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## Identification of the Participants and Selection Methods Utilized in the Employment of Elementary Principals

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IDENTIFICATION OF THE PARTICIPANTS  
AND SELECTION METHODS UTILIZED IN THE  
EMPLOYMENT OF ELEMENTARY PRINCIPALS

by

Cean Kimball Cartwright

A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School  
of Loyola University Chicago in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree of  
Doctor of Education

January

1990

LOYOLA UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

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CEAN KIMBALL CARTWRIGHT

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## VITA

Cean Kimball Cartwright was born on May 7, 1946, in New Castle, Indiana. She is the daughter of James and Elizabeth Kimball and is married to Philip E. Cartwright. They have two children, Amy and Philip Marshall.

The author attended both elementary and high school in Middletown, Indiana, and in 1964 graduated from Northwestern School Corporation. She attended Indiana University at Bloomington, majoring in elementary education and special education. She graduated with a Bachelor of Science in 1967 and a Master of Science in 1968.

From 1967 through 1971, the author was employed as an elementary or special education teacher. During 1972-1973 she supervised student teachers while obtaining her Director of Special Education license at Indiana University. From 1976 through 1979 Cean Cartwright again taught special education. From 1980 to 1982 she was supervisor of the Learning Disability (L.D.) Program in Decatur, Illinois. In 1982, the author received a Specialist in Education Degree from Eastern Illinois University at Charleston, Illinois.

Since that time she has been involved in the teaching or administration of special education or elementary education. Cean Cartwright is currently serving as principal of Porter Lakes Elementary School. In 1985 she entered the School of Education at Loyola University of Chicago.

## Abstract

Cean Kimball Cartwright

Loyola University of Chicago

### IDENTIFICATION OF THE PARTICIPANTS AND SELECTION METHODS UTILIZED IN THE EMPLOYMENT OF ELEMENTARY PRINCIPALS

Research indicates that almost half of the currently employed principals in the United States are between 55 and 65 years of age. Thus, a large number of vacancies will occur in the next few years. Further, the role of the principal is changing from that of an implementor of policies and rules to that of an educational leader. Principals are emerging as a key element in school reform.

The population consisted of the 292 public school superintendents in Indiana. The purpose of this study was to investigate the selection of elementary principals in Indiana during the 1986-1987, 1987-1988, and 1988-1989 school years. The study dealt with selection methods, participants, and roles of these participants in the selection of elementary school principals.

A questionnaire was sent to the subject population during March of 1989 and usable returns were obtained from



87.7 percent of the population. The results were tabulated and the numerical frequency and percentage distribution were determined. The following conclusions were drawn: (1) It does not appear that the majority of Indiana school corporations are attempting to build an applicant pool of elementary principal candidates. (2) Most Indiana school corporations limit their advertising for elementary principal candidates within the state. (3) Many Indiana corporations are not preparing a specific job description for elementary principal vacancies. (4) There is a strong reliance on traditional screening methods. (5) There is a strong reliance on traditional methods to select finalists. (6) Consistent with the professional literature, the dominant participant in the screening and selection process in Indiana is the superintendent. (7) The exact role of Indiana school boards is not delineated by individual board policy in the vast majority of Indiana school corporations.

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CHAPTER 1  
THE PROBLEM

Introduction

The American principalship is an occupational position that has evolved over the course of the last century and a half. During the industrialization of the nineteenth century, there was a movement to provide schooling to the masses of children. In order to educate these numbers, larger schools were opened. The increased number of teachers in larger buildings required more direction and supervision and thus the increased use of principals. The trend continued between 1850 and 1880 during which time there was substantial increase in the number of school principals.<sup>1</sup>

Between 1880 and 1920, public education experienced more specialization. The principal was expected to exercise control and follow the practices of industrial efficiency which was based on fewer tasks for teachers and principals alike allowing the employees to concentrate their abilities on their areas of expertise. Principals began to concentrate their time and efforts more on administrative tasks. The

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<sup>1</sup>Catherine D. Baltzell and Robert A. Dentler, Selecting American School Principals: Research Report (Cambridge: Abt Associates, Inc., 1983), 3.

next step was the evolution of the principalship to the equivalent of the corporate middle manager.<sup>2</sup>

Writing in 1944, Robert Hill Lane, the Assistant Superintendent of Schools in Los Angeles, California, presented a profile of a successful elementary school principal applicant.

