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Critical factors in superintendency transitions

Bird, Kenneth Michael, Ed.D.

The University of Nebraska - Lincoln, 1993

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CRITICAL FACTORS IN
SUPERINTENDENCY TRANSITIONS

by

Kenneth M. Bird

DISSERTATION

Presented to the Faculty of

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Under the Supervision of Professor Frederick C. Wendel

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June 1993

DISSERTATION TITLE

CRITICAL FACTORS IN SUPERINTENDENCY TRANSITIONS

BY

KENNETH M. BIRD

SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE:

APPROVED

DATE

Fredrick C. Wendel
Signature

6-21-93

Dr. Fred Wendel
Typed Name

Larry D. Dlugosh
Signature

6-21-93

Dr. Larry Dlugosh
Typed Name

Ron Joekel
Signature

6-21-93

Dr. Ron Joekel
Typed Name

Ward Sybouts
Signature

6/21/93

Dr. Ward Sybouts
Typed Name

Stan Vasa
Signature

6-21-93

Dr. Stan Vasa
Typed Name

Signature

Typed Name

CRITICAL FACTORS IN
SUPERINTENDENCY TRANSITIONS

Kenneth M. Bird, Ph.D.

University of Nebraska - Lincoln, 1993

Adviser: Fred Wendel

The selection of the superintendent is one of the primary functions of a school board. Far too often a board of education sees the selection of a superintendent as the completion of their responsibilities, and an incomplete transition of leadership occurs.

The primary purposes of this field investigation were to detail a superintendency transition process and to identify critical events in this process. A qualitative, naturalistic inquiry design was used for this investigation. The investigation focused on the incumbent superintendent, the superintendent-elects, and the members of the Board of Education during the changes of chief executives for the Westside Community Schools between the years 1983 to 1992.

This investigation was designed to: (a) provide a history of the Westside Community Schools and its rise to prominence;

(b) describe the conditions that existed and led to the change in superintendents; (c) describe the transition process and procedures that have been used by the Westside Community Schools; and (d) provide a detailed analysis of the transition process and identify critical events in this process.

The results of my investigation indicated that the transition of leadership from one superintendent to the next will be enhanced when the Board of Education recognizes its responsibility and role, and establishes a framework for the transition. Boards of Education seeking a smooth transition of leadership should consider the following: (a) agree on the need for a defined transition process which goes beyond the selection of a new superintendent; (b) obtain the full support of the outgoing superintendent for the transition process; (c) select a new superintendent well in advance of the departure of the current superintendent; (d) empower the outgoing superintendent with the prerogative to provide the superintendent-elect training and information, visibility, and authority to make decisions; (e) publicize the procedures and goals of the transition process to all stakeholders; and (f) monitor and evaluate the transition.

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Chapter 1

Introductory Section

The problem. Parallel to the emphasis placed on excellence in education, single most important is a demand for increased effectiveness and productivity from superintendents. Selecting the right superintendent for the job is a must. The selection of the superintendent is one of the primary functions of a school board. "The person selected as superintendent must be not only eminently qualified but must have a personal and administrative style that meshes well with the board's style" (Twiford and Harrison, 1986, p. 1).

Far too often a board of education sees the selection of a superintendent as the completion of their responsibilities in the process. The selection of the best person is one of the early stages of the leadership-transition process. An incomplete transition of school district leadership can result in a significant shift in direction and priorities that adversely affects the day-to-day operation of the school district, and ultimately impedes the

district's ability to achieve the desired level of excellence. School board members must understand what the steps in this transition process are and assure that a smooth transition occurs.

Context. The Westside Community Schools has experienced a change in superintendencies three times in the last ten years. In order to maintain its status as a "lighthouse" school district with an uncompromising commitment to excellence, careful attention has been given to the transition of leadership at each change of superintendency. This paper is designed to: (a) provide a history of the district and its rise to prominence; (b) describe the conditions that existed and led to the change in superintendents; (c) describe the transition process and procedures that have been used by the Westside Community Schools; and (d) provide a detailed analysis of the transition process and identify critical events in this process.

History of the Westside Community School District

Formation of the district. With the end of World War II came growth to the city of Omaha and westward expansion. Seventy-second and Dodge Street, the approximate geographic center of

Omaha in 1993, was a “quiet, rural intersection” (Laas, 1982, p. 1) in 1946.

With this westward growth came the pressure of more and more students on the rural schools located west of Omaha. Three school districts were particularly affected by this growth:

1. School District #46 which was located in what is called the Underwood-Peony Park area. “It opened as a rural school in 1876 and in 1925 the Underwood Community High School was added” (Laas, 1982, p. 1).

2. School District #65 which was located in the Loveland area. This school began its operation in 1932.

3. School District #31 which was located in what was called the Oak Park area. The Oakdale School was opened in 1871. As westward growth of the city of Omaha continued, the leaders of these three schools districts came together to consider merging.

Two issues surfaced that provided a common bond for the members of these communities to rally around as merger was being considered. Each community was interested in maintaining

the small community aspect of their current living and school settings, and each took pride in providing quality educational opportunities to their children. “In those early days, there was no division between the people who owned the farms in the area, and the professional people who moved into the area, said Viola Wise Chatfield, who came to Oakdale in 1944. There was a tremendous loyalty and spirit between the two groups—we had a common goal—our children’s education. The school prided itself in stressing the basic academic subjects” (Laas, 1982, p. 3). The Loveland area’s commitment to quality education was noted from its founding. “The school had 35 pupils when it opened. There were two teachers with Life Certificates, who were paid \$100 per month—a high salary in those days. Many professional and business people rapidly moved into the area because of this very fine school” (Laas, 1982, p. 3).

Members of the Underwood community were no exception. They too believed in the importance of the schools to their community. Loretta Cutler, who taught the elementary grades in the 1930s, said:

The Underwood area was a lovely neighborhood. Underwood School was well equipped. We were the richest rural district in the state. We were as good a school as you could find anywhere, with well qualified teachers. The community had great pride in the school. The parents had pride, teachers and students had pride. These were old country people who settled in this big farmland area west of Omaha—Austrians, Germans, and Scandinavians. Underwood Community School District 46 was a closely knit district. The residents wanted the best for their children and expected the best. They were jealous of having anybody have things better than they did (Laas, 1982, p. 4).

This sense of community and quality schools led the three school districts to agree to contract with the University of Nebraska Teachers College and the State Department of Education to conduct a study for the purpose of determining recommendations and interest in forming an “elementary education, and centrally located community high school program for the districts involved . . . and the cost of the survey not to exceed \$100 to any one

district" (Laas, 1982, p. 4). School district #19, which was located in what is called the Old Mill area, was to be included in the study.

Upon completion of the study, the primary recommendations were: (a) that School Districts 19, 31, 46, and 65 join to form a new school district to provide both elementary and high school privileges for children in the new district under school law 79-104; (b) that the present four school buildings continue to house children in the new district from kindergarten through sixth grade and that these buildings be refitted to accommodate a highly desirable elementary school program; and (c) that a new high school building be constructed in the vicinity of 90th and Pacific to house pupils from grades seven through twelve. Following the study came petition drives in each community to gather formal documentation of the desire to form a new school district. School District #19 withdrew from the merger effort at this time. These petition drives were successful and School District #66 was created with the organization of the new school district becoming effective March 30, 1947, the date of the school district's first meeting.

Superintendents' transitions of the early years. Mr. Allan Lichtenberger, who was previously the principal/superintendent of the Underwood Community School, became the first superintendent of the newly formed School District 66. As an "insider," Lichtenberger brought to the leadership of the new school district a clear understanding of the founding principles of community and quality.

With the formation of School District 66 also came the need for the development of a presence in the political arena of the local and state governments. The first political test for the district came in 1947. Patrons of the new school system became concerned that they might get a quality high school built, and then as the city grew west, it would be taken over by the Omaha Public Schools. "With this in mind, Senator Henry Kosman, a resident of the Loveland District, introduced and succeeded in having passed into law Legislative Bill 469, which provides that any school district in an unincorporated area which maintains a high school, when its area or any part thereof is incorporated into a metropolitan city, remains as a separate and independent district, unless a majority

of the legal voters in that district vote in favor of merging with the metropolitan school district” (Laas, 1982, p. 7). The passage of LB 469 in 1947 did not come without considerable effort on the part of the district 66 patrons.

The focus of this legislative effort was the beliefs in community and quality. Charlie Hoff, a community member is reported as saying:

In fairness to Senator Henry Kosman, and to those people who may later find their property being taken into the city of Omaha but who still remain in our school district, we must keep District 66 in the top bracket of educational opportunities. Rest assured that each session of our state legislature will see an attempt by Omaha to throw out LB 469. Unless we continue to prove that we are entirely capable and willing to support a program and facilities which are far above average, then LB 469 should be killed (Laas, 1982, p. 7).

Superintendent Lichtenberger resigned in July of 1949 so that he could complete his work toward his doctorate degree.

Following completion of his doctorate, he became an employee of the United States Office of Education until his retirement. During Superintendent Lichtenberger's short tenure, he provided a clear understanding of the fragile nature of the school district and a solid political foundation on which District 66 was built. With the resignation of Superintendent Lichtenberger came the appointment of Glenn Pickrel as the new superintendent. Pickrel came to District 66 from the Louisville Public Schools.

Superintendent Pickrel was charged with the duty of moving the new district forward with focus on the building of the new high school.

It was his task to build a new public relations program and creating a better understanding of the problems facing the rapidly growing district. The basis of this was to continue improving the educational program, expanding physical plant, and hiring well-qualified faculty who were dedicated to developing the best and most creative educational program in the state (Laas, 1982, p. 72).

Pickrel led the passage of five bond issues and the building of four schools.

Superintendent Pickrel's resignation was accepted September 20, 1957. His letter of resignation stated that he was leaving the Westside Community Schools in order that he could accept the Superintendency of the Downers Grove, Illinois, schools. Mr. C. L. Retelsdorf was appointed superintendent. Retelsdorf had been serving as business manager for the school district before his appointment. During his twenty-two months of service as superintendent, Retelsdorf was instrumental in the building of one school and the site selection for several more. He was also responsible for the hiring of H. Vaughn Phelps as the Assistant Superintendent in charge of instruction. Again the school board elected to select leadership from within the school district, with Phelps being appointed superintendent July 1, 1959, immediately following Retelsdorf's resignation.

