training on the evaluation process. The remaining, fourteen percent, reported they had received training. The sources of that

training were the Virginia School Board Association and the National School Board Association.

How often are superintendents evaluated?

An overwhelming number of chairpersons, eighty-five percent, report that the superintendent evaluation is an annual affair, with the remaining fifteen percent being split among semiannually, bi-annually, and other. Most chairpersons reported an informal process fifty-seven percent of the time, and a formal process forty-three percent when evaluating the superintendent of schools. Eighty-five percent of the chairpersons reported a post evaluation conference with the evaluator and evaluatee, with thirteen percent saying no post conference existed.

Does evaluation include observations?

When chairpersons were asked about on-the-job observation of the superintendent, thirty-five percent said no on-the-job observations were done as a part of the superintendent's evaluation while sixty-five percent said an on-the-job observation was a part of the superintendent's evaluation. When asked if it were formal or informal, ninety-three percent stated it was informal.

Does the superintendent have the evaluation procedures outlined in a contract?

While superintendent contracts are a relatively new concept in Virginia, only eighteen percent of the chairpersons report that the superintendent evaluation procedures were outlined in his contract. Seventy-six percent of the chairpersons reported no contract provision for the superintendent's evaluation.

Determine whether Virginia school superintendent's evaluation policies and procedures vary based on selected variables such as size of district in Average Daily Membership (ADM), expenditures per student in ADM, and gender of the chairperson of the local school board.

The data obtained from crosstabulation of the seventeen attributes used in the survey questionnaire with size of district in Average Daily Membership (ADM) [small--0-2500 ADM; medium--2501-4000 ADM; large--4501-up ADM] tended not to vary the results obtained significantly. Although it was not significant, large school districts varied the most from the mean score (Table 12).

Expenditure per student in Average Daily Membership (ADM) produced the most varied results (Table 13) when using a difference of fifteen percent as a measure of significant variance. School divisions with larger expenditures

Table 12. Percentage of Yes Responses to Survey Questions
Based on Size of School Districts in Average Daily
Membership (ADM)

Survey Questions	0-2500	2501-5000	5001-up	Average
*Does the board evaluate	78	70	93	81
*Does the board have written policy	54	33	48	45
*Does the board have written procedure	44	30	57	44
Is there a formal pre-conference	61	69	80	70
Are goals mutually agreed on	72	90	77	79
Are procedures in contract	17	7	28	18
Does superintendent have job description	69	76	72	72
Evaluation based on job description	53	59	56	56
Was board trained prior to evaluation	19	17	5	14
Evaluation was formal	42	38	49	43
Evaluation was annual	86	90	82	86
Evaluation developed by:				
1) superintendent	50	38	46	45
2) board chairperson	36	35	31	34
3) board member	69	86	87	81
4) consultant	14	0	21	13
5) parents	0	0	3	1
6) teachers	0	0	5	2
7) others	0	3	3	2

(continued)

Table 12 (continued)

Survey Questions	0-2500	2501-5000	5001-up	Average
Who has evaluation input:				
1) school board	94	97	97	96
2) principals	8	21	13	14
3) central office personnel	8	14	13	12
4) teachers	3	21	8	10
5) superintendent	44	35	28	36
6) students	0	3	5	3
7) consultants	0	0	0	0
8) community	6	17	8	10
9) others	0	0	0	0
Review of products/ artifacts in evaluation	19	7	15	14
On-the-job observation in evaluation	58	69	64	64
On-the-job observation is formal	6	7	8	7
Is there a formal post-conference	92	79	85	86

*The percentages in the questions (Does the Board evaluate, have a written policy, and have written procedures) are based on the total one hundred thirty responses to the survey from the Commonwealth of Virginia. The remainder of the questions is based on the one hundred four yes responses obtained from the question, "Does your board evaluate the superintendent of schools" in the Virginia survey.

