CAREER PATH PATTERNS OF PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT
SUPERINTENDENTS IN THE STATE OF TEXAS AND
PERCEPTIONS OF SUPERINTENDENTS AND A
PANEL OF EXPERTS REGARDING DESIRABLE
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND
EXPERIENCE FOR THE
SUPERINTENDENCY

DISSERTATION

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The purposes of this study were to determine the predominant career paths of superintendents within the State of Texas and to determine the most important professional positions and areas of professional development as perceived by superintendents and educational experts. The study also compares actual experience and professional development of superintendents with those perceived as most important.

Superintendents from 1,068 public school districts in the State of Texas and a panel of sixty-six educational experts were surveyed. The findings of the study indicate that the "typical" superintendent was male, hired from outside the district, with a master's degree. He was 48.6 years of age, had been in his current position 6.4 years, and had spent 4.9 years in each prior position. His first administrative or supervisory position was a principalship. He had spent 16.2 years in 4.5 different positions in 2.4 districts prior to the first superintendency. He entered the first superintendency at 39.4 years of age from a principalship.
He had served in 1.5 superintendencies and his moves as superintendent had been to larger districts. His career path was from teacher to principal to superintendent. His teaching experience was as a secondary coach and his administrative experience was as a secondary principal.

The study also revealed that the assistant superintendency was perceived by both the superintendents and the expert panel to be the single most valuable position prior to the superintendency. Both superintendents and the expert panel members ranked the most important areas of professional development.

The findings also indicate that most superintendents would choose public school superintendency again. The study lists the aspects that superintendents found most and least rewarding about the profession. The study also compares differences between male and female superintendents.
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The career path of superintendents in the State of Texas is assumed by many educators to follow a "typical" pattern--from teacher or teacher and coach to principal to superintendent, with positions of assistant principal or assistant superintendent sometimes included as well. It is also assumed that many superintendents move from smaller to larger districts once they have reached the superintendency level.

Although the American school superintendency has undergone close scrutiny for the past sixty years, with major studies conducted approximately once each decade to ascertain the characteristics of this position as well as the changes that have occurred in it, very little research has been conducted concerning the Texas superintendency. The only major study conducted, or at least published, was completed almost twenty years ago.

Stoker found that in 1967, the typical path to the superintendency in Texas was, indeed, from teacher to principal to superintendent, and normally at the high school level. Over two-thirds of the 800 respondents used in his study had moved into the first superintendency from
a high school principalship. The elementary principalship was held by 12.5 per cent of the respondents, and 6.1 per cent had moved from a central office position. Stoker also found superintendents were most likely to have been high school teachers. Of those responding to the study, 45 per cent had secondary teaching experience, while only 8.5 per cent had been elementary teachers. Coaching experience was reported by 28 per cent of the superintendents.

School boards expect the superintendent to be an educational leader—to know what and how to teach and how to meet individual needs. They also expect the superintendent to be competent in business management, plant construction, operation and maintenance, personnel administration, and public relations (3). House Bill 72 (1984), with its emphasis on quality of instruction, also expects the superintendent to be an instructional leader. However, little has been published concerning the experiences or professional development for the superintendency. Even the American Association of School Administrators (1) gives only the vaguest general guidelines for the preparation of school administrators. It is therefore important to examine the previous experience of superintendents to determine where they are most likely to have gained their expertise. It is also important to ascertain the years of experience and preparation for the superintendency. A comprehensive study of career paths of superintendents within the State
of Texas would serve to establish changes in career path patterns during the past two decades, to compare the Texas superintendency with the status of this position nationally, and to determine if the commonly held assumptions concerning Texas superintendents are accurate. A study encompassing the perceived importance of various experiences and areas of professional development would serve to improve the formal preparation of superintendents and to serve as a guide to those who aspire to this position.

Statement of the Problem

The problem of this study was to determine the career path patterns of individuals currently serving as public school superintendents in the State of Texas, and to determine the importance of various job experiences and areas of professional development perceived by superintendents and by educational experts.

Purposes of the Study

The purposes of this study were (1) to determine the predominant career paths of superintendents within the State of Texas, (2) to determine the most important professional positions and areas of professional development as perceived by superintendents and educational experts, and (3) to compare actual experiences and development of superintendents with those perceived as most important. These data were analyzed in terms of the size of school districts as measured
by Average Daily Attendance (ADA), as well as districts in the state as a whole. This information will be of benefit to universities which train school administrators, and to the Texas Education Agency, Texas Association of School Administrators, and Texas Association of School Boards in the development of programs and professional development.

Research Questions

1. Are superintendents hired from within the school district or from outside?

2. How many superintendents have a doctoral degree?

3. Have superintendents had full-time, primary work experience outside the field of education?

4. What is the average current age of superintendents?

5. How many years have superintendents served (a) in their current positions, (b) in each previous superintendency?

6. What was the first administrative or supervisory position of superintendents?

7. How many years have superintendents been employed in public school education prior to assuming the first superintendency?

8. How many different educational positions have superintendents held prior to assuming the first superintendency?

9. What position did superintendents hold immediately prior to assuming the first superintendency?
10. What was the age of superintendents when they assumed their first superintendency?

11. In how many districts have superintendents served (a) prior to assuming the first superintendency and (b) as superintendents?

12. Have superintendents who have held this position in other districts moved to districts larger in size?

13. Have superintendents followed a career path of (a) teacher to principal to superintendent, (b) teacher to principal to central office administrator to superintendent, (c) teacher to central office administrator to superintendent, or (d) some other path?

14. At what grade levels (elementary, middle school, secondary) have superintendents had administrative experience?

15. Teaching experience of superintendents has been (a) at what grade levels, and (b) in what subject areas?

16. What professional positions do superintendents perceive as being the most beneficial prior to assuming the superintendency?

17. What is the relationship between professional positions superintendents have actually held and those they perceive to be most important?

18. What professional positions do members of the expert panel perceive as being the most beneficial for a superintendent prior to assuming the superintendency?
19. What is the relationship between positions superintendents have held and those that the expert panel perceive to be most important?

20. How do superintendents prioritize the importance of various areas of professional development?

21. How do members of the expert panel prioritize the importance of various areas of professional development?

22. In what areas do superintendents think their professional development should have been more extensive?

Supplemental Research Questions

1. If superintendents had the choice to make again, how many would choose public school superintendency as a career?

2. What aspects of the position do superintendents find rewarding?

3. What are the negative aspects of the position?

All research questions regarding superintendents were analyzed on the basis of the size of the school district as measured by Average Daily Attendance (ADA) as well as districts in the state as a whole. All questions concerning the expert panel were analyzed according to panel subgroups as well as the panel as a whole. Results are reported by numbers and percentages within each subgroup as well as for the total group.
Definition of Terms

Superintendent is the chief administrative officer of a public school district.

Principal is the administrative officer of the membership area in which he is assigned.

Central Office Administrator is a professional employee such as director, supervisor, coordinator, consultant, or assistant superintendent who serves the district as a whole rather than being assigned to a particular campus.

Average Daily Attendance is referred to as ADA and is calculated in accordance with Texas Education Agency directives.

School district size is based on ADA as reported by the Texas Education Agency. School district size in this study includes Group A—50,000 or more; Group B—10,000 to 49,999; Group C—5,000 to 9,999; Group D—1,500 to 4,999; Group E—300 to 1,499; and Group F—less than 300.

Texas Education Agency (TEA) is the state education agency for the State of Texas.

Expert panel is a select panel consisting of three subgroups of educational experts: (1) one subgroup composed of school board presidents of public school districts in the State of Texas, (2) one subgroup composed of Texas university professors of educational administration, and (3) one subgroup composed of Texas education Agency officials.
representing the areas of general administration, curriculum, finance, accreditation, audits, and discipline management.

Background and Significance

In 1933, the first major study was undertaken to explore the characteristics and analyze the status of the American school superintendency. Such studies were again conducted in 1952, 1960, 1971, and 1982. The most recent study in 1982, a national survey of 2,533 superintendents, was prepared for the American Association of School Administrators by a special research team at the Ohio State University, and included data on career paths of American superintendents (2).

This study found that 20 per cent of superintendents entered the position before the age of thirty and more than three-fourths were superintendents before the age of forty. The median age for entry into the superintendency was thirty-four. The first administrative or supervisory position for 18.9 per cent of the superintendents was assistant principal, and for 55.7 per cent was principal. Five per cent began their administrative careers as a supervisor, 5.2 per cent as a director, 2.6 per cent as assistant superintendent, 0.9 per cent in a state department of education, and 11.7 per cent in some other position. In examining experience prior to the superintendency, it was found that 8.8 per cent had been a teacher only, 5.8 per cent a principal only, and
1.1 per cent a central office administrator only. Those who had been both a teacher and principal comprised 37.2 per cent of the sample, 3.5 per cent had served as principal and central office administrator, and 30.2 per cent had been a teacher, principal, and central office administrator. Almost 6 per cent had followed some other route (2).

In comparison, Knezevich (4) found that superintendents surveyed in 1969-1979 entered the first superintendency at approximately thirty-six years of age. Two-thirds had moved into the first superintendency from a high school principalship, 12.5 per cent from an elementary principalship, and 6.1 per cent from a central office position. The median age for superintendents during that year was forty-eight, with younger superintendents concentrated in smaller districts. Knezevich also found that superintendents had come from a variety of teaching fields. Only one in eight had been a health or physical education teacher, disproving a popular assumption, but 79 per cent had coached athletics as an extracurricular activity. In 1962, Joy (3) had found that superintendents tended to teach history, English, physical science, biological science and social studies.

Cunningham and Hentges (2) found that the percentage of superintendents who had followed the teacher to principal route to the superintendency had declined over previous years, but was still the most prevalent path in small districts. The percentage of those who had followed the
teacher to principal to central office administrator route to the superintendency had increased and was most often found in districts larger than 3,000 students. They also found that only 8.3 per cent of superintendents had spent their entire professional career in only one school district. The superintendents surveyed had been in their current positions an average of 5.6 years, and had held an average of 1.7 superintendencies.

These career paths were the same as those found in the 1962 study (3). In smaller communities, superintendents tended to have been a teacher and principal, particularly a high school principal, prior to being a superintendent. Superintendents in larger communities were more likely to have had central office administrative experience as well. In the 1969-1970 study, more than three-fourths of superintendents had served in two or fewer districts, and 92 per cent had worked in only one state. Superintendents had spent an average of 2.5 years in the first superintendency before moving to a second one, and had spent an overall average of six to six and one-half years in each superintendency (4).

Superintendents in larger districts held doctoral degrees more often than those in smaller ones. In districts with student populations over 25,000, 58.8 per cent had doctorates in 1982, compared with 50.8 per cent in districts of 3,000 to 24,999, 23.4 per cent in districts of 300 to
and only 10.6 per cent in districts with student populations of less than 300 (2).

In comparison, in 1969-1970, 20.2 per cent of superintendents had a doctoral degree, 13.4 per cent had a specialist degree, 55.1 per cent had a master's degree, and 2.1 per cent had a bachelor's degree. Superintendents in large districts were most likely to have a doctorate (4).

In 1962, male superintendents outnumbered females ninety-seven to one. In 1981, men still outnumbered women eighty-two to one (2, 3).

Stoker (5) surveyed all 1,030 superintendents in the State of Texas. Over 900 responses were returned, and 800 were used in the study. This represented approximately 80 per cent of the superintendents in the state at that time. He found that 99 per cent of the superintendents were male. Of the five women reporting, all were in elementary districts and also served as elementary principal. No women were serving in any of the larger districts.

The median years experience in the current superintendency was 4.5 years, with a median of nine years in any superintendency position. About 23 per cent had served in their current position twelve or more years, but 18 per cent were in their first year. The median years in education was 20.5 years. Approximately 1 per cent had been educators for more than twenty-two years. Almost 38 per cent had served
approximately four years as a teacher before being appointed
to their first administrative position, but 14.9 per cent
had served more than nine years as a teacher.

Over half of the superintendents in Texas at the time
of the study were between forty and fifty-five years of age.
About 10 per cent were over fifty-nine years of age, and 7.8
per cent were under thirty-five. Only 3.1 per cent had
doctoral degrees, while 1.8 per cent possessed only a
bachelor's degree, and the remainder had master's degrees
(5).

An analysis of trends nation-wide showed that more
superintendents have had experience in jobs outside of
education. More also have had experience at the elementary
school level. There was a shift away from experience in
teaching social studies and coaching athletics toward teach-
ing experience in mathematics, English, and journalism.
Finally, today's superintendents have had slightly less
classroom teaching experience than in the past (2).

Since recent studies have not been conducted concerning
Texas superintendents, this study provides unique informa-
tion regarding career path patterns of superintendents
within the state, as well as job experience and professional
development that superintendents and educational experts
felt was most important. This information should be of
benefit to those educators aspiring to achieve the super-
tintendency as well as to educational institutions which
train school administrators. The results of the study will also be shared with the Texas Association of School Administrators.

Organization of the Study

This study is organized into five chapters. Chapter I provides an introduction to the study. Chapter II presents a review of related literature. Chapter III consists of the design of the study and the procedures used in collecting and analyzing the data. The population tested is identified and the research instruments are reviewed. Chapter IV contains the analysis of the data and findings of the study. Chapter V presents the discussion, conclusions, and implications of the study, and suggestions for further research.
CHAPTER BIBLIOGRAPHY


CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Profile of the Superintendent

Since the 1920s, major studies of the American school superintendency have been conducted approximately every ten years. In addition, less comprehensive national studies, state studies, and studies specifically concerning women superintendents have also been conducted. From these it is possible to examine the changing profile of the school superintendent in terms of age, sex, education, professional preparation, experience, and career path patterns.

A 1962 study (26) found that the most common routes to the superintendency were from teacher to principal to superintendent in smaller communities, and from teacher to principal to central office to superintendent in larger districts. These superintendents tended to have undergraduate majors in history, English, physical science, biological science, and social studies.

In a major study conducted for the American Association of School Administrators in 1971, Knezevich (27) found that the median age for superintendents was forty-eight, with younger superintendents most frequently found in smaller districts. In districts of 25,000 or more, one in four
superintendents were sixty or older. This finding indicated a reversal of a trend toward increasing age in the superintendency. In 1921-1922, the median age was forty-three. In 1931-1932, it was forty-four, and in 1950-1951, it was forty-nine. The median age reached its peak in 1958-1959 at almost fifty-two, and then dropped back to forty-eight in 1969-1970.

In the 1969-1970 school year, the "typical" superintendent had started his career in education at the age of twenty-three as a science, mathematics, or social studies teacher in the secondary school. He was twice as likely to have taught at the secondary level (54.1 per cent) than at the elementary level (22.8 per cent). In eight of ten cases, he coached some sport, and had six or seven years in the classroom before entering administration. The first administrative job was most likely a principalship or assistant principalship, entered at age twenty-five to thirty-four. Only 5.5 per cent of superintendents entered administration after age forty, and more than four of five began before age thirty-five. After thirteen years in education, the superintendent entered his first superintendency at age thirty-six. In larger districts, he most likely was three or four years older and also had central office experience.

Knezevich (27) also found that no one teaching field produced the majority of superintendents. Only one in
eight had been a health or physical education teacher, but
over 79 per cent had coached athletics as an extracurricular
activity. Of superintendents surveyed, 60 per cent had
taught one subject field, 30 per cent had taught two subject
fields, and 10 per cent had taught three or more subject
fields.

Over 70 per cent of these superintendents had been a
principal, 3.1 per cent had been a supervisor, 3.5 per cent
had been a director, 2.4 per cent had been an assistant
superintendent, and 15.8 per cent had been an assistant
principal. Those who had experience in positions except
the principalship were more often serving in larger dis-
tricts. In fact, 72.7 per cent of superintendents serving
in districts of 100,000 or more had prior experience as an
assistant superintendent. Immediately prior to their
superintendency 48.3 per cent had been a principal, 18.6
per cent had been in another superintendency, 14.2 per cent
in an assistant superintendency, and 3.5 per cent in a
central office position. In larger districts, superintendents
were three times more likely to have been a superintendent in
another district, and 69 per cent had been an assistant
superintendent. Criswell (14) also found that the position
of vice-principal was an important first step toward the
superintendency. This position allows superiors and
subordinates to closely scrutinize an individual's work.
Knezevich (27) also found that superintendents did not necessarily move from smaller to larger districts. In fact, superintendents of large districts were most likely to have spent their entire professional careers in large districts. Of those serving in districts with more than 100,000 students, only 18 per cent had started in districts with less than 300 pupils.

In 1969-1970 (27) superintendents had spent 2.5 years in the first superintendency before moving to the second, with those in larger districts moving faster. The average time overall was 6 to 6.5 years in each superintendency. Most superintendents had served in that capacity 9 to 11 years in general, and in large districts, over 12 years. The majority of superintendents (56 per cent) had no primary non-educational experience, while 32.4 per cent had military experience, and 16.5 per cent had worked in business.