Superintendents of the 60s to 90s. No historical review of the District 66 would ever be considered complete without a detailed consideration of the tenure of H. Vaughn Phelps'

superintendency. Phelps provided leadership during the major growth period of the school district, overseeing the building of eight schools, the passage of one bond issue, and the hiring of hundreds of staff members, while at the same time developing a nationally recognized educational system. "When Phelps joined District 66, there were approximately 4,000 students and 240 teachers. During his superintendency, he watched the district grow to 10,000 and 550 teachers" (Carlock, 1985, p. 12).

Phelps began his professional career in education in Pleasanton, Nebraska, as teacher of science and math, and ultimately became superintendent of Pleasanton. He left Pleasanton to become part of a community education research project in Mullen, Nebraska. Following this project Phelps joined the staff of the University of Nebraska Extension Division. Joining the administrative team of District 66 in 1957, Phelps was a perfect match for the growing district which was committed to maintaining a sense of community and a commitment to quality.

Many believe that one of Vaughn Phelps' greatest contributions to education was the creation and success of

the Westside Community Schools in Omaha, Nebraska.

Vaughn Phelps said of his leadership: "I want the Westside Community Schools to be recognized because of what we're doing for students—we must be a lighthouse district for all to see." When asked what he was most proud of as superintendent: "I am proud of our community school concept, our communication with parents, our human resources and our creativity" (Carlock, 1985, p. 25).

Phelps died in his sleep February 24, 1983. The Lincoln Journal described Phelps well in saying, "His devotion to unity, quality, and optimism sometimes seems scarce today; but Phelps believed that educators and the public should continue to tackle the world" (Carlock, 1985, p. 2). With Phelps' passing began the critical activity of finding an appropriate individual to carry on the District 66 tradition that Phelps had nurtured over the preceding 25 years.

On February 28, 1983, a special meeting of the District 66 Board of Education was held at which Dr. Kenneth K. Hansen was appointed to the position of Acting Superintendent. A review of the

board of education minutes (Westside Community Schools, District 66, Board Minutes, 1983, March & April) show no public comments regarding the position of superintendent. At the May 2, 1983, Board of Education meeting a motion was made to undertake a search for the next Superintendent of District 66, that a consultant be used to assist the Board, and that Dr. Ken Hansen be chosen as one of the finalists. This motion was voted on and passed by a vote of four affirmatives, one negative, and one abstaining (Westside Community Schools, District 66, Board Minutes, 1983, May 2).

The search. The Board of Education invited two organizations to present proposals for conducting a search, the Nebraska School Boards Association and the National School Boards Association. Both organizations made presentations to the District 66 Board, with the National School Boards Association receiving the contract by a vote of three affirmatives, one negative, and two abstaining. Dr. Carroll Johnson was the National School Boards Association staff member assigned to conduct the search

(Westside Community Schools, District 66, Board Minutes, 1983, May 24).

Johnson's first series of activities involved the establishment of a set of characteristics that different stakeholder groups agreed were necessary for the new superintendent to possess. After considerable input, the following characteristics were determined, which were then used in designing the application and interview procedures. (See Table 1 on page 15.)

Table 1

PROPOSED CHARACTERISTICS FOR WESTSIDE COMMUNITY SCHOOLS SUPERINTENDENT CANDIDATES
SUMMARY OF SURVEY RESULTS

Secondary School Students	Administrators	MOBE & C/BC Representatives	Non-Certified Staff	Certified Staff (teachers)	Open Meeting	Superintendent's Advisory Council	Business Leaders
Communicates well; listens, writes well and speaks articulately.	Active politically.	Vision & ability to identify problems, establish priorities, & implement solutions.	Successful relations dealing with teacher and other employee organizations.	Vision & ability to identify problems, establish priorities, & implement solutions.	Vision & ability to identify problems, establish priorities, & implement solutions.	Vision & ability to identify problems, establish priorities, & implement solutions.	Communicates well; listens, writes well and speaks articulately.
Vision & ability to identify problems, establish priorities, & implement solutions.	Public relations; obtains good public understanding & support for schools.	Has developed programs designed to improve academic excellence.	Vision & ability to identify problems, establish priorities, & implement solutions.	Public relations; obtains good public understanding & support for schools.	Proven ability to unify groups w/in the community—Board, community & staff.	Delegates authority well & holds subordinates accountable.	Vision & ability to identify problems, establish priorities, & implement solutions.
Public relations; obtains good public understanding and support for schools.	Communicates well; listens, writes well and speaks articulately.	Ability to achieve good fiscal management.	Credibility.	Proven ability to unify groups w/in the community—Board, community & staff.	Has developed programs designed to improve academic excellence.	Public relations; obtains good public understanding & support for schools.	Public relations; obtains good public understanding & support for schools.
Successful relations dealing with teacher & other employee organizations.	Vision & ability to identify problems, establish priorities, & implement solutions.	Communicates well; listens, writes well and speaks articulately.	Delegates authority well & holds subordinates accountable.	Credibility.	Successful relations dealing with teacher and other employee organizations.	Strong background in curriculum.	Credibility.
Well qualified & in team effort.	Proven ability to unify groups w/in the community—Board, community and staff.	Credibility.	Has developed programs designed to improve academic excellence.	Communicates well; listens, writes well and speaks articulately.	Communicates well; listens, writes well and speaks articulately.	Credibility.	Proven ability to unify groups w/in the community—Board, community & staff.

Note. From Interim Report of the Consultants On A Superintendency Search by Dr. Carroll Johnson, National School Boards Association Staff Member, 1983, p. 55, for Westside Community Schools, Omaha, NE.

Johnson (1983) conducted a national search which produced 104 applicants from 28 different states who completed all the necessary requirements. On December 7, 1983, the selection process was narrowed to two final candidates (Westside Community Schools, District 66, Board Minutes, 1983, December 7). On Saturday December 31, 1983, a special meeting of the Board of Education was convened for the purpose of concluding the superintendent search. After a lengthy executive session, the Board returned to open session, and on a unanimous vote, appointed Hansen as superintendent (Westside Community Schools, District 66, Board Minutes, 1983, December 31).

Hansen's five-year superintendency was served during a time of considerable downsizing and reorganization of the staff as well as the physical plant. He was responsible for District 66's first strategic planning efforts, as well as several major curriculum revisions. On September 8, 1987 at the regular Board of Education meeting, Hansen announced he would be retiring August 31, 1988, which would mark the end of some 31 years of service to District 66 (Westside Community Schools, District 66,

Board Minutes, 1987, September 8). At this same Board of Education meeting, a motion was made to designate Dr. Jim Tangdall as Superintendent of Schools, with his term commencing September 1, 1988.

Tangdall, a 31-year veteran of District 66, was directed to use the upcoming school year to become familiar with his pending role. The President of the Board of Education stated:

In naming Dr. Tangdall to succeed Dr. Hansen at this time provides continuity of leadership, permits him to be more actively involved in planning next year's programs, and to become thoroughly familiar with all phases of the operation of the school district, and assures an orderly transition of responsibilities of the superintendency, while he continues to carry out his responsibilities as Associate Superintendent (Westside Community Schools, District 66, Board Minutes, 1987, September 8).

Review of the Westside Community Schools, District 66, Board Minutes (1984, January- 1987, August) for the period of time that Hansen was superintendent reveals no previous discussion of

retirement or consideration of anyone to succeed him when he announced his retirement.

Tangdall's three-year tenure as superintendent was marked by the finalization of district reorganization activities, the development of an expansive community education program, and the successful implementation of a major Westside Foundation fund drive. At the August 5, 1991, Board of Education meeting, public announcement was made that Tangdall would retire at the end of the 1991-92 school year. Following this announcement, a motion was made that the Board of Education designate Kenneth M. Bird as Superintendent of Schools commencing September 1, 1992 (Westside Community Schools, District 66, Board Minutes, 1991, August 5). Review of the Westside Community Schools, District 66, Board Minutes (1988, October- 1991, July) for the period of time that Tangdall was superintendent reveals no previous discussion of retirement or consideration of anyone to succeed him when he announced his retirement.

In a Westside news release (1991, August 2), provided on behalf of the Westside Board of Education by the President of the

Board, the following was noted: "In April, Dr. Jim Tangdall, Superintendent, Westside Community Schools, informed the Board of Education that he would retire at the end of the 1991-92 school year marking 36 years with the District."

Dr. Tangdall's announcement left the Board members with a very tough decision—how to find someone who would carry on tradition. After many meetings and much discussion, the Board decided it was not necessary to conduct a costly national search for a candidate because the right person for the job could be found internally. The Board reached a consensus that Ken Bird, Associate Superintendent, was the person for that position. The Board cited several reasons for their decision.

The Westside news release (1991, August 2) went on to say:

The Board feels that the appointment of Mr. Bird to replace Dr. Tangdall at this time provides continuity of leadership; permits him to be more actively involved in planning next year's programs and to become thoroughly familiar with all phases of the operation of the school district; and assures an orderly transition of responsibilities of the

superintendency, while he continues to carry out his responsibilities as Associate Superintendent.

Need for the study. Little documentation exists regarding the transition process beyond selection when changing superintendents. This field study provides a detailed analysis of the transition process used by the Westside Community Schools while preparing to change superintendents and identifies activities that are critical to ensuring a successful transition of leadership.

Review of Relevant Literature

Change in an organization's top management can bring about an unnecessary degree of disarray and anxiety in the organization. "We can never be really prepared for that which is wholly new. We have to adjust ourselves, and every radical adjustment is a crisis in self-esteem—we undergo a test, we have to prove ourselves. It needs inordinate self-confidence to face drastic change without inner trembling" (Hoffer, 1952, pp. 1-2). Being aware of the possible effects of change brought on by transition from one chief executive officer (CEO) to the next is essential for the smooth operation of any organization. Therefore

understanding some of the basic concepts of change is essential. Concepts include planning for change, rules of change, leadership, and leadership transition.

Planning for change. Bringing about change in an effective manner requires a systematic approach, a set of rules, and an understanding of organizational dynamics. Systematic change may be achieved through a formal planning process. The importance of planning cannot be overstated as it related to change. "Planning is an extremely difficult concept to define. Viewed broadly, it is a process of deciding what to do and how to do it before some action is taken" (Moskow, 1978, p. 1). Planning forces the organization to identify and address its major decisions in a logical and orderly manner. Planning is intended to affect the organization's outcomes over an extended period of time. Today's planning systems are usually formal processes. "Planning, as managers generally think of it today, received its major impetus during World War II. Historically, planning systems are perhaps the most important and typical change tool" (Peters, 1978, p. 7).