Table 13. Percentage of Yes Responses to Question on Survey Based on Expenditures Per Pupil in Average Daily Membership (ADM)

Survey Questions	Expenditures Per Student in ADM			Average
	below \$4000	\$4001-4500	\$4501 & up	
*Does the board evaluate	83	67**	96	82
*Does the board have written policy	40	46	64	50
*Does the board have written procedure	41	36	64**	47
Is there a formal pre-conference	71	61	81	70
Are goals mutually agreed on	80	71	86	79
Are evaluation procedures in contract	9	25	33**	18
Does superintendent have job description	69	68	86	72
Evaluation based on job description	55	50	67	56
Was board trained prior to evaluation	13	11	19	14
Evaluation was formal	36	36	71**	43
Evaluation was annual	87	86	81	86
Evaluation developed by:				
1) superintendent	40	46	57	45
2) board chairperson	31	32	43	34
3) board member	82	79	81	81
4) consultant	9	11	24	13
5) parents	2	0	0	1
6) teachers	4	0	0	2
7) others	0	4	5	2

(continued)

Table 13 (continued)

Survey Questions	Expenditures Per Student in ADM			Average
	below \$4000	\$4001- 4500	\$4501 & up	
Who has Evaluation Input:				
1) school board	96	93	100	96
2) principals	13	18	10	14
3) central office personnel	13	14	5	12
4) teachers	9	14	5	10
5) superintendent	29	43	43	36
6) students	2	4	5	3
7) consultant	0	0	0	0
8) community	9	14	5	10
9) others	0	0	0	0
Review of products/ artifacts in evaluation	9	14	29**	14
On-the-job observation in evaluation	64	57	72	64
On-the-job observation is formal	6	7	10	7
Is there a formal post-conference	82	86	95	86

*The percentages in the questions (Does the Board evaluate, have a written policy, and have written procedures) are based on the total one hundred thirty responses to the survey from the Commonwealth of Virginia. The remainder of the questions is based on the one hundred four yes responses obtained from the question, "Does your board evaluate the superintendent of schools" in the Virginia survey.

**Over 15% variance between this set of responses and the mean of responses to this item.

(\$4501-up per student in ADM) were more likely to use the following "best practice" attributes when compared with lower expenditure districts.

- a) Does the board have written procedures?
- b) Are procedures in the contract?
- c) Is the evaluation formal?

The gender of the school board chairperson in Virginia showed no variance when compared with the "best practices" developed from the literature, except for on-the-job observations (Table 14).

Table 14. Percentage of Yes Responses to Survey Questions Based on Gender of School Board Chairperson

Survey Questions	Gender of School Board Chairperson		
	Male	Female	Average
*Does the board evaluate	80	85	82
*Does the board have written policy	35	41	37
*Does the board have written procedure	43	56	46
Is there a formal pre-conference	67	79	70
Are goals mutually agreed on	76	86	79
Are procedures in contract	20	14	18
Does superintendent have job description	70	79	72
Evaluation based on job description	55	57	56
Was board trained prior to evaluation	11	21	14
Evaluation was formal	40	54	43
Evaluation was annual	87	82	86
Evaluation developed by:			
1) superintendent	42	54	45
2) board chairperson	33	36	34
3) board member	80	82	81
4) consultant	11	18	13
5) parents	1	0	1
6) teachers	1	4	2
7) others	0	7	2

(continued)

Table 14 (continued)

Survey Questions	Gender of School Board Chairperson		
	Male	Female	Average
Who has evaluation input:			
1) school board	96	97	96
2) principals	17	4	14
3) central office personnel	11	14	12
4) teachers	12	4	10
5) superintendent	36	36	36
6) students	4	0	3
7) consultants	0	0	0
8) community	9	11	10
9) others	0	0	0
Review of products/artifacts in evaluation	13	18	14
On-the-job observation in evaluation	58	79**	64
On-the-job observation formal	5	11	7
Is there a formal post-conference	83	93	86

*The percentages in the questions (Does the Board evaluate, have a written policy, and have written procedures) are based on the total one hundred thirty responses to the survey from the Commonwealth of Virginia. The remainder of the questions is based on the one hundred four yes responses obtained from the question, "Does your board evaluate the superintendent of schools" in the Virginia survey.

**Over 15% variance between this responses and the mean response to this item.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The public school superintendent cannot escape evaluation. In a time of increasing public demand for accountability, formal evaluation of the superintendent's performance should be a key element in every school system's personnel appraisal system. One purpose of this study was to examine existing superintendent of schools evaluation policies and procedures from the local school board chairperson's perspective in the Commonwealth of Virginia. Also, the purposes included comparing existing policies and procedures in Virginia with those in the literature considered "best practice" nationally, and to determine whether Virginia school superintendent evaluation policies and procedures vary based on selected variables, such as size of school district in Average Daily Membership (ADM), expenditures per pupil in ADM, and gender of chairperson of the local school board.