"He is probably between thirty and forty years of age. He has the type of personality which appeals favorably to fellow teacher, children, parent, and the general public. If a man, he is well groomed and would be accepted by a casual acquaintance as a successful business man. If a woman, she is appropriately and attractively dressed. The applicant meets people with poise and confidence, speaks in a pleasant, cultivated voice, and uses good taste and good judgment in talking about himself and his work. He has a well-controlled sense of humor. He appears to enjoy contacts with people and is versed in social amenities. He bears the marks of good birth and good breeding. Obviously, he has a rich cultural background, and his conversation is not restricted to school affairs.

He is a successful classroom teacher who enjoys the company of children and guides their learning wisely and effectually. He obtains results, as evidenced by the school-and-home records of his pupils after they leave his classroom . . ."<sup>3</sup>

The profile was clearly that of a master teacher and a warm and popular individual who had the support of everyone. It should also be noted that women occupied more than half of the nation's elementary principalships prior to World War II.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 3-4.

<sup>3</sup>Robert Hill Lane, The Principal in the Modern Elementary School (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1944), 10-11.

<sup>4</sup>Baltzell, Selecting Principals, 5.

After the war the trend was to replace retiring women principals with males, many of whom were returning war veterans. By 1979, men held 82 percent of the elementary principalships while women accounted for 83 percent of elementary teaching positions which were lower in both pay and status. The majority of the elementary principals were men between the ages of 55 and 65.<sup>5</sup>

During the 1970s, enrollment declines and tight school budgets reduced available principalship vacancies. In the 1980s, the opportunities for gaining a principalship have increased but so has the competition from women and minority candidates. The nature of the job has also changed. "Today, the principal is expected to juggle several roles, performing in large school districts as educational program leader, administrative manager, community liaison specialist, agent of the superintendent in implementing union contract clauses, and gatekeeper of program change."<sup>6</sup>

Many studies including the Select Committee on Equal Educational Opportunity of the U.S. Senate called the school principal, "the most important and influential individual in any school."<sup>7</sup>

At the same time that the role and importance of elementary principals reached an all time high, many authors

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<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., 7.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid.

became critical of the practices used to select these principals. They also became aware of the obligation to improve selection procedures. Alan Newberry described selection procedures as unsystematic, based on myths and unsupported by research. He went on to state that these procedures have created, "a crises in the selection of elementary school principals."<sup>8</sup>

Jack McCurdy reported on the growing sentiment in favor of reforming the way principals are selected. In a 1983 report, the Southern Regional Education Board urged school districts to exercise greater care to identify strong potential principals and the use of objective selection methods.<sup>9</sup>

Doctoral student Ralph Harris Poteet concluded from his research on the selection of elementary principals in Texas that there is a need to establish guidelines to be utilized in selecting elementary principals. His review of the professional literature indicated no uniform formal manner for the selection of principals exists across the country.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup>Alan J.H. Newberry, "What Not to Look for in an Elementary School Principal," Principal 56 (March/April 1977): 41-44.

<sup>9</sup>Jack McCurdy, The Role of the Principal (Sacramento: Education News Service, 1983), 66.

<sup>10</sup>Ralph Harris Poteet, "Criteria for the Selection of Public Elementary School Principals in the State of Texas" (Ph.D. diss., East Texas State University, 1968), 72.



Alan J. Rousseau who serves as Director of Personnel in Beaverton, Oregon, reported that those who are charged with the responsibility for hiring elementary principals often do not know or ignore the academic and professional elements that relate to probable success as an elementary principal. While he encountered substantial research on the selection of teachers, little was found on the selection of elementary principals.<sup>11</sup>

William B. Castetter pointed out the importance of selecting highly qualified principals based on the following rationale:

- "1. The administrative problems in public education are becoming increasingly complex.
2. The knowledge needed in school administration has increased considerably over the years.
3. School systems are becoming extensive and expensive operations.
4. The responsibilities of school administrators are increasing.
5. The number and variety of administrative positions are increasing.
6. Administrative positions in education require extensive and intensive professional training.
7. Greater demands are being made for wider and more effective use in school administration of lay groups and professional staff members in the solution of school problems. This approach to administration, which requires a thorough understanding of group processes and democratic procedures obviously calls

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<sup>11</sup>Alan J. Rousseau, The Elementary School Principal: What Training and Experience Factors Relate to His Success? (Eugene, Oregon: University of Oregon, 1971), 2.

for a different kind of leadership than one which adheres strictly to the line-staff concept.

