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A Review of the Literature on the Evaluation of Superintendents

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A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE ON THE EVALUATION

This starred paper submitted by Mitchell Clausen in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree Master of Science at St. Cloud State University is hereby approved by the final evaluation committee.

by

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A Starred Paper

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Dean
School of Graduate and Continuing Studies

**A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE ON THE EVALUATION
OF SUPERINTENDENTS**

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According to Peterson, superintendents are the only school district employees not evaluated by other educational professionals. Many school districts evaluate their superintendents for legal reasons. Some states require superintendents to be evaluated on a regular basis. "Because evaluation involves assessment of human abilities and traits, appraisal is a sensitive and often traumatic process for all parties" (Booth & Glaub, 1978, p. 34). According to Booth and Glaub, the greatest and most common error made is evaluation boards are uncomfortable with the process, so they avoid doing it at all. "These errors of omission in evaluation are irresponsible and cannot be justified at any level of an organization that expects to accomplish specific goals" (Booth & Glaub, 1978, p. 34).

"Too often, superintendent evaluations fail to meet the test of fairness and accuracy and both the board and superintendent suffer" (Calzi & Helier, 1999, p. 33). Evaluation is necessary for improvement of the school district and for communication between the superintendent and the board. "In theory, a superintendent's evaluation isn't complicated. The school board develops the criteria with which to judge its chief executive, selects a method of measuring or

Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

Evaluation of superintendents can be a difficult task if it is not preceded with adequate thought and preparation. In general, teachers are evaluated by principals, and principals are evaluated by superintendents (Peterson, 1989). According to Peterson, superintendents are the only school district employees not evaluated by other educational professionals. Many school districts evaluate their superintendents for legal reasons. Some states require superintendents to be evaluated on a regular basis. "Because evaluation involves assessment of human abilities and frailties, appraisal is a sensitive and often traumatic process for all parties" (Booth & Glaub, 1978, p. 34). According to Booth and Glaub, the greatest and most common error made is avoidance; boards are uncomfortable with the process, so they avoid doing it at all. "These errors of omission in evaluation are irresponsible and cannot be justified at any level of an organization that expects to accomplish specific goals" (Booth & Glaub, 1978, p. 34).

"Too often, superintendent evaluations fail to meet the test of fairness and accuracy and both the board and superintendent suffer" (Calzi & Heller, 1989, p. 33). Evaluation is necessary for improvement of the school district and for communication between the superintendent and the board. "In theory, a superintendent's evaluation isn't complicated: The school board develops the criteria with which to judge its chief executive, selects a method of measuring or

rating the school chief's effectiveness, and then discusses the results with the superintendent" (Calzi & Heller, 1989, p. 33).

In any event, formal assessment provides a basis for evaluating performance. A formal evaluation can offer protection in lawsuits, criticism from terminated superintendents, and constituents angered over the superintendent's performance.

According to Bippus (1985), if a board sets up a clear, logical evaluation system it can avoid breakdowns in board or superintendent relationships. Bippus said "develop a process in which all involved can identify what the board expect of the superintendent and then monitor the progress in meeting those expectations" (p. 17).

Statement of the Purpose

The purpose of this starred paper was to review current literature and research findings regarding the different models used for evaluations of superintendents and the underlying forces that create the models. The review included validation that superintendent evaluation is an important task for school boards to engage in.

Although many reasons exist for supporting evaluation, professional education associations agree that the primary purpose of evaluation is to improve performance (Foldesy, 1989). According to Foldesy, an evaluation should identify strengths and weaknesses while providing a prescription to improve job performance.

Many times the evaluation may be used for justifying the continuance or termination of employment of a superintendent. This may cause superintendents to fear losing their job and try to hide weaknesses to keep the job rather than trying to improve skills (Foldesy, 1989).

The following definitions of terms facilitate an understanding of the vocabulary used in the paper:

Superintendent. The superintendent is the chief executive officer of the school district. The superintendent is also an ex officio member of the school board without voting rights. The superintendent abides by the policies, regulations, rules, and procedures established by the School Board and the State Board of Education. He/she has charge of the administration of the school under the direction of the School Board (MSBA/MASA Joint Report, 1987). The term, superintendent, does not include any other certified central office personnel. The superintendent's roles are defined by contractual relationship, board policies, and job description (Bittle, 1981).

The superintendent has various roles to fulfill. "The superintendent is expected to display excellence as an educational leader, to be politically sophisticated, to be aware of and active in legislative developments, and to have an extensive knowledge of federal and state laws" (AASA/NSBA Roles, 1980).

Superintendent Evaluation. Foldesy (1989) gave one explanation of a superintendent evaluation. Foldesy said the assurance to the school board that the superintendent is serving the school system in an effective manner, along with the assurance that the superintendent is living up to the expectations of the school board and their communities, constitutes a good evaluation.

Board policy, most of the time, will directly influence what the superintendent's job description will be. The job description often will have a direct relationship to what goes into an evaluation instrument. The board sets policies that provide direction for the operation of the district. It is through these policies that administrative functions are delegated to the superintendent. Policy should provide the basis for authority while also identifying the procedure to be

followed in executing the board's wishes (Foldes, 1989). Superintendents may be evaluated on how well they can follow guidelines set forth by policy.

Limitation of the Study

The focus of this review of literature was the evaluation of superintendents. This paper focused on school superintendent evaluation and reviewed the literature and practices from across the country. One of the best processes for the evaluation of superintendents was not identified in the paper. Materials from around the country, with an emphasis on Minnesota public schools, were reviewed in the paper.

Issues for Review

The literature review of Chapter II focused on the relationship of the school board to the superintendent. Recent Minnesota laws on superintendents' tenure were given consideration. A history of superintendent evaluation and the responsibility of evaluating the superintendent are given consideration in the review. Finally, advantages and disadvantages of different superintendent evaluation models are discussed.

Chapter III contains a summary, conclusions, and recommendations that have risen from these findings.

Chapter II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The purpose of this starred paper was to review current literature on the topic of superintendent evaluation. Many different superintendent evaluation models were reviewed. Evaluations help to identify strengths and weaknesses of the superintendent's performance, which in turn, will lead to the district setting goals, the superintendent improving performance, and a strengthening of the relationship between the district and the superintendent.

Why should boards evaluate administrators? "The major purpose is to improve district management and leadership" (Hoyle, English & Steffy, 1990, p. 136). Iowa State University researchers believe that the evaluation should be based on an analysis of progress made toward accomplishment of predetermined objectives through the use of good practice (Hoyle, English & Steffy, 1990). According to Hanson, (1986) useful evaluation usually involves comparison. Evaluation can be a valuable communication mechanism between the board and superintendent because the performance as perceived by each the superintendent and board can be compared (MSBA & MASA, 1991).

Historical Development of the Superintendent

A knowledge of history helps us understand the present. This adage is true of the superintendency (Konnert & Augenstein, 1990). "A detailed history of the superintendency is not available. Perhaps the reason for this is that the

superintendency evolved as a product of growth in the public education arena" (Konnert & Augenstein, 1990, p. 3).

In the late eighteenth century the states became involved in education through the tenth amendment to the Constitution that says, "The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the states, are reserved to the states respectively, or to the people." Since the word education is never mentioned in the Constitution, the states assumed responsibility for education when the citizens began expressing interest in mass education. The legislatures passed laws permitting public education and allocated small amounts of money to help local communities with their educational efforts.