The study population consisted of one hundred thirty local school board chairpersons in the Commonwealth of Virginia. The study was conducted in four phases: (1) an extensive review of the literature, (2) construction of and

pilot testing of a data gathering instrument (Appendix A), (3) acquiring responses from selected subjects, and (4) reporting and interpreting the data. The researcher obtained one hundred percent of the one hundred thirty requests for information that was made from local school board chairpersons. The extremely high return rate was achieved due to the method used in the survey. The survey procedures were: (1) One hundred thirty local school board chairpersons were mailed the initial survey package which consisted of a survey form (Appendix A), a cover letter (Appendix C), and a self-addressed return envelope, (2) The second contact was a follow-up 5" X 8" machine printed white postcard (Appendix B) mailed one week after the first mailing if no response had been received, (3) Fifteen days after the second contact a third mailing was made to each of the remaining non-respondents which consisted of the same material as initial contact except a "third request" was stamped across the cover letter (Appendix C), (4) For those non-respondents, thirty-nine days after the initial mailing, a direct telephone call to the local chairperson by the researcher was placed and a telephone interview was completed. Frequencies and percentages were calculated and reported (Table A). No other attempt was made by the researcher to conduct other statistical analysis of these data.

Findings

Responses to the survey questionnaire (Appendix A) were received from one hundred thirty or one hundred percent of the local school board chairpersons appraised by the researcher. The responses yielded the following findings:

(1) Chairpersons of local school boards in the Commonwealth of Virginia reported evaluating the superintendent of schools in eighty percent of the districts. Of those who do evaluate their superintendents, only thirty-seven percent have written policies, written procedures exist in only forty-six percent of the systems, and a formal procedure exists in only thirty-five percent of the cases. A more informal procedure exists in Virginia than nationally. Although sixty-three percent had mutually agreed upon goals established in a formal pre-conference, in fifty-six percent of the districts, with fifty-eight percent having a superintendent job description and forty-five percent saying they based the evaluation on those job descriptions only fifteen percent said it was consummated with a superintendent's contract. The chairpersons stated their superintendent's evaluation procedures were developed in most cases, sixty-five percent by school boards, and the major providers of input into the superintendent's evaluation was also school board members by a hefty seventy-seven percent. The procedure is an annual process, sixty-

nine percent, with fifty-one percent saying on-the-job observations are used, but only five percent of the time is it a formal procedure. Also, artifact/products are used in the procedure in twelve percent of the school districts with a formal post-conference in sixty-nine percent of the districts.

(2) When comparing policies and procedures in Virginia with nationally considered "best practice" (Appendix G) Virginia ranges from eighty percent when discussing superintendent's evaluation by school boards to only five percent with a formal on-the-job observation of the superintendent for the evaluation procedures. Virginia's average is around fifty percent or less when you compare all seventeen attributes mentioned in the literature with what local school board chairperson's report to be happening in their districts.

(3) The selected variables, size of school district in Average Daily Membership (ADM), wealth of district as a cost per ADM, and gender of chairperson of the local school boards, had limited effect on the results of this study when compared using the plus/minus fifteen (± 15) tolerance factor.

Conclusions

Based on the data obtained from this study the following conclusions appear to be warranted:

(1) Evaluation of the performance of the public school superintendents in the Commonwealth of Virginia is, for the most part, an informal, nonpolicy and nonprocedure activity that is not well understood by the chairpersons of the local school board. Very few of the local chairpersons have received training on the evaluation system. However, there seems to be a growing interest, based on request for results of this study and information, throughout the Commonwealth for a more formalized productive program.

(2) Another inference that can be made is that when compared with "best practice" from the current literature (Appendix G) the Commonwealth of Virginia is not doing an acceptable job in any of the seventeen identified attributes. Although most systems of evaluation are started by board members and superintendents jointly, it is evident that a clear understanding is not forthcoming because of the informal programs that exist in the vast majority of local public school systems.

(3) The three variables looked at, size of school district when measured by student numbers in ADM, wealth of district when measured by expenditures on students in ADM, and gender of local school board chairperson, were found not

to be an influencing factor when analyzing the evaluation program for local public school superintendents in the Commonwealth of Virginia although there was a slight tendency for larger and wealthier school divisions to report a higher percentage of "best practices."