Rules for Managing change. Developing and implementing a formal planning system must be accompanied by a framework for managing change. A framework or set of rules is necessary in order to bring about the desired outcomes. Rowe and Mason (1987) identified five guiding beliefs that organizations should follow to facilitate implementation of a new direction:

1. Communicate knowledge about the need for change to meet forces in competitive environment.
2. Develop a vision about the new direction that can be shared by members of the organization.
3. Determine what needs to be changed in beliefs, values, norms, structure, and protocol for the new direction to succeed.
4. Make the president's office the focal point of support for the proposed changes.
5. Formulate means to ensure that the changed culture is reinforced and supports the new direction. (p. 107)

If planning for change concentrates only on the technical and financial requirements of change with regard for certain

organizational change, successful implementation of beliefs will be extremely difficult.

Control over the direction of change requires rules that address several issues. Most importantly, they must take into account the amount of time required for planning through installing desired changes. Recognizing that, change typically comes about slowly as the result of systematic planning. A study of university presidents identified eight basic tactical rules for managing change.

Table 2
Rules for Managing Change

Rule	Interpretation
1. Spend Time	Spending time exerts, in itself, a "claim" on the decision-making system.
2. Persist	Having more patience than other people often results in adoption of a chosen course of action.
3. Exchange status for substance	One of the most effective ways to gather support for programs is to reward allies with visible tokens of recognition.

- | | |
|--|---|
| 4. Facilitate opposition participation | Often those outside the formal decision centers overestimate the feasibility of change; encouraged to participate, they will often become more realistic. |
| 5. Overload the system | Bureaucracies chew up most projects, but on the other hand, some sneak through; merely launching more projects is likely to result in more success. |
| 6. Provide garbage cans | Organizations endlessly argue issues; to induce desired outcomes, put "throw-away" issues at the top of agendas (to absorb debate) saving substantive issues for later. |
| 7. Manage unobtrusively | Certain actions can influence the organization pervasively but almost imperceptibly; more-over, the resulting changes will persist with little further attention. |
| 8. Interpret history | By articulating a particular version of events, the leader can alter people's perception of what has been happening; whoever writes the minutes influences the outcome. |

Note. From "Symbols, Patterns, and Settings: An Optimistic case for Getting Things Done" by T. J. Peters, 1978, Organizational Dynamics, p. 6.

Beliefs and rules are essential to the change process as they serve to bring together the organization and inspire ownership to the proposed change.

Leadership and Leadership Transition

Often discussions of leadership focus on case studies of individuals who are or have been recognized for their abilities to lead. These case studies provide much information regarding the personal essence of leadership and little in the way of criteria or context for describing leadership. Before one can discuss issues of leadership transition, it is important to fully understand what leadership is.

Several theories regarding the development of leadership have evolved. Leadership skills were once thought a matter of birth. Leaders were born, not made, summoned to their calling, “Great Man” theory. This view did not stand the test of time and was replaced with a view that great events created leadership in the “Big Bang” theory. Now leadership is generally accepted as set qualities that are developed over a period of time.

Leadership, as defined by Roberts (1990) is “ the privilege to have the responsibility to direct the actions of others in carrying out the purposes of the organization, at varying levels of authority and with accountability for both successful and failed endeavors. It does not constitute a model or system” (p. 14). Leadership is not a skill that is developed in a definitive period of time. Rather it is a set of qualities that is developed at every skill level throughout life. Leadership is developed through study and experience and is manifested through the mastery of the following essential qualities:

Table 3
Qualities Essential For Leadership

Qualities	Attributes
Loyalty	Above all things loyalty is a necessary quality.
Courage	Leadership requires fearlessness, the fortitude to carry out assignments, the gallantry to accept risk, and ability to act with confidence and excel in times of uncertainty.
Desire	The commitment to influencing people, processes, and outcomes.

Emotional Stamina	The ability to accept the increasing demands leadership places on the emotions and the stamina to recover rapidly from disappointment.
Physical Stamina	The ability to endure the physical demands of the duties.
Empathy	An appreciation for and an understanding of the values of others.
Decisiveness	The ability to know when to act and when not to act, taking into account all facts bearing on the situation and assuming the responsibility for actions.
Anticipation	Use learning by observation and instincts sharpened by experience to anticipate thoughts, actions, and consequences.
Timing	Knowing when to make recommendations and when to act.
Competitiveness	The development of an intrinsic desire to win.
Self-Confidence	The personal feeling of assurance with which to meet the inherent challenges of the position.
Accountability	Accepting the responsibility to account for personal actions and those of subordinates.
Responsibility	Accepting the fact that leaders are only necessary when someone is needed to see that actions are carried out and directions are followed.

Credibility	The ability to convey words and actions in a believable manner and to be trusted to have the intelligence and integrity to provide correct information.
Tenacity	The quality of unyielding drive to accomplish assignments.
Dependability	The ability to be entrusted to get things done.
Stewardship	Accepting the role of a caretaker of the interests and well-being of those and the purposes served.

The key to leadership is the effective development of these qualities over time. There is no known shortcut to developing leadership and no clearcut measure of leadership. Joel Barker (1992) said, "A leader is a person you will follow to a place you wouldn't go by yourself" (p. 163). This may be the best measure of the acquisition of true leadership.

The transition of leadership in the top management of organizations is not a widely studied topic. "A number of studies have examined organizational characteristics as determinants of top-management turnover, focusing primarily on organizational performance, size, and form of ownership" (Harrison, Torres, &

Kukalis, 1988 p. 212). There appears to exist a void in information regarding the process and procedures that organizations use for transitioning between the exiting CEO and the incoming CEO.

While situations in which an organization has no ability to provide for an orderly transition are theoretically possible because of the time frame or reason for the turnover, establishment of an orderly process for succession and turnover of leadership is also theoretically possible. Researchers that have investigated the causes and consequences of turnover in organizations focus on such issues as age, compensation, performance, and longevity, and do not deal with transition processes or issues.

There appears to be no general theory for providing for an orderly transition of leadership. However Harrison et al. (1988) identified in their paper several roles for the Board, Board Chair, and the CEO. For the purpose of this field investigation the Board is a parallel to a School Board, the Board Chair is considered similar to the President of the School Board, and the CEO to be the position of the out-going superintendent. The roles Harrison et al. (1988) identified are:

The CEO has the primary responsibility for the firm's continuing operations.

The board of directors is expected to refrain from involvement in operating decisions and policy and in strategy formulation and to focus on relations with the institutional environment.

The board's primary role is to promote legitimacy and is ceremonial in nature as defined by institutional norms.

The board projects an image to the outside world and becomes actively involved in operational matters only in periods of crisis for the firm and even then usually considers only when and how to replace the CEO.

The board is also viewed as a cooperative device to help the firm manage and adapt to its environment and to promote its survival.

The primary orientation of the Board Chair is toward external relations. (p. 214)

Recognizing the similarities and differences of these roles, as perceived by individuals writing from a private sector perspective,

is helpful in understanding how specific responsibilities and actions might be carried out when a transition of leadership is imminent. Harrison et al. (1988) seem to suggest that if the nature of the relationship between the CEO, Board Chair, and Board is not clear, then a vacancy at the top could precipitate power struggles. They also recommend that firms which are subject to top level turnover should place more emphasis on succession planning through management development.

Superintendent selection. Unlike the area of leadership transition, much has been written on the process of selecting a new superintendent. The purpose intended for this section is to identify several issues school boards are typically confronted with in this process.

“Finding the right leader for your school district can be a bear of a task, one that takes an inordinate amount of time, money, and preparation” (Matika, 1985, p. 42). The hiring of a superintendent is often cited as one of the most important responsibilities of a school board. Finding the right leader is certainly the goal of every school board that embarks on a

superintendent search. Several key factors school boards must take into account as they consider selecting a new superintendent are cost and time for the board to conduct the search itself or to use a consultant, and to conduct a search or to not. Each of these factors can have a significant effect on the selection process and must be given appropriate attention.

School Boards must be aware of the time commitment that they will be making when they decide to undertake a national search. "A general rule of thumb: Allow four months for your search" (Matika, 1985, p. 42). Being careful not to move too fast is essential. "A rush-through follows in which all too often a candidate is hired without adequate study of thought. You'll need 90 to 100 days to conduct a thorough, national search" (Johnson, 1975, p. 28).

Cost of conducting a national search deserves serious consideration by the board of education prior to committing to such an activity. "Fortunately we were able to cut expenses by using a consortium of Oklahoma colleges that offer consulting services. Even so, the cost of doing the search—\$50,000—was a

killer. If your school system is small and your regional pool of applicants is good, you could get away with considerably less, but you will still be amazed at how the money disappears” (Hill, Hermes, Donwerth, 1988, p. 32). When considering cost factors, items such as consultant contract, advertising, applicant travel, and the cost of internal staff assistance must all be factored in. To conduct a search or not to is the most important early decision that a school board must make. Conducting a search when the board already knows who it wants in the position serves no purpose and may, in fact, hurt the school system. “Don’t advertise for candidates if you already have a likely prospect in the school system. Conducting a full-fledged search when you already have someone in mind for the job damages your board’s credibility and integrity” (Matika, 1985, p. 42). Johnson, (1975), superintendent search consultant for the National School Boards Association, has identified seven major steps for conducting a superintendent search: “1) Set a timetable, 2) Begin to prepare a brochure 3) Involve the community 4) Finish the brochure 5) Screen the

candidates 6) Introduce the finalists and 7) Announce your choice.” (pp. 28-32)

How the board of education is going to handle the search process is also a paramount issue. Deciding to conduct the search itself or to use a consultant is no simple task. The majority of school districts conducting searches use consultants. Hess (1989) reported that 25 percent of the 500 superintendents involved in his study of superintendent searches in the State of New York indicated consultants were not involved. “This is not a decision to be arrived at whimsically. Some school boards can be helped markedly by a consultant. Others can do the job well enough alone. It depends to a large extent upon the time and effort the board is willing to devote to the task” (Johnson, 1975, p. 27).

Quality of educational opportunities, a sense of community, and continuity of leadership have been consistent themes for School District 66 since its founding in 1947. These themes were established early by the district's founding fathers. They proved to be the key elements that bonded the school system together through difficult times such as the formation of a new school

system, political attacks on boundaries, rapid growth, the death of a superintendent, and the transitions between superintendents.