When state funds began to be appropriated for education, the law makers wanted some accounting of the funds. They often appointed volunteer committees to oversee these limited fiscal activities. These committees, formed at the beginning of the nineteenth century, were the forerunners of state boards of education (Konnert & Augenstein, 1990).

As more communities availed themselves of state funds for education, work loads became burdensome for the volunteer committees. These committees then proceeded to identify a paid state officer to handle the accounting activities for them. Overseeing the state educational funds was but one part, and often a small part, of the state official's total responsibilities (Konnert & Augenstein, 1990).

As the number of communities involved in state funding continued to grow, the oversight function became a full-time job. Thus, the first state superintendencies were established. New York is credited with appointing the

first state superintendent in 1812. This practice was quickly adopted by the other states (Konnert & Augenstein, 1990).

As the population of this country continued to grow and expand westward, many hundreds of small local school systems sprang up. The task of visiting and inspecting these local systems became an impossibility for a single state school officer or committee. As a result, these responsibilities were gradually delegated to area committees. These area committees quickly became county committees. As happened at the state level, the volunteer county committees soon found the oversight activities too burdensome and proceeded to delegate them to a county official already on the payroll. As the responsibilities continued to grow, they required the attention of a full-time person. Thus, the county superintendency was born. More than a dozen states had adopted the county form of educational supervision before the Civil War. Today, the county superintendency is still very much in evidence in the educational governance structure of this country. In many states, the county office still serves as the intermediary between the local districts and the state department (Konnert & Augenstein, 1990).

The local superintendency was not the result of a sequential progression of the state and county superintendencies. Instead, it developed simultaneously with the position. It evolved from local initiative and was not established by constitution or statutes as the state and county superintendencies were (Konnert & Augenstein, 1990).

The first local superintendencies were established in the larger cities. Buffalo, New York, and Louisville, Kentucky, are generally credited with establishing the first local superintendents in 1837. The practice slowly spread, and by 1870, more than 30 large cities had their own superintendents (Konnert & Augenstein, 1990).

Since 1950 when the first efforts to study educational administration as an academic discipline came to the forefront, much research has focused on school systems as organizations and on superintendents as educational leaders. As a result, more is known about school systems, leadership, boards of education, and superintendents than at any time in the past (Konnert & Augenstein, 1990).

The superintendent, as an employee of the board of education, is still the law in most states. Unlike many professionals, the superintendent cannot operate autonomously. They depend on the board both for the establishment of policy and the approval of many administrative recommendations (Konnert & Augenstein, 1990).

While progress has been made in defining the responsibilities of the superintendent, there is still much left to the discretion of the board. With some boards the distinction between policy formation and administration is blurred at best. This is particularly true in the financial and personnel areas. Seldom do boards get deeply involved in the mechanics of the instructional program. These contemporary relationships between superintendents and boards are remnants of past practices (Konnert & Augenstein, 1990).

According to the Minnesota Association of School Administrators (1991), the superintendent has six main areas to work with on the job. They are board relations, planning, administration, program development, staff relations, and public relations.

The Minnesota superintendent is the chief administrative officer and is responsible for developing a working relationship with the board (MASA, 1991). "The superintendent shall manage, organize, direct, and supervise the administrative, instructional and supporting staff." The superintendent shall organize, plan, and attend all school board meetings" (MASA, 1991, p. 5). Along

with these duties, the Minnesota Association of School Administrators, (1991) suggested that the Superintendent have these general duties and responsibilities:

1. Curriculum and Instruction
2. Budget and Finance
3. Personnel and Negotiating
4. Buildings and Maintenance
5. Communications and Reports
6. Representation and Legislation
7. Special Assignments

The superintendent is an employee of the school district. They depend on the board both for the establishment of policy and the approval of many administrative recommendations.

Superintendent Evaluations--History

"Evaluation policy within school districts is often unclear and unwritten, consistent with their loosely coupled organizational nature" (Hanson & Hathaway, 1988, p. 1). According to Hansen and Hathaway, this lack of clarity can lead to confusion and management problems.

"Fair procedures for assessing and improving the performance of school administrators are crucial to effective instructional programs" (ERS, 1985, p. 1). The focus of research and public concern in the past has tended to be on teacher evaluation. This trend has spread over the past 25 years, to include concern for administrator evaluation.

Ten years ago (1974), an ERS survey found that nine states mandated formal evaluation of administrators. A similar survey conducted in 1984 found that 27 states mandated administrative evaluation. In addition, ERS surveys indicated that the percentage of school districts conducting formal evaluations of administrators has increased. (ERS, 1985, p. 1)

Past practices in evaluating superintendents have been something of an eclectic patchwork of techniques and procedures (Joint AASA-NSBA Committee, 1980). In the past, there were no planned procedures, but a reliance upon word-of-mouth assessments. According to the committee, the need for an effective superintendent evaluation system led to checklists, rating scales, and essays. While these evaluation methods allow school boards an opportunity to express views, they leave something to be desired.

The practice of informal, unwritten evaluations of the superintendent's performance prevailed for a long time. As long as things went well, there seemed little need to let superintendents know how they were doing. Only when operations failed did it seem necessary to total up the assets and liabilities of the superintendent. The trouble with that practice was that it often occurred too late to correct the initial difficulty (Joint AASA-NSBA Committee, 1980). Gradually, it became obvious that there were definite advantages to systematic, written evaluations. Many school districts use a popular method for evaluating called the forced Rating Scale Evaluation method. This method is a fast and easy checklist (Booth & Glaub, 1978).

The impetus for improvement probably stemmed from a mutual desire to do a better job in personnel management. The superintendent could see how planned, regularly scheduled evaluations not only provided timely responses about performance, but also made it possible to use assessment results as a springboard for further improvement and development. The board was able to make accountability a much more meaningful concept. Most of all, the school

system gained greater stability and continuity in top management (AASA-NSBA Committee, 1980).

The trend for superintendent evaluations today is evaluating by a set of pre-determined objectives. This type of evaluation is sometimes called Evaluation by Objectives (Booth & Glaub, 1978). The matching of these objectives set up by the superintendent and board is what the evaluation is about. "A successful evaluation system requires that the purposes of the evaluation process be discussed, identified, and agreed upon by all who are involved in it" (Anderson & Lumsden, 1989). An evaluation system should be based on the performance goals and position description previously established (MSBA/MASA, 1991). This method is used today and called a written performance evaluation (Jones, 1981). It is recommended that an appraisal procedure be adopted that is satisfactory to both the board and superintendent (MSBA/MASA, 1991).

If the formal evaluation process is working properly, mutually agreed upon goals and objectives for the superintendent and school system will be established, and the evaluation will focus on the degree to which the goals and objectives have been met (Konnert & Augenstein, 1990). Evaluation can be a valuable communication mechanism between the board and superintendent because the performance as perceived by each party can be compared (MSBA & MASA, 1990).

The Need for Evaluation

Many school districts evaluate superintendents for legal reasons. Some states require it, or it may be part of the superintendent's contract. The administrative checkups are preventive medicine. According to Hoyle, English, and Steffy (1985), the major purpose of evaluations is to improve district

management and leadership. They prescribe ways to ensure continued good health and detect potential maladies (Howell, 1987). In any event, formal assessment provides a basis for evaluating weak areas and rewarding satisfactory job performance. An evaluation offers protection from lawsuits and criticism from both terminated superintendents and constituents angered over the superintendents' performance and salary (Peterson, 1989).