(4) Lastly, twenty percent of the chairpersons representing local public school districts in the Commonwealth of Virginia report they do not have an evaluation program, either formal or informal, for the superintendent of schools. If the divisions reporting informal processes are added (Appendix G), between sixty percent and seventy percent do a poor job in evaluating the local public school superintendent in the Commonwealth of Virginia. While the literature acknowledges informal evaluation programs, there are strong cautions against such systems and the problems which can be created if the evaluation system is not formalized.

Recommendations

The following implications for further research and inservice are supported by the findings and conclusions of this study.

(1) A study of the relationship between the existence of a formal evaluation process of the superintendent of

schools and the success of the superintendent of schools needs to be conducted.

(2) A study in the Commonwealth of Virginia to determine the relationships between formal and informal evaluation processes, superintendent effectiveness, and quality of education should be conducted.

(3) An examination in the Commonwealth of Virginia of the advantages or disadvantages of superintendent evaluation of the board and board self evaluation should be conducted.

(4) A study should be undertaken to link this study and its companion study (authored by C. Lindsey Suggs) on the evaluation of superintendent of schools in Virginia from the superintendent's perspective.

(5) Leadership from the Virginia School Board Association (VSBA), with assistance and involvement of the Virginia Association of School Superintendents (VASS), and the Virginia Department of Education, should be provided to assist local school districts not having a formal program to develop program for the implementation of a system to evaluate the local public school superintendent.

(6) The Virginia School Board Association (VSBA), with the assistance and involvement of the Virginia Association of School Superintendents (VASS), and the Virginia Department of Education should provide leadership and direction in the following areas:

(a) Providing inservice to local school board members and superintendents on a local and statewide basis on formal superintendent's evaluation.

(b) Disseminating information on the pros and cons of a formal program for the evaluation of the local public school superintendent.

(c) Developing model programs for formal superintendent evaluation.

(d) Encouraging universities and other institutions of higher learning to train prospective superintendents on the use and benefits of a formal evaluation process for the superintendents of schools.

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APPENDIX A

Division Code _____

**Superintendent's Evaluation Policies and Procedures
In The Public School Division of Virginia:**

The School Board Chairperson's Perspective

Instructions: Please respond to each of the questions by checking the best answer. Use the space provided to explain answers where applicable. Please answer all questions and do not obtain assistance from your superintendent or other school board members. Return questionnaire in the enclosed self addressed envelope.

1. Does your board evaluate the Superintendent of Schools?

Yes _____

No _____

2. Does your division have a written policy for evaluation of the superintendent?

Yes _____ If yes, please enclose a copy.

No _____

Do Not Know _____

3. Does your division have written procedures for evaluating the superintendent?

Yes _____ If yes, please enclose a copy.

No _____

Do Not Know _____

If the answers to questions 1, 2, and 3 are no, or do not know, please stop here and return the questionnaire.

4. Is a formal conference held with the superintendent to establish the goals and the evaluation criteria at the beginning of the evaluation cycle?

Yes _____

No _____

5. Is the superintendent's evaluation based on mutually agreed upon goals?

Yes _____

No _____

Do Not Know _____

6. Are the procedures for the superintendent evaluation outlined in the superintendent's contract?

Yes _____

No _____

Do Not Know _____

7. Does your superintendent have a job description?

Yes _____

No _____

Do Not Know _____

8. If the answer to question 7 is YES, is your superintendent's evaluation based on the job description?

Yes _____

No _____

Do Not Know _____

9. Did you receive training prior to conducting your superintendent's evaluation?

Yes _____

No _____

If yes, explain _____

✓ 10. The superintendent's evaluation procedure is best described as:

Formal _____

Informal _____

11. The superintendent's evaluation procedure is conducted:

Semi-Annually _____

Annually _____

Bi-Annually _____

Other (Explain) _____

12. Was your superintendent's evaluation developed by:
(Check all that apply.)

- Superintendent _____
- Chairperson of School Board _____
- Members of School Board _____
- Consultants _____
- Parents _____
- Teachers _____
- Others (specify) _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

13. Who else provides input into the evaluation of the superintendent? (Check all that apply.)

- School Board Members _____
- Principals _____
- Central Office Personnel _____
- Teachers _____
- Superintendent _____
- Students _____
- Consultants _____
- Community _____
- Others (Explain) _____
- _____

14. In some school divisions a superintendent's evaluation may include the review of products/artifacts (e.g., newsletters, publications) and/or presentations to the board or community). Are such data formally included in your evaluation procedures?