Planning for change, rules of change, leadership, and leadership transition are each important concepts that relate to maintaining continuity when an organization transitions from one CEO to the next. Planning ensures that the organization's outcomes are realized. Rules provide the framework for managing change and control over the direction of change. Selection of new leadership and leadership transition are essential to the smooth operation of an organization. Selecting the right superintendent is a major responsibility of a school board. The board of education also has a responsibility in the transition from one superintendent to the next; however, this role is poorly documented in relevant literature.

Chapter 2

Overview of the Research Methodology

Design. A qualitative naturalistic inquiry design was used for this field investigation. The design of a naturalistic inquiry is that of a traditional ethnographic case study. “Traditional ethnographic case studies focus on description and explanation; their goal is to reconstruct and classify reality in order to integrate data into a set of theoretical constructs” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 334).

Subjects. The primary subjects were the incumbent superintendent, the superintendent-elects, and the members of the Board of Education during the changes of chief executives for the Westside Community Schools from 1983-1992.

Instruments. “The instrument of choice in the naturalistic inquiry is the human” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 236), which will be referred to as the ethnographer. Resources that were used by the ethnographer in this field investigation were the historical archives of the Westside Community Schools, structured

interviews, and the diary and calendar of the current superintendent-elect.

Data gathering techniques. Interviews were conducted with five Board of Education members, each of whom had been involved in the selection of the current and immediate past superintendent. Retiring superintendent, Tangdall, and previous superintendent, Hansen, were also questioned. Document and record analysis served as another means of obtaining pertinent information for this study. "These types of data-gathering techniques are appropriate when a significant amount of the data collection operating will occur in an indeterminate situation (not knowing what is not known)." (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 240).

Structured interviews (see Appendix B for complete proof) were conducted with the key stakeholders being the school board members and previous superintendents. "In the structured interview, the problem is defined by the researcher before the interview. The questions are formulated ahead of time, and the respondent is expected to answer in terms of the interviewer's framework and definition of the problem" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985,

p. 268). For the purpose of this field investigation, the following questions were used to guide the discussion with all stakeholders regarding their perceptions of the superintendent transition process:

1. Describe what you perceive to be the role of the Board of Education in the superintendency succession process, beyond the selection of the new superintendent.

2. Describe the characteristics that you believe to be necessary components of an orderly transition between superintendents. (Identify activities, timelines, conditions, etc.).

3. Describe what you perceive to be the role of an individual member of the Board of Education in the superintendency succession process, beyond the selection of the new superintendent.

4. What do you see as the pros and cons of the transition process currently employed by the Westside Community Schools?

Interview question responses were documented in written form and clustered by respondent type and question category. Responses to interview questions were entered into a computer

data base called Filemaker Plus which allowed the investigator to conduct key word searches and frequency counts. (see Appendix B for complete proof)

Additional document and record analysis focused on the contents of the school district's board of education minutes and general school district archives. School district Board of Education minutes for each meeting held between January 1983 and September of 1992 were reviewed. Items deemed to be of historical significance and relevant to the transition of superintendencies were noted and included in this field study as appropriate (Westside Community Schools, District 66, Board Minutes, 1983, January-1992, September). Historical archives such as personal files, records of employment, and historical reports of the school district were reviewed on an item-by-item basis.

Data regarding specific activities and events relevant to the superintendent transitions were recorded on a calendar which was maintained between August 1, 1991 and September 1, 1992 (see Appendix A for complete proof). Calendar data were analyzed by clustering events and activities into general areas which

represented critical transition issues. The critical transition issues were identified through analysis of the stakeholder interview responses.

Methods of analysis. Analysis was completed using a conceptually clustered matrix as described in the following statement by Miles and Huberman (1984): “A conceptually clustered matrix has its columns arranged to bring together items that belong together. This can happen in two ways: conceptual—the analyst may have some priority ideas about items or questions that derive from the same theory or relate to the same overarching theme; or empirical—during data collection or early analysis, one may find that informants answering different questions are tying them together, or are giving similar responses. The basic principle, however, is conceptual coherence” (p. 110). Field notes and historical documents were collected by the researcher throughout the investigation. These notes and documents were organized chronologically for the purpose of analysis.

“The data of naturalistic inquiry—the observational and interview notes accumulated in the field, documents and records,

unobtrusive traces, and the like—demand a form of processing very similar to that which has traditionally characterized ethnographic inquiry” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 333). The data collected through this Field Study have been sorted, organized, and analyzed so as to reflect critical issues in the transition process.

Ethnographers who infer cultural and behavioral patterns as views from the perspective of the group under investigation must use strategies to elicit and analyze subjective data

The goal is to reconstruct the categories used by subjects to conceptualize their own experiences and world view. This contrasts with an objective approach, which applies conceptual categories and explanatory relationships, readily visible to external observers, to the analysis of unique populations. (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 334)

Results of the structured interviews were analyzed to identify critical items relative to transition of leadership. Diary/calendar were analyzed to identify events and activities, both planned and unplanned that enhanced or interfered with transition. Data were sorted chronologically and conceptually by source into categories

that were identified as critical factors for the superintendent's success. "The process of data analysis, then, is essentially a synthetic one, in which the construction that have emerged (been shaped by) inquirer-source interactions are reconstructed into meaningful wholes. Data analysis is thus not a matter of data reduction, as is frequently claimed, but of induction" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 333).

Chapter 3

Presentation of Results

Introduction. The purpose of this chapter is to provide an overview of the results of this filed investigation. Interview question results, as well as findings from the calendar analysis, are detailed.

The primary means for presentation of results are the investigator's narrative reporting. Analysis, which includes tables and reports, is also used to display results of data and reflect findings. Examples and narrative summaries of the study's database are used to reflect qualitative findings.

Interview Question Results

The primary source for identification of critical factors in superintendency transition for this investigation is the stakeholder interview responses. Respondents' "anonymous" answers are summarized using narrative reporting as well as a cluster matrix.

Question number one. Describe what you perceive to be the role of the Board of Education in the superintendency succession process, beyond the selection of the new superintendent.

This question was designed to probe the respondents regarding their perceptions of the role of the Board of Education as whole, a single unit in the transition process. Responses were clustered around four primary roles: (a) public support, introducing and supporting the superintendent-elect to the community at large; (b) staff support, introducing and supporting the superintendent-elect with the current staff; (c) continuity, planning and setting priorities for the next school year; and (d) issue resolution, the identification of and resolution of any areas of potential conflict between the Board of Education and the superintendent-elect.

All respondents perceived the Board of Education as in fact having a role in the transition process. There was, however an outlier that indicated the board's role was limited. Respondent Board Member #2 indicated: "The board's role is very minor. Selecting a superintendent from the existing staff means that the board wants to continue with the kind of leadership the current superintendent has given." In addition to the identified roles, there was clearly a theme that the board had a role in the development

of the new superintendent. This was best reflected in the position of respondent Board Member #3 who said, "It is the Board's responsibility to see that the new superintendent is trained and receives his 'superintendent development.' They should delegate this responsibility to the retiring superintendent, but it remains the Board's task to assure his success."

Table 4

Reoccurring Themes

Question number one: Describe what you perceive to be the role of the Board of Education in the superintendency successive process, beyond the selection of the new superintendent.

	Public Support	Staff Support	Continuity	Issue Association	Misc.
Board Member #1	Support the new Superintendent in the community at large.	Support the new Superintendent with other staff members.	Make transition more productive.		President of the Board provides leadership in the transition.
Board Member #2					Minor role for Board of Education
Board Member #3	Publicity supportive and enthusiastic about new Superintendent.	Be attuned to any community, staff, teacher conflict, and react to insure smooth transition.		Use transition time to "privately" iron out any conflicts.	Support Superintendent-Elect's development by encouraging retiring Superintendent training to assure success.
Board Member #4			Maintain orderliness with change in leadership. Administrative continuity is of utmost importance.		Seek means to enhance strategic plan.
Board Member #5	Firm grip on the "friends" of the District and support for the new Superintendent.		Use the time to set goals.		
Supt. #1			Allow and expect Superintendent-Elect to be actively involved in the planning for next year.	President and Superintendent-Elect use transition to identify issues and how they will be dealt with.	Use time to develop relationship with the Board and Superintendent (necessary socialization)
Supt. #2	Properly introduce and support the new Superintendent in the community.			Establish clear relationship and roles for Board of Education and Superintendent.	

Question number two. Describe the characteristics that you believe to be necessary components of an orderly transition between superintendents. (Identify activities, timelines, conditions, etc.) This question was intended to identify activities, timelines, or conditions that respondents believed to be necessary characteristics of the transition process.

Three primary components of an orderly transition process were identified: (a) timeline, providing adequate time for the transition; (b) goal setting, involvement of the superintendent-elect in both short-term and long-term goal setting; and (c) mentorship, providing for development of the superintendent-elect through the establishment of a shadow or apprenticeship arrangement with the out-going superintendent.

Along with these three components, visibility in the community, ongoing dialogue with the Board of Education, and professionalism were also identified as important components. However, timelines, goal setting and mentorship were clearly identified as the most important components, with each of these

items being identified as important by four respondents, and two of these items being identified by the other three respondents.

The importance of these components of an orderly transition were described by respondent Board Member #5 as follows: "I believe an orderly transition between superintendents has to occur over many months. A new superintendent cannot just walk on board one week and take over. I believe he has to work with the outgoing superintendent to assess what plans and goals are progress so he can reset these or change these without a terrible transition taking place."

Table 5

Components of An Orderly Process

Question number two: Describe the characteristics that you believe to be necessary components of an orderly transition between superintendents. (Identify activities, timelines, conditions, etc.).

	Timeline	Goal Setting	Mentorship	Miscellaneous
Board Member #1	Make decision a year in advance.	Set goals for first year as Superintendent.	Mentorship of current Superintendent for information.	
Board Member #2		Set goals and objectives for first year of Superintendency. Develop long-range plan.		Provide for visibility in the community.
Board Member #3	Involvement in all aspects of District's operations.	Involvement in strategic planning.	Absorption of all knowledge and experience of outgoing Superintendent.	
Board Member #4	A year's notice.	Assume operational responsibility.	Apprenticeship program for a year.	High visibility in all aspects of the District.
Board Member #5	Time for orderly transition.	Set goals.	Work with outgoing Superintendent to understand District.	
Supt. #1	Time for transition to occur and to establish credibility.	Involved in planning "next" year's activities. Involvement in long-range planning.		Open and honest dialogue regarding issues facing the District, Board, and Superintendent.
Supt. #2	Time for transition.	Setting goals and objectives for next year.		Professionalism—open and honest.