Knezevich (27) found that superintendents were not highly mobile. Of those surveyed, 75 per cent had served in two or fewer districts, 87.4 per cent had served in three or fewer districts, and only 4.3 per cent had served in five or more districts. Those who had served in only one system throughout their entire career comprised 21.8 per cent of the sample, while 92.1 per cent had served their entire career in one state. Superintendents in large districts tended to be somewhat more mobile, with only 66.4 per cent of them serving in only one state.
This study showed a definite increase in the level of education. In 1921-1922, less than 3 per cent of superintendents had a doctorate, while in 1969-1970, 29.2 per cent had a doctorate, 13.4 per cent had a specialist degree, 55.1 per cent had a master's, and 2.1 per cent had a bachelor's. Superintendents in large districts were most likely to hold a doctorate. The most common field of graduate study was educational administration (69.6 per cent) with 23.1 per cent majoring in education in general, and 7.3 per cent in other disciplines. The majority of superintendents gave a high vote of confidence to their programs of graduate study (27).

Merrow, Foster, and Estes (34, pp. 22-23) found a very similar profile of superintendents in 1974. Most were white males, forty to fifty years old, and most had served as both a teacher and a principal. Few had been in their present positions more than six or seven years, and most were vividly aware of the tenuous hold on the job. Specifically, 98.7 per cent were male, with a median age of forty-eight. They were an average of 24.4 years of age when they assumed their first teaching position, and served 7.4 years as a teacher. They were most likely to have taught science, mathematics, or social studies. A total of 75 per cent had been a coach. The mean age at the first administrative position was 30.4 years, and at the first superintendency, 36.7. The average
enrollment of the district in which they first served as superintendent was 2,050. Their average total years as a superintendent were 11.6.

This study also showed that superintendents were not highly mobile, especially across state lines. Only 7.8 per cent had served in more than one state. Analysis of education showed that a doctorate was held by 15.4 per cent, and a master's by 68 per cent of the superintendents. Like the Knezevich study, the Merrow, Foster, and Estes study also showed that superintendents were unlikely to move back and forth between urban and non-urban districts. City superintendents tended to move into administration faster, but followed a more complex career line and were older when they obtained the superintendency (27; 34, p. 23).

In 1982, Cunningham and Hentges (15) conducted a major study of the superintendency for the American Association of School Administrators. They found that the median years in the superintendency had decreased from 8.3 years in 1971 to 7.6 years in 1982. The median number of superintendencies held was 1.3. They also found little interstate movement. In examining "inside" versus "outside" employment, they found that 38 per cent of the superintendents had been hired from inside, usually when things were going well, and 62 per cent were hired from outside the district, normally when problems existed and change was needed.
Cunningham and Hentges (15, p. 23) found that the median age of the superintendent had risen from a low of 43.1 in 1923 to a high of 51.8 in 1960, dropped to 48.1 in 1971, and rose again to 48.7 in 1982. The percentage of superintendents who had entered the superintendency from a principalship fluctuated widely: 77.2 per cent in 1923, 31.6 per cent in 1951, 29.4 per cent in 1960, 60.8 per cent in 1971, and 43.0 per cent in 1982. The percentage who had entered the superintendency from a teaching position had also fluctuated, but remained rather low: 9.3 per cent in 1923, 16.0 per cent in 1951, 4.6 per cent in 1960, 14.1 per cent in 1971, and 8.8 per cent in 1982.

The median years served as a superintendent went from a high of approximately ten years in 1923 and 1933, down to 7.6 years in 1982. The median age at the first superintendency also decreased from 37.1 in 1951 to 34.4 in 1982. In 1982, the median age of superintendents was 48.7, with younger superintendents still found in smaller districts. A total of 20 per cent had entered the superintendency before the age of thirty, and more than three-fourths were superintendents before age forty. The median for entry into the first administrative or supervisory position was 29.5 (15, pp. 16, 19-23).

Cunningham and Hentges (15, pp. 14, 21-23) found that superintendents in 1982 had more experience in jobs outside
of education and more experience at the elementary school level. There was a shift away from teaching experience in social studies and coaching athletics. In 1971, 79.1 percent had coached athletics, but in 1982, only 42.3 percent had been coaches. However, 95.1 percent had extracurricular duties in coaching, class sponsorship, music, yearbooks, or newspapers. There was also a shift toward teaching experience in mathematics, English, drama, and journalism, but superintendents had slightly less teaching experience overall.

The typical career path for superintendents in 1982 was similar to those reported in past years. In districts of more than 3,000 students, the typical route was teacher to principal to central office position to superintendent. In smaller districts, the typical route was teacher to principal to superintendent. The percentage of those who had followed the teacher to principal route in the superintendency had declined slightly, and central office experience had increased. Only 8.8 percent of superintendents had been a teacher only, 5.8 percent had been a principal only, 1.1 percent had served only in a central office position. The percentage who had served as both a teacher and a principal was 37.2 percent, as a principal and central office administrator, 3.5 percent, and as a teacher, principal, and central office administrator, 30.2 percent. A total of 5.9 percent had followed some other route (5, pp. 22, 71).
In 1982, 18.9 per cent of superintendents had started their administrative or supervisory career as an assistant principal, and 55.7 per cent as a principal. Supervisor was the first position for 5.0 per cent, director for 5.2 per cent, and assistant superintendent for 2.6 per cent. Less than 1 per cent had started in a state department of education, and 11.7 per cent had followed some other route. The average number of superintendencies was 1.7 and the average length of the current superintendency was 5.6 years. Only 8.3 per cent of the superintendents had spent their entire career in one school district (15, pp. 22-25, 55).

Cunningham and Hentges (15, pp. 39-41) found superintendents in their study to be better educated than their predecessors, with superintendents in larger districts holding doctorates more often than those in smaller ones. The percentage of those with doctorate or post-doctorate education had increased from 15.4 per cent in 1971 to 33.4 per cent in 1982. In districts over 25,000 students, 58.8 per cent of superintendents had doctoral degrees, 50.8 per cent in districts from 3,000 to 24,999, 23.4 per cent in districts 300 to 2,999, and 10.6 per cent in districts less than 300. Superintendents were starting and finishing degrees at a much earlier age than ten years previously, and still rated their graduate studies highly.

Fuqua (23) found a significant relationship between the rate of upward mobility and five attractiveness variables:
age at the superintendency, tolerance for work pressure, highest degree earned, aspiration for upward mobility, and geographic mobility.

Ziegler and others (42, pp. 120-124) made a comparative study of school superintendents and city managers. They reasoned that since both were administrators hired by and answerable to lay boards, there should be many similarities between the two positions. They found that school superintendents were more highly educated and specialized than city managers, and that superintendents tended to make career choices earlier and to finish their education earlier. They also found that superintendents had more influence over school boards than city managers had over city councils. In addition, they found that superintendents used a collaborating-competing method of dealing with conflict, while city managers favored accommodating-competing techniques. Neither used avoidance techniques to deal with conflict.

In 1967, Stoker (41, pp. 2, 7, 23, 51) conducted an extensive study of Texas superintendents. Over 80 per cent of Texas superintendents at that time were involved in the study. He found that over half were between forty and fifty-five years of age, but 2.8 per cent were over sixty-five. The median age was forty-seven, with 7.8 per cent under thirty-five and 10.2 per cent over fifty-nine. The median number of years as a teacher before assuming the
first administrative position was four, but 14.9 per cent of the superintendents had served more than nine years as a teacher.

Superintendents were more likely to have been secondary school teachers than elementary, while 28 per cent had been coaches. The median years in education was 20.5, but 1 per cent had been in the profession less than six years, and 46.3 per cent had served twenty-two years or more. Two-thirds of the superintendents moved into the first superintendency from a high school principalship, 12.5 per cent from an elementary principalship, and 6.1 per cent from a central office position (41, p. 23).

Stoker's study (41, pp. 54-55) showed that Texas superintendents, in 1967, were very secondary oriented. Only 8.5 per cent of elementary principals at that time had aspirations of being a superintendent. The median years in the present superintendency was 4.5 years, and in all superintendencies was nine years, with 23 per cent in their present position twelve years or more, and 18 per cent in the first year.

As undergraduates, 27 per cent of Texas superintendents had majored in social science, and 11.6 per cent had majored in health and physical education. Business and agriculture were close behind. Only 14.3 per cent majored in education alone. As graduates, 75.4 per cent of superintendents
majored in educational administration, and 12.7 per cent in professional education. A doctorate was held by 3.1 per cent of the superintendents, considerably below the national average, while 1.8 per cent held only a bachelor's degree (41, pp. 10, 17).

Several other studies have been conducted concerning career paths of superintendents in various states. Craig (13) examined superintendents in districts of 5,000 or more students within the State of Michigan. He found that all were male, ages forty-six to fifty-five, and all had begun their careers in public high school at about the age of twenty-four. The first administrative position for each was as an elementary principal, high school principal, or in a central office position. All had achieved their first superintendency between the ages of thirty-six and forty-five. Most had a master's degree when first employed as a school administrator, but most had gone on to complete a doctorate. Most also had a good background in school finance. Laidler (29), also reporting on Michigan superintendents, found that no one career path was evident. Instead, several major pathways emerged, and these tended to be complex.

Fihe (22) studied Indiana superintendents, and found that 72.7 per cent had been a high school teacher, 61.4 per cent had been a high school principal, 43.7 per cent had been an assistant superintendent, and 20.3 per cent had
served as some other central office administrator. Most had spent less than five years in each position. Superintendents in smaller districts tended to be hired from outside the district, while those in the largest districts tended to be hired from within.

North Carolina superintendents are hired by local boards. However, they are required to have been, at least, a principal in a North Carolina public school or to have had equivalent experience as prescribed by the State Board of Education (25, p. 3).

Because of the small number of women in this position, much of the recent research has focused on women superintendents. In 1962 (26), only 3 per cent of superintendents nationally were women. By 1982 (15, p. 12), men still outnumbered women eighty-two to one. There were only eighty-eight women superintendents in the entire United States (19). The majority of women also served in small districts, often suburban ones (25, p. 14). Only 3.5 per cent of women superintendents served in districts with over 25,000 students, while 20.2 per cent were in districts of 300 to 3,999, and 23.7 per cent served in districts with less than 300 students (15, p. 73). Six of the ten women superintendents in Leizar's study served in the six smallest districts (30). In Stoker's 1967 study of Texas superintendents (41, p. 7) 99 per cent were male. Of the five women superintendents
responding, all also served as elementary principals in small, non-high school districts.

Stepherson (27) found the typical woman superintendent was white, married with two or fewer children, and between the ages of forty and fifty-nine. Fewer than 8 per cent came from an ethnic minority. Most had been in the superintendency from one to nine years and worked in rural districts with enrollments of 2,500 or less. All began as classroom teachers and entry into the superintendency was almost always from a principalship or central office position.

Dorner (17) found that 48.9 per cent of women advanced to the superintendency from a principalship, 36.3 per cent from a central office position, and 14.8 per cent directly from a teaching position. Paddock (36) found that 28 per cent of women superintendents had tenure at the central office level.

Cunningham and Hentges (15) found, in 1982, that women superintendents were slightly older than their male counterparts, were more often divorced or separated, had more elementary experience, more years in teaching, and higher levels of formal preparation. They began graduate preparation at older ages and were more likely to have served as supervisors in their first administrative position. They entered the first administrative position at an older age, and were likely to have been appointed from outside the
district. Women took more time than men to become superintendents after their initial teaching experience. Jones and Montenegro (25) found that 54 per cent of the men, but no women, were superintendents within ten years of their initial teaching assignment. Female superintendents in large districts were more likely to have had secondary school experience (22).

Studies show that female superintendents did not have career paths significantly different from men. For women also, the most common paths were from teacher to principal to central office to superintendent in large districts, and from teacher to principal to superintendent in small districts. Here, as well, the vice principalship proved to be an important proving ground and first step to the superintendency (25, 36).

More women superintendents than men had a doctoral degree. In 1977, 33 per cent of the women and 12.5 per cent of the men had a doctorate. In 1980, 48 per cent of women had a master's and 39 per cent had a doctorate (36, 40).

Women administrators were more immobile than men. About 94 per cent had worked in only one state, and 72 per cent in only one district. Less than half were willing to move, compared with 65 per cent of male superintendents who were willing to relocate (36). McDade (33) found that
women superintendents normally had an uninterrupted career path for family or other responsibilities. However, Paddock (36) found that many more women than men had discontinuous careers. Men's outside jobs tended to be military or business, whereas women tended to be homemakers, not useful or relevant experience for an administrator, according to most school boards.

Mauter (32) found several differences in Ohio female superintendents from the national norms. Although women superintendents tended to pursue career paths similar to male administrators with respect to educational preparation and training, their employment was concentrated in large urban school districts in metropolitan centers. Most had been superintendents three years or less, and felt that stereotyped attitudes about female roles and the "old boy network" had been major career hindrances.

Professional Preparation of Superintendents

Superintendents have consistently rated their graduate preparation very high. Some of the strengths of preparation programs have included the quality of faculty in the administrative area, and interdisciplinary approach, internship and other field experience, and cooperative working relationships with other school administrators. Other strengths have been the flexibility of programs, permitting individualized
preparation, individual counseling and advisement practices, and high standards in selection, admission, and retention of students. Finally, library and other resources, small class sizes, low student-teacher ratios, and cooperative working relations with state departments of education and leaders of professional organizations have been commended (3).

Advancements in preparation programs have included the growing distinction between complete and partial programs for the preparation of school administrators, and emergence of a minimum two-year program as a recognized professional need, the emergence of new approaches to concept development, and the use of related disciplines in preparation programs. Other advancements have been the use of new materials for instruction, the use of field experiences, and financial assistance to students (3).

Colleges and universities designated by state departments of education have the responsibility for the preparation of educational administrators. Most include such areas of preparation as school plant, finance and business administration, school law, school and community relations, curriculum, supervision, foundations, research, and field experiences (3). Between 80 and 89 per cent of superintendents ranked finance, personnel administration, public relations, business management, law, school plant, child growth and development, and philosophy of education as
important or very important areas of professional preparation. Approximately 75 per cent ranked administrative theory and school principalship courses as important or very important. Field experience also ranked high. Psychology, curriculum, and teaching methods were ranked as important by only 30 per cent of superintendents (27, pp. 50-51). Brownell and Pulley (9, p. 22) recommended at least three years experience in teaching and administration as prerequisite for the superintendency, as well as systematic study of elementary education, secondary education, and school administration.

Although most superintendents thought highly of their professional preparation, Merrow, Foster, and Estes (34, pp. 1-2, 41-43) did not feel that professional training or conventions or conventional inservices provided adequate preparation for the superintendency. Most superintendents learn what they need to know either on the job or through internship or apprenticeship programs. Almost every American superintendent has come up through the ranks, from teacher to principal to administrator to superintendent. The authors felt it was highly debatable whether any of these roles could be considered training for the next higher post. Administrators were being trained in the same ways by the same people, only in greater numbers than ever before. There were too many certified administrators for the jobs available, a ratio of ten to one.
Merrow, Foster, and Estes (34, pp. 55, 91-99) felt that Americans expect too much of their schools and tend to blame the superintendent when things go wrong. The superintendent was, generally speaking, unprepared by experience or training for the job. Although commendable energy has been given to reform professional training over the past twenty years, it has been largely misguided. The authors felt that university departments of educational administration were not the best place to look for meaningful, challenging reforms in the training of educational administrators. School administrators did not have to be former teachers or principals trained at graduate schools of education. School districts needed to consider the concept of superintending teams, hired together as a unit, rather than a single superintendent. Short of this, districts should insist upon mass resignations of all assistant and associate superintendents upon appointment of a new superintendent. The new superintendent should select 20 per cent of the new administrative team from outside the field of education--lawyers, engineers, social workers, and so on.

Although Merrow and his colleagues (34) made these recommendations over ten years ago, their suggestions have not been widely implemented. Professional preparation programs tend to be much the same as they have been in the past, only more extensive (15).
Skills and Competencies Needed

Boards expect the superintendent to be an educational leader—to know what and how to teach and how to meet individual needs. They also expect him to be competent in business management, plant construction, operations, and maintenance, personnel administration, and public relations (26, p. 2).

Blumberg (7, p. 37) divided the superintendent's role into four major parts: (1) improving educational opportunity including all aspects of the educational program, (2) obtaining and developing personnel, (3) maintaining effective relations with the community, and (4) providing and maintaining funds and facilities.