The real need is to develop a fair and valid procedure and to create greater understanding of the purposes and limitations of performance appraisal so that it will not be misused. Evaluation requires defining what is expected of the superintendent.

Effective superintendent assessment offers encouraging praise, instructive criticism, and suggestions for overcoming shortcomings and problems. It clarifies roles, expectations, and performance. Evaluation has many functions. Evaluation is motivational, it can aid in planning, it is developmental, and it aids in communication.

Evaluation of the superintendent's performance helps to provide organizational goals for the district. It helps to define the needs of the district and to set up improvement goals.

Specifically, evaluation of the superintendent's performance should help to achieve the following:

- provide organizational goals
- to identify weaknesses and strengths
- to encourage improved performance and self appraisal
- to generate understanding between Board and superintendent
- to enable the superintendent and board to deal with differences other than during a crisis

- to force the board to examine its own performance
- to determine qualifications for merit pay
- to determine unsatisfactory performance for demotion or termination
- to comply with state law regulations (Miller, 1990, MSBA/MASA, 1991, Education Research Service, 1985, Missouri School Board Association, 1986)

"Evaluation is a communication process" (Peterson, 1989, p. 1).

According to Peterson, evaluation enhances communication and clarifies the board's role. "Evaluation requires defining what is expected of the superintendent" (Peterson, 1989, p. 1).

In summary, planning for evaluation includes analyzing a specific situation, outlining the purposes of evaluation, setting goals and specific objectives, and choosing the means for measuring the processes used and the eventual outcomes (Anderson & Lumsden, 1989). Evaluation will clarify roles, expectations, and performance of the superintendent and Board (Peterson, 1989). Evaluation provides a basis for evaluating weak areas and rewarding satisfactory job performance (Peterson, 1989). Evaluation has many functions, it is motivational, it aids in planning, it is developmental, and it aids in the communication process.

Policies, Laws, and Practices

There are mandates for the evaluation process in many states. For example, superintendents in Virginia are required to be evaluated annually. In Ohio an annual evaluation of the superintendent is recommended. In Georgia, "all personnel employed by local units of administration, including elected and

appointed school superintendents, shall have their performance evaluated annually by appropriately trained evaluators" (Rogers, 1990, p. 1).

According to the ERS report (1985), at least two-thirds of the districts surveyed evaluated their superintendent yearly. Assistant superintendents also were evaluated at the two-thirds rate. Eighty-five percent of all reporting districts said they had some type of formal procedure for evaluating the superintendent (ERS Report, 1985).

According to MSBA/MASA (1990), an important aspect of a positive school board-superintendent relationship involves at least an annual, periodic, systematic performance review and appraisal of the superintendent. MSBA/MASA feel that the evaluation should be insisted upon by the superintendent and the board.

Minnesota has no mandatory evaluation requirement. "Before the 1990 session of the legislature, superintendents were covered under the basic continuing contract law, M. S. 125.12, affording superintendents essentially the same protection as teachers, generally" (MSBA/MASA, 1991, p. 8). Under the continuing contract law, no tenured superintendent can be discharged at the close of the school year unless the superintendent has received a written notice of deficiency and has been given a reasonable opportunity to improve (MSBA/MASA, 1987).

In 1990 the law changed in Minnesota. "For any superintendent's contract entered into or modified after July 1, 1990, a superintendent does not have the protection of the continuing contract law, and at its expiration date, may or may not be renewed at the school board's discretion" (MSBA/MASA, 1990, p. 4).

In summary, the research findings showed that most states either require or recommend a yearly evaluation for superintendents (ERS Report, 1985;

MSBA/MASA, 1990, Rogers, 1990). In the literature it was found that few people questioned that there is a need for performance appraisal and job evaluation.

The Board and Superintendent Relationship

"Today, effective public education requires strong school boards and strong superintendents who willingly assume leadership roles" (AASA & NSBA, 1980, p. 1). "Educational success is dependent upon a good working relationship between the school board and the chief administrative officer it employs" (AASA/NSBA, 1980, p. 1). School improvement can be influenced positively by a strong working relationship between the board and the superintendent (Davidson, 1987).

"Basic to this relationship is a clear understanding that the board and superintendent constitute a team. Neither can operate effectively without a thorough knowledge of and support for the other's role" (AASA & NSBA, 1980, p. 1).

A positive school board-superintendent relationship is essential for there to be effective management of the public school district. The foundation of that relationship is a clear, written understanding by the superintendent of the superintendent's position and the expectations of the school board. The position description should be specific in delineating responsibilities and authority. The expectations of the board for the superintendent should be set forth in an annual prioritized list of goals. (MSBA/MASA, 1991, p. 1)

"The relationship between the board of education of a public school system and the school superintendent is extremely important to the functioning and progress of the system" (Sharp & Newman, 1990). The board must serve as a legislative body in the development and evaluation of policies. The superintendent must be primarily responsible for the administration of the school district according to board policies (AASA & NSBA, 1980).

The board and the superintendent must find ways to communicate with each other and develop mutual trust and confidence (Sharp & Newman, 1990). According to (Tallerico, 1989), "The functional relationship between the school board and the superintendent is extremely important." When a board and superintendent put in writing what they agree to be their respective roles and responsibilities, a good working relationship will develop (AASA & NSBA, 1980).

"An efficient and well-understood system of communication between the school board and superintendent is vital to a successful working relationship" (AASA/NSBA, 1980, p. 6). It is important, therefore, that a positive school board-superintendent relationship be established (MSBA/MASA, 1990). "A general consensus should be sought with regard to the role of the board, how the board will carry out its responsibilities, and how it will interface with its chief executive officer, the superintendent" (Jones, Working, & Biernacki, 1981, p. 5)

The American Association of School Administrators (1980) stressed the importance of establishing a good system of communications between boards and superintendents. "The manner in which a superintendent communicates with the board varies with the size of the district and the leadership style of the superintendent" (Konnert & Augenstein, 1991, p. 125). According to Konnert and Augenstein (1991), it is preferable to have information provided to board members by the superintendent and staff rather than by the media, angry parents, or some group calling them.

According to MSBA/MASA (1987), the major elements necessary to establish a positive school board-superintendent relationship should include:

- A clear understanding of the difference between policy decisions and administrative decisions.

- A description of the administrative position listing the major duties and responsibilities of the superintendent of schools.
- Clearly established goals for the school district and the superintendent with appropriate time lines for completion.
- A plan for achieving the priorities of the position after an opportunity for mutual discussion between the school board and the superintendent.
- A plan for review and appraisal of the superintendent's performance
- A plan for improvement, if necessary, depending upon the review and appraisal results.
- A contract determining the terms and conditions of the employment relationship between the superintendent and the school board to include such matters as salary, fringe benefits, leaves of absence, expense reimbursement and other items agreed upon.

The above elements point to good evaluation. An evaluation instrument will force boards and superintendents to address most of the items.

A sound evaluation program serves the best interests of both the superintendent and board. Cooperative evaluation builds a strong bond of mutual interest in superintendent-board relations. Neither the superintendent nor the board should seek to exploit the other. They must function as partners in achieving the goals and purposes of the school system (AASA & NSBA, 1980).