Question number three. Describe what you perceive to be the role of an individual member of the Board of Education in the superintendency succession process, beyond the selection of the new superintendent. This question was designed to seek the respondents perception regarding the role of individual members of the board of education in the transition process. Respondents' answers to this question disclosed a wide range of opinion regarding role of an individual member of the Board of Education in the superintendency succession process. Responses to cluster around general areas: (a) building individual trust/support, the individual board members should use the transition period to establish an open and honest working relationship with the superintendent elect; (b) issue resolution, individual board members spend "private" time with the superintendent-elect to discuss and resolve any personal issues; and (c) community/staff support, individual board members should use the transition period to demonstrate their personal support for the superintendent-elect.

In describing an individual board member's role in the transition process, respondent Board Member #3 said:

Each individual must feel completely supportive of the new person and be willing to show that trust and faith that got him selected by supporting his major goals. Each individual must take whatever action they personally need to, to put themselves squarely in support of the new superintendent's programs and plans. If an individual Board member feels unsure about the new superintendent's ideas, he or she should spend individual time with the superintendent to discuss ideas and resolve them.

Table 6

Role of Individual Board Member

Question number three: Describe what you perceive to be the role of an individual member of the Board of Education in the superintendency succession process, beyond the selection of the new superintendent.

	Building Individual Trust/Support	Issue Resolution	Community/Staff Support	Miscellaneous
Board Member #1	Giving trust to operate as necessary.			
Board Member #2	Be a sounding board and advisor.	Raise issues of concern.		
Board Member #3	Supportive, showing trust and faith.	Spend individual, private time to resolve and discuss issues.	Provide positive and encouraging contacts with students, staff, and parents about the new Superintendent.	Take whatever action to put themselves squarely in support of the new Superintendent's programs and plans.
Board Member #4	Express a range of options on issues.	Express individual points of view on issues—but maintain an objectivity.	Help forge consensus and unity.	Be a good listener.
Board Member #5	Board should work as a group, not as individuals.	Spend individual time.		Make process smoothly.
Supt. #1	Build trust.	Allow Superintendent-Elect to be a "major player"—share all decisions.	Assist with meeting staff and community groups.	Help acquaint Superintendent-Elect with all aspects of District.
Supt. #2	Provide total support.	Orientation to community and District cultural characteristics	Introduce to: -professional colleagues; -community leaders.	Orientation to all job-related functions.

Question number four. What do you see as the pros and cons of the transition process currently employed by the Westside Community Schools? This question focused on identification of the perceived positive and negative characteristics of the transition process used by the Westside Community Schools. Two basic “pros” were identified by respondents: (a) learning time, providing a period of time in which the Board of Education can learn about their new superintendent, time for superintendent-elect to learn about his new role, and time for the community to meet and accept the superintendent elect; and (b) orderly transition, providing a process that is the least disruptive and maintains continuity within the school system. These two issues were augmented by a variety of other comments which ranged from reducing any threatening feeling held by staff members to time to establish credibility. Orderly transition and learning time were identified by each respondent as the “pros” of the current transition process. Maintaining order was the paramount concern of respondent Board Member #4 who said, “First of all, the process is private. If it became a ‘public circus,’ it would be very disruptive to all of

those involved in the district. The executive session approach is very important to maintain continuity.”

Table 7

Pros

Question number four: What do you see as **pros** of the transition process currently employed by the Westside Community Schools?

	Learning Time	Orderly Transition	Miscellaneous
Board Member #1	Providing a year to learn the ropes.		
Board Member #2	Providing a year to learn.	Providing amiable transition from a mentor.	
Board Member #3			Keeping the process private and non-disruptive.
Board Member #4			Keeping the selection "within" the District is strong with no need to go outside. History proves it works.
Board Member #5	Provides continuity.		
Supt. #1	Allows time to learn the system.	Orderly transition. Establishes good working relationship with Board. Exposure to the community and time to establish credibility.	Process less threatening to all staff members.
Supt. #2	Provides smooth transition.	Involved in strategic planning.	Staffing decisions jointly made. Budget decisions jointly made.

In seeking to identify the “cons” or negative aspects of the transition process, respondents were unable to list many weaknesses of the process. Three of the seven respondents indicated that there were no negative aspects. Those responding with perceived “cons” identified the following issues: (a) role of the outgoing superintendent, too much responsibility is given to the outgoing superintendent for assuring a smooth transition occurs; (b) time, the superintendent-elect is expected to handle both the duties previously he was previously responsible for and the learning of the duties of the superintendency; (c) public perception, the community at large may not understand the transition process and feel that they should be involved in the selection of the new superintendent; and (d) possible conflict, there exists the possibility of conflicts over lines of authority between the superintendents, elect and outgoing, as well as between the board of education and each of these individuals.

Table 8

Cons

Question number four: What do you see cons of the transition process currently employed by the Westside Community Schools?

	Role of Outgoing Superintendent	Time	Public Perception	Possibility of Conflict
Board Member #1	Too much left to outgoing Superintendent.			
Board Member #2		Superintendent-Elect not free of previous duties.		
Board Member #3			Some people don't understand the process. Some think the approach is too "rigged."	
Board Member #4				
Board Member #5				
Supt. #1				Possibility conflict over lines of authority. If Board/Superintendent relationships are unfavorable, conflict could result. Possibility of current Superintendent being unwilling to relinquish authority.
Supt. #2				

Calendar Analysis

A month-by-month analysis of the superintendent-elect's calendar for the period of time from August 1991 to July 1992 (see Appendix A for complete proof) is the source used for identification of critical events/activities in the superintendency transition. Events/activities are clustered by topic, and a frequency count was used to identify those events/activities which most frequently reoccurred. The topics chosen for the clustering of events/activities were identified through the analysis of responses to interview question number two, which described the characteristics believed to be necessary for an orderly transition between superintendents. The topics chosen for clustering are (a) operational decision making, (b) goal setting/planning, (c) community visibility, and (d) within-district visibility. A narrative interpretation of the critical events/activities is used to summarize the calendar analysis.

For the twelve months that were monitored for this field investigation, the investigator maintained a calendar specific for the purpose of documenting events/activities that were directly

related to his position of superintendent-elect. Only events/activities that related to the superintendent-elect's transition were documented. The criteria for including an event/activity was that participation in the event/activity was delegated by the outgoing superintendent for the purpose of gaining knowledge or exposure or that participation was expected for the purpose of planning or decision-making. Events/activities which were similar in nature and frequently reoccurred, or serial-type activities, were counted only once. These were items such as screening and interviewing for the hiring of a new administrator or meeting with each member of the central office administrative team to discuss a certain issue.

The calendar item analysis identified 163 different activities/events that clustered around the topics of (a) operational decision making, (b) goal setting/planning, (c) community visibility, and (d) within-district visibility. The 163 items were distributed as follows: (a) operational decision making, 60 items representing 36.8% of the total; (b) goal setting/planning, 34 items representing 20.9% of

the total; (c) community visibility, 36 items representing 22.2% of the total; and (d) within district visibility, 33 items representing 20.1% of the total.

Involvement in operational decision making was clearly the most prevalent characteristic of the superintendency transition. A month-by-month analysis of the category of “operational decision making” shows that involvement in operational decision making became increasingly more prevalent in the later months of the superintendent elect’s transition. During the last three months of the transition, twenty four, or 40%, of the operational decision-making events occurred. Analysis of the first three months of the transition showed involvement in only six, or 10%, of the operational decision-making events.

“Operational decision making” evolved over the year period from events such as: (a) coordination and conducting of the “back to school” workshop for all administrators; and (b) taking an active role in the board of education meeting including setting of the agenda to (c) meeting with central office administrators to discuss

reorganization of the central office staff; (d) screening and hiring new administrators; and (e) meeting with the school board president to discuss budget needs.

The activities/events frequency count identified that the areas of “goal setting/planning,” “community visibility,” and “within district visibility” each received a similar degree of attention during the transition process. Each of these areas were within the occurrence range of 33 to 36 activities/events. The area of “goal setting/planning” represented 34 activities/events or, 20.9% of the total. During the first three months of the superintendent-elect’s transition, no activities/events related to “goal setting/planning” were documented. One third or 33% of the “goal setting/planning” activities/events occurred during each of the remaining quarters of the transition. “Goal setting/planning” activities/events included the following: (a) serving as facilitator for Middle School planning, (b) meeting with architects to discuss facilities planning, and (c) meeting with individual staff members to discuss their goals.

“Community visibility” activities/events occurred throughout the transition period with some weighting towards the last half of the transition period. At least seven activities/events were identified during each quarter of the transition period. Twenty-two, or 61% of these activities/events occurred during the second half of the transition period. “Community visibility” activities/events reflected involvement of the superintendent-elect in such activities as: (a) meetings with politicians and media representatives to introduce the superintendent-elect, (b) meetings with area superintendents to discuss mutual concerns, (c) presentations to local service clubs, and (d) meetings with individual patrons.

“Within district visibility” was also spread throughout the transition period. Fifty-five percent of these activities/events occurred during the second half of the transition period. Activities/events identified in this category included: (a) introduction and endorsement to all staff by board of education president, (b) meetings with individual school community clubs, (c) meetings with individual school board members, and (d) presentations to staff and retired staff.

Chapter 4

Discussion of Results

This section is designed to provide a discussion of the significant activities and events that are identified as enhancing or interfering with the transition of leadership from one superintendent to the next.

Significant Findings

Factors that enhance the superintendency succession process. Three significant factors that have been identified in this study are:

1. **The role of the Board of Education:** The Board of Education does have a role, beyond the selection of a new superintendent, in the transition process. The School Board's role in this transition period is to: (a) provide public support to the superintendent-elect, (b) assure continuity within the school system, (c) provide visible support of the superintendent-elect to the current staff, and (d) identify and resolve potential conflict between the Board of Education and the superintendent-elect.