Yes _____

No _____

If yes, explain: _____

15. Are on-the-job observations of the superintendent a part of the evaluation procedures?

Yes _____

No _____

Do Not Know _____

If Yes, are the observations: Formal _____

Informal _____

16. Is a formal conference held with the superintendent after the evaluation cycle has been completed?

Yes _____

No _____

Do Not Know _____

17. Are there other comments you would like to make which would be helpful in describing the superintendent's evaluation process in your school division. (Please use the back if more space is needed.)

If you are interested in receiving a summary of the results, please indicate by placing an X in the box.

Thank you for your assistance. Please put the questionnaire in the attached addressed envelope and mail immediately.

APPENDIX B

Name of Reviewer _____

QUESTIONNAIRE EVALUATION FORM

Please consider each of the following questions as you review and critique the questionnaire. Any comments or suggestions you might have in addition to these questions will be greatly appreciated. Feel free to make your comments on this form and/or on the questionnaire.

1. Is the format of the questionnaire easy to follow?

2. Are the directions for completing the questionnaire clear?

3. Circle the question number where the meaning of question was **not** readily understood.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16

4. Circle the question number where the response options for question # were **not** adequate.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16

5. Does any aspect of the questionnaire suggest bias on the part of the researcher?

Explain:

6. Is the length of the questionnaire excessive?

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

APPENDIX C

Herman G. Bartlett, Jr.
Superintendent
Colonial Heights City Schools
1147 Cumberland Drive
Colonial Heights, VA 23834

Dear :

As a part of my doctoral program at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Virginia Tech), I am researching a topic "Superintendent Evaluation." This research has the support of the Virginia State Department of Education, the Virginia School Boards Association (VSBA), the Virginia Association of Superintendents (VASS), and Virginia Tech.

The enclosed questionnaire will provide valuable data about superintendent evaluation procedures across the Commonwealth of Virginia. You have been selected based on your position as a School Board Chairperson of a school division in the State of Virginia. It should take approximately fifteen (15) minutes to complete the survey.

The information you provide will be used solely for the purposes of this study. Anonymity and confidentiality of responses is assured each participant. The code number in the upper right corner is for purposes of this study or follow up only.

Please return the questionnaire with your comments by December 20, 1990. A stamped, self-addressed envelope is included for your convenience.

If you are interested in results of this study, please indicate your desire to receive a copy of the results summary on the last question of the survey.

Thank you in advance for your assistance, time and cooperation.

Sincerely,

Herman G. Bartlett, Jr.

enclosure

APPENDIX D

PostCard Follow-up

December 20, 1991

Dear Chairperson:

On December 6, 1990 a questionnaire seeking your opinion about superintendent evaluation policies and procedures was mailed to you. Your name was selected from a list of School Board Chairpersons from across the state of Virginia.

If you have already completed and returned it to me please accept my sincere thanks. If not, please do so today. Because it has been sent to only Virginia School Board Chairpersons it is extremely important that yours also be included in the study if the results are to accurately represent the opinions of Virginia's School Board Chairpersons.

If by some chance you did not receive the questionnaire, or it got misplaced, please call me right now, collect at (804) 526-0811, and I will get another one in the mail to you today.

Sincerely,

Herman G. Bartlett, Jr.
Superintendent of Schools
Colonial Heights City Schools

APPENDIX E

Follow-up Letter

**COLONIAL HEIGHTS CITY SCHOOLS
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT
512 BOULEVARD
COLONIAL HEIGHTS, VA 23834
804-526-0811**

December 31, 1991

About a month ago, I wrote to you seeking your opinion on the status of your school division's superintendent evaluation policies and procedures. As of today I have not yet received your completed questionnaire.

I am conducting this research to determine how superintendents across the state are evaluated. It is because superintendents are the key individuals in an effective school system, and evaluation is the avenue for improvement, that makes this research effort important. Before more extensive efforts are made by local school divisions or the State Department of Education to improve superintendent's evaluation practices, it is important to examine what currently exists.