A number of authors identify the competencies a superintendent must have to be effective. Burbank (10, pp. 28-33) identified leadership, relationship with the school board, keeping the news media informed, relationship with staff and teachers, and working with local government. Cunningham and Hentges (15) listed in decreasing order of importance, the following areas: general effectiveness of performance, educational leadership and knowledge, board-superintendent relationships, management functions, and community-superintendent relationships. They also included budget development and implementation, staff-superintendent relationships, personal characteristics, recruitment,
employment, and supervision of personnel, and student-superintendent relationships.

Burbank (10, pp. 16-18) felt that all superintendents needed wide reading, graduate study, workshops, membership in professional associations, writing, and teaching. Joy (26, p. 4) listed mandatory competencies as the ability to see the whole picture, an understanding of people, the ability to live with a high pressure job, administrative experience, usually as a high school principal, the ability to handle the technical aspects of the job, and high intelligence.

The American Association of School Administrators (4, 5, 6) identified necessary superintendent competencies in the areas of board-superintendent relations, community relations, staff and personnel relations, educational programs, business and financial matters, and professional and leadership development. The superintendent must be responsible for studies and recommendations for human and material resources. He is in the strategic position to help the board of education and the teachers work through common problems, and must serve as arbitrator and mediator, especially when teacher groups or unions are in conflict with the board.

Redfearn (37, pp. 42-44) recommended that superintendents be evaluated for competency in the areas of board
relations, community and public relations, staff and personnel management, business and fiscal management, facilities management, curriculum and instruction, management of student services, professional and personal development, and comprehensive planning. Kowalski (28, pp. 6-8) expanded some of these areas. She felt that planning must include skills in delineation of responsibilities, assigning qualified professional staff, efficiency, communication with administrators and teachers, maintenance and utilization of school plants, and providing the board with regular budget reports. Curriculum and instruction should include skills in leadership, involving staff and community, evaluative programs and personnel, foresight in budgeting, updating professional knowledge, and encouraging research and creativity. Human relationships skills involve dealing with staff, students, and parents, the ability to give constructive criticism, a sense of humor, and accessibility to school personnel and community groups.

For the superintendent to have a successful relationship with the board, he must be able to keep the board informed about operations of the school system, prepare the agenda for meetings, execute the intent of the board, act as liaison between the board and other personnel, and maintain harmony with the board when differences occur. Kowalski (28) listed the general characteristics a superintendent must have
as personal appearance, health, ability to face controversy, ability to speak and write acceptably, enthusiasm and productivity, and the ability to foster high morale and cohesiveness among employees.

Superintendents were asked to rank the skills they felt were most important to be effective. In descending order, these were general management skills, human relations skills, data management and technology, financial skills, knowledge of social and educational change processes, conflict resolution skills, and research skills. Superintendents were also asked to list the two highest expectations that board members had for them. Skill in human relations was listed by 46.4 per cent, knowledge of finance by 45.2 per cent, internal management by 42.3 per cent, public and community relations by 19.8 per cent, planning by 17.8 per cent, and curriculum by 14.0 per cent (15, p. 41).

In surveying Texas superintendents, Douglas (19, pp. 8, 81) found that superintendents in all sizes and wealth of districts, experienced or inexperienced, believed that planning was important. All also believed in competence in the area of communication, although less experienced superintendents rated this as less important. The majority of superintendents rated competence in curriculum and instruction as relatively unimportant. This may be due to the fact that in many districts, responsibility for curriculum and
instruction is delegated to someone besides the superintendent.

Those competencies that superintendents rated most highly include personal and professional commitment to the education of all students, recognition of concerns shown by the community, the development of educational programs to implement unique goals and objectives, and the ability to review new ideas and information and deal with them with relative objectivity. Other competencies include designing strategies for initiating and managing proposals at an action level, recognizing the dimensions of the organizational climate and its role and function in establishing or changing the climate of the school, and recognizing that conflict can lead to beneficial change and manage it toward positive resolution (19, pp. 38-40).

Douglas (19, p. 40) also found that superintendents rated highly the ability to demonstrate sensitivity to role identification of coworkers in group processes, to recognize the legal context of school operations and to function effectively within it, and to develop and demonstrate a range of techniques to involve the staff in the effective formation of plans and policies. Other competencies identified were in the areas establishing procedures for planning and decision making in which citizens and students may actively participate; clarifying who will carry it out and those it will affect, utilizing the perceptions of
other in accomplishing planning tasks, and assigning priorities to completion of problem solving tasks, and seek, identify, and evaluate alternate solutions.

Davis (16, pp. 98-100), also surveying Texas superintendents, examined the competencies they felt were necessary in the area of public relations. He identified seven competency areas with seventy-seven specific competencies. The two most important competency areas identified were relations with the board of education and personality traits. Other areas perceived as important were relationship with staff, relationship with the community, relationship with the news media, communication skills, and organizational and management skills. There were no differences between perceptions of superintendents based on district size.

Browder (8, pp. 6, 57) examined the superintendent's responsibilities from the standpoint of educational accountability. He stated that schools and educators who operated them were held accountable for what they produced as educational outcomes— --for what students learned. Schools exist to produce publicly endorsed changes in the learning behavior of the student. Learning behaviors, expressed as outcomes, can be achieved in a variety of ways, some more effective than others. Because resources of time, money, and staff available in a school district are normally less than the demands made upon them, it is incumbent upon the
administrative staff to seek a balance between the available resources and the most effective means of expending them to attain publicly endorsed goals and objectives.

Schools should be monitored regularly with the results assessed and made public. Similar close reporting should be made on the cost of educational programs and their resulting benefits. School personnel should be held responsible for devising programs that meet the needs of all students, from the most to the least endowed (8, p. 10).

Browder (8, p. 47) stated that the superintendent must be skilled in all phases of the planning, evaluation, and implementation process. He defined preliminary planning as assessing needs and developing a preliminary change strategy. Formal planning includes involving community and staff and developing goals and performance objectives. Program implementation deals with staff development and implementation of program procedures. The final step is rendering the account, including evaluation of the program, reporting the results, and determining the level of confidence.

The superintendent must be more than an executive who waits for the school board to instruct him. He must understand the role of education in modern society, and the problems of the community. He must be able to foresee issues before they explode as crises. His main function is to lead in formulating programs and policies, and to present them
to the public. This position calls for an exceptionally able, well educated, competent person, supported by a staff of superior quality and size. The superintendent must be able to work with non-public schools, with community agencies, with the media, and with industry and government (21, pp. 8-9).

A competent superintendent working effectively with the school board and school staff exerts an important influence in helping people decide what kinds of schools they want and how to get them. The superintendent must know the community intimately, including its traditions, resources, beliefs, limitations, and people. He must also be able to identify different types of leaders and know how and when to use them (4, pp. 7, 17-14).

The American Association of School Administrators (1, pp. 3-7) stressed that the superintendent's personal and professional qualities should fit the needs of the school district. Personal qualifications should include qualities of vision, courage, integrity, self-control, and enterprise. He should have the ability to work with people from all walks of life, and have a genuine liking for children and youth. He should fit into the social and civic life of the community, and should have skill and initiative in promoting educational programs. He must have the desire to recognize and reward good service, and the willingness to stimulate and accept constructive criticism and suggestions.
The superintendent's education, professional preparation, and experience must be commensurate with the requirements of the position. He should have skill and know-how in the development of school teamwork for the betterment of the community. He must possess the ability to delegate authority wisely and to deal loyally and fairly with staff and employees. The superintendent should be able to enlist the whole community in promoting the advancement of public education. Other necessary professional competencies include courageous leadership, professional advice to the school board, development and operation of budgets, and expertise in public relations. He should also have skill in the recruitment of teachers and administrative staff (1, p. 5).

In addition to the personal and professional competencies needed for the job, the superintendent must be political, but appear to be non-political. The superintendency is a political job involving the politics of local educational decision-making, the politics of being a non-elected executive of a local public enterprise, the politics of state and federal legislative and bureaucratic establishments, and the politics of survival. The superintendent must possess an extraordinary combination of political, managerial, communicative, and interpersonal skills. He must also have power to influence municipal decisions and actions that affect the schools (7, pp. 46-47; 34, pp. 7, 13).
Fuqua (23) identified the necessity for superintendents to learn to work within the system by deferring to paternalism and by gaining the support of influential people both inside and outside the educational organization.

In establishing the necessary qualifications and selecting a superintendent, boards must reward superior service with promotion. This is mandatory if they wish to encourage enthusiasm for personal and professional growth. However, boards must protect against provincialism, complacency, stagnation, and politics. School boards should look both inside and outside the district to select the superintendent with the qualifications most suited to the particular school district (1, p. 7).

Perceptions of the Superintendent's Role

Sandler (38, pp. 45-59) studied the perceptions of actual and ideal roles of public school superintendents in Texas. He examined the areas of instruction and curriculum development, pupil personnel, community and school leadership, staff personnel, school plant, school transportation, organization and structure, and school finance and business management. Among superintendents in large districts, actual and ideal roles were perceived to be the same in all areas except curriculum development and instruction, pupil personnel, and community and school leadership. Among
superintendents in small districts, actual and ideal roles differed in all areas except school transportation.

Board presidents in both large and small districts perceived the actual and ideal roles of superintendents to be the same in all areas. Superintendents in both large and small districts perceived their actual roles to be the same in the areas of pupil personnel, community and school leadership, school transportation, and organization and structure, and to be different in the areas of curriculum and instruction, staff personnel, school plant, school finance and business management. Board presidents in large and small districts perceived the actual roles of superintendents to be the same in all areas (38, pp. 70-124).

Knezevich (27, pp. 56-58) identified the issues facing superintendents during the 1969-1970 school years as lack of adequate financing, the demands for new ways of teaching or operating educational programs, and the high visibility of the superintendent. Other issues were changes in values and behavior norms among students and the general population including dress codes, hair styles, and freedom of expression, and school staff relations including strikes and teacher militancy.

In 1982, Cunningham and Hentges (15) identified the issues as financing schools, planning and goal setting, and assessing educational outcomes. They also identified
accountability-credibility, and staff and administrative evaluations.

Zeigler, Kehoe, and Reisman (42, p. 169) predicted that future issues that will confront superintendents will be less willingness of local voters to approve increases in school budgets, greater number of federal services shifted to state and local levels, greater competition from private schools, and greater needs for conflict management.

Knezevich (27, p. 60) asked superintendents in 1969-1970 to list the factors they felt inhibited their effectiveness. Lack of financial resources was listed by 35.8 per cent, while 33.2 per cent included too many insignificant demands. Inexperienced, unqualified staff was listed by 23.3 per cent, limits on personal and professional capabilities by 23.1 per cent, lack of time and too much responsibility by 21.7 per cent, and too many controls on the superintendent by 16.0 per cent. Problems with school boards was at the bottom of the list, cited by only 3.8 per cent of superintendents.

In 1982, Cunningham and Hentges (15) reported on superintendents' perceptions of factors inhibiting their effectiveness. The results were very similar to the Knezevich study. Inadequate financial resources was again first on the list, cited by 41.3 per cent of the superintendents. Too many insignificant demands were listed by 34.2 per cent, and lack of time by 22.8 per cent.
Collective bargaining appeared in this study, included by 16.7 per cent. Too much added responsibility was the complaint of 12.3 per cent, and inexperienced or unqualified staff was cited by 7.9 per cent.

In 1969-1970, 79.7 per cent of superintendents planned to stay in the superintendency until retirement, and 71.4 per cent said they would be superintendents again. The problems that would cause them to leave were attacks on superintendents, teacher negotiations and strikes, the caliber of board members, and inadequate financing. Other problems were student unrest and socio-cultural ferment (27, pp. 12-13, 64).

In 1982, Cunningham and Hentges (15) reported that 54.6 per cent of superintendents would take the job again, a 17 per cent decrease. Twice as many said they would like to leave the field of education entirely, and less than half planned to continue in the superintendency until retirement. Issues that would make them quit were negotiations, strikes, and teacher militancy, the caliber of local boards, administration-board relations, attacks upon the superintendent, and financing of schools.

Burbank (10, pp. 92-105) found that dissatisfactions with the superintendency were lack of time, few vacations, health problems, family deprivation, and job insecurity. According to Blumberg (7, pp. 125, 156-157) superintendents
described the major difficulty in being a superintendent as being "public property"—being accessible at all times and in all places, and maintaining a personal life above reproach. Superintendents felt they had no privacy and no time to be themselves. Blumberg found that the four activities superintendents perceived as having the greatest emotional impact on them were planning and presenting a budget, dealing with incompetent teachers, making decisions on expelling students, and relationships with the news media.

In Stoker's study (41, p. 36) Texas superintendents' three major complaints were filling out reports (45.5 per cent), long hours (15.1 per cent), and working with irate parents (9.4 per cent). Only 3.7 per cent said that school boards restricted their freedom to administer schools.

Cunningham and Hentges (15, pp. 153-154) reported that despite the demands, 95.3 per cent of male and 99.1 per cent of female superintendents found the job to be moderately to very fulfilling, and over half would choose to do the same thing again. Texas superintendents reported the rewards of the job as being of service to the education of children (47.8 per cent), the variety of experiences and challenges (34.9 per cent), and the salary (14.8 per cent).

Shannon (39, pp. 18-22) reported that to counteract the demands and pressures of the job, superintendents must also be guaranteed certain rights. These include the right to a specific and complete written description of professional
duties and responsibilities, the right to a full and impartial evaluation of professional performance on a regular and continuing basis, and the right to constructive counseling to upgrade performance. Superintendents should also be allowed to participate in administrative staff inservice training programs, to be furnished a list of reasons when dismissal, demotion, or non-reemployment is proposed, and the right to a fair but private hearing before the board in the case of dismissal, demotion, or non-reemployment. Superintendents should also enjoy the right to a private review by the professional school administrative association of all the facts and judgments resulting in a proposal to demote, dismiss, or not to renew employment. Compensation should be adequate for providing the socially important, complex, and learned professional services of the superintendency. The superintendent should have a voice in district policy making, and should be accorded the dignity of the profession and as an individual, sensitive human being.

Studies over the past fifty years have shown that although many changes have occurred in the superintendency, many areas remain relatively the same. An examination of the Texas superintendency reveals how it has been affected by changes, and the status of it today.
CHAPTER BIBLIOGRAPHY


CHAPTER III

METHOD OF STUDY

Introduction

This chapter identifies the population and the procedure for conducting the study. The field study, and the instruments which were used to collect the data are discussed. Finally, the statistical treatment of the data is provided.

Population

The superintendents in this study served in 1,068 public school districts in the State of Texas as identified by the Texas Education Agency Division of Policy Analysis (1985). These districts ranged in size from Average Daily Attendance (ADA) of 178,412.85 down to an ADA of only 3.95. All superintendents in this population were surveyed.

Districts were divided into six categories according to ADA: Group A--50,000 or more--6 districts, Group B--10,000 to 49,999--56 districts, Group C--5,000 to 9,999--33 districts, Group D--1,500 to 4,999--231 districts, Group E--300 to 1,499--449 districts, and Group F--less than 300--293 districts.

These groupings were based on general staffing patterns of school districts. Group F schools normally had no more
than one section per grade, and may have had more than one grade in a classroom. The superintendent may also have served as the principal. Group E schools had one or more sections per grade, and had a principal for each campus. In Group D schools, boards frequently hired additional administrators such as assistant principals or assistant superintendents, and sometimes curriculum specialists or business managers. Group C schools usually had multiple elementary school and middle school campuses, and sometimes more than one high school campus. Group B districts had multiple campuses at all levels, an increase in the number and types of administrative positions, and occasionally were divided into geographical areas. Group A districts were almost always separated into a distinct category, particularly by the Texas Education Agency, because of their extremely large size, urban locations, and unique characteristics.

The educational experts surveyed consisted of school board presidents, Texas university professors of administration, and Texas Education Agency officials. Five board presidents within each district group size, a total of thirty, were selected by stratified random sample from the population of public school districts in the state. Questionnaires were sent to twenty-five university professors selected by random sample from the membership of the Texas University Professors of Educational Administration. The
group of Texas Education Agency officials surveyed were selected on the basis of most direct contact with superintendents and the overall administration of school districts. Questionnaires were sent to eleven selected officials working in the areas of general administration, curriculum, accreditation, finance, audits, and discipline management.

Instrumentation

The Career Path Survey form (Appendix A) and the Superintendents' Experience and Professional Development survey form (Appendix B) were used to collect data for this study. These forms were developed by the investigator using input from five superintendents consulted in their development. A pilot study was conducted in March and April of 1985. Career Path Survey forms were sent to each of fifteen superintendents in the Dallas and Fort Worth area. Three superintendents each were from 5A, 4A, 3A, 2A, and 1A school districts according to University Interscholastic League (UIL) designations. No follow-up was conducted. The purposes of the pilot study were to test the instrument used so that appropriate modifications could be made and to determine a response rate to the questionnaire.