2. The role of individual members of the Board of Education:

Each Board of Education member does have a role to play in enhancing the leadership transition. The specific role a Board of Education member plays should be left to individual or personal discretion. Working with the superintendent-elect to: (a) build trust, (b) resolve personal issues, and (c) show their support for the superintendent-elect in the community are issues individual Board Members may want to consider.

3. Characteristics of an orderly transition: The leadership

transition will be enhanced when the transition process provides: (a) time, (b) involves goal setting, (c) and is supported through a mentorship type program. The process of transition should include: (a) significant opportunities for the superintendent-elect to be involved in the school district's operational decision making; (b) opportunities for the superintendent-elect to have visibility both in the community and within the school district; and (c) involvement of the superintendent-elect in the school district's goal setting and planning activities.

Factors interfering with the leadership transition process.

Identified as possibly interfering with the process included: (a) lack of understanding by the public of the transition process; (b) potential conflict over lines of authority between outgoing superintendent, superintendent-elect and/or the Board of Education; and (c) the ability of the superintendent elect to fulfill the responsibilities of both his previous positions and those of the role of superintendent-elect.

Conclusions Drawn

The transition of leadership from one superintendent to the next will be enhanced when the Board of Education recognizes its responsibility and role and establishes a framework for the transition. The transition process must be well thought out and have the full support of the outgoing superintendent. The implementation of an orderly transition process requires adequate time and a clear understanding of the process by all stakeholders.

Smooth transition of leadership. Boards of Education desiring a smooth transition of leadership from one superintendent to the next should consider the following:

1. Agree on the need for a defined transition process which goes beyond the selection of a new superintendent. The process should include: (a) defining the role of the Board of Education and the individual Board Members; (b) providing adequate time for the transition to occur; and (c) providing for a mentorship-type support to the superintendent-elect.

2. Obtain the full support of the outgoing superintendent for the transition process.

3. Select a superintendent-elect well in advance of the departure of the current superintendent

4. Empower the outgoing superintendent with the prerogative to provide the superintendent-elect: (a) necessary training and information, (b) visibility, and (c) authority to make decisions.

5. Publicize the procedures and goals of the transition process to all stakeholders.

6. Monitor and evaluate the transition by systematically reviewing it with the: (a) Board Members, (b) outgoing superintendent, and (c) superintendent-elect.

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Appendix A
Calendar Analysis

AUGUST 1991:

GOAL SETTING/PLANNING

COMMUNITY VISIBILITY

2ndNews release by Board of Education regarding
appointment

5thPublic statement of support at Board of Education
meeting

OPERATIONAL DECISION MAKING

12thCoordinate and conduct all administrators "back to
school" workshop

WITHIN DISTRICT VISIBILITY

13thIntroduction and endorsement by outgoing
superintendent to new staff

15thIntroduction and endorsement to all staff by board
president and outgoing superintendent

SEPTEMBER 1991:

GOAL SETTING/PLANNING

COMMUNITY VISIBILITY

3rdLunch with state senators to introduce
superintendent elect's new role

5thJoined membership of school district's foundation
board of directors

- 24thIntroduction and endorsement by outgoing superintendent to, Superintendents Advisory Committee
- 26thOutgoing superintendent holds a private meeting with the chief editor of the World Herald for the purpose of introducing me and my new role to him

OPERATIONAL DECISION MAKING

- 5thJoined membership of school districts foundation board of directors
- 16thActive role in board of education meeting including setting of agenda
- 19thAssist outgoing superintendent with development of Growth Plans for evaluation of Central Office administrators

WITHIN DISTRICT VISIBILITY

- 25thAssist with planning and conducting elementary principals' meeting

OCTOBER 1991:

GOAL SETTING/PLANNING

COMMUNITY VISIBILITY

- 2ndWestside Community Club Dinner: Introduction and endorsement by outgoing superintendent

OPERATIONAL DECISION MAKING

- 7thSchool board meeting assist with planning and conducting meeting
- 21stSchool board meeting assist with planning and conducting meeting

WITHIN DISTRICT VISIBILITY

- 7thSchool board meeting assist with planning and conducting meeting

21stSchool board meeting assist with planning and
conducting meeting

NOVEMBER 1991:

PLANNING/GOAL SETTING

18thPlanning with district technology team

19thFacilitate planning with Middle school staff

COMMUNITY VISIBILITY

6thMeeting with outgoing superintendent and
university staff to discuss role

27thMeeting with area superintendents to discuss
mutual concerns

27thMeeting with elementary school community club

OPERATIONAL DECISION MAKING

4thSchool board meeting assist with planning and
conducting meeting

18thSchool board meeting assist with planning and
conducting meeting

27thMeeting with area superintendents to discuss
mutual concerns

WITHIN DISTRICT VISIBILITY

4thSchool board meeting assist with planning and
conducting meeting

14thParticipation with school board at State School
Boards Association conference

18thSchool board meeting assist with planning and
conducting meeting

26thMeeting with individual school board member to
discuss specific issue of concern to board member

27thMeeting with elementary school community club

DECEMBER 1991:

GOAL SETTING/PLANNING

2ndMiddle School planning facilitator

- 4thMeeting with secretarial staff to discuss transition
- 9thMeeting with central office administrators to discuss future budget and health insurance cost issues
- 12thMeeting with administrators and architects to discuss facilities planning

COMMUNITY VISIBILITY

- 3rdFoundation Board Meeting

OPERATIONAL DECISION MAKING

- 2ndSchool board meeting assist with planning and conducting meeting
- 10thMeeting with teachers education association to discuss mutual concerns
- 12thMeeting with administrators and architects to discuss facilities planning
- 27thMeeting with an individual staff member to discuss his role in the future

WITHIN DISTRICT VISIBILITY

- 2ndSchool board meeting assist with planning and conducting meeting
- 4thMeeting with secretarial staff to discuss transition
- 10thMeeting with teachers' education association to discuss mutual concerns
- 17thMeeting with staff at an elementary building to discuss superintendent elect's vision for the school district

JANUARY 1992:

GOAL SETTING/PLANNING

- 14thMeeting with Alumni Association representatives to discuss association's future role.
- 16thMeeting with district's legal counsel to discuss future needs and arrangements

- 20th Meeting with Education Service Unit administration to discuss future relationships and concerns
- 27th Planning meeting with Middle School staff
- 28th Preliminary meeting regarding district staffing needs

COMMUNITY VISIBILITY

- 7th Meeting with area superintendents to discuss issues of mutual concern
- 15th Meeting with Foundation to discuss fund raising
- 21st Interview with local television station regarding transition of superintendency
- 22nd State education consortium meeting for superintendents
- 31st Meeting with local politicians to discuss District's involvement in various activities

OPERATIONAL DECISION MAKING

- 6th School board meeting assist with planning and conducting meeting
- 7th Meeting with area superintendents to discuss issues of mutual concern
- 13th Meeting with area legislators and school board members to discuss potential legislation
- 20th School board meeting assist with planning and conducting meeting
- 22nd State education consortium meeting for superintendents
- 28th Preliminary meeting regarding district staffing needs

WITHIN DISTRICT VISIBILITY

- 6th School board meeting assist with planning and conducting meeting
- 20th School board meeting assist with planning and conducting meeting

FEBRUARY 1992:**GOAL SETTING/PLANNING**

- 2ndMeetings with various administrators to discuss their views on the district goals
- 6thMeeting with Middle School regarding strategic planning
- 7thMeeting with director of Alternative School to discuss goals
- 11thMeeting with an administrator to discuss possible change in assignments for next year
- 17thMeeting with Elementary school to discuss and update strategic plan

COMMUNITY VISIBILITY

- 5thMeeting with president of Alumni Association to review organization's charge
- 18thPresentation to Superintendents advisory council regarding Issues in Education

OPERATIONAL DECISION MAKING

- 3rdSchool board meeting assisting with planning and conducting meeting
- 7thMeeting with outgoing superintendent to review how transition is going
- 12thMeeting with outgoing superintendent and business manager to discuss 1993/94 budget
- 17thSchool board meeting assist with planning and conducting meeting
- 26thMeeting with attorney and parent to discuss possible suit
- 28thMeeting with architects regarding building renovation

WITHIN DISTRICT VISIBILITY

- 3rdSchool board meeting assist with planning and conducting meeting

17thSchool board meeting assist with planning and conducting meeting

MARCH 1992:

GOAL SETTING / PLANNING

2ndPlanning meeting with Middle School staff
 6thMeeting with State School Boards Association director to discuss districts future relationship with the organization
 31stMeeting with outgoing superintendent and high school principal to discuss staff for next year

COMMUNITY VISIBILITY

4thLunch meeting with community member regarding new role
 5thMeeting with community task force studying calendar
 7thLunch with state senator to discuss new role and needs of the school district
 10thMeeting with outgoing superintendent and president of major local corporation to discuss new role
 11thPresentation to local service club regarding new role
 25thMeeting with local relators' association to discuss new role
 26thPresentation local business leaders regarding new role

OPERATIONAL DECISION MAKING

2ndSchool board meeting assist with planning and conducting meeting
 16thSchool board meeting assist with planning and conducting meeting
 24thMeeting with area superintendents to discuss issues of mutual concern

- 25thMeeting with individual school board member to discuss a specific concern
- 26thMeeting with individual school board member to discuss a specific concern

WITHIN DISTRICT VISIBILITY

- 2ndSchool board meeting assist with planning and conducting meeting
- 16thSchool board meeting assist with planning and conducting meeting
- 26thMeeting with two staff members to discuss concerns regarding superintendent elect's new role

APRIL 1992:

GOAL SETTING/PLANNING

- 8thMeeting with all of the district's administrators to discuss staffing and budgeting issues for next year
- 18thMeeting with district's math coordinator to discuss possible funding for pilot projects for the next year
- 20thMeeting with district's early education team to discuss outcome-based education (OBE) planning for next year
- 29thScreening and interviewing applicants for new administrative position

COMMUNITY VISIBILITY

- 7thSpeak to newly elected presidents of each school buildings' community club

OPERATIONAL DECISION MAKING

- 6thSchool board meeting assist with planning and conducting meeting
- 8thMeeting with all of the district's administrators to discuss staffing and budgeting issues for next year
- 9thMeeting with district's Director of Community Education to discuss future of position

- 20th School board meeting assist with planning and conducting meeting
- 21st Meeting with area superintendents to discuss issues of mutual concern
- 23rd Coordination of bid opening for major building project
- 29th Screening and interviewing applicants for new administrative position
- 30th Coordinate negotiations with Westside Education Association