I am writing to you again because of the significance each questionnaire has to the usefulness of this study. In order for the results of this study to be truly representative of the opinions of all Virginia School Board Chairpersons, it is essential that each person in the sample return their questionnaire.

In the event that your questionnaire has been misplaced, a replacement is enclosed.

Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

Cordially,

Herman G. Bartlett, Jr.
Superintendent

ENCLOSURES

APPENDIX F

Superintendent Evaluation Matrix

A Crosstabulation Matrix of the nationally selected seventeen (17) attributes considered "best practice" from nationally published authors and writings.

<u>"Best Practices"</u>	<u>ERS</u>	<u>Redfern</u>	<u>NSBA</u>	<u>AASA</u>
Does the board evaluate?	X	X	X	X
Does the board have written policy?	X	X	X	X
Does the board have written procedure?	X	X	X	X
Is there a formal pre-conference?	X	X	X	X
Are goals mutually agreed upon?	X	X	X	X
Are procedures in contract?	X	X	X	X
Is there a job description?	X	X	X	X
Is evaluation based on job description?	X	X	X	X
Was board trained prior to evaluation?	X	X	X	X
Formal evaluation procedure?	X	X	X	X
Annual evaluation?	X	X	X	X
Development based on:				
members of board	X	X	X	X
chairperson	X	X	X	X
superintendent	X	X	X	X
parents			X	X
teachers			X	
consultants		X		X

"Best Practices"

ERS Redfern NSBA AASA

Input includes:

members of board	X	X	X	X
chairperson	X	X	X	X
superintendent	X	X	X	X
teachers		X		
parents		X	X	
students		X		
community			X	
consultants			X	X

Is there On-the-job observations?

formal	X	X	X	
informal	X	X	X	X

Does evaluation include review of product/artifact?

X	X	X	
---	---	---	--

Is there a formal post-conference?

X	X	X	X
---	---	---	---

APPENDIX G

Percentage of Yes Responses to the Seventeen Survey Questions From the One Hundred Thirty Chairpersons in the Commonwealth of Virginia

(N=130)

	Yes Percentage
Does the board evaluate?	80
Does the board have written policy?	37
Does the board have written procedure?	46
Is there a formal pre-conference?	56
Are goals mutually agreed upon?	63
Are procedures in contract?	15
Is there a job description?	58
Is evaluation based on job description?	45
Was board trained prior to evaluation?	11
Is there a formal evaluation procedure?	35
Is there an annual evaluation?	69
Is the evaluation development based on member of board?	65
Does input include members of board?	77
Are there on-the-job observations?	51
Are on-the-job observations formal?	5
Does evaluation include review of product/artifact?	12
Is there a formal post-conference?	69

VITA

HERMAN G. BARTLETT, JR.

1147 Cumberland Drive
Colonial Heights, VA 23834

(804) 526-4710 Residence
(804) 526-0811 Business

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

Ed.D.	Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University Major: Educational Administration	1991
Ed.S.	University of Virginia Major: Educational Administration	1981
M.S.	Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University Major: Educational Administration	1973
B.S.	Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University Major: Science	1969

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

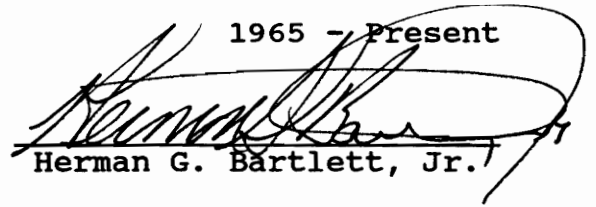
Superintendent of Schools Colonial Heights City Public Schools	1985-Present
Superintendent of Schools Craig County Public Schools	1981 - 1985
Assistant Superintendent for Instruction Cumberland County Public Schools	1979 - 1981
Administrative Assistant for Finance Cumberland County Public Schools	1977 - 1979
Secondary Principal Cumberland County Public Schools	1973 - 1977
Program Writer and Interim Principal Montgomery County Schools	1971 - 1973

Science Teacher
Matthews County Schools

1969 - 1971

United States Army Reserves

1965 - Present

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Herman G. Bartlett, Jr.", is written over a horizontal line. The signature is stylized and somewhat cursive.

Herman G. Bartlett, Jr.