8. The success of the educational enterprise has become increasingly dependent on the judgment of administrative personnel.
9. Social change will continue to create persistent problems which will require skillful administrative planning for their solution.
10. Increasingly, the administrator must spend his time with people rather than with things."<sup>12</sup>

Richard L. Fiander was even stronger in his assessment linking the principal's performance as the determinant in whether a school will be outstanding, mediocre, or downright poor. "As the Principal goes, . . . so goes the school."<sup>13</sup>

The assistant secretary for research and improvement at the U.S. Department of Education, Chester E. Finn, Jr., lists the employment of the best available principal as the single most important thing that can be done to improve schools today. "The principalship is probably the single most powerful fulcrum for improving school effectiveness."<sup>14</sup>

As noted earlier, we are anticipating a large turnover in elementary principalships. Seventy percent of the elementary principals in the United States plan to retire before the end of this decade according to Samuel Sava,

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<sup>12</sup>William B. Costetter, Administering the School Personnel Program (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1962), 210.

<sup>13</sup>Richard L. Fiander, "Don't Wing it When You Hire Principals," The Executive Educator 8 (December 1986): 24.

<sup>14</sup>Chester E. Finn, "How to Spot an Effective Principal," Principal 67 (September 1987): 22.

executive director of the National Association of Elementary School Principals.<sup>15</sup>

While there are numerous candidates for these vacancies, it is believed that individuals who possess the necessary leadership characteristics will be scarce.<sup>16</sup>

William J. Bennett described the principals who are now being hired as, "the educational vanguard that will lead our country into the 21st century." He went on to say that their significance requires that we make every effort to find and employ the good principals that our schools need.<sup>17</sup>

Chester E. Finn, Jr. challenged school superintendents to start now to build the pool of quality candidates for principalships including looking outside the field of education. He stated, "More than ever, principals stand at the center of school reform."<sup>18</sup>

Phyllis Rosser pointed out the decline of women in elementary school principalships decreasing from 55 percent in 1928 to 18 percent of the available elementary principalships in 1980. She indicated that one reason for this decline was the existence of the "good old boys

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<sup>15</sup>Arthur W. Steller, "Chart a Course for Selecting New Principals," Updating School Board Policies 15 (May 1984): 1.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid.

<sup>17</sup>United States Department of Education, Principal Selection Guide, (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1987), iii.

<sup>18</sup>Chester E. Finn, "Pick Principals with Promise," The Executive Educator 10 (June 1988): 20.

network." Rosser recommended that women aspiring to elementary principalships learn how the hiring game works and play it to their advantage.<sup>19</sup> While this may be sound advice, it also serves to document the lack of merit in most selection procedures.

Sally Banks Zakariya reported on research that challenged school districts to begin to search for principals before a vacancy exists and to improve the selection process. She described the perfect principal as, "one part shrewd executive, one part P.R. maven, one part Mr. Chips - he (or she, of course)."<sup>20</sup>

While the extent of research on the selection of elementary school principals is limited, there is an evergrowing cry in current educational journals for improvements in the selection process. Baltzell and Dentler concluded from their research that the selection process is not only essential in its own right but that the selection experience is often significant in determining the sense of mission which the selected principals take with them as they assume their duties as principal.<sup>21</sup> Clearly the selection

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<sup>19</sup>Phyllis Rosser, "Women Fight 'Old Boys' for School Administrator Jobs." Learning 8 (March 1980): 31-32.

<sup>20</sup>Sally Banks Zakariya, "How to Add Snap, Crackle, and Pop to Principal Selection," The Executive Educator 5 (November 1983): 20.

<sup>21</sup>Baltzell, Selecting Principals, 64.

process is vital to employment of the best possible elementary principals and thus to the future of the American educational system.

### Statement of the Problem

This study attempts to identify how many Indiana school corporations have employed an elementary principal during the 1986-1987, 1987-1988, or 1988-1989 school years and determine the selection methods, participants and roles of these participants in the employment of elementary school principals.

It is expected that the results of this study may help answer the following questions:

1. How many Indiana school corporations employed an elementary principal during the 1986-1987, 1987-1988, or 1988-1989 school years?
2. What selection methods were utilized in the selection process?
3. Who were the participants in the selection process?
4. What roles were assigned the various participants in the selection process?

### Significance of the Study

Research indicates that almost half of the currently employed principals in the United States are between 55 and 65 years of age. Thus a large number of vacancies will

occur in the next few years. Further the role of the principal is changing from that of an implementor of policies and rules to that of an educational leader. Principals are emerging as a key element in school reform.

This increased attention to the role of the principal has resulted in questions concerning the entire selection process. Who should be involved? What methods should be employed? Some significant research has been conducted that indicates that there are better methods available than were previously employed. However, many districts are still relying heavily on traditional methods. This study will attempt to determine how and by whom elementary principals have been selected during the last three years in Indiana.