WITHIN DISTRICT VISIBILITY

- 3rd Meeting with individual parent who was concerned about superintendent elect's new role
- 6th School board meeting assist with planning and conducting meeting
- 22nd Meeting with parents concerned about an issue at a specific building
- 24th Attend National School Board conference with all board members assist with planning of trip

MAY 1992:

GOAL SETTING / PLANNING

- 6th Facilitate elementary school planning activity
- 12th Begin meetings with each principal to review future staffing needs
- 15th Facilitate gifted education planning for next year
- 19th Meetings with elementary and middle school planning committees to review their work
- 20th Meetings with a variety of staff members to discuss their roles in the next year

COMMUNITY VISIBILITY

- 1st Attend political function as superintendent elect
- 6th Attend community recognition function as superintendent elect

- 14thAttend community service club function to receive award for the school district
- 28thPresentation to local service club regarding my new role and how the transition has been handled
- 29thMeeting with two patrons to discuss how they can support me in my new role

OPERATIONAL DECISION MAKING

- 4thSchool board meeting assist with planning and conducting meeting
- 12thBegin meetings with each principal to review future staffing needs
- 14thMeeting with school board president to discuss staffing and budgeting issues
- 18thMeeting with outgoing superintendent to review how the year has gone and to discuss the history of how administrative salaries have been established
- 18thSchool board meeting assist with planning and conducting meeting
- 19thMeeting with area superintendents to discuss mutual concerns
- 20thMeeting with central office staff members to discuss technology needs and changes
- 23rdMeeting with parent to discuss several concerns

WITHIN DISTRICT VISIBILITY

- 4thSchool board meeting assist with planning and conducting meeting
- 13thPresentation to retired staff regarding my vision for the school district
- 18thSchool board meeting assist with planning and conducting meeting
- 21stPresentation of awards at a school function
- 29thPresentation of gifts to outgoing superintendent at retirement reception

JUNE 1992:**GOAL SETTING/PLANNING**

- 3rdCoordinate planing for elementary education
- 15thMeeting with Director Counseling to discuss future goals
- 17thMeeting with area schools to discuss legislative goals
- 24thMeeting with administrators to discuss goals for implementation of OBE
- 25thMeeting with all administrators to establish goals next year
- 30thMeeting with Board of Education president to discuss transition

COMMUNITY VISIBILITY

- 2ndAttend dinner recognizing community leaders
- 8thAttend foundation meeting
- 26thPresent to area educators on new role

OPERATIONAL DECISION MAKING

- 1stSchool board meeting assist with planning and conducting meeting
- 5thMeeting with outgoing superintendent and assistant superintendents to discuss transition
- 8thMeeting with president of the school district's community support group to discuss groups future
- 12thMeeting with central office administrators to discuss reorganization of central office staff
- 12thBegin screening and interviews for hiring new administrator
- 19thMeeting with several staff members to discuss their roles in the future
- 23rdMeeting without going superintendent and assistant superintendents to discuss transition
- 30thMeeting with Director of Food Services to discuss needs and issues in this program

WITHIN DISTRICT VISIBILITY

- 1stSchool board meeting assist with planning and conducting meeting
- 2ndPresentation to all staff at end of the year all staff meeting

JULY 1992:**GOAL SETTING/PLANNING****COMMUNITY VISIBILITY**

- 2ndMeeting with parents regarding supporting me in my new position
- 21stMeeting with district's residents regarding the need for better multicultural education
- 21stBreakfast with the Mayor to discuss mutual concerns and how he could help me in my new position

OPERATIONAL DECISION MAKING

- 6thSchool board meeting assist with planning and conducting meeting
- 14thMeeting with legal counsel to discuss staffing issue
- 20thSchool board budget workshop assist with planning and conducting meeting
- 21stMeeting with district residents regarding the need for better multicultural education
- 28thMeeting with school board member to discuss concerns
- 29thMeeting with outgoing superintendent to discuss transition

WITHIN DISTRICT VISIBILITY

- 6thSchool board meeting assist with planning and conducting meeting
- 20thSchool board budget workshop assist with planning and conducting meeting

Appendix B

Field Study by Ken Bird

"Critical Factors in Superintendency Transition"

Question #: 1 **Respondent Code:** B

Response: The board's role is very minor. Selecting a superintendent from the existing staff means that the board wants to continue with the kind of leadership the current superintendent has given.

Question #: 1 **Respondent Code:** B

Response:

1. Help superintendent in any way he/she asks to make the outcomes more productive.
2. President meet with new superintendent often to help in transition.
3. Support the superintendent in the community at large.
4. Support the superintendent with other staff members.

Question #: 1 Respondent Code: B

- Response:**
1. If at all feasible, the Board should approve a period of transition of at least a year.
 2. They should be willing to provide extra staff help, if needed, while the superintendent-to-be tries to work one job, while shadowing another.
 3. The Board must be publicly supportive and enthusiastic about the changing guard.
 4. The Board must listen closely to the intentions of the new superintendent and privately iron out any conflicts before his/her reign begins.
 5. The Board must oversee that the retiring superintendent is doing the anticipated job of preparation with the new superintendent and be attuned to conflicts or problems. (Aren't we lucky not to have to worry about this!)
 6. It is the Board's responsibility to see that the new superintendent is trained and receives his "superintendent development." They should delegate this responsibility to the retiring superintendent, but it remains the Board's task to assure his success.
 7. The Board should be attuned to the response of the community, staff, teachers, etc. to the new superintendent and react to any difficulties to insure a smooth transition.
 8. Board must be willing to budget necessary funds for professional development, professional organizations, and meeting on an ongoing basis.

Question #: 1 Respondent Code: B

Response: The succession process must take into account the outlined policies and goals contained within our strategic plan. The role of the board in over-seeing the implementation of those policies and goals must identify the criteria concerning the superintendency succession process.

Those criteria should include:

1. Maintaining orderliness with respect to the transition or an avoidance of disruption to the administrative staff, teachers, and others in day-to-day functions of the school district. (In addition, the same is true with respect to parents and others in the district.)
2. Administrative continuity is of utmost importance. We as the Board would not wish to lose any focused effort toward achieving our policies and goals.
3. The Board further desires to identify within the succession process a means of perhaps enhancing the achievement of our strategic plan.

Question #: 1 Respondent Code: B

Response: I believe that the School Board has to have a firm grasp of the friends of the District and the philosophical feelings of the District to enable the Board to bring in a new superintendent. With this in mind, the Board has to evaluate the person or persons who apply for the position from the standpoint of knowing what already is in place. Therefore new Board members have a much more difficult time evaluating where the District is going when they haven't been there long enough to get a feel for where the District has been.

In other words, I feel the School Board has to evaluate where they are at that point in time when a new superintendent is evaluated, and where the School Board feels the District should be years down the line after the new superintendent has taken hold.

Question #: 1 Respondent Code: FS

Response: The president of the board of education is the key person in establishing a harmonious working relationship between the superintendent-elect and the board of education. The president and superintendent use the transition period to discuss issues confronting the board and the manner in which the board will address these issues.

The board should provide opportunities for the superintendent-elect to meet and share expectations at various times throughout the transitional year.

The board expects the superintendent-elect to provide leadership in the development of plans for the upcoming school year, and to be actively involved in areas of budget, personnel decisions, and policy changes.

The superintendent-elect engages in significant activities, such as strategic planning, and regularly submits reports to the board for approval.

The transition period allows for the necessary socialization process between the board and superintendent-elect, and helps to create a positive working relationship.

Question #: 1 Respondent Code: S

Response: I perceive the role of the Board of Education in the Superintendency process to include the following components:

1. The Board needs to review its policies regarding its role in relationship to the Superintendent and commit to the strict adherence to these policies. For example, if the policy states that the Board of Education delegates the administration of the school system in all aspects to the Superintendent, then its actions and behavior should consistently reflect this position.
2. The Board should have a plan to properly introduce the Superintendent to the community. The creation of this plan may be delegated to the Superintendent or his/her designee, but should include an active, participatory role by each Board member. Board members have many contacts that could be beneficial to the Superintendent as he/she exerts leadership to involve the community toward an improved educational system.
3. The Board needs to be apprised of the succession activities that are occurring for its assessment and involvement. This will assist with its awareness and reflect the importance that the Board gives the Superintendency succession process.

Question #: 2 Respondent Code: B

Response: By making the decision a year in advance, the board has directed the current superintendent to train the new superintendent in what he needs to know before he assumes the job. At contract time, the new superintendent will provide the board with goals set for the coming year. With this process in place, the transition will be very smooth.

Question #: 2 Respondent Code: B

Response:

1. New superintendent should present goals and objectives for the year.
2. New superintendent should give overall three-year plan.
3. New superintendent should become more visible in the community and explain how this should be done.

Question #: 2 Respondent Code: B

Response: Simple: Absorption of all the knowledge and experience of the outgoing superintendent, and complete awareness of the full operation and personnel of the district.

1. Involvement in strategic planning process: integration of new superintendent's philosophy into existing plans.
2. Involvement with personnel decisions: more philosophical than routine hiring; address class size, teacher evaluations, etc.
3. Involvement with budget process: decisions on areas of funding must be acceptable to new superintendent as he must work under that next year's budget.
4. Involvement in education policy for the district and interaction with State and Federal governments, local education officials and governments.
5. Involvement in curriculum planning: understanding of the process and philosophical emphasis.

Question #: 2 Respondent Code: B

Response: The following are my perceived requirements:

1. Having an "apprenticeship" period of a year or more which is implemented within one to three months of the announcement of the change to take place--a close working relationship between the outgoing and incoming administrators.
2. High visibility for the incoming administrator should be maintained within all aspects of the district functions, so that staff and parents alike gain introduction to the new administrator and gain a comfort level with the new person.
3. Toward the end of the transition process, the new administrator begins to assume a number of operational responsibilities.

Question #: 2 Respondent Code: B

Response: I believe an orderly transition between superintendents has to occur over many months. A new superintendent cannot just walk on board one week and take over. I believe he has to work with the outgoing superintendent to assess what plans and goals are in progress so he can reset these or change these without a terrible transition taking place.

A new superintendent certainly has to work with the rest of the administration, as well as the School Board in trying to set his goals in conjunction with the outgoing superintendent's feelings and goals as well.

In order for this process not to become disruptive to the administration, I believe the outgoing and incoming superintendents should work closely together for a minimum of three months during the transition period.