Eleven responses were returned, two each from 5A and 1A districts, three each from 4A and 2A districts, and one from the 3A districts. This represented a response rate of 73 per
Based on the results of the pilot study, several changes in the Career Path Survey form were made to clarify the form itself, and to ensure that the information required for this study would be obtained. Additional questions were also added to determine superintendents' perceptions of the importance of prior job experience and areas of professional development. The use of the expert panel of school board presidents, university professors of educational administration, and Texas Education Agency officials was also added to provide additional information on the importance of job experience and professional development for superintendents. The Superintendents' Experience and Professional Development survey form was also developed by the investigator, and closely follows one section of the Career Path Survey form completed by superintendents to ascertain their perceptions regarding experience and professional development.

Data Collection

A cover letter and Career Path Survey form, as well as a self-addressed stamped envelope, were sent to each superintendent in the State of Texas during the months of January and February, 1986. Returned responses were grouped according to district size. An acceptable response rate was determined to be 30 per cent within each district group size, and a 50 per cent response rate for the total population. The actual response rate was 5 responses, 83.1 per cent for
Group A; 33 responses, 61.1 per cent for Group B; 17 responses, 51.5 per cent for Group C; 133 responses, 57.6 per cent for Group D; 240 responses, 53.5 per cent for Group E; and 114 responses, 38.9 per cent for Group F. A total of 542 questionnaires were returned, 50.8 per cent of the population of superintendents.

A cover letter and Superintendents' Experience and Professional Development Survey form and a self-addressed stamped envelope were sent to thirty school board presidents, five from each district group size, twenty-five Texas university professors of educational administration, and eleven Texas Education Agency officials during the month of January, 1986. An acceptable response rate was determined to be fifteen university professors, eight Texas Education Agency officials, and eighteen school board presidents. The actual response rate was twenty-three university professors, nineteen school board presidents, and nine Texas Education Agency officials.

Analysis of Data

The returned Career Path Survey forms were divided into six categories according to Average Daily Attendance of the district. The returned Superintendents' Experience and Professional Development Survey forms were divided into three subgroups according to responses. Data were hand
scored, and results were compiled to answer each research question and to determine career path profiles.

Research questions one through fifteen were answered using the Career Path Survey forms. Results are reported by frequencies and percentages of respondents for each group and for the total population. In addition, a mean was calculated for questions four, five, seven, eight, and eleven.

Both Career Path Survey forms and Superintendents' Experience and Professional Development Survey forms were used to answer questions sixteen through twenty-two. Comparisons among subgroups of the expert panel, among groups by district size of superintendents, and between the superintendents and the panel were made using frequencies and percentages of respondents.
CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

The results of this study of the career paths patterns of public school district superintendents in the State of Texas and perceptions of superintendents and a panel of experts regarding desirable training and experience for the superintendency are presented in this chapter. A total of 542 superintendents and 50 expert panel members responded to the survey. However, in some instances, individuals omitted responses to specific questions. Therefore, the totals presented in the discussion of the research questions may be less than the total number of respondents. The method of analyzing the data collected involves the use of descriptive statistics, and is described in Chapter III.

The responses of the superintendents were analyzed for the total group and for six groups according to the Average Daily Attendance of the school district. Group A districts had an ADA of 50,000 or more, Group B districts had an ADA of 10,000 to 49,999, and group C districts had an ADA of 5,000 to 9,999. Group D school districts had an ADA of 1,500 to 4,999, Group E from 300 to 1,499, and Group F districts had an ADA of less than 300 students. The subgroups of the expert panel were comprised of Texas
university professors of educational administration, school board presidents of public school districts in the State of Texas, and Texas Education Agency officials.

Research Question One

"Are superintendents hired from within the school district or from outside?"

At the time they attained the first superintendency, 250 respondents, 46.1 per cent, were hired from within the district where they were employed. A total of 292 superintendents, 53.9 per cent, were hired from outside the district. In Group A schools, 3 superintendents were hired from inside and 2 from outside. In Group B schools, 19, 57.6 per cent, were promoted from within the district, while 14, 42.4 per cent were hired from outside. In the Group C schools, 52.9 per cent, 9 of the respondents, were promoted from within, while 47.1 per cent, 8 respondents were hired from outside. Group D schools had a total of 70, 52.6 per cent, hired from within, and 63, 47.4 per cent hired from outside. In Group E schools, 110 respondents, 45.8 per cent, were hired from within the district, while 130, 54.2 per cent were hired from outside. In Group F schools, 39 of the respondents, 34.2 per cent were employed from within the district, and 75, 65.8 per cent, were hired from outside. These results indicate that in districts larger than 1,500 students, that is, the Groups A through D districts,
superintendents were slightly more likely to be hired from within the district, but in districts smaller than 1,500 students, the Groups E and F districts, superintendents were more likely to be hired from outside the district. These results are presented in Table I.

### Table I

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Inside</th>
<th>Outside</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Per Cent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group A</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group B</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>57.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group C</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>52.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group D</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>52.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group E</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>45.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group F</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>34.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>46.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In superintendencies subsequent to the first one, the vast majority of superintendents were hired from outside the district, usually from another superintendency. Of the 273 superintendencies reported subsequent to the first one, 271 positions were filled from outside the district, while only
two were filled from inside. Of these two, one each were from Group B and Group D district.

Research Question Two

"How many superintendents have a doctoral degree?"

A total of 525 superintendents responded to this question. Of these, 406, 77.3 per cent had a master's degree, while 118, 22.5 per cent, had a doctorate. Only 1 superintendent had just a bachelor's degree. In Group A schools, all 5 of the respondents had a doctorate. In Group B schools, 11, 34.4 per cent had a master's degree, while 21, 65.6 per cent had a doctorate. Of Group C school district superintendents, 5, 33.3 per cent had a master's and 10, 66.7 per cent had a doctoral degree. In Group D districts, 63.5 per cent, 80 of the respondents had a master's degree, and 36.5 per cent, 46 had a doctorate. In Group E schools, 207, 88.5 per cent had a master's degree, while 27, 11.5 per cent had a doctorate. In the smallest districts, Group F districts, 103 superintendents, 91.1 per cent had a master's degree, and 9, 8.0 per cent had a doctorate. One had a bachelor's degree. (See Table II.)

These findings indicate that superintendents in larger districts were much more likely to have a doctorate than those in smaller districts. Superintendents in the smallest districts, Group F districts with 300 or fewer ADA, were the least likely to have a doctoral degree.
TABLE II
EDUCATIONAL LEVEL OF SUPERINTENDENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Master's</th>
<th></th>
<th>Doctorate</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Per Cent</td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Per Cent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group A</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group B</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>34.4</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>65.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group C</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>66.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group D</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>63.5</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>36.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group E</td>
<td>207</td>
<td>88.5</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>11.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group F</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>91.1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>406</td>
<td>77.3</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>22.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Research Question Three

"Have superintendents had full-time, primary work experience outside the field of education?"

In answering this question, superintendents included work experience outside the field of public school education including university teaching, work with the Texas Education Agency, Regional Education Service Center, and Department of Education, as well as military and business experience. Of the 542 respondents, 136 had military experience. This figure represents 25.1 per cent of the superintendents. A total of 19, 3.5 per cent, had university teaching experience, 24, 4.4 per cent had worked for the Texas Education Agency,
Regional Service Center, or Department of Education, and 98.18.1 per cent had full-time business experience. Two of the female superintendents also listed time out to raise a family as full-time experience outside the field of education.

Of the Group A superintendents, 2 had university teaching experience, 3 worked for education agencies other than public school districts, and 2 had military experience. In Group B districts, 12 superintendents had military experience, 1 had worked at the university level, 2 had worked for education agencies, and 7 had outside business experience. In Group C districts, 4 superintendents had military experience and 4 had business experience. In Group D districts, 27 had military experience, 2 had university experience, 23 had worked in business, and 8 had worked for Texas Education Agency or the Regional Service Center. Of the superintendents in Group E districts, 58 had military experience, 8 had worked at the university level, 10 had worked for an education agency, and 37 had business experience. One had experience raising a family. In Group F districts, 33 superintendents had military experience, 6 had university experience, 1 had worked for an education agency, and 27 had worked in business. One had raised a family.
Research Question Four

"What is the average current age of superintendents?"

The mean age of the current superintendent in Texas was 48.6 years old. Of the 540 superintendents who responded to this question, 9 were 30 to 34 years of age, 61 were 35 to 39, 91 were 40 to 44, and 100 were 45 to 49 years old. Additionally, 171 were 50 to 54 years of age, 85 were 55 to 59, 21 were 60 to 64, and 2 were more than 65 years of age.

The average age of the 5 Group A respondents was 55 years of age. Two were between the ages of 55 and 59, while 1 each was 45 to 49, 50 to 54, and 60 to 64. Of the 33 superintendents who responded from Group B districts, the average age was 53.3 years of age. Of these, 2, 6.1 per cent, were 40 to 44 years of age, 5, 15.1 per cent were 45 to 49, 12, 36.4 per cent were 50 to 54, 9, 27.3 per cent were 55 to 59, and 5, 15.1 per cent were 60 to 64 years of age. The average age of the 17 superintendents from Group C school districts was 51.1. Within this group, 3, 17.6 per cent were 40 to 44 years of age, 2, 11.8 per cent, were 45 to 49, 7, 41.2 per cent, were 50 to 54, and 5, 29.4 per cent, were 55 to 59 years of age.

Group D superintendents averaged 48.5 years of age, with 1, 0.8 per cent 30 to 34 years of age, 12, 9.09 per cent 35 to 39, 29, 21.8 per cent 40 to 44, and 27, 20.3 per cent, 45 to 49 years of age. In addition, 39, 29.3 per cent were 50 to 54 years of age, 19, 14.3 per cent, were 55 to 59,
5, 3.5 per cent were 60 to 64, and 1, 0.8 per cent, was over the age of 65. In Group E districts, the average age of superintendents was 47.8 years old, with 6 superintendents, 2.5 per cent between the ages of 30 and 34, 35, 14.6 per cent, from 35 to 39, 31, 13.0 per cent, from 40 to 44, and 51, 21.3 per cent, from 45 to 49. Of the remaining superintendents, 81, 33.9 per cent, were 50 to 54, 30, 12.6 per cent, were 55 to 59, and 5, 2.1 per cent were 60 to 64. The average age of Group F superintendents was 48.3. Of these, 2, 1.8 per cent were 30 to 34, 14, 12.4 per cent were 35 to 39, 26, 23.0 per cent were 40 to 44, and 14, 12.4 per cent were 45 to 49. Additionally, 31, 27.4 per cent were 50 to 54 years of age, 20, 17.7 per cent were 55 to 59, 5, 4.4 per cent were 60 to 64, and 1, 0.9 per cent was over 65 years of age. (See Table III.)

The analysis of the data indicates that the average age of superintendents was highest in the largest districts and decreased as districts became smaller in size with the exception of the Group F districts, those with less than 300 students. The average age of superintendents in Group F districts increased slightly, to 0.5 years above the average age of superintendents in Group E, but still less than the average age of superintendents in Groups A through D.
TABLE III
CURRENT AGE OF SUPERINTENDENTS IN TEXAS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>30-34</th>
<th>35-39</th>
<th>40-44</th>
<th>45-49</th>
<th>50-54</th>
<th>55-59</th>
<th>60-64</th>
<th>65+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group A</td>
<td>55.0</td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>1 20.0</td>
<td>1 31.7</td>
<td>2 40.0</td>
<td>1 20.0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group B</td>
<td>53.5</td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>2 6.1</td>
<td>5 15.5</td>
<td>12 20.0</td>
<td>9 27.3</td>
<td>5 15.1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group C</td>
<td>51.1</td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>3 17.6</td>
<td>2 11.8</td>
<td>7 36.4</td>
<td>5 29.4</td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group D</td>
<td>48.5</td>
<td>1 0.8</td>
<td>1 9.0</td>
<td>29 21.8</td>
<td>27 21.3</td>
<td>39 41.2</td>
<td>19 14.3</td>
<td>5 3.7</td>
<td>1 0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group E</td>
<td>47.0</td>
<td>6 2.5</td>
<td>35 14.6</td>
<td>31 13.0</td>
<td>51 21.3</td>
<td>81 33.9</td>
<td>30 12.6</td>
<td>5 2.1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group F</td>
<td>48.3</td>
<td>2 1.8</td>
<td>14 12.4</td>
<td>26 23.0</td>
<td>14 12.4</td>
<td>31 27.4</td>
<td>20 17.7</td>
<td>5 4.4</td>
<td>1 0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>48.6</td>
<td>9 1.7</td>
<td>61 11.3</td>
<td>91 16.8</td>
<td>1100 18</td>
<td>5 171 31.7</td>
<td>85 15.7</td>
<td>21 3.9</td>
<td>2 0.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Research Question Five

"How many years have superintendents served (a) in their current position, (b) in each previous superintendency?"

A total of 537 superintendents responded to this question. Superintendents in school districts in Texas had served in their current positions an average of 6.4 years. Superintendents in Group A districts had served an average of 7.2 years, while those in Group B districts had served 6.1 years. In Group C districts, superintendents had served an average of 7.9 years and those in Group D had averaged 5.8 years. Group E superintendents had served 6.4 years, and those in Group F had served an average of 6.9 years in their current positions.

More superintendents state-wide, 99, 18.4 per cent were serving in the first year of their current superintendency than in any other year. However, 47 of them, 8.8 per cent had been in their current position 16 or more years, and 5 had been in their current superintendency more than 25 years. The longest current superintendency reported was 36 years.

(See Table IV.)

The superintendents who responded to the survey had served in a total of 275 superintendencies prior to their current position. Their average length of service was 4.94 years. Group A superintendents averaged 4.8 years in previous superintendencies, while Group B superintendents
TABLE IV
FREQUENCY OF NUMBER OF YEARS IN CURRENT POSITION OF SUPERINTENDENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
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<th>10</th>
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<th>12</th>
<th>13</th>
<th>14</th>
<th>15</th>
<th>16+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group B</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
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<td>Group E</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>10</td>
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<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group F</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
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<td>Total</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
averaged 4.7 years. Group C superintendents averaged 5.5 years in previous superintendencies, and the average for the Group D superintendents was 4.8 years. Superintendents in Group E averaged 4.6 years in previous superintendencies, while those in Group F averaged 6.1 years. The longest length of service reported in a prior superintendency was 35 years, far surpassing the second longest, 18 years. (See Table V.)

In all categories, superintendents had served a longer average length of time in their current positions than in previous superintendencies. State-wide, the average current superintendency was 6.4 years, while the average for previous superintendencies was 4.94 years.

Research Question Six

"What was the first administrative or supervisory position of superintendents?"

The majority of superintendents began their administrative or supervisory career in a principalship. Of the 540 respondents to this question, 337, 62.4 per cent, held a principalship as the first administrative or supervisory position. Of these, 90 were elementary principals, 34 were middle school principals, 87 were high school principals, and 126 were either all-level principals or did not specify the grade level of the principalship. The second largest group began their administrative careers in a
### TABLE V

**FREQUENCY OF NUMBER OF YEARS IN PREVIOUS SUPERINTENDENCIES**

| Group     | Number of Years |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|------------|-----------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|            | 1   | 2   | 3   | 4   | 5   | 6   | 7   | 8   | 9   | 10  | 11  | 12  | 13  | 14  | 15  | 16+|
| Group A    | 0   | 1   | 1   | 0   | 1   | 1   | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0   | 1   | 0   | 0   | 0   |
| Group B    | 1   | 6   | 7   | 4   | 6   | 3   | 2   | 1   | 1   | 1   | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0   |
| Group C    | 1   | 0   | 0   | 1   | 3   | 0   | 1   | 1   | 1   | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0   |
| Group D    | 2   | 10  | 19  | 18  | 6   | 9   | 2   | 1   | 3   | 3   | 1   | 1   | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0   |
| Group E    | 8   | 23  | 18  | 17  | 15  | 6   | 2   | 5   | 4   | 3   | 1   | 1   | 0   | 0   | 3   | 1   |
| Group F    | 3   | 8   | 7   | 8   | 4   | 1   | 0   | 1   | 4   | 2   | 2   | 1   | 1   | 1   | 0   | 2   |
| Total      | 15  | 48  | 52  | 48  | 35  | 20  | 7   | 10  | 12  | 9   | 5   | 3   | 1   | 1   | 4   | 5   |
vice-principalship. A total of 114, 21 per cent, began as vice-principals, 10 at the elementary level, 12 at the middle school level, 39 at the high school level, and 53 either all-level or unspecified. Other positions, including director, supervisor, coordinator, assistant superintendent, administrative assistant, or business manager were the first administrative or supervisory positions for 57, 10.6 per cent of the superintendents. A total of 32 superintendents, 5.9 per cent, had no administrative experience prior to the superintendency.