This study has significance for employing officials, university placement officials, principal candidates and principal training faculty. Employing officials may utilize the results of this study in the revision of their election procedures. These data will be of equal value to principal candidates seeking to improve their ability to obtain employment by presenting their qualifications in the best possible manner. The results of the study may give direction to the faculty of principal training institutions concerning the professional experiences needed to produce more marketable principal candidates.

Finally the selection methods, participants and roles identified by this study will provide the basis for further

### Limitations

This study was limited:

1. to public school districts located in Indiana
2. by the writer's ability to design an instrument that would secure the data required in the study
3. to the number of useable responses
4. by the accuracy and truthfulness of the responses
5. by the writer's ability to classify the responses

### Definitions

The following definitions are used throughout this study. The terms are restricted to the meanings below:

Elementary Principal. A school administrator in charge of a school building housing students in grades kindergarten through grade eight or some portion thereof with a majority of the grades lower than grade seven.

Selection Methods. The procedures used to choose an elementary principal.

Selection Participants. An individual involved in any part of the formal procedures used to choose an elementary principal.

### Methodology and Procedures

The research procedures employed in this study involved the following steps:

1. The development of the questionnaire.
2. The identification of the participants.

3. The administration of the questionnaire to the participants.
4. The treatment of data.

#### Development of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire used to obtain data from Indiana school corporations was developed in the following manner:

1. A review of related research was conducted to compile a comprehensive list of methods, participants and roles used in the selection of elementary school principals.
2. In an effort to establish an informal estimate of content validity, a preliminary version of the questionnaire was presented to members of the Northwest Indiana Public School Study Council which is composed of the 22 public school superintendents in Lake and Porter Counties. Their criticisms and suggestions were used to alter and improve the instrument.
3. The questionnaire was presented to the members of the writer's faculty committee, Dr. Howard Smucker, Dr. Max Bailey and Dr. Jack Kavangh, for final revision. The final form of the questionnaire consisted of five sections. The first section contained a forced choice item requesting the most recent school year in which the respondent's school corporation employed an elementary school principal. Categories included 1985-1986 or before, 1986-1987, 1987-1988, or 1988-1989.



The second section of the questionnaire contained seven checklist items covering methods used in the selection of elementary school principals. The first checklist was devoted to the applicant pool. The next three checklists covered declaration of vacancy items. The fifth checklist pertained to a written job description. The sixth checklist covered methods employed in the screening process. The seventh checklist covered the methods used to select finalists.

The third section contained a list of 11 positions identified from related research as playing a role in the selection of elementary school principals. Respondents were asked to check all who were involved to any extent in the selection process in their school corporations.

The fourth section of the questionnaire again listed the participants contained in section three. This time the respondents were instructed to check the various roles in which their participants were involved during the selection process.

The final section contained a single yes or no item. Respondents were asked if their school board had a written board policy covering the selection of elementary principals.

#### Identification of Participants

The public school corporations in Indiana comprised the subject population for this study. A mailing list and labels

of all Indiana school corporations was obtained from the Indiana Department of Public Instruction.

#### Administration of the Questionnaire

On March 29, 1989, a cover letter (see appendix A), a letter of endorsement from the Indiana Association of Public School Superintendents (see appendix B), a two page questionnaire (see appendix C), and a self-addressed, stamped return envelope were mailed to each superintendent in Indiana. The cover letter requested participation in the study and asked the superintendent to complete and return the questionnaire. The letter of endorsement from the Indiana Association of Public School Superintendents urged completion and return of the questionnaire and requested a summary of the survey results.

On April 28, 1989, the returned questionnaires were tabulated and reviewed. Based on a return of 260 questionnaires of which 256 were usable, it was determined not to send a follow-up letter.

#### Treatment of Data

The data was treated in the following manner:

1. The numeral frequency and percentage distribution were determined for all responses to the questionnaire items.
2. Significant data were presented in tabular form to facilitate interpretation.

3. Conclusions and recommendations were made from the analyzed data.

## CHAPTER 2

### REVIEW OF RELATED RESEARCH

The review of related research has been divided into four sections. Part one provides an introduction to the process of selecting elementary school principals; part two, the specific methods used in the selection process; part three, the participants in the selection process; and part four, the functions assigned the various participants in the selection process.

Research sources cited include textbooks, research reports, doctoral dissertations, bulletins, and professional journals published since 1944.

#### Selection Methods

Given the importance of the selection process, what specific methods are involved in the overall process of selecting elementary school principals?