Question #: 2 Respondent Code: FS

Response: The first characteristic of a successful transition process must be an acceptance and endorsement by the superintendent of his successor. The superintendent-elect should be included as an integral part of the management team at the outset, not merely a passive observer. He/she should be involved in planning activities during the transition year, beginning with pre-school activities and culminating with primary responsibility for decisions affecting his first year as the new superintendent. These decisions include budget responsibility, administrative and staff assignments, and related personnel matters.

A second characteristic is the creation of a climate of openness and trust among the participants on the administrative team. The outgoing superintendent should be candid in conveying his ideas and experiences in dealing with leadership issues. The board of education, the superintendent, and the superintendent-elect should engage in frequent dialogue about issues of concern. The superintendent-elect should be given opportunities to present at regular board meetings and to plan for those meetings.

A third characteristic of the transition period assumes that the superintendent-elect is fully qualified and capable of assuming any assigned administrative or leadership role, and that opportunities are provided to demonstrate that competence. Early in the year, the superintendent-elect might plan and preside at some administrative meetings; and, later in the school term, particularly during the planning process, should be in charge, recognizing that critical decisions affect his tenure and effectiveness.

The transition period should be a time of orientation to staff and community, creating opportunities for exposure of the superintendent-elect to all constituencies involved in the educational process. This period is a time for establishing credibility in an environment where risk is somewhat diminished and non-threatening.

Question #: 2 Respondent Code: S

Response: The most important characteristic that needs to pervade all components of the transition is professionalism. The goal of the process must be what is best for the educational opportunities of the students and not what is best for either the departing Superintendent or the successor. This means a high degree of integrity, total openness, unselfishness, and a task-oriented process must be created between the two people. Obviously, a sense of humor sprinkled throughout will enhance the transition process.

Specific activities, timelines, etc., will vary considerably dependent upon the situation. However, in any event, the primary activity of exchanging job information such as staffing patterns, financial conditions, district strategic plans, philosophies, and policies, etc., should be planned and implemented early during the transition process.

Question #: 3 Respondent Code: B

Response: By affirming the selection of the new superintendent, an individual board member has given his or her trust in the new superintendent's ability to lead the district. As a board member, I will tell the new superintendent about how I operate:

1. I trust his ability to make the best possible decision for the kids and the taxpayers of the district. I will never say anything judgmental about the district without his knowing it first.
2. He will be the first to hear about any concerns I hear or have.
3. When a citizen of the district calls with a question, I refer them to the proper administrator and tell them to get back to me if they have further questions about the matter. I will inform the superintendent of the call, and follow-up myself in the matter or ask the superintendent to get involved depending on the seriousness of the matter.

Question #: 3 Respondent Code: B

- Response:**
1. President has greatest responsibility by being a sounding board and advisory to superintendent.
 2. Board members, in executive session, should raise issues and concerns with the new superintendent.

Question #: 3 Respondent Code: B

Response: Each individual must feel completely supportive of the new person and be willing to show that trust and faith that got him selected by supporting his major goals. Each individual must take whatever action they personally need to, to put themselves squarely in support of the new superintendent's programs and plans.

If an individual Board member feels unsure about the new superintendent's ideas, he or she should spend individual time with the superintendent to discuss ideas and resolve issues.

Our choice of the superintendent is a show of support that must not end after the vote. If an individual has problems with that, it is the individual's responsibility to resolve them.

Individually, we must be positive and encouraging in our contacts with students, parents, and staff about the new superintendent.

Question #: 3 Respondent Code: B

Response: The role of the individual board member is to maintain cohesiveness among the board while still expressing one's own individual views.

Several important issues can be described:

1. One must be sure to express a range of options for review of the entire board.
2. Express one's individual views--but at the same time maintain an objectivity.
3. Listen carefully to other's individual views.
4. Help to forge a consensus which leads to board unity as to how the process should proceed.

Question #: 3 Respondent Code: B

Response: I am not sure the role of an individual member of the Board of Education is important in the superintendency succession process. The Board should work as a group to assist the oncoming superintendent in understanding where the Board has been and where the Board is going. Individual members with individual meetings with the new superintendent might not make this process run smoothly. I believe socially it is fine for each individual member of the Board to meet and to associate with the new superintendent and his spouse; however, I think when there are problems arising within the District, I believe the School Board as a whole should meet to simplify the succession process.

Question #: 3 Respondent Code: FS

Response: The superintendent must be willing to let go of the reins as appropriate, and actively involve the superintendent-elect in all major issues facing the school district. While serving as mentor and guide, he/she recognizes that since most important policy decisions will have long-range implications, the superintendent-elect should have the opportunity to share in those decisions.

The superintendent-elect should be allowed to be a major player from the outset, recognizing the trust that the board of education has demonstrated by naming him to serve as the next chief executive officer. He/she should not be viewed as an apprentice to be trained, but as a colleague to be oriented to the expectations unique to the culture of the school system.

Acquainting the superintendent-elect with the intricacies of a board-superintendent relationship is of primary importance. Answers to matters of board authority in the policy arena, operating style and tradition, personal relationships and political considerations are not found in policy manuals and can best be learned by close observation and involvement.

The superintendent should acquaint his successor with all aspects of the school program, freeing him from routine responsibilities, and allowing time to meet with staff members, community groups, and to become familiar with the daily operations of the school system.

The superintendent assumes a degree of responsibility for the success of the superintendent-elect. This can best be accomplished by allowing the superintendent-elect to assume increasing responsibilities so that the transition is smooth, natural, and uneventful.

Question #: 3 Respondent Code: S

Response: The role of the "outgoing" superintendent should be a combination of the components and characteristics that I described in responses to questions #1 and #2.

The outgoing superintendent needs to be totally professional in his/her behavior, always exhibiting that the welfare of the District is the goal. This attitude needs to permeate all of the transitional activities. The exiting superintendent should initiate the following:

1. Orientation to all job-related functions;
2. Introduction to District employees;
3. Introduction to professional colleagues from other districts, state departments, higher education, etc.;
4. Introduction to community leaders;
5. Orientation to community and district cultural characteristics.

The outgoing superintendent can enhance the transitional process immensely by demonstrating total support for the successor.

Question #: 4 Respondent Code: B

Response: 1. From this questionnaire, I realize that perhaps too much is left to the outgoing superintendent to help the new person. However no one knows the task as hard better than someone who has filled that role.

2. It appears we may not have a "transition process." I do believe hiring the new superintendent a year before the fact provides him/her time to learn the ropes. This is adequate time in my opinion.

Question #: 4 Respondent Code: B

Response: Each situation is different. Ken Hansen was at the administrative offices already but did not have benefit of direct transition with Dr. Phelps. Jim Tangdall and Ken Bird have been fortunate to have an amiable transition from a mentor. That is the ideal.

The "cons" are that the new superintendent cannot completely shed his current job responsibilities, to literally follow the superintendent everywhere. The time limitation on a daily basis is a problem. Yet the utilization of an entire year is a "pro." A strong working relationship between the old/new is a major element in this success. The advantage of having your mentor still around to give advice, or answer questions, is a plus.

The willingness of all (other staff, board, etc.) to provide a good training period and the willingness of both parties to achieve a successful transition is the major "pro." ATTITUDE important.

Question #: 4 Respondent Code: B

Response: First of all, the process is private. If it became a "public circus" it would be very disruptive to all of those involved in the district. The executive session approach is very important to maintain continuity.

The downside of our approach is that a number of people tend to think that this process is "rigged."

Question #: 4 Respondent Code: B

Response: The Westside School District has for the past many years chosen a superintendent within the District. This has made the transition process much easier, and is the main reason for not going outside of the District. I feel very strong that the School Board should always look within the District first, and not look to the outside. This is especially true if the District is doing well, and is not in great need of outside "ideas."

Therefore, the current transition process employed by District 66 has worked well for the last three superintendents, and I would see no reason to change this in any way.

Question #: 4 Respondent Code: FS

Response: PROS:

The transition process provides for continuity and allows for an orderly transfer of authority, lessening the sometimes awkward getting-acquainted period. The new superintendent traditionally enjoys a "honeymoon" period with the board. The transition might be likened to a courtship that eliminates surprises and enhances the likelihood of a successful union.

Establishing a close working relationship and a clear understanding of expectations with the board of education during the transition period instills confidence and trust on both sides.

It allows the opportunity for the superintendent-elect to understand the culture of the school and community, the political considerations, the bureaucracy, and the problems.

The process is less threatening to staff members who have the opportunity to interact with the incoming superintendent and to feel that there will be continuity in the school program.

The superintendent-elect has broad exposure to the community, allowing him to establish credibility and acceptance and to gain increased understanding of problems and concerns.

CONS:

- The cost of having two people on staff when administrative costs are under scrutiny.

This was not the case at Westside where the superintendent-elect carried heavy responsibility previous to his appointment.

- The possibility of conflict and concern over lines of authority.

The possibility that the "sitting" superintendent might be unwilling to relinquish authority or to take the superintendent-elect into his confidence.

If board-superintendent relationships are unfavorable, conflict could result.

Question #: 4 Respondent Code: S

Response: From my perspective the process employed by the Westside Community Schools is nearly one hundred percent positive.

It has allowed for a very smooth and orderly transition with no interruption in the effort to accomplish the District's strategic plan. The specific major job functions of the superintendency are listed with a comment as to the positive or negative impact of this transition process.

Function - Staffing

Comment: All staffing decisions have been jointly made with the successor having final authority on specific people being employed or transferred. Very positive result.

Function - Budgeting

Comment: Budget decisions jointly made. An agreement has always been reached with little apparent concern. Very positive result.

Function - Planning

Comment: The strategic plan which was in place has provided a blueprint for the district and the two people involved; hence, no reason for disagreement on direction or priorities. Very positive.

Function - Communication

Comment: The communication with all publics has been enhanced by a talented and credible communications director and by unanimous support of the Board of Education. Very positive.

Function - Administration of Policy

Comment: Seems to have gone well because of the role of successor as associate superintendent in charge of policy development. Everyone was used to the process and there wasn't a change.

The only negative that may exist in the Westside process is at the back end when the formal change gets closer. Because of the overlap of the contractual obligations (September-August) of the predecessor with the start-up of school in early August, there may be confusion by some as to who is responsible. Hopefully, the two superintendents will anticipate this problem and quickly determine a resolution.