Of the Group A superintendents, 2, 40 per cent began in a vice-principalship, 1, 20 per cent, began as a principal, and 2, 40 per cent began in another position, 1 as a director and 1 as an assistant superintendent. In Group B, 12, 36.4 per cent, began as a vice-principal, 13, 39.4 per cent as a principal, and 9, 24.2 per cent in some other position. In Group C, 7, 41.2 per cent of the superintendents began their administrative careers as a vice-principal, 8, 47 per cent, as a principal, 1, 5.9 per cent as a director, and 1, 5.9 per cent, directly as a superintendent.

The majority of superintendents in Group D, 74, 56.1 per cent began as principals. The vice-principalship was the first administrative position for 35, 26.5 per cent, 20, 15.1 per cent, began in another position, and 3, 2.3 per
cent, began their administrative careers in the super-
intendency. In Group E schools, 159 superintendents, 66.4
per cent began as principals, 48, 20.2 per cent as vice-
principals, 17, 7.1 per cent in another administrative
position, and 15, 6.3 per cent, as superintendents. In
Group F districts, 82, 7.19 per cent of the superintendents
began as principals, 10, 8.8 per cent, as vice-principals,
9, 7.9 per cent in another administrative or supervisory
position, and 13, 11.4 per cent, directly as superintendents.
(See Table VI.)

The analysis of these data indicates a consistent trend.
As districts decreased in size, it was more likely that the
superintendent began his administrative or supervisory
career as a principal. More superintendents also began
their administrative careers directly as superintendents in
smaller districts than in larger ones.

Research Question Seven

"How many years have superintendents been employed in
public school education prior to assuming the first super-
intendency?"

The 532 superintendents who responded to this question
had spent an average of 16.2 years in public education prior
to assuming the first superintendency. This ranged from a
low of 0 years (the superintendency was the first public
school position) to a high of 39 years. The average
TABLE VI

FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE OF FIRST ADMINISTRATIVE OR SUPERVISORY POSITION HELD BY TEXAS SUPERINTENDENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Vice-Principal</th>
<th>Principal</th>
<th>Superintendent</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Per Cent</td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Per Cent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group A</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group B</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>36.4</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>39.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group C</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>41.2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>47.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group D</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>26.5</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>56.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group E</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>20.2</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>66.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group F</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>71.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>21.1</td>
<td>337</td>
<td>62.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
number of years for Group A superintendents was 17, for
Group B, 20, for Group C, 18.3, for Group D, 17, for Group
E, 14.7, and for Group F, 15.1 years. For Group A super-
intendents, the fewest number of years prior to the
superintendency was 10, while the greatest was 24. In
Group B, the fewest number of years was 5 and the greatest
was 31, and in Group C, the fewest number of years was 10
and the greatest was 26. Of Group D superintendents, all
had spent a minimum of 3 years in public school education
prior to the first superintendency, while 1 had spent 34
years. In Group E, the range was from 0 to 39 years, and
in Group F, the range was from 3 to 34 years. (See Table
VII.)

TABLE VII

NUMBER OF YEARS IN PUBLIC SCHOOL EDUCATION PRIOR TO
FIRST ATTAINING THE POSITION OF SUPERINTENDENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Number of Years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean Fewest Greatest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group A</td>
<td>17.0 10 24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group B</td>
<td>20.0 5 31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group C</td>
<td>18.3 10 26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group D</td>
<td>17.0 3 34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group E</td>
<td>14.7 0 39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group F</td>
<td>15.1 3 34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>16.2 0 39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Superintendents in smaller districts, Groups E and F, had spent somewhat less time, on the average, in public school education than those in larger districts. However, a total of 53 superintendents served more than 25 years in public school education before their first superintendency.

Research Question Eight

"How many different educational positions have superintendents held prior to assuming the first superintendency?"

Superintendents through the state had held an average of 4.5 different educational positions prior to the first superintendency. Those in Group A had an average of 5.2 different positions, while those in Group B had an average of 5.9 positions prior to the first superintendency. The Group C superintendents had held an average of 5.2 different positions, and those in Group D had an average of 4.8 different positions. Prior to their first superintendency, Group E superintendents held an average of 4.2 different educational positions, and Group F superintendents held an average of 4.0 different positions. These ranged from an average of 0 different positions prior to the first superintendency to a maximum of 13. (See Table VIII.)

The largest number of superintendents, 120, had held three positions prior to the first superintendency, while the next largest, 108, had held four. Superintendents in larger districts tended to hold more different public school
### Table VIII

**Number of Different Educational Positions Prior to First Attaining the Position of Superintendent**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>11</th>
<th>12</th>
<th>13</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group A</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group B</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group C</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group D</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group E</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group F</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
positions prior to their first superintendency than did those in smaller districts.

Research Question Nine

"What position did superintendents hold immediately prior to assuming the first superintendency?"

The majority of superintendents state-wide, 301, 55.5 per cent, entered their first superintendency from a principal's position. Of these, 35 had been elementary principals, 21 had been middle school principals, 139 had been high school principals, and 106 had been all-level principals or did not specify at which grade levels they served as principals. The next largest single group entered the superintendency from an assistant superintendency, 117 or 21.6 per cent, while 7, 1.3 per cent entered from a vice-principalship. The remaining 117, 21.6 per cent, had held some other position. Of these, 40 had been a director, 1 a supervisor, 4 a coordinator, and 5 had been in a cooperative superintendency program. Additionally, 7 had been a business manager, 10 an administrative assistant, 28 had been a teacher or coach, 3 had been a counselor, and 3 had been an athletic director. Several superintendents were hired from outside public school districts, 8 from the Texas Education Agency, Regional Service Center, or Department of Education, 3 from university positions, and 5 from business positions.
Of the Group A superintendents, 3 had been an assistant superintendent immediately prior to the first superintendency, 1 had been in a cooperative superintendency program, and 1 was teaching in a university. In the Group B districts, 7, 21.2 per cent had been a principal, 20, 60.6 per cent had been an assistant superintendent, and 6, 18.2 per cent had held some other position. In Group C, 4, 23.5 per cent had been a principal, 6, 35.3 per cent had been an assistant superintendent, and 7 had held some other position.

Among Group D superintendents, 50, 37.6 per cent had been a principal, 54, 40.6 per cent had been an assistant superintendent, and 29, 21.8 per cent had held some other position. The majority of Group E superintendents, 164, 68.3 per cent had been a principal immediately prior to the first superintendency. A total of 26, 10.8 per cent, had been an assistant superintendent, and 50, 20.9 per cent had held some other position. In Group F, 76, 66.7 per cent had been a principal, 8, 7 per cent had been an assistant superintendent, and 30, 26.3 per cent had held some other position. (See Table IX.)

In smaller districts, superintendents were much more likely to have been a principal immediately prior to their first superintendency, while in larger ones, they were more likely to have held a central office position, particularly an assistant superintendency. In Group D-F districts, 34
TABLE IX

FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE OF POSITIONS IMMEDIATELY PRIOR TO FIRST ATTAINING THE POSITION OF SUPERINTENDENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Principal</th>
<th>Assistant Superintendent</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Per Cent</td>
<td>Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group A</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group B</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>21.2</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group C</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>23.5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group D</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>37.6</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group E</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>68.3</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group F</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>301</td>
<td>55.5</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

superintendents had moved directly into the superintendency without prior administrative or supervisory experience, while none had done so in Group A-C districts.

Research Question Ten

"What was the age of superintendents when they assumed their first superintendency?"

The average age of Texas superintendents upon attaining their first superintendency was 39.4. The youngest was 23, and the oldest was 58. Group A superintendents were an average of 40.8 years of age at the first superintendency. The youngest was 35, and the oldest was 50. Group B
Superintendents were an average of 40.8 at the first superintendency. The youngest was 26, and the oldest was 57. Among Group C superintendents, the average age at the first superintendency was 39.5, with the youngest at 30 and the oldest at 49. In Group D districts, superintendents were an average of 39.6 years of age at the first superintendency. The youngest was 23, and the oldest was 57. Group E superintendents averaged 39.1 years of age at the first superintendency, with the youngest 25, and the oldest 58. In group F, the average age at the first superintendency was 38.2, with the youngest 26 and the oldest 55. (See Table X.)

Superintendents in Texas tended to be an average of approximately 40 years of age at their first superintendency. Superintendents in smaller districts tended to be slightly younger upon assuming their first superintendency than those in larger ones. However, there was an extremely large range, from 23 to 58, in the age at which superintendents assumed their first superintendency.

Research Question Eleven

"In how many districts have superintendents served (a) prior to assuming the first superintendency and (b) as superintendents?"

Superintendents had served in an average of 2.4 school districts prior to the district in which they first served
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Age in Years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group A</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group B</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group C</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group D</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group E</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group F</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
as superintendent. These ranged from a low of no other districts prior to the first superintendency to a high of ten other districts. Group A superintendents averaged 1 other district, with 1 superintendent having served in no other districts, 3 who served in 1 other district, and 1 who served in 2 other districts. Group B superintendents averaged 2.6 districts prior to the first superintendency. These ranged from 0 to 9 other districts. Among the superintendents in Group C, the average number of prior districts was 2.7, with a low of 1 and a high of 7.

In Group D, the average number of districts prior to the first superintendency was 2.2, with a low of 0 and a high of 8. Group E superintendents averaged 2.5 other districts, with a low of 0 and a high of 10. Superintendents in Group F worked in an average of 2.7 districts other than the one in which they were first hired as superintendent. (See Table XI.)

The 542 superintendents who responded to this question had served in an average of 1.5 superintendencies. A total of 350 were in their first superintendency, 134 were in their second one, 36 were in their third superintendency, and 16 were in the fourth. Additionally, 3 were in their fifth superintendency, 2 were in their sixth, and 1 was in the seventh superintendency. Group A superintendents had served in an average of 2.0 superintendencies. Two were
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group A</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group B</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group C</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group D</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group E</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group F</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
in their first superintendency, 2 were in the second, and one was in his fourth superintendency. Group B superintendents averaged 2.1 superintendencies, with a low of 1 and a high of 7. The average for Group C was 1.5, with a low of 1 and a high of 3.

Superintendents in Group D had served in an average of 1.6 superintendencies, with a low of 1 and a high of 5. The average for Group E was 1.4, with a low of 1 and a high of 5. Among Group F superintendents, the average was 1.4 with a low of 1 and a high of 4. Superintendents in Groups A and B tended to have served in slightly more school districts as a superintendent than those in the smaller districts. (See Table XII.)

TABLE XXII

NUMBER OF DISTRICTS SERVED AS SUPERINTENDENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Number of Districts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group A</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group B</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group C</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group D</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group E</td>
<td>163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group F</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>350</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Research Question Twelve

"Have superintendents who have held this position in other districts moved to districts larger in size?"

The superintendents who responded to this research question had served in a total of 269 superintendencies. In 217 of these, 80.7 per cent, the superintendent moved to a larger district. In 49, 18.2 per cent, the superintendent moved to a smaller district, and in 3, 1.1 per cent, the superintendent moved to a district of the same size. Among Group A superintendents, all 4 moves were to districts larger in size. In the Group B districts, 19, 82.6 per cent of the moves were to larger districts, while 3, 13.0 per cent were moves to smaller districts, and 1, 4.4 per cent, was a move to a district of equal size.

Among Group C superintendents, 42 of the 43 moves, 97.7 per cent, were to larger districts.

Group D superintendents had served in 75 superintendencies. Of these, 69, 92 per cent, were moves to a larger district, 4, 5.3 per cent, were to a smaller district, and 2, 2.7 per cent were to a district of the same size. In Group E schools, 60 of the 84 moves, 71.4 per cent, were to a larger district, while the remaining 24, 28.6 per cent, were to a district of smaller size. Group F superintendents had served in 40 superintendencies. Of the moves made by this group, 23, 57.5 per cent, were to larger districts,
while 17, 42.5 per cent were to smaller districts. (See Table XIII.)

TABLE XIII

FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE OF MOVES OF SUPERINTENDENTS TO LARGER OR SMALLER SCHOOL DISTRICTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Larger</th>
<th>Smaller</th>
<th>Same</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Per Cent</td>
<td>Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group A</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group B</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>82.6</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group C</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>97.7</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group D</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>92.0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group E</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>71.4</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group F</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>57.5</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>217</td>
<td>80.7</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From these data, it is clear that the vast majority of superintendents had moved from smaller to larger districts. Superintendents in larger districts were more likely to have moved from smaller to larger districts. However, even superintendents in the smallest districts, Group F with less than 300 students, were still more likely to have moved from smaller to larger districts.
Research Question Thirteen

"Have superintendents followed a career path of (a) teacher to principal to superintendent, (b) teacher to principal to central office administrator to superintendent, (c) teacher to central office administrator to superintendent, or (d) some other path?"

The most common path to the superintendency reported was from teacher to principal to superintendent. Of the 521 responses to this question, 275, 52.8 per cent of the superintendents had followed this path. Of these, 40 had also served as a vice-principal. The next most common path was from teacher to principal to central office administrator to superintendent. An additional 108, 20.7 per cent of superintendents had followed this route. Of these, 19 had also been vice-principals. The third route, from teacher to central office administrator to superintendent, was followed by 41 superintendents, 7.9 per cent. The remaining 97 superintendents, 18.6 per cent, had followed some other route to the superintendency.

All five superintendents in Group A who responded to the questionnaire had followed a fairly complex route to their current superintendencies. The most direct route was reported by one who had gone from teacher to principal to superintendent to assistant superintendent to the current superintendency. The next most direct route was from teacher to principal to three superintendencies to
to Office of Education to the present position. A third superintendent had gone from teacher to assistant superintendent to superintendent to a university position to a superintendency, then to another university position, and to the present superintendency. The two remaining superintendents followed even more complex career paths, including educational agency experience and outside business experience, as well as public school positions. Even in route to their first superintendency, only three of the five had followed any of the three most common career paths.

Among the superintendents in Group B, the most common career path was from teacher to principal to central office administrator to superintendent. A total of 15, 48.3 per cent had followed this path. Of these, five had also been a vice-principal. The next most common path, followed by 7, or 22.6 per cent, was from teacher to principal to superintendent. Of these, two had also been vice-principals. An additional three superintendents, 9.7 per cent, had gone from teacher to central office administrator to superintendent, and 6, 19.7 per cent, had followed some other career path.

The majority of superintendents in Group C, 52.9 per cent had followed the teacher to principal to central office administrator to superintendent career path. Two of these had also served as vice principal. An additional 5, 29.4 per cent, had gone from teacher to principal to
superintendent, with 4 also serving as vice-principal, while 2, 11.8 per cent had gone from teacher to central office administrator, and 1, 5.9 per cent, had gone directly from a teaching position into the superintendency.

In Group D school districts, the two most common career paths to the superintendency were from teacher to principal to superintendent followed by 46, 35.9 per cent of the superintendents, and from teacher to principal to central office administrator to superintendent, followed by 48, 37.5 per cent of the superintendents. In the first group, 10 had also been vice-principal, and in the second group, 9 had held this position. An additional 16 superintendents, 12.5 per cent, had been a teacher, central office administrator, and superintendent, with 5 of these also serving as vice-principal, and 18, 14.1 per cent, had followed some other career path.

Among the Group E superintendents, 151, 66.8 per cent, had followed the path from teacher to principal to superintendent, with 21 of these also serving as vice-principal. The teacher to principal to central office administrator to superintendent career path was followed by 29, 12.8 per cent of the superintendents, with 1 of these also serving as vice-principal. The teacher to central office administrator to superintendent was the route followed by 10 superintendents, with 4 of these also serving as vice-principal.
The remaining 32 superintendents had followed some other career path, with teacher directly to superintendent being the most common, followed by 10 superintendents.

In Group F, 66, 57.9 per cent of the superintendents had gone from teacher to principal to superintendent. Of these, 5 had also been vice-principal. An additional 7, 6.1 per cent, had followed the path of teacher to principal to central office administrator to superintendent, and 6, 5.3 per cent, had gone from teacher to central office administrator to superintendent. Of these, 3 had also served as vice-principal. The remaining 35, 30.7 per cent, had followed some other career path, with 3 going directly from teacher to superintendent. (See Table XIV.)