Role of Board and the Role of the Superintendent

What is the role of the board and superintendent when dealing with their relationship? What leadership roles should each have? Who should be doing what?

According to Davidson (1987), there are some questions being asked about the different roles the board and superintendents have. Some of the questions are as follows:

- Does the superintendent establish regulations to implement policies or are these regulations to be board approved?
- When problems arise, are they to be given to the administration or do board members habitually attempt to resolve these concerns?
- What is the established procedure for reporting solutions to those problems that are referred to the administration?
- What are the specific areas in which the board needs to be kept informed?
- In working with the media, who speaks for the district?
- How do we handle potential problems that become obvious and how do board members and the superintendent inform one other of these potential problems?
- What is the role of both the board and the superintendent in major areas of operation within the school district?
- What are the procedures for resolving misunderstandings?
- Is it useful to establish a meeting at least once each year, perhaps twice the first year, to examine the relationship between the board and the superintendent?
- How shall you continue if one member and superintendent disagree?
- What other items important to the board or superintendent need to be discussed in this developing stage of the relationship?

These questions address yet more questions. What should be the boards' responsibilities? What should be the superintendents' responsibilities in a good working relationship?

In working together and utilizing the written position description and previously established performance goals, the school board as a whole should according to MSBA/MASA (1991), AASA/NSBA (1980):

- Hold the superintendent responsible for the administration of the school district.
- Give the superintendent authority commensurable with the position's responsibility to carry out school board adopted goals and policies in addition to administrative rules and regulations necessary to implement school board direction.
- Appoint employees after recommendation of the superintendent.
- Participate in school board action after the superintendent has furnished adequate information supporting the superintendent's recommendations.
- Provide the superintendent counsel and advice.
- Refer all constituent complaints to the superintendent who will discuss them with the proper administrative officer.
- Present personal criticisms of employees to the superintendent.
- Provide the school district with professional administrative personnel.
- Recognize that the authority for school district governance rests with the school board operating in legally called meetings. It does not rest with individual members of the board except as may be specifically authorized by law.

The MSBA/MASA AND AASA/NSBA differ in only two descriptions.

MSBA/MASA also adds these descriptions:

- Refer all constituent complaints to the superintendent who will discuss them with the proper administrative officer.
- Devote appropriate time to the ongoing development of educational policies and a review of those policies at least once each year.

In summary, the board must serve as a legislative body in the development and evaluation of policies. The superintendent must be primarily responsible for the administration of the school district according to board policies (AASA & NSBA, 1980). Both the superintendent and the board need these statements in writing and need to be reminded of each of their respective roles.

What is the Board's Role in Evaluations?

A great deal of the board's responsibility involves maintaining and improving the quality of administration and instruction. One of the primary methods used to carry out this responsibility is to work with superintendents in improving their effectiveness. "An evaluation should be viewed as constructive and aimed at one goal; that is, the best possible school program" (MSBA/MASA, 1991, p. 6).

There are four broad areas that the school board functions in. Planning and policy making are the first function. This involves tasks such as goal development and the formulation of board policy. The second, legislation, is defined as a process to put plans and policies into action. The judicial function is the third broad area of school board responsibility as defined as: the passing of motions, representing the school, and following due process. The fourth area is the appraisal and evaluation that focuses on the process of reviewing the operation of the school and determining if the job is being done (Foldesdy, 1989).

An article by Dickinson (1980) explained that the board should start by identifying and listing all of a superintendent's responsibilities including all those

described in state law, school district policy, and the superintendent's own contract. According to Dickinson, the board should weigh each area of responsibility to ensure that the superintendent's overall evaluation is not excessively influenced by performance in any one area or is not unduly influenced by especially vocal critics or supporters. According to Dickinson, said the board should identify the degree of the superintendent's responsibility and control over any area in which the superintendent is being evaluated. Evaluation comments should be specific and carry with them suggestion for improvement. Dickinson wrote that the evaluation process should follow a formal, annual cycle.

Kalkhoven (1981) wrote that a big problem that a board and a superintendent may have is with the language used. Kalkhoven felt that plain talk should be used. Kalkhoven wrote, the board should ask themselves:

What do we want the superintendent to do?

How well did he or she do it?

What needs improvement?

What was done that was exceptional or outstanding?

In summary, the board has four main roles of which one part is appraisal and evaluation. Evaluation focuses on the process of reviewing the operation of the school and determining if the job is being done.

What School Boards Evaluate

Because the scope of the superintendent's job is usually broad, appraisal of the performance raises many questions. Is performance judged on the basis of student test scores, balanced budget, or popularity (Booth & Glaub, 1978)?

School boards can reduce this confusion, according to Booth and Glaub (1978), by resolving to identify the administrative needs of their own particular

districts. "The most important part of appraisal is to determine precisely what it is that you wish to appraise" (Booth & Glaub, 1978, p. 26).

Booth & Glaub (1978) felt that the school board and the superintendent must sit down together and sort through the multitude of possible factors that signify success or failure in school management. Then they must agree on those factors that represent the board's expectations for the superintendent and serve as the criteria upon which they will judge the performance. Then both the board and the superintendent will be fully aware of what the board considers important (and unimportant). Neither should find surprises in the appraisal process (Booth & Glaub, 1978).

According to Booth and Glaub, any evaluation system, including the evaluation of the superintendent, needs certain basic requirements. These requirements include: 1) understanding school district goals; 2) analysis of school board policies; 3) a job description which is clearly written; 4) performance criteria is communicated directly and clearly; and 5) appraisal procedures are clear to the board and superintendent.

Booth and Glaub (1978) felt that before the essential ingredients for evaluation can take place, the school board and the superintendent must first reach a meeting of the minds on three key matters: 1) they must agree on the nature of the board-superintendent relationship and the reasonable expectations of one for the other; 2) they must clearly state the purposes of evaluation; 3) they must decide what and how to evaluate.

"Because different districts have different needs, no single evaluation system is appropriate for all. Certain principles of management, however, apply to all school organizations-or can be modified to apply" (Booth & Glaub, 1978, p. 27).

Although differences among school districts are often as much imagined as real, there are some legitimate distinctions that must be recognized.

According to Booth and Glaub (1978), there are three distinctions between any given district: 1) the role of the superintendent varies among school districts; 2) not all school boards work alike, nor do all board members think alike; 3) individuals who serve as superintendents possess a wide variety of personal characteristics.

One obviously cannot assume that the role of the superintendent is the same in all districts. If evaluation is to bear any relationship to the actual duties of the superintendent, the process must be tailored to fit each school district. An evaluation system should not be selected off the rack in the way one picks a *suit of clothes*. (Booth & Glaub, 1978, p. 28)

Today, many believe superintendent evaluation should be part of a 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 evaluation becomes more than a report card on what the superintendent did or did not do. The process also becomes developmental, leading to improvement in programs and performance (AASA & NSBA, 1980).

EVALUATION METHODS AND MODELS

Forced Rating Scales and Checklists

How do Forced Rating Scales and Checklists work? Individual board members have the responsibility to independently rate a superintendent's performance. A board member collects each member's evaluation. A copy of the composite evaluation is transmitted to the superintendent. A conference is scheduled with the superintendent and board members to discuss the evaluation. The superintendent and the board are all given copies (AASA & NSBA, 1980).