Superintendents in smaller districts were more likely to have followed a career path from teacher to principal to superintendent, while those in larger districts were more likely to have gone from teacher to principal to central office administrator to superintendent. Those who had followed a career path from teacher to central office administrator to superintendent were most often found in districts in Groups C and D. Superintendents in the very largest and the very smallest districts, Groups A and F, were the most likely to have followed some other career path to the superintendency.
TABLE XIV

FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE OF CAREER PATHS OF SUPERINTENDENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>T-P-S*</th>
<th>T-P-CO-S</th>
<th>T-CO-S</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Per Cent</td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Per Cent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group A</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group B</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>22.6</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>48.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group C</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>29.4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>52.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group D</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>35.9</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>37.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group E</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>66.8</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>12.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group F</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>57.9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>275</td>
<td>52.8</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>20.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*T = Teacher, P = Principal, S = Superintendent, CO = Central Office.
Research Question Fourteen

"At what grade levels (elementary, middle school, secondary) have superintendents had administrative experience?"

All superintendents responded to this question. A total of 163 had elementary school administrative experience, either as principal or vice-principal, or both. Another 131 had middle school administrative experience, and the largest group, 287, had secondary level administrative experience. Some of the superintendents included in these numbers had served at more than one level. An additional 83 superintendents had campus level experience, either as principal or vice-principal, but did not specify at what grade levels. The remaining 67 had not had campus level administrative experience, but had served either in central office positions or had gone directly from teaching into the superintendency.

Among Group A superintendents, 1 each had administrative experience at the elementary and middle school level, while 2 had served at high school level, and 1 did not specify the grade level. In this group, 2 of the superintendents had not had campus level administrative experience, but had administrative experience only in the central office area. Among Group B superintendents, 7 had served as administrators at the elementary level, 9 at the
middle school level, 13 at high school, and 8 at unspecified grade levels. In Group B, 4 of the superintendents had no campus level administrative experience.

In Group C, 4 superintendents had served as elementary level administrators, 5 at middle school, 9 at high school, and 1 at unspecified level. The remaining 2 had not had campus level administrative experience. Of Group D superintendents, 41 had served at elementary level, 37 at middle school, 66 at high school, and 14 at unspecified grade level positions. An additional 19 had no campus level experience in administration.

In Group E school districts, 74 superintendents had elementary administrative experience, 58 had served in middle school, and 138 had been secondary school administrators. An additional 32 had experience as a principal or vice-principal, but did not specify at what grade level, and 27 had no campus level administrative experience. Among Group F superintendents, 36 had served at the elementary level in administration, 21 at middle school, and 59 at the secondary level. A total of 27 had served either as all-level administrators, or did not specify the grade level, while 13 had not had administrative experience at the campus level. (See Table XV.)

These data indicate that these superintendents in all size school districts were much more likely to have had
### TABLE XV

**FREQUENCY OF CAMPUS LEVEL ADMINISTRATIVE EXPERIENCE OF TEXAS SUPERINTENDENTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Elementary</th>
<th>Middle School</th>
<th>Secondary</th>
<th>Unspecified</th>
<th>None</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group A</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group B</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group C</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group D</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group E</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group F</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>287</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Campus level administrative experience prior to the superintendency than to have had no administrative experience or central office experience only. In all districts as well, superintendents were more likely to have served as secondary school administrators than at other grade levels.

**Research Question Fifteen**

"Teaching experience of superintendents has been (a) at what grade levels, and (b) in what subject areas?"

More superintendents had taught at high school level than at other grade levels across the state. More had also taught at middle school level than at elementary. Of the
responding superintendents, 63 had elementary teaching experience, 138 had middle school teaching experience, and 328 had high school teaching experience. An additional 124 did not specify the grade levels of teaching experience.

**TABLE XVI**

**FREQUENCY OF GRADE LEVEL TEACHING EXPERIENCE OF TEXAS SUPERINTENDENTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Elementary</th>
<th>Middle School</th>
<th>Secondary</th>
<th>Unspecified</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group A</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group B</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group C</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group D</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group E</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group F</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>328</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Texas superintendents were overwhelmingly more likely to have had coaching experience than experience in any other teaching area. State-wide, 228 of the responding superintendents had been coaches, followed by 137 who had taught science (including biology, chemistry, and physics), 107 who had taught mathematics, 58 who had taught history, and 50 who had taught general elementary subjects. The
remainder had taught a variety of different subjects. Those subjects taught by the fewest number of superintendents were psychology, 1; migrant education, 1; spelling, foreign language, and art, 3 each; speech, 4; and special education, 5. The predominance of coaching experience over other teaching experience also held true within every size group of school districts.

Research Question Sixteen

"What professional positions do superintendents perceive as being the most beneficial prior to assuming the superintendency?"

The assistant superintendency was perceived as being the most important position prior to the superintendency by 202 of the superintendents. The principalship was considered most important by 145 of the superintendents, and teaching experience was listed as most important by 108. Only 3 listed a director's position as most important, 2 listed a supervisor-consultant position, and 2 listed the assistant principalship. The remaining 25 listed some other position as being most important. These other positions included university experience, work with education agencies, outside business experience, and military experience. Other positions listed as most important also included business manager, vocational director, administrative assistant, athletic director, coach, and counselor.
In Group A school districts, 2 superintendents listed teaching experience as most important, 1 listed the assistant superintendency, and 1 named university experience. In Group B districts, 18 superintendents felt the assistant superintendency was most important, 6 each felt that the principalship and teaching were most beneficial, 2 listed the position of business manager, and 1 felt that experience with the Texas Education Agency was most beneficial.

Among Group C superintendents, 7 listed the position of assistant superintendent as most important, 3 listed teaching experience, 2 listed the principalship, and 2 listed business manager. In Group D, 58 superintendents felt that the assistant superintendent provided the most beneficial experience, 35 listed teaching experience, 27 listed the principalship, and 1 listed the position of supervisor or consultant. In addition, 1 listed vocational director, 1 named administrative assistant, and 1 felt the position of athletic director was most beneficial.

In Group E, 83 superintendents felt the position of assistant superintendent provided the most beneficial experience, 76 listed the principalship, and 62 listed teaching. The assistant principalship was named by 2 superintendents, and the position of director was also listed by 2. Other positions perceived to provide the most important experience prior to the superintendency were
business manager, community education, work at the Regional Education Service Center, experience at the Texas Education Agency, president of a professional organization, outside business experience, and university work.

In Group F districts, 35 superintendents listed the assistant superintendency as the most beneficial position prior to the superintendency. The principalship was considered most important by 34 superintendents, and 31 considered teaching experience to be most beneficial. The position of supervisor or consultant, and that of director were each listed by 1 superintendent as being most important. Other positions named include military experience, counseling, college administration, coaching, and business manager. (See Table XVII.)

In addition to examining the single position that superintendents felt provided the most important experience prior to the superintendency, these data were also analyzed in terms of the positions that superintendents ranked first, second, or third. Although the largest number of superintendents ranked the assistant superintendency as first in providing the most beneficial experience, the largest number ranked the principalship in the top three positions. A total of 532 superintendents ranked the principalship as either first, second, or third in importance of positions, whereas 377 ranked the assistant superintendency as either
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Assistant Principal</th>
<th>Principal</th>
<th>Supervisor</th>
<th>Consultant</th>
<th>Director</th>
<th>Assistant Superintendent</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group A</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group B</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group C</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group D</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group E</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group F</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>202</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
first, second, or third. In addition, 299 listed teaching in the first three positions, 110 listed a director's position, 89 listed the assistant principalship, and 46 listed the position of supervisor or consultant. A total of 81 listed other positions in the first, second, or third position of importance. These other positions included university experience, military experience, outside business experience, and work with education agencies. They also include the positions of business manager, vocational director, administrative assistant, athletic director, tax assessor, coach, counselor, band director, volunteer, and custodian.

Among Group A superintendents, 4 ranked the assistant superintendency in the top three positions, 4 ranked the principalship in the top three, 2 included teaching, and 2 included other experience. In Group B, 33 superintendents ranked the principalship as first, second, or third in importance, 23 listed the assistant superintendency, 19 included teaching experience, 4 included the assistant principalship, 8 a director's position, and 5 listed other positions. In Group C, 14 superintendents ranked the principalship as first, second, or third in importance, while 11 included the assistant superintendency in these positions. An additional 10 included the director's position in the top three rankings, 6 listed teaching
experience, 1 listed the assistant principalship, 3 included supervisor or consultant, and 3 listed other positions.

Among Group D, 123 superintendents ranked the principalship as first, second or third, 106 placed the assistant superintendency in one of these positions, and 65 included teaching experience in these positions. An additional 23 included the assistant principalship, 9 included supervisor or consultant, 33 a director's position, and 15 included other experience. In Group E districts, 244 superintendents felt the principalship ranked in the top three positions of importance, while 164 listed the assistant superintendency. Teaching experience was ranked first, second, or third by 142 superintendents, and 40 each included the assistant principalship or director's position. An additional 21 listed supervisor or consultant as one of the three most important positions, and 38 listed other positions. In Group F, 114 superintendents ranked the principalship as one of the three most important positions, and 69 listed the assistant superintendency. Next was teaching experience, listed by 65, followed by assistant principalship, listed by 21, director, listed by 19, other experience, listed by 18, and supervisor or consultant, included by 13.

From these data, it is clear that superintendents perceived the assistant superintendency as the single most important position prior to the superintendency. However,
it is important to note that the principalship was ranked in the top three positions of importance more frequently than the assistant superintendency. (See Table XVIII.)

Research Question Seventeen

"What is the relationship between professional positions superintendents have actually held and those they perceive to be most important?"

Superintendents in all groups except Group A ranked the position of assistant superintendent as most beneficial prior to assuming the superintendency. Yet, only 21.6 per cent of superintendents actually held the position of assistant superintendent prior to the superintendency. Superintendents in large districts were more likely to have been assistant superintendents than those in smaller districts. In Group A, the only group that did not rank the assistant superintendency as most beneficial, 60 per cent of the superintendents had held this position.

However, when the top three position rankings were examined, the position of principal was listed with greatest frequency as first, second, or third in importance. Over 80 per cent of superintendents had held the position of principal at some point in their careers.

Most superintendents ranked the principalship as highly important and had actually held this position, while the assistant superintendency, regarded as the single most
### TABLE XVIII

**FREQUENCY OF POSITIONS CONSIDERED BY SUPERINTENDENTS TO BE FIRST, SECOND, OR THIRD IN IMPORTANCE PRIOR TO ASSUMING THE SUPERINTENDENCY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Assistant Principal</th>
<th>Principal</th>
<th>Supervisor Consultant</th>
<th>Director</th>
<th>Assistant Superintendent</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group A</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group B</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group C</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group D</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group E</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>244</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group F</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>299</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>532</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>377</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
beneficial position by the greatest number of superintendents, had been held by relatively few of them.

Research Question Eighteen

"What professional positions do members of the expert panel perceive as being the most beneficial for a superintendent prior to assuming the superintendency?"

Members of the expert panel considered the position of assistant superintendent to be the most beneficial position for a superintendent prior to assuming the superintendency. In this group, 22 ranked the assistant superintendency as most important, followed by 16 who ranked teaching experience as most important, and 8 who listed the principalship as the most important position. Only 1 listed the position of supervisor or consultant as the most important position, and 2 listed some other position.

Respondents from the Texas Education Agency listed teaching as most important, ranked first by 4 panel members, followed by the assistant superintendency, ranked first by 3, then by the principalship, ranked first by 1 panel member. Among professors of educational administration, 12 ranked the assistant superintendency as most important, 6 listed teaching as most beneficial, and 5 listed the principalship. Among school board presidents, 7 listed the assistant superintendency as most beneficial, 6 listed teaching experience, 2 listed the principalship, 1 listed
supervisor or consultant, and 2 listed some other position. These other positions were coach and mayor. (See Table XIX.)

When the responses of the expert panel were examined in terms of these positions ranked either first, second, or third in importance, the assistant superintendency remained as the most frequently listed position in terms of importance in preparation for the superintendency. This position was listed as first, second, or third in importance by 43 members of the expert panel. The principalship increased to the second most frequently listed position, named by 40 members of the panel, and teaching experience decreased to third in importance, listed by 29 panel members. In addition, 9 of the panel listed the assistant principalship as in the top three positions of importance, 9 listed supervisor or consultant, 12 listed a director's position, and 4 listed some other position. The other positions included coach, mayor, business manager, and outside business experience. (See Table XX.)

Research Question Nineteen

"What is the relationship between positions superintendents have held and those that the expert panel perceive to be most important?"

The expert panel ranked the assistant superintendency as the most important position prior to the superintendency, with teaching experience second, and the principalship third.
### TABLE XIX

**FREQUENCY OF POSITIONS CONSIDERED BY THE EXPERT PANEL TO BE MOST BENEFICIAL PRIOR TO THE SUPERINTENDENCY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Panel</th>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Assistant Principal</th>
<th>Principal</th>
<th>Supervisor Consultant</th>
<th>Director</th>
<th>Assistant Supt.</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Texas Education Agency</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University Professors</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Board Presidents</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>16</strong></td>
<td><strong>0</strong></td>
<td><strong>8</strong></td>
<td><strong>1</strong></td>
<td><strong>0</strong></td>
<td><strong>22</strong></td>
<td><strong>2</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE XX

FREQUENCY OF POSITIONS CONSIDERED BY THE EXPERT PANEL TO BE FIRST, SECOND, OR THIRD IN IMPORTANCE PRIOR TO THE SUPERINTENDENCY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Panel</th>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Assistant Principal</th>
<th>Principal</th>
<th>Supervisor Consultant</th>
<th>Director</th>
<th>Assistant Superintendent</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Texas Education Agency</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University Professors</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Board Presidents</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>29</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The assistant superintendency was also most frequently listed in the first, second, or third position, with the principalship next most frequently listed in these three positions, and teaching experience third. Although the panel ranked the assistant superintendency as the most important position, only 21.6 per cent of the superintendents had served as assistant superintendents. Over 80 per cent had served as principals, and over 99 per cent had served as teachers. Therefore, the majority of superintendents had not had prior experience in the position considered to be the most beneficial prior to assuming the superintendency.

Research Question Twenty

"How do superintendents prioritize the importance of various areas of professional development?"

Superintendents were asked to prioritize the importance of professional development, either through formal coursework or inservice training, in the following areas: finance, curriculum, law, bond or building programs, personnel, building operation or maintenance, leadership or management, educational theory, community or public relations, or other. Finance was ranked as most important, ranked first by 178 superintendents, followed by leadership or management, 153, curriculum, 71, personnel, 39, and law, 26. A total of 13 superintendents ranked community or public relations as
most important, 5 listed educational theory, 3 listed building operation or maintenance, and 2 listed bond or building programs.

Group A superintendents listed leadership or management as most important, and curriculum second. Group B superintendents ranked leadership or management as first, curriculum, second, and finance, third, followed by law, bond or building programs, personnel, and building operation or maintenance. Among Group C superintendents, curriculum was listed as most important, finance and leadership or management tied for second, and law was third, followed by personnel, and community or public relations.

Group D superintendents listed professional development in leadership or management as most important, followed in order by finance, curriculum, personnel, law, community or public relations, educational theory, and building operation or maintenance. Group E superintendents listed finance as most important, followed by leadership or management, curriculum, personnel, law, community or public relations, bond or building programs, building operation or maintenance, and educational theory. Among Group F superintendents, finance ranked as first in importance, followed by leadership or management, curriculum, law, personnel, community or public relations, and educational theory.

A total of 5 superintendents listed some other area as most important for professional development. These areas
included public speaking and writing, organizational theory, board relations, people skills, and communication skills. (See Table XXI.)

From Table XXI, it can be seen that professional development in the areas of leadership or management and curriculum was more important to superintendents in larger districts, while professional development in finance was more important to superintendents in smaller districts, particularly the Group E and Group F districts. Curriculum assumed less relative importance as school districts decreased in size.

When the data were analyzed in terms of the areas of professional development ranked either first, second, or third in importance, finance still remained as most important, with 363 superintendents ranking it in one of the top three positions of importance. Leadership or management and curriculum were each ranked by 281 superintendents in one of the top three positions of importance. Personnel was listed by 215, law by 141, and community or public relations by 102. Educational theory was ranked as either first, second, or third in importance by only 41 superintendents, followed by building operation or maintenance by 34, and bond or building programs by only 16.

Among Group A superintendents, 3 each ranked finance and leadership or management in the top 3 positions of
**TABLE XXI**

**FREQUENCY OF AREAS OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PERCEIVED BY SUPERINTENDENTS AS MOST IMPORTANT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group A</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group B</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group C</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group D</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>62</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group F</td>
<td>42</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>178</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
importance, 2 each listed curriculum and personnel, and 1 each included educational theory and community or public relations. In Group B, 22 superintendents ranked curriculum in the top three positions of importance, while 20 included leadership or management, 18 listed finance, and 14 listed personnel. Only 8 superintendents ranked law among the top three positions, 6 listed educational theory, 3 each listed community or public relations and building operation or maintenance, and 2 ranked bond or building programs within the top 3 positions of importance. In Group C, 11 superintendents ranked finance within the first three positions, 10 listed leadership or management, 9 listed curriculum, and 7 included personnel. An additional 5 listed law, 2 included community or public relations, and 1 included building operation or maintenance.

Group D superintendents most frequently listed leadership or management and curriculum in the first three positions of importance with 78 each listing these areas. These were followed by finance, ranked by 71, personnel by 42, law by 33, community or public relations by 25, and educational theory by 19. Only 5 listed building operation or maintenance in one of the first 3 positions of importance, 2 included bond or building programs, and 3 listed some other area. In Group E, 178 superintendents ranked finance as one of the three most important areas of professional
development, 123 ranked leadership or management, 113 listed curriculum, and 97 included personnel. An additional 67 included law, 17 included building operation or maintenance, 14 listed educational theory, and 8 included bond or building programs. In Group F, 82 superintendents ranked finance among the top 3 positions, followed by curriculum, 57, personnel, 53, leadership or management, 47, law, 28, community or public relations, 20, building operation or maintenance, 8, bond or building programs, 4, and educational theory, 1. (See Table XXII.)

Research Question Twenty-One

"How do members of the expert panel prioritize the importance of various areas of professional development?"

The members of the expert panel were asked to prioritize the same areas of professional development as were the superintendents. The greatest number of panel members, 22, named professional development in the area of leadership-management as most important. Finance and curriculum followed, with 9 panel members each naming these two areas as most important. Of the remaining panel members, 3 each named educational theory and community or public relations, and 1 named law. In addition, 1 named other development, specifically internship, as most important.

Of the professors of educational administration, 11 named leadership or management training as most important,
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group A</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group B</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14</td>
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<td>20</td>
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<td>Group C</td>
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<td>97</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group F</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Total</td>
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<td>141</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>281</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
followed by 5 who named finance, 3 who listed curriculum, and 1 each who listed law, personnel, educational theory, and community or public relations. Among school board presidents, 8 listed leadership or management as most important, 4 each listed finance and curriculum, 2 listed community or public relations, and 1 listed educational theory. Texas Education Agency personnel listed professional development in leadership or management as most important, 3, followed by curriculum, 2, educational theory, 1, and internship, 1. (See Table XXIII.)

The areas of professional development were also examined in terms of those ranked in either first, second, or third position in order of importance. Again, the expert panel ranked leadership or management most frequently in one of these three top positions. Of the panel, 42 members listed leadership or management as either first, second, or third in importance. An additional 31 named curriculum as either first, second, or third in importance, while 27 ranked finance in these positions. Personnel was named next most frequently, by 18 panel members, followed by 12 who listed law, 11 who listed community or public relations, 6 who named educational theory, 2 who named building operation or maintenance, and 2 who listed some other area, specifically internship and outside business training.

Professors of educational administration most frequently included leadership or management in the top 3
<table>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>University Professors</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Board Presidents</td>
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<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Texas Education Agency</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
areas of professional development, followed by finance, curriculum, law, personnel, community or public relations, and educational theory. Board presidents most frequently listed leadership or management among the top three positions of importance, followed by curriculum, finance, personnel, community or public relations, law, educational theory, and building operation or maintenance. The order of priority among Texas Education Agency personnel was leadership or management, followed by curriculum, finance, community or public relations, law, building operation or maintenance, and educational theory. (See Table XXIV.)

Research Question Twenty-Two

"In what areas do superintendents think their professional development should have been more extensive?"

The greatest number of superintendents, 96, listed finance as the area of professional development in which they would like to have had more extensive training. This was followed by 58 who listed leadership or management, 55 who listed curriculum, 51 who listed personnel, 40 who named community or public relations, and 39 who listed law. In addition, 35 superintendents listed a need for more extensive professional development in bond or building programs, 23 listed building operation or maintenance, and 10 listed educational theory.
TABLE XXIV

FREQUENCY OF AREAS OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PERCEIVED
BY THE EXPERT PANEL AS FIRST, SECOND, OR THIRD
IN ORDER OF IMPORTANCE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>University Professors</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Board Presidents</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Texas Education Agency</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Among Group A superintendents, none listed any areas of professional development that they thought should have been more extensive. In Group B, 4 superintendents listed personnel, 3 named leadership or management, 2 each named finance and curriculum, and 1 each named law, bond or building programs, educational theory, and community or public relations. Of Group C superintendents, 1 each would like professional development to have been more extensive in the areas of law, personnel, and educational theory.

In Group D, 20 superintendents expressed a desire for more extensive professional development in the area of finance, while 18 listed curriculum, 17 listed leadership or management, 15 named personnel, and 12 listed law. An additional 10 felt their training should have been more extensive in the area of community or public relations, 9 listed bond or building programs, 5 included building operation or maintenance, and 3 listed educational theory. Among Group E superintendents, 51 felt their professional development should have been more extensive in the area of finance, 28 each listed leadership or management and curriculum, 23 named community or public relations, and 21 each listed law and personnel. An additional 19 felt a need for more extensive professional development in the area of bond or building programs, 12 included building operation or maintenance, and 5 named educational theory. In Group F,
10 superintendents would like their professional development to have been more extensive in the area of finance, 10 each listed personnel and leadership or management, 7 included curriculum, 6 each listed bond or building programs, building operation or maintenance, and community or public relations, and 4 listed law.

From these data, it is clear that superintendents in smaller school districts would have liked more extensive professional development in the area of finance. This was the area that superintendents in smaller districts also ranked as most important. (See Table XXV.)

Supplemental Research Question One

"If superintendents had the choice to make again, how many would choose public school superintendency as a career?"

An overwhelming number of superintendents responding to the questionnaire stated that they would choose public school superintendency as a career if they had the choice to make again. A total of 498 said that they would make this choice again, as opposed to 65 who said they would not, and 9 who said they were not certain.

In Group A, 4 superintendents said they would choose the superintendency again, and 1 said he was not certain. In Group B, 31 would make the same choice again, and 2 would not. Among Group C superintendents, 15 would be superintendents again, and 1 would not. In Group D, 159 superintendents
TABLE XXV

FREQUENCY OF AREAS OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SUPERINTENDENTS THINK SHOULD HAVE BEEN MORE EXTENSIVE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group A</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<td>Group E</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group F</td>
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<td>10</td>
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<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
would choose this career again, 10 would not, and 1 was uncertain. Of Group E superintendents, 198 would choose public school superintendency again, 33 would not, and 5 were undecided. In Group F, 91 superintendents would make the same choice again, 19 would not, and 1 was undecided. In Groups B, C, and D, the ratio of superintendents who would choose the profession again to those who would not was approximately 15:1. In Group E, this ratio decreased to 6:1, and in Group F, it decreased further still to 4.8:1. These data indicate that superintendents in larger districts tended to be more satisfied with their career choice than those in smaller districts, but that in general, superintendents were satisfied with the public school superintendency. (See Table XXVI.)

**TABLE XXVI**

**NUMBER OF SUPERINTENDENTS WOULD CHOOSE PUBLIC SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENCY AS A CAREER**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Undecided</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group A</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group B</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group C</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group D</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group E</td>
<td>198</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group F</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>498</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Supplemental Research Question Two

"What aspects of the position do superintendents find rewarding?"

Superintendents listed a variety of aspects of the superintendency that they found rewarding. The largest number, 130, named helping students or seeing student achievement as the most rewarding aspect of the position. An additional 120 listed having an impact on education as most rewarding. If these two closely related aspects are combined, 250 of the 542 respondents named one of these two areas as being most rewarding. The third most frequently listed reward of the position was working with people. This was followed, in order, by the challenge of the position, staff growth and development, leadership, salary, program improvement, community support and involvement, prestige and goal attainment.

Additional rewards cited by 10 or more superintendents included problem solving, budgeting and finance, association with other professionals, power or authority, being of service, and satisfaction or self-esteem.

Among Group A superintendents, 3 listed having an impact on education as most rewarding, while 1 each named leadership, problem-solving, and everything about the position. In Group B, the most rewarding aspects of the position were listed, in order, as educational impact, working with people, community support and involvement,
challenge, helping students, and salary. In Group C, the most frequently listed rewards were working with people, impact on education, salary, prestige, and program improvement.

Group D superintendents listed educational impact, helping students, working with people, challenge, program improvement, goal attainment, and leadership as the most rewarding aspects of the superintendency. In Group E, the most frequently listed rewards were helping students, educational impact, working with people, challenge, leadership, staff growth and development, and prestige. Group F superintendents found helping students, impact on education, staff growth and development, salary, and working with people to be the most rewarding aspects of the superintendency.

Supplemental Research Question Three

"What are the negative aspects of the position?"

The greatest number of superintendents, 87, responded that government interference was the most negative aspect of the superintendency. An additional 74 named time requirements of the position, 72 listed working with school boards, and 60 listed the politics of the job. Insufficient funding was listed by 58 superintendents, paperwork by 49, and lack of appreciation by the public by 48. The stress or pressure of the job was named by 47 superintendents, House
Bill 72 was listed by 44, and problems with staff was named by 43 superintendents.

Other negative aspects of the position, listed by 10 or more superintendents, included lack of privacy, special interest groups, parents, teacher groups, and being blamed for all the problems of the district or education. Also included were the Texas Education Agency, Governor White, and unhappy patrons.

In Group A, 2 superintendents each listed politics and time requirements as being negative aspects of the job, while 1 each listed school boards, special interest groups, and inadequate funding. In Group B, the most frequently listed negative aspects of the superintendency were school boards, politics, time requirements, government interference, and staff problems. Group C superintendents most frequently cited time requirements, school boards, stress or pressure, and the politics of the job.

Negative aspects of the position most frequently cited by Group D superintendents were insufficient funding, school boards, time requirements, government interference, politics, and the stress or pressure of the job. In Group E districts, superintendents most frequently named government interference, time requirements, school boards, lack of public appreciation, stress or pressure, politics, insufficient funding, and paperwork as the negative aspects of the superintendency.
In Group F, the most frequently listed negative aspects were paperwork, House Bill 72, school boards, government interference, time requirements, insufficient funding, and staff problems.
CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS
AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents the summary, findings, and con-
cclusions of this study. Recommendations for further
research are also included.

Summary

This study investigated career path patterns of super-
intendents in the State of Texas. It also examined percep-
tions of superintendents and a panel of experts regarding
desirable professional development and experience for the
superintendency.

A Career Path Survey was mailed to each superintendent
in the State of Texas during the month of January, 1986. A
total of 542 questionnaires were returned, for a response
rate of 50.8 per cent. These responses were divided accord-
ing to district size: Group A districts, 50,000 or more
ADA; Group B, 10,000 to 49,999 ADA; Group C, 5,000 to 9,999
ADA; Group D, 1,500 to 4,999 ADA; Group E, 300 to 1,499 ADA;
and Group F, less than 300 ADA. The response rate for
Group A was 5, 83.1 per cent; for Group B, 33 responses,
61.1 per cent; for Group C, 17 responses, 51.5 per cent;
Group D, 133 responses, 57.6 per cent; for Group E, 240
responses, 53.5 per cent; and for Group F, 114 responses, 38.9 per cent.

A Superintendents' Experience and Professional Development Survey form was sent to thirty school board presidents, five from each district group size, twenty-five Texas university professors of educational administration, and eleven Texas Education Agency officials. A total of fifty-one questionnaires were returned, twenty-three from university professors, nineteen from school board presidents, and nine from Texas Education Agency personnel.

The data from these survey forms were used to analyze the research questions and to develop a profile of the "typical" Texas superintendent. Descriptive statistics including totals, means, and percentages were used in the analysis of the data.

Findings

The following findings resulted from the study.

1. At the time of attaining the first superintendency, the majority of superintendents, 53.9 per cent, were hired from outside the district. In larger districts, Group A-D, superintendents were slightly more likely to be hired from within the district, but in districts smaller than 1,500 students, the Groups E and F districts, superintendents were more likely to be hired from outside. On superintendencies subsequent to the first one, almost all superintendents were
hired from outside the district, usually from another superintendency.

2. The majority of Texas superintendents had a master's degree. A total of 406, 77.3 per cent had a master's degree, while 118, 22.5 per cent had a doctoral degree, and 1 had only a bachelor's degree. Superintendents in larger school districts were much more likely to have a doctorate than those in smaller districts.

3. The majority of superintendents had not had primary work experience outside the field of public education. A total of 25.1 per cent had military experience, 3.5 per cent had university teaching experience, 4.4 per cent had worked for the Texas Education Agency, Regional Service Center, or Department of Education, and 18.1 per cent had full-time business experience.

4. The average age of the current superintendent in Texas was 48.6 years old. The average age of superintendents was highest in the largest districts and decreased as districts became smaller in size. The exception to this was in Group F districts, those with fewer than 300 students, where the average age increased slightly above that of Group E districts, but still remained less than that of superintendents in Groups A-D.

5. Superintendents had served in their current positions an average of 6.4 years. State-wide, more
superintendents, 18.4 per cent, were serving in the first year of their current superintendency than in any other year. However, 8.8 per cent had been in their current position 16 or more years, and 5 of them had been in their current superintendency more than 25 years. The longest current superintendency reported was 36 years.

The superintendents who responded to the survey had served in a total of 275 superintendencies prior to their current position. Their average length of service in prior superintendencies was 4.9 years. Those in the smallest districts averaged the greatest length of time, 6.1 years, in prior superintendencies. The longest length of service reported in a prior superintendency was 35 years, and the second longest was 18 years. In all district group sizes, superintendents had served a longer average length of time in their current positions than in previous superintendencies.

6. The majority of superintendents began their administrative or supervisory career in the principalship. A total of 62.4 per cent held a principalship as the first administrative or supervisory position. The second largest group, 21 per cent, began in the vice-principalship. Other positions, including director, supervisor, coordinator, assistant superintendent, administrative assistant, or business manager, were the first administrative or supervisory positions for 10.6 per cent of the superintendents.
A total of 5.9 per cent of superintendents had no administrative or supervisory experience prior to the superintendency. As districts decreased in size, the more likely that the superintendent began his administrative or supervisory career as a principal. More superintendents also began their administrative careers directly as superintendents in smaller districts than in larger ones.

7. Superintendents had spent an average of 16.2 years in public education prior to assuming the first superintendency. This ranged from a low of 0 years for 1 superintendent (the superintendency was the first public school position) to a high of 39 years for 1 superintendent. Superintendents in smaller districts, Groups E and F, had spent somewhat less time, on the average, in public school education than those in larger districts. However, a total of 53 superintendents served more than 25 years in public school education before their first superintendency.

8. Across the state, superintendents had held an average of 4.5 different educational positions prior to the first superintendency. The largest number of superintendents had held three positions prior to the first superintendency, while the next largest had held four. Superintendents in larger districts tended to have held more different public school positions prior to their first superintendency than did those in smaller districts.
9. The majority of superintendents state-wide, 55.5 per cent, entered their first superintendency from a principal's position. The next largest single group entered the superintendency from an assistant superintendency. Several superintendents were hired from outside public school districts, 8 from the Texas Education Agency, Regional Service Center, or Department of Education, 3 from university positions, and 5 from business positions. In smaller districts, superintendents were more likely to have been a principal immediately prior to their first superintendency, while in larger ones, they were more likely to have held a central office position, particularly an assistant superintendency. In Group D-F districts, 34 superintendents had moved directly into a superintendency without prior administrative or supervisory experience, while none had done so in Group A-C districts.

10. The average age of Texas superintendents upon attaining their first superintendency was 39.4. The youngest was 23, and the oldest was 58. Superintendents in smaller districts tended to be slightly younger upon assuming their first superintendency than those in larger ones. However, there was an extremely large range, from 23 to 58, in the age at which superintendents assumed their first superintendency.

11. Superintendents had served in an average of 2.4 school districts prior to the district in which they first
served as superintendent. These ranged from a low of no other districts prior to the first superintendency to a high of ten other districts.

Superintendents had served in an average of 1.5 superintendencies. A total of 350 were in their first superintendency, 134 were in their second one, 36 were in their third superintendency, and 16 were in the fourth. Additionally, 3 were in their fifth superintendency. Superintendents in Groups A and B districts tended to have served in slightly more school districts as a superintendent than those in the smaller districts.

12. The superintendents who responded to the survey had served in a total of 269 superintendencies. In 217 of these, 80.7 per cent, the superintendent moved to a larger district. In 49, 18.2 per cent, the superintendent moved to a smaller district, and in 3, 1.1 per cent, the superintendent moved to a district of the same size. The vast majority of superintendents had moved from smaller to larger districts. Superintendents in larger districts were more likely to have moved from smaller to larger districts. However, even superintendents in the smallest districts, Group F with less than 300 students, were still more likely to have moved from smaller to larger districts.