According to Booth and Glaub (1978), checklists and rating scales are the most common devices used in evaluations. There are scales for rating various traits, such as judgment and creativity. Another instrument may be used to rate more specific activities or functions.

Booth and Glaub (1978) said checklists with rating scales are popular because they are fast, impersonal, and often give the appearance of exactness. "Rating scales call for personal judgment by the evaluator and are, therefore, used to gather opinions regarding traits, abilities, and behaviors" (Booth & Glaub, 1978, p. 30).

Checklists and rating scales serve useful purposes in identifying problems and opening up board-superintendent communications (Booth & Glaub, 1978). Boards that want to look seriously at school district results and administrative performance find such scales woefully deficient (Booth & Glaub, 1978). Most of the evaluations looked at are based on performance items using a checklist.

The researcher found many checklist evaluations used by the different school districts across the United States. All the schools from Georgia (Georgia School Boards Association, 1989-90), Mississippi (Columbia High School, 1982), Texas (Candoli, 1986), Virginia (Superintendent Evaluation Report), Nevada (Folesey, 1989), Tennessee (Miller, 1990), Illinois (Miller, 1990) and the National appraisal form (Educational Policies Service of the National School Boards Association, 1988) from MSBA agreed on the following areas to rate:

- Community Relations
- Personnel
- Financial Management
- Organization, Administration, and Supervision
- Working with the Board

Georgia, Nevada, and MSBA feel that long range facility planning is an important item to rate. Curriculum and instruction are rated on Virginia's, Texas', Nevada's, and MSBA's checklists. Another item on Georgia's, Texas', Illinois' and MSBA's check list is Educational leader. Short and long term planning is an important item for MSBA and Nevada's rating scales.

Over half of Tennessee's rating scale items were for board relationships. There was a strong emphasis on the fact that the board was in charge. Some examples of rating scale items are:

- Supports all policies of board of education regardless of personal beliefs
- Demonstrates respect and cooperation in relationships with board of education
- Go to the board when he/she feels an honest, objective difference of opinion exists between him/her and any or all members of the board in an earnest effort to resolve such differences

In Minnesota, as across the nation, checklists and rating scale evaluation forms are very popular. The Educational Policies Service of the National School Boards Association (1988) has an evaluation form prepared jointly by the Minnesota School Boards Association and the Minnesota Association of School Administrators in 1987. The form is broken into different performance factors. Each of the factors is split down farther and rated from 1 to 5. There is a place on each of the factors to have the evaluator rate the priority of improvement needed. The superintendent also makes a self-evaluation that is discussed later in this paper. The performance factors used for this form are:

1. Planning
2. Decision Making

3. Implementation

4. Appraisal

There are places to make comments at the end of the appraisal form.

The Minnesota School Board's Association (1991) uses rating scales. The superintendent is rated from one to five on many items similar to across the nation. Where the two evaluations differ is that they put more emphasis on the following:

- Evaluating the performance of educational staff
- Evaluating educational, administrative, and extra-curricular programs and activities
- Recommending priorities in the allocation of resources
- Seeking ways to involve parents in the district
- Keeping Legislative contacts and working relationships with them
- Communication at all levels
- Personal and professional growth
- Public speaking
- Problem solving/decision making skills

Checklists and rating scales are by far the most common devices used in evaluation (Booth & Glaub, 1978). Checklists with rating scales are popular because they are fast, impersonal, and often give the appearance of exactness.

According to Booth and Glaub, a board that wants to see some improvement in education or school management can not rely on a checklist of personal traits or skills. "No checklist by itself is capable of producing planned or purposeful change" (Booth & Glaub, 1978, p. 36).

There are, according to Booth and Glaub, many weaknesses to rating scales and checklists. They tend to consist largely of personal judgments or

feelings for which there may or may not be a factual basis. There is no agreement on the meaning of such ratings as excellent or average. Because a person possesses a skill or some other characteristic is no guarantee that the person will exercise that skill. Scores can also be misleading in that all items on a checklist are not equal in importance (Booth & Glaub, 1978).

Management by Objectives

A method called Management by Objectives is in use in many school districts. "MBO is a management system in which all decision-makers set down in writing what they are going to do, how, by when, and how they'll measure the results" (Booth & Glaub, 1978, p. 32). "Better definition of duties and responsibilities, more systematic determination of needs, greater skill in developing objectives, and more efficient assessment of results" (ERS Report, 1985, p. 11) are all important parts of Management by Objectives.

Management by Objectives consists of two broad components: a definition of desired outcomes and an agreed upon method of assessing the degree to which outcomes are achieved (ERS Report, 1985). There are many steps involved in a MBO program. First, an annual organization review takes place and district goals are set. The evaluator and evaluatee agree upon performance goals. The evaluator rates the evaluatee on the accomplishment of these goals; self-evaluation is also encouraged. Finally, a post-evaluation conference is conducted to discuss the evaluation plan and goals for the next year (ERS Report, 1985).

An example of Management by Objectives, taken from a newsletter called *The Practitioner* (1981), is:

- A. Specific Aspect of Job Content--Supervision
- B. Specific Goal (Objective)--Motivate individual teachers to develop and achieve at least one major self improvement activity during the year
- C. Implementing Activities--Orient staff, provide assistance, monitor progress, review results
- D. Outcomes Expected--100% participation and successful achievement of goals

After having set up what the superintendent wants to have as goals and the board agreeing that those should be the goals, an evaluation of whether the goals have been attained takes place (NASP, 1981). This process has to be followed in exactly that order. Properly written objectives contain both deadlines for completion and measures for determining the superintendent's success or failure (Booth & Glaub, 1978).

The essential component of Management by Objectives is achieved results (ERS Report, 1985). For those superintendents that are not performing well, it is necessary, according to the ERS Report (1985), to be sure that deficiencies are identified as early as possible and a prescribed remediation is detailed and concrete. Supervision is directed toward correcting the deficiency and assistance is greater in quantity and quality. All contacts are detailed and documented with due process rights granted.

According to Hoyle, English, and Steffy (1990), there are assumptions that have to be made about using Management by Objectives Evaluation methods. Staff members are goal-oriented and the administration promotes a program that is performance-oriented. Administrators desire to understand what is expected of them and their duties are stated in written form. The whole district must be sold on the program.

Management by objectives is a management system in which all decision makers set down in writing what they are going to do, how, by when, and how they will measure the results (Booth & Glaub, 1978). Some major pitfalls of Management by Objectives, according to Booth & Glaub, are:

- The school does not have clear goals and policies. The objectives can only reflect the superintendent's perceptions of what he should be doing.
- Objectives can be too philosophical and speculative at the one extreme or too preoccupied with trivia at the other.
- Playing with objectives can become an end in itself, particularly for those board members and superintendents who enjoy mental gymnastics. The central purpose-to evaluate-can get shunted aside.

Performance Appraisal

"Somewhere between the rating scale and pure MBO lies the answer to the appraisal needs of most school boards" (Booth & Glaub, 1978, p. 33).

This means of evaluation, referred to by Booth and Glaub (1978) is the performance appraisal process. Through the performance appraisal process, the school board determines whether the district and its management are effective in meeting the board's goals through implementing its written policies and plans (Dickinson, 1980).