13. The most common career path pattern to the superintendency was from teacher to principal to
superintendent. A total of 275, 52.8 per cent, of the superintendents had followed this path. Of these, 40 had also served as vice-principal. The next most common path was from teacher to principal to central office administrator to superintendent. An additional 108, 20.7 per cent of superintendents had followed this route. Of these, 19 had also been vice-principals. The third route, from teacher to central office administrator to superintendent, was followed by 7.9 per cent of superintendents. The remaining 18.6 per cent had followed some other route to the superintendency.

Superintendents in smaller districts were more likely to have followed a career path from teacher to principal to superintendent, while those in larger districts were more likely to have gone from teacher to principal to central office administrator to superintendent. Those who had followed a career path from teacher to central office administrator to superintendent were most often found in districts in Groups C and D. Superintendents in the very largest and the very smallest districts, Groups A and F, were the most likely to have followed some other career path to the superintendency, and these paths varied greatly.

14. Of the superintendents responding to the survey, 163 had elementary school administrative experience, either as principal or vice-principal, or both. Another 131 had
middle school administrative experience, and the largest group, 287, had secondary level administrative experience. Some of the superintendents included in these numbers had served at more than one level. An additional 83 superintendents had campus level experience, either as principal or vice-principal, but did not specify at what grade levels. The remaining 67 had not had campus level administrative experience, but had served either in central office positions or had gone directly from teaching into the superintendency.

Superintendents in all size school districts were much more likely to have had campus level administrative experience prior to the superintendency than to have had no administrative experience or central office administrative experience only. In all districts as well, superintendents were more likely to have served as secondary school administrators than at other grade levels.

15. More superintendents had taught at high school level than at other grade levels across the state. More had also taught at middle school level than at elementary.

Texas superintendents were overwhelmingly more likely to have had coaching experience than experience in any other teaching area. State-wide, 228 of the responding superintendents had been coaches, followed by 137 who had taught science (including biology, chemistry, and physics),
107 who had taught mathematics, 58 who had taught history, and 50 who had taught general elementary subjects. The remainder had taught a variety of different subjects. The predominance of coaching experience over other teaching experience also held true within every size group of school districts.

16. The assistant superintendency was perceived by superintendents as being the single most important position prior to the superintendency. Second most important was the principalship. However, more superintendents ranked the principalship as either first, second, or third in importance than any other position. The second largest number ranked the assistant superintendency as either first, second, or third in importance.

17. Although superintendents ranked the assistant superintendency as the single most important position prior to the superintendency, only 21.6 per cent of superintendents had actually held this position. Superintendents in large districts were more likely to have been assistant superintendents than those in smaller districts. However, when the top three position rankings were examined, the position of principal was listed with greatest frequency as first, second, or third in importance. Over 80 per cent of superintendents had held the position of principal at some point in their careers.
18. Members of the expert panel considered the position of assistant superintendent to be the most beneficial position for a superintendent prior to assuming the superintendency. The panel ranked teaching experience as second most important, and the position of principal, third. The panel also ranked the assistant superintendency most frequently as first, second, or third in importance. The principalship was the second most frequently listed position in first, second, or third position of importance and teaching was the third most frequently listed position.

19. Although the panel ranked the assistant superintendency as the most important experience for a superintendent, only 21.6 per cent of the superintendents had held this position. Over 80 per cent of superintendents had served as principals, and over 99 per cent had served as teachers. Therefore, the majority of superintendents had not had prior experience in the position considered to be the most beneficial prior to assuming the superintendency.

20. Superintendents ranked finance as the single most important area of professional development, followed in order by leadership or management, curriculum, personnel, law, community or public relations, educational theory, building operation or maintenance, and bond or building programs. A total of five superintendents listed some other
area as most important for professional development. These areas included public speaking and writing, organizational theory, board relations, people skills, and communication skills.

Professional development in the areas of leadership or management and curriculum was more important to superintendents in larger districts, while professional development in finance was more important to superintendents in smaller districts. Curriculum assumed less relative importance as school districts decreased in size.

21. Members of the expert panel named professional development in the area of leadership or management as most important. Finance and curriculum were second, followed by educational theory, community or public relations, and law.

22. The greatest number of superintendents listed finance as the area of professional development in which they would like to have had more extensive training. This was followed by those who listed leadership or management, curriculum, personnel, community or public relations, and law. Named less frequently were bond or building programs, building operation or maintenance, and educational theory. Superintendents in smaller districts most frequently listed the need for more extensive professional development in the area of finance. This was also the area that superintendents in smaller districts ranked as the most important area of professional development.
23. An overwhelming number of superintendents stated that they would choose public school superintendency as a career if they had the choice to make again. A total of 498 said they would make this choice again, as opposed to 65 who said they would not, and 9 who said they were not certain. In Groups B, C, and D, the ratio of superintendents who would choose the profession again to those who would not was approximately 15:1. In Group E, this ratio decreased to 6:1, and in Group F, it decreased further still to 4.8:1. From this, it would seem that superintendents in larger districts tended to be more satisfied with their career choice than those in smaller districts, but that in general, superintendents were satisfied with the public school superintendency.

24. Superintendents listed a variety of aspects of the superintendency that they found rewarding. The largest number named helping students or seeing student achievement as the most rewarding aspect of the position. The second largest number named a closely related aspect, having an impact on education, as most rewarding. The third most frequently listed reward of the position was working with people. This was followed, in order, by the challenge of the position, staff growth and development, leadership, salary, program improvement, community support and involvement, prestige, and goal attainment.
25. The greatest number of superintendents responded that government interference was the most negative aspect of the superintendency. Additional superintendents named time requirements of the position, working with school boards, and the politics of the job. Insufficient funding was also listed as a negative aspect of the job, as was paperwork, lack of appreciation by the public, stress or pressure, House Bill 72, and problems with staff.

Additional Findings

A total of thirteen female superintendents responded to the survey. Since females were such a small but growing minority of the population of superintendents, the additional findings revealed the differences between female superintendents and their male counterparts.

1. Although only 22.5 per cent of all superintendents held a doctoral degree, 46.2 per cent of female superintendents had a doctorate. Female superintendents tended to have attained higher levels of education than males.

2. Of the female superintendents, 2 reported taking time out from working to raise a family. No male superintendents had taken time off from work for family reasons. Additionally, 2 of the female superintendents had outside business experience, and 2 had worked for an education agency.
3. The average age of female superintendents was slightly higher than that of males. While the average age of all superintendents was 48.6, females averaged 49.1 years of age.

4. The average number of years in the current superintendency for all superintendents was 6.4 years. For female superintendents, this average was 2.3 years. Females had served in the superintendency shorter periods of time than had males.

5. The average number of years in previous superintendencies was 4.94. Only 1 female superintendent reported a previous superintendency, and that was for 1 year.

6. Slightly fewer women began their administrative careers in the principalship. Of females, 46.2 per cent began administration in a principalship, compared with 62.4 per cent of all superintendents.

7. Female superintendents, on the average, had spent over 6 more years in public school education prior to the first superintendency than had superintendents in general. The average for all superintendents was 16.2 years, but for females, was 22.9 years. The greatest number of years in public school education prior to the first superintendency for any superintendents was 39. This superintendent was female.

8. Female superintendents had also held more different educational positions prior to the superintendency.
The average number of positions for all superintendents was 4.5, but for women superintendents, was 6.3.

9. Women superintendents were more likely to have been assistant superintendents, and less likely to have been principals prior to the first superintendency than superintendents in general. Among all superintendents, 55.5 per cent were principals and 21.6 per cent were assistant superintendents immediately prior to the first superintendency. Among female superintendents, 23.1 per cent were principals, and 38.5 per cent were assistant superintendents.

10. Female superintendents averaged over 7 years older than the average age of all superintendents upon attaining the first superintendency. The average age for all superintendents at the first superintendency was 39.4 and for women was 46.7.

11. Female superintendents had served in slightly more districts prior to the first superintendency, an average of 3.2, than superintendents in general, who had served in 2.4 districts.

12. Women superintendents had also served in fewer superintendencies than their male counterparts. All superintendents had served in an average of 1.5 superintendencies, but women had served in only 1.2.

13. Although the largest number of superintendents had been coaches, female superintendents have had diverse
teaching experience. No one level or area of teaching experience was predominant for female superintendents.

14. In the additional areas examined by this study, there was no substantial difference between female superintendents and superintendents in general.

Conclusions

The following conclusions were drawn based upon the findings of the study. They can be generalized only to the population studied.

1. Although there was a diversity among career path patterns of superintendents in the State of Texas, two major career paths were evident. In smaller districts, the most common path to the superintendency was from teacher to principal to superintendent. In larger districts, the most common path was from teacher to principal to central office administration to the superintendency. Only a small percentage of superintendents in any size districts had followed the path from teacher to central office administration to superintendent. Those superintendents who had followed some other career path were most often found in the very largest and very smallest districts.

2. On the average, superintendents were 48.6 years of age, and had served in their current positions 6.4 years. Their average length of service in previous superintendencies was 4.9 years. Superintendents had spent an average
of 16.2 years in public school education, in 4.5 positions, in 2.4 school districts prior to the first superintendency. Superintendents were most likely to have a master's degree.

3. The "typical" superintendent started his public school career in a high school coaching position, moved to a high school administrative position, and then to his first superintendency in another school district at the age of thirty-nine. He was most likely to still be serving in his first superintendency. If he had moved to a subsequent superintendency, his move was to a larger district. (See Table XXVII.)

### Table XXVII

#### Profile of the "Typical" Superintendent

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Male</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Degree</td>
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<td>Current Age</td>
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<td>Years in Current Position</td>
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<tr>
<td>Position Immediately Prior to First Superintendency</td>
<td>Principal</td>
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<td>Age at First Superintendency</td>
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<td>Number of Districts Prior to First Superintendency</td>
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<td>Number of Districts as Superintendent</td>
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<td>Secondary</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Coaching</td>
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</table>
4. The assistant superintendency was perceived by superintendents to be the single most valuable position prior to the superintendency. However, the principalship was most often listed in first, second, or third position of importance. Only 21.6 per cent of superintendents had been assistant superintendents, while over 80 per cent had been principals.

5. Members of the expert panel also perceived the assistant superintendency to be the most beneficial position for a superintendent prior to assuming the superintendency. The assistant superintendency was also most frequently ranked in first, second, or third position of importance.

6. Superintendents ranked finance as the single most important area of professional development, followed in order by leadership or management, curriculum, personnel, law, community or public relations, educational theory, building operation or maintenance, and bond or building programs. Professional development in the areas of leadership or management and curriculum was more important to superintendents in larger districts, while professional development in finance was more important to superintendents in smaller districts.

7. Members of the expert panel named professional development in the area of leadership or management as most important. Finance and curriculum were second,
followed by educational theory, community or public relations, and law.

8. Finance was the area of professional development in which the greatest number of superintendents would like to have had more extensive training. This was followed by leadership or management, curriculum, personnel, community or public relations, and law. Less frequently named were bond or building programs, building operation or maintenance, and educational theory.

9. Most superintendents said they would choose public school superintendency as a career if they had the choice to make again. The ratio of superintendents who would choose the profession again in Groups B, C, and D, was 15:1. This ratio decreased to 6:1 for Group E, and 4.8:1 for Group F.

10. A variety of aspects of the superintendency were listed as being rewarding. The largest number of superintendents named helping students or seeing student achievement as the most rewarding aspect of the position. The second largest number named having an impact on education as most rewarding. These were followed by working with people, challenge of the position, staff growth and development, leadership, salary, program improvement, community support and involvement, prestige, and goal attainment.

11. Superintendents named government interference in education as the most negative aspect of the superintendency.
This was followed by time requirements of the position, working with school boards, and the politics of the job. Other negative aspects named by superintendents were insufficient funding, paperwork, lack of appreciation by the public, stress or pressure, House Bill 72, and problems with staff.

Recommendations

The results of three of the research questions have specific implications for universities or organizations involved in the professional development of superintendents. Both superintendents and the expert panel listed professional development in the areas of leadership or management, finance, and curriculum as most important. In addition, superintendents listed these same three areas as those in which they thought their training should have been more extensive. It is therefore recommended that superintendents be provided more extensive opportunities for professional development in the areas of leadership or management, finance, and curriculum.

Recommendation for Further Research

The following recommendations for further research are made based on the findings and conclusions of this study.

1. The study should be replicated nationally to confirm the findings and conclusions of this study.
2. Since most university administrative preparatory programs offer professional development in the areas in which superintendents stated that they wished their training had been more extensive, further research is needed to determine why superintendents felt their training was not adequate.

3. Comparisons should be made of superintendents based on age to determine what differences exist between those who have recently attained the superintendency and those who have been in the position for some time.

4. More extensive research should be conducted to determine career paths, characteristics, and perceptions of female superintendents.

5. This study should be repeated in ten years to determine changing trends in the Texas superintendency.
Dear Superintendent:

The enclosed questionnaire is part of a doctoral dissertation at North Texas State University. This study is endorsed by the Texas Association of School Administrators. Its purpose is to determine career path patterns of superintendents in the State of Texas, and to determine the areas of experience and professional development that superintendents and educational experts feel are most important prior to assuming the superintendency. The questionnaire is broad in nature, but is designed to provide information to answer questions such as the following:

1. Is there a "typical" career path for superintendents?
2. Are most superintendents hired from within the district or from outside?
3. What was the first administrative position held by superintendents?
4. What positions have superintendents held prior to becoming superintendents?
5. In how many districts have superintendents been employed?
6. How do age, sex, or education affect the career path?
7. What positions do superintendents and other educational experts feel provide the most beneficial experience prior to the superintendency?
8. What areas of professional development (university coursework and inservices) are the most important for superintendents to have had prior to assuming the superintendency?

These research questions will be analyzed in terms of the size of the school district. Individual responses will remain anonymous. Your cooperation in completing and returning this questionnaire will be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Melonae Peters
Career Path Survey

Sex: _____ Male _____ Female

Highest level of education: _____ Master's degree
_____ Doctorate

Current age: _____ 25-29 _____ 30-34 _____ 35-39
_____ 40-44 _____ 45-49 _____ 49-54
_____ 55-59 _____ 60-64 _____ Over 65

Age upon attaining first superintendency: _____

Prior Employment (Complete below)

1. Please list all educational and non-educational positions. Include military and business experience.
2. Please include teaching and administrative experience.
3. Please be very specific as to grade levels and subject areas. (Examples: High School Biology Teacher, Middle School Principal, Director of Elementary Instruction, Assistant Superintendent for Finance, etc.)
4. If there are gaps in employment history for reasons such as returning to school full-time, please note this.
5. Please list most recent position first.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POSITION</th>
<th>DISTRICT OR</th>
<th>DISTRICT ENROLLMENT</th>
<th>AT TIME OF EMPLOYMENT</th>
<th>DATES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Please prioritize, highest to lowest (1-7), the positions that you feel provide the most important experience for a superintendent prior to assuming the superintendency.

- Teacher
- Assistant Principal
- Principal
- Supervisor or Consultant
- Director
- Assistant Superintendent
- Other (specify)

From the above areas, please list the three positions that you feel provide the most important experience. Please be as specific as possible concerning grade level, subject area, administrative area.

1. 
2. 
3. 

Please prioritize, highest to lowest (1-10), the importance of the following areas of professional development (university coursework or inservice) prior to assuming the superintendency. Please place a check mark next to any areas in which you would like your professional development to have been more extensive.

- Finance
- Building operation or maintenance
- Curriculum
- Leadership or management
- Law
- Educational theory
- Bond or building program
- Community or public relations
- Personnel
- Other (specify)

Supplemental Research Question:

If you had the choice to make again, would you be a public school superintendent? _____ Yes _____ No

What aspects of this position do you find rewarding?

What are the negative aspects of this position?
Appendix B

Dear

The following questions will be used as part of a doctoral dissertation at North Texas State University. This study is endorsed by Texas Association of School Administrators. The subject of this dissertation is career paths of superintendents in the State of Texas.

Your cooperation in completing and returning this questionnaire will be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Melonae Peters

Please Prioritize, highest to lowest (1-7), the positions that you feel provide the most important experience for a superintendent prior to assuming the superintendency.

- Teacher
- Assistant Principal
- Principal
- Supervisor or Consultant
- Director
- Assistant Superintendent
- Other (specify) ____________________________________________

From the above areas, please list the three positions that you feel provide the most important experience. Please be as specific as possible concerning grade level, subject area, or administrative area. (Examples: High School Biology Teacher, Middle School Principal, Director of Elementary Instruction, Assistant Superintendent for Finance, etc.)

1.
2.
3.

Please prioritize, highest to lowest (1-9), the importance of the following areas of training (university coursework or inservice) prior to assuming the superintendency.

- Finance
- Leadership or management
- Curriculum
- Educational theory
- Law
- Community or public relations
- Bond or building programs
- Other (specify) ________
- Personnel
- Building operation and maintenance
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