"Before a board considers a new system of management based on performance, it must take a critical look at the entire organization--its structure, priorities, and people" (Kalkhoven, 1981, p. 12). Evaluation by performance appraisal requires board members to identify and prioritize the superintendent's major goals before the year begins (Peterson, 1989). According to Peterson, it is important for both board members and the superintendent to participate fully in this process. Establishing administrative goals enables the board to assert its

policy-making powers and to exercise its legal mandate to guide the overall direction of public schools (Peterson, 1989).

A school board that decides to adopt a performance appraisal process for evaluating its superintendent must be certain that it really does want to appraise performance (Kalkhoven, 1981). According to Kalkhoven (1981), the process will raise many questions about how well the board performs its own job and about the overall operations of the district. At the outset, the board should sit down with the superintendent and discuss the following:

- How do we want the superintendent to function? Is this board willing to function in a policy-making capacity and to delegate authority for school management to the superintendent?
- Can we express in written policies and job descriptions what this board wants from its employees?
- If we expect the superintendent to provide leadership can we find the words to tell him/her what we really mean?

The appraisal of performance does not require ratings or scores, although checklists of traits and behaviors can be very helpful in identifying school board concerns (Booth & Glaub, 1978). According to Booth and Glaub (1978), performance appraisal should apply the best ideas associated with both trait-centered systems and management by objectives. Performance appraisal requires the school board to determine what the superintendent's responsibilities are and to be able to tell if the superintendent is fulfilling those responsibilities.

In performance appraisal, the school board evaluates the superintendent's results in reaching agreed-upon goals, solving agreed-upon problems, and making agreed-upon improvements (Booth & Glaub, 1978).

Kalkhoven (1981) said as part of the board's total evaluation procedure, the establishment of the following documents is vital to the over-all process:

1. What the Board wants to accomplish through a planned appraisal of the superintendent.
2. Draft of a proposed board policy concerning evaluation of the superintendent.
3. The procedure for evaluating the superintendent.

In order for the board to properly arrange its priorities for appraisal, they will also have to include the following documents:

- Goals or Priorities which reflect community aspirations and state requirements.
- Job Description for the superintendent which sets forth the performance responsibilities.
- Written procedure on superintendent appraisal which clearly specifies:
 - Purposes of the appraisal--what it is expected to accomplish.
 - How the board and superintendent will determine what to appraise.
 - The procedure that will be followed, including a time table for appraisal meetings, methods of documentation and follow-up and the manner in which appraisal will be tied to compensation and re-employment (Kalkhoven, 1981).

There is not a need for ratings; the aim is simply to determine whether the superintendent is accomplishing what the board wants the superintendent to accomplish. According to Booth and Glaub (1978), there are certain advantages to results-oriented appraisal. They are as follows:

1. The superintendent has a standard of evaluation based on special characteristics of his/her own job, jointly agreed upon with the board.

2. It emphasizes the future--which can be changed-not the past.
3. By forward planning, it clarifies responsibilities, organizes jobs and corrects problems in advance.
4. It shifts the board from merely criticizing to helping the superintendent to improve.
5. It allows for the non-conformist who gets results with unconventional methods.
6. It increases the superintendent's control over his/her environment and reduces dependency on the board.
7. It gives the school board positive and constructive means for guiding the school district by linking evaluation with the total management system.

An example of performance based evaluation was reviewed from the Missouri School Boards Association in 1986. Their superintendents are evaluated at least two times a year. Rating scales were not used. The Missouri Board has 24 performance criteria set up for the evaluation. An example of one of the performance criteria is: Provides leadership for positive educational change. If the superintendent had dealt with this category in the last six months, the evaluator would write a response describing how the superintendent deals with that area of performance.

If the superintendent does not deal with any particular performance criteria, then that area is just left blank. The superintendent and the evaluator sit down and discuss what is needed and where the positive and negatives are (Smith, 1986). The board and the superintendent will next plan a job target. On this target form they will list the criterion, improvement objectives, appraisal method, and target date (Smith, 1986).

The district also sets up goals on a District Goal Statement Form. On these forms a particular goal is stated by the superintendent. In writing, the superintendent assesses progress toward accomplishing the goal. The board discusses the progress, reaches consensus on appropriate progress, and records that consensus (Smith, 1986).

When using performance evaluation, the board and the superintendent should mutually agree upon specific performance criteria for the superintendent. These criteria will become the basis for the board's evaluation of the superintendent (Missouri School Boards Association, 1986). The product of a performance appraisal is a focus on results that the superintendent had in the areas the board had concern in.

Self-Evaluation

Another evaluation method for superintendents is self evaluation. The Texas Association of School Administrators uses a self-appraisal form that asks the superintendent to fill out three basic questions:

The three questions the association asks are:

1. What do you consider to be your most significant accomplishments during the last school year?
2. What goals that were not accomplished during this school year and the factors that you feel prevented completion?
3. What do you feel should be your primary goals for the next school year?

In Arlington, Virginia, the burden of assessment of performance and development of plans for improvement is placed primarily on the evaluatee (NSBA, 1991). This superintendent must then set up target goals that he/she must meet. Virginia added these self-assessment items to the evaluation:

- What factors have inhibited the attainment of your objectives
- Have you published any articles in professional or other magazines during the past year?
- Have you addressed any professional meetings during the past year?
- List conferences attended, courses taken, studies made

Hermantown Community Schools in Minnesota (ISD 700, 1991) uses a self-evaluation section in their evaluation process. A list of areas of responsibilities and duties is given to the superintendent to rate from 1 to 5 the extent of their achievement in each category (ISD. 700, 1991). The major areas to be self-evaluated are:

1. Finance and Budget Management
2. Administration and Personnel Management
3. Buildings and Grounds Management
4. Communications/Public Relations/Human Relations
5. Educational Leadership and Curriculum Development
6. Personal Traits and Professional Growth
7. School Board Relations

Each of these areas is broken down further into greater detail. The superintendent also sets up position targets. An example of a position target would be: "Where would the superintendent like to see his/her staff be headed on OBE?" (ISD. 700, 1991, p.7).

West Saint Paul, Minnesota, uses self-evaluation also (ISD. 197, 1977). They use their current job description and have their superintendent rate how well the superintendent did on meeting the job description (ISD 197, 1977).

Self evaluation requires that there be a close, trusting relationship between the board and the superintendent. The superintendent must be open

and honest. The superintendent must be willing to spend much time analyzing what they are evaluating.

Choosing an Evaluation Method

School boards are in varying degrees of readiness for appraisal. Some have already installed systems for evaluating their superintendents. Others are actively seeking a system that looks workable (Booth & Glaub, 1978).

"School boards that presently do nothing to formally evaluate their superintendents, but now plan to get into it, will have to decide precisely what they want to accomplish" (Booth & Glaub, 1978, p. 36). Many boards go into appraisal and come away disappointed, feeling that the process is a waste of time and that they are not really accomplishing anything. The mistake that such boards make is that their aims for appraisal greatly exceed the capacity of the methods they use (Booth & Glaub, 1978).

"A school board that goes from no appraisal at all directly into the writing of performance objectives for the superintendent without careful thought and planning will be disappointed" (Booth & Glaub, 1978, p. 38). According to Booth and Glaub, the board and superintendent must first go through a process of:

1. Getting to know one another;
2. Eliminating minor differences of opinion and petty gripes;
3. Defining their respective roles and responsibilities;
4. Identifying strengths and weaknesses in both behavior and performance (results);
5. Planning improvements;
6. Analyzing results of improvement plans.

In North Dakota (EPS/NSBA, 1988), the process the board uses to evaluate a superintendent is very straight forward. In September, the board will

publish a set of goals for the year. In October, the superintendent will respond with a set of anticipated actions corresponding to said goals. These actions will be subject to board approval. In addition, the superintendent may submit proposed goals and actions that will be discussed by the board and either accepted or rejected.

In February, all the North Dakota boards evaluate their superintendents' performances relating to the published goals of the boards, those proposed by the superintendents and accepted by the boards, and other components of effective administration (EPS/NSBA, 1988). Each of the board's presidents will report to each of the boards that the evaluation has been completed and discussed with the superintendent.

The Educational Policies Service of the National School Boards Association (1988) provided a plan toward performance appraisal of the superintendent (Educational Policies Service of the National School Boards Association, 1988). They felt that there was a need to break the operations into areas of finance, personnel, and educational program. They felt those areas should then be broken down into tasks. For each task there should be a leadership role developed and in each area there should be a performance indicator. They also felt the job description for the superintendent should be prepared by combining functions and tasks with roles. The next step is to prepare written objectives for the superintendent. The last step should be to agree upon an expected outcome for each objective and rank each objective in order of priority.

According to Miller (1988), there are some common evaluation errors that Board's make:

- undertaking evaluation without a clear understanding of what the superintendent is or should be doing;
- evaluating in a vacuum;
- thinking of evaluation only in terms of correcting deficiencies;
- overlooking half the purpose of evaluation: acknowledging and rewarding good work;
- measuring performance without carefully constructed standards;
- posturing as psychologists;
- not providing a forum in which the superintendent can respond to the Board's evaluation;
- not providing time for the superintendent to correct deficiencies before acting on the results of the evaluation;
- assuming the longer the evaluation form is the better it is. (p. 42)

"By making these errors in appraisal, the evaluator may unintentionally reward the undeserving, fail to recognize real performance, and do a disservice to the organization" (Booth & Glaub, 1978, p. 35).

School boards probably will be inclined to use a variety of evaluation techniques as determined by their own preferences and views (Miller, 1990). According to Miller, good evaluations can be achieved in various ways provided the process is:

- thoughtfully planned
- cooperatively implemented
- completed in a professional manner

"Evaluation must be more than a post performance report card" (Miller, 1990, p. 43). Evaluation can be used as a tool to help a superintendent develop the ability to handle problem areas. It can become a preventive instrument as well as a report on past performance. It certainly provides an opportunity for the board and the superintendent to set the course of the educational program in a given community (Miller, 1990).

"Next to selecting your chief educational officer, evaluation is one of the most important tasks that any school board has a responsibility to perform"

(Miller, 1990, p. 43). According to Miller, it can be the primary instrument in determining the quality of education for all children, the effective use of district resources, and as well as, enhancing the relationship between boards of education and school superintendents.

Superintendents need to be evaluated to improve the overall effectiveness of the school district. The real aim is to ensure good education through effective governance and management of the schools (Booth & Glaub 1978).

The school board is legally responsible to the state and politically responsible to the community for the operation of the school district. The board needs a system for monitoring district performance and ensuring that the superintendent is managing the district effectively and within board policies (Booth & Glaub, 1978).

Systematically assessing or evaluating individual performance serves not only as a barometer of individual performance, but also as an indicator of organizational effectiveness (Guthrie & Reed, 1986). By assessing regularly, the district will improve its management and leadership (Hoyle, English, & Steffy, 1985).

Chapter III

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The purpose of this study was to review the different kinds of evaluation models. Choosing an evaluation instrument and actually evaluating a superintendent is a very difficult task for schools to engage in. Regular superintendent evaluations can be a helpful tool in maintaining the well-being of a school system (Arkansas SBA Reporter, 1987). A proper evaluation of superintendents can enhance effectiveness, assure to the board their policies are being carried out, clarify the board and superintendent's roles, and strengthen the working relations between the board and the superintendent (Arkansas SBA Reporter, 1987).

The superintendent acts as the executive officer of the school board advising the board on policy matters and assuming general responsibility for operation of the school system. Delegating selected responsibilities with accompanying authority and accountability is also a duty of the superintendent. The chief executive officer is generally responsible for the safety and well-being of students, employees, and public while they are present at school or school activities. The superintendent is responsible for making sure schools are operated in a manner consistent with the school's purpose and in compliance with applicable laws, regulation, and school board policy (NSBA, 1982).

The superintendent, by statute or by board policy, or by both, is the chief administrative officer of the administrative team and the management team. The

superintendent's roles are also defined by contractual relationship, board policies, and job description.

"Regular superintendent evaluations can be a helpful tool in maintaining the well-being of a school system" (Howell, 1987, p. 4). The administrative checkups are preventive medicine; they prescribe ways to ensure continued good health and detect potential maladies.

Howell (1987) pointed out that there are benefits of regular, properly conducted evaluations:

- enhancing the superintendent's effectiveness;
- assuring the board that its policies are being carried out;
- clarifying board and superintendent responsibilities, and
- strengthening working relations between the board and the superintendent.

There are other possible benefits of regular evaluations. In addition to the above list, evaluations may encourage professional growth, provide an instrument for constructive criticism, and enhance communications (Howell, 1987).

Educators caution that one of the problems of superintendent evaluation is that the process can only be as good as the instrument used (Howell, 1987).

"Evaluation is the process for determining your progress toward identified goals" (Howell, 1987, p. 4).

Calzi and Heller (1989) said these steps should be used when there is a sound evaluation system:

1. Set district priorities
2. Use policy as a guide
3. Set standards of expectation
4. Define effectiveness
5. Design a rating system

6. Conduct the evaluation
7. Insist on a frank discussion
8. Encourage communication (pp. 33-34)

Research indicated that there are four major types of evaluation models that can be used by boards:

1. *Evaluation by Objectives*. This process requires superintendents and boards to develop mutually a set of objectives in specific areas. Yearly, superintendents evaluate their performance based on the objectives, and boards review these assessments and make assessments of their own. Similar evaluation processes are Management by Objectives, work standards, and job standards. All set specific objectives and measure attainment (Howell, 1987).

The superintendent, in writing objectives, sets down in writing what he/she is going to do, how, by when, and how the results will be measured. Performance standards can be added to greatly strengthen this process. The board reviews these objectives and standards and either accepts objectives or asks for revision (Booth & Glaub, 1978). Negotiations may take place at this time. At the end of the year the superintendent completes a self-assessment. The board members also complete an assessment based on the objectives. A conference is then held between the superintendent and board to determine if the objectives were met. Documentation of results may be requested for this meeting (Jones, 1981).

Some weaknesses of the written objective procedure are:

- The objectives may reflect the superintendent's perceptions of what they think should be done.
- They may be too speculative or philosophical.
- They may become an end in themselves, that is the objective may be met but serious problems arise in areas not covered by the objectives.

--The objectives may be too restricted in scope as alluded to in the above statement (Jones, 1981).

2. *Forced Rating Scale Evaluations/Check lists.* These procedures feature a checklist of qualities or attributes, such as works with community leaders. Board members select one of several ratings that best describes the superintendent's performance. A related evaluation instrument asks board members to rate the superintendent's performance according to a checklist of qualities by using numerical values (Arkansas SBA Reporter, 1987).

Rating scale evaluations' procedures use various characteristics as a basis for evaluating superintendents. The checklist calls for yes or no judgments on specific characteristics and functions. The rating scale allows for the assessment of characteristics or functions on a continuum. Checklists and rating scales are popular because they are fast and often give the appearance of exactness. The rating scales require board members to make subjective judgments into some kind of quantifiable score, such as on a scale of 1 to 5, or rate the skills as excellent, good, average or poor (Jones, 1981).

There are several weaknesses in the evaluation and rating of characteristics. These weaknesses are:

- These ratings are a collection of personal judgments.
- The meaning of excellent, average, etc., differs from person to person.
- There is a difference between possessing a skill, etc., and exercising it.
- The scores are misleading. Not all characteristics or functions are weighted equally (Jones, 1981).

3. *Written performance evaluations.* Board members write narratives describing the superintendent's performance, which are then consolidated by the board president.

These written performance evaluations rely on individual board members to write narrative statements about the superintendent's strengths and weaknesses. These narrative statements are given to the superintendent and they respond in writing. Strength is added to this process if a conference is held between board members and superintendent to discuss the content of the narratives. The weaknesses of the essay evaluation are:

- The length and content of the essay are variable.
- There are many ambiguous fence-straddling statements used in the essay.
- It is difficult to get board members to take the time to write these narratives.

4. *Self Evaluations*. This type of evaluation requires the superintendent to write down what the good and bad parts of the performance for the year. This report is then gone over with the board and the next years' improvement plan is made up.

Some requirements of the self evaluation model are:

- A good working relationship with the board
- Trust in the superintendent and the board
- The superintendent must spend a lot of time on his/her evaluation

Research also indicated that there are three important documents that can facilitate communication and understanding between the board and the superintendent. They are: an extended review of the superintendent's job description, the system's policies, and system's goals (Jones, 1981). "When major discrepancies in how these documents are interpreted exist, the first step calls for a restatement of either the job description or district-wide policies or goal statements" (Jones, 1981, p. 6).

Conclusions

Evaluation requires defining what is expected of the superintendent. It requires identifying and prioritizing the district's goals. "Board's should first create a policy describing the purpose and steps of the evaluation process" (Peterson, 1989, p. 1).

1. Most districts evaluate superintendents through a checklist or rating scale because of the quickness and ease (Booth & Glaub, 1978; Jones, 1981).

2. Most districts evaluate superintendents once a year because of the written contract (Anderson, 1989; Bittle, 1981; Braddom, 1986; Foldesy, 1989; I.S.D. 197, 1977).

3. A good appraisal system enables the board and superintendent to chart a course for the school district and enables the board to hold the superintendent accountable for following that course (Bippus, 1985; Booth & Glaub, 1978; Calzi, 1989; Howell, 1987; NASSP, 1981).

4. Appraisal should produce a written record that serves as a defense against critics of the superintendent, school board, or district in general (Bittle, 1981, Booth & Glaub, 1978; Howell, 1987; Konnert & Augenstein, 1990).

5. Appraisal should open communications among board members and the superintendent (Booth & Glaub, 1978).

6. There are three basic methods of evaluation: Rating scales, Performance Analysis and Management by Objectives(Booth & Glaub, 1978; Candoli, 1986; Carnes, 1985; Jones, 1981; Kalkhoven, 1981; Peterson, 1989).

7. The law in Minnesota states that there is no tenure law for superintendents and they can be dismissed without cause (MSBA/ MASB, 1991).

8. A good working relationship is needed between the superintendent and the School Board in order for the school district to be managed efficiently (Booth

& Glaub, 1978; Candoli, 1986; Foldsey, 1989; Jones, 1981; MSBA/MASB, 1987; MSBA/MASB, 1991; Sharp, 1990; Tallerico, 1989).

9. It was recommended that a combination of all four evaluation methods be used: Evaluation by Objectives, Forced Rating Scale Evaluation, Written Performance evaluation, and Self-Evaluation (AASA/NSBA, 1980; Anderson & Lumsden, 1989; Bippus, 1985; Booth & Glaub, 1978; Braddom, 1986; Dickinson, 1980; Howell, 1987; Jones, 1981; Kalkhoven, 1981; MSBA/MASB, 1987; Peterson, 1989).

Recommendations

1. School boards must create and/or use a productive evaluation instrument. After setting up district goals, setting school policy, and stating the boards' objectives, the writer suggests that the boards use The Position Description (MSBA/MASA, 1991) as a starting point. In the position description the following will be found:

- Major Position Responsibilities
- General Duties and Responsibilities
- Assessment and Evaluation
- Direction and Control
- Develop and Recommend
- Representation

Pick the general duties and responsibilities that fit the board's desire for a superintendent. Out of the five major categories (Planning and Organization, Assessment and Evaluation, Direction and Control, Develop and Recommend, and Representation) use the areas that the board wants to have for duties of the superintendent. The areas can be broken down further, if the board desires. The board and the superintendent need to compile a list of short-term and long-term

goals. These must be mutually agreed upon. Then use the performance factors that fit the district's goals. The major purpose of evaluation is that of improvement of district management and leadership which in turn improves the education of all students.

2. Through the evaluation of the superintendent, the board should strive to accomplish the following:

- Clarify for the superintendent their role in the school system as seen by the board.
- Clarify for all board members the role of the superintendent considering the job description and the priorities among the responsibilities as agreed upon by the board and the superintendent.
- Develop harmonious working relationships between the board and the superintendent.
- Provide administrative leadership for the district.

3. Every evaluating method offers advantages and disadvantages, and all will differ in the type of information generated and the amount of input from the superintendent and the board. Sources for evaluations can be purchased, borrowed, and developed independently or with the help of a consultant. School boards are advised to develop their own evaluation instrument (Howell, 1987). This could be done using the method described in number one above.

4. Boards need to consider how the evaluation instrument will be used and what type of information is desired. Regardless of the type of instrument selected, both the school board and the superintendent should feel comfortable with the evaluation instrument used.

5. Evaluation of a superintendent is a function which the board can use to evaluate itself, the superintendent, and the relationship between the board and the superintendent.

6. Targeted evaluation areas can be arrived at through the use of school district goals, school board policies, and job descriptions.

7. A formal evaluation of the superintendent should be completed at least once a year using a specific evaluation style or parts of many evaluation forms choosing the evaluation that fits what the board and superintendent desire.

8. School districts need to take the time and spend the money necessary to train the board members on how to evaluate the superintendent. This will usually mean using an outside-the-district, trained facilitator.

Superintendent evaluation is not a catch-all solution for a system's problems, nor will it necessarily create good board-superintendent relations. Effective communication and mutual trust between the superintendent and school board members are needed to make the process effective.

Regular evaluation can become a practical tool to improve school system leadership and to create far-reaching benefits.

An efficient and well-understood system of communication between the school board and superintendent is vital to a successful working relationship. The necessary step toward achieving this relationship takes place when a board and superintendent put in writing what they agree to be their respective roles and responsibilities (AASA-NSBA, 1980).

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