Writing in the Principal in 1974, Professor Kenneth E. McIntyre reviewed a similar article which he had produced in 1965. He concluded that principal selection procedures had not improved to any great extent during this time. McIntyre argued for greater reliance on test results, high intellect, at least a moderate level of scholarship, a breadth of knowledge, the ability to speak and write accurately and

forcefully and good human relations skills. Rather than rely on interviews, letters of recommendation or rating scales, he preferred techniques that measure how a candidate will function in a given situation. McIntyre recommended an interview guide, telephone checks with several references and simulation activities. For districts that select from within, he favored acting principalship opportunities or internships.<sup>22</sup>

Baltzell and Dentler categorized the methods or practices which they observed in the first part of their study as "conventional - - that is, customary and widely shared - - modes of selection."<sup>23</sup> They believed their findings to be consistent with the limited available research literature on principal selection. Their conventional selection methods included declaration of vacancy, establishment of selection criteria, formation of applicant pool, screening of candidates and the employment decision.<sup>24</sup>

In order to have a clear understanding concerning the competencies needed for a vacancy, Castetter stressed the

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<sup>22</sup>Kenneth E. McIntyre, "The Way it Was/Is," Principal 53 (July/August 1974): 30-34.

<sup>23</sup>Catherine D. Baltzell and Robert A. Dentler, Selecting American School Principals: Research Report Cambridge: Abt Associates, Inc., 1983), 101.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., 28.

importance of preparation and use of a job description or position specifications as an important technique in principal selection.<sup>25</sup>

Castetter pointed out that the first step in principal selection is recruitment. By beginning a recruitment plan, it is possible to develop a talent bank from which the school district can select replacements as administrative vacancies occur. He listed activities to implement a talent bank plan:

- "1. Forecasting future administrative personnel needs.
2. Development and maintenance of an administrative personnel inventory, which would catalogue the administrative potential within the system.
3. Compilation of a record of pertinent personnel inventory. The basic information would be provided by the individual, and relate to previous background, experiences, and accomplishments. To this would be added data from appraisal devices which school officials choose to employ in the selection process, such as results from tests, questionnaires, meaningful recommendations, interviews, and appraisal reports by staff members.
4. Provision for developmental opportunities within the school system which furnish one basis for predicting future administrative performance.
5. Provision for continuance of graduate education along lines which will be beneficial to both the individual and to the school system.
6. Periodic review of the personnel inventory to determine the progress of each individual under consideration as it pertains to his state of readiness to occupy an administrative post."<sup>26</sup>

Castetter indicated that while a talent bank plan would encourage promotion from within the system, it would not

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<sup>25</sup>William B. Castetter, Administering the School Personnel Program (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1962), 214.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., 215-216.

preclude recruitment and employment of external candidates for a specific vancancy.<sup>27</sup>

He also indicated that those who are involved in the selection of principals must consider what attributes are needed and to what extent they are needed in order to be successful. This involves an attempt to predict administrative effectiveness. Standardized tests, on-the-job observations, studies of traits of successful administrators, and measures of past administrative success have been used in these attempts. Tests have not proven to be completely satisfactory. Likewise, research on characteristics has not been conclusive. Castetter concluded that the selection process can be improved, "if continuous attention is devoted to the systematic development of selection criteria, especially in defining the administrative behavior which is desired for each of the several administrative posts."<sup>28</sup>

Assistant Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education, Chester E. Finn, Jr., listed several points that should be considered in selecting effective principals. The selection process should begin long before a vacancy occurs to allow time for a district to review its schools and leaders to determine what is desired in new principals. Potential candidates should be sought both within and outside

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<sup>27</sup>Ibid., 216.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid., 218.

the district. When a vacancy occurs and a sufficient pool of applicants is in place, selection procedures should include written tests, structured interviews, and a review of biographical data. Interviews should include several interviewers including teachers and parents. Employing officials should visit the home school and observe the performance of candidates. Where this is not possible, Finn recommends the use of an assessment center. In making the final selection, care should be exercised to match the right principal to the exact school based on the specific strengths of the candidate and the needs of the school.<sup>29</sup>

Lynn M. Cornett indicated that internships provide not only training for prospective principals, they also provide an opportunity for employers to observe and measure the potential of interns for possible employment. Internships are often done in partnership with a local university. Interns are usually picked from teachers with a minimum of three years of teaching experience. Interns serve a one or two year internship in their school district while they are enrolled as graduate students. While these programs are expensive for the school district, they are judged as effective. Speaking of his district, one superintendent

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<sup>29</sup>Chester E. Finn, "Pick Principals with Promise," The Executive Educator 10 (June 1988): 20-21.



stated his belief that his district was creating a cadre of educational leaders through its internship program.<sup>30</sup>

In 1987, the United States Department of Education published a booklet aimed at improving the selection of school principals. The work described five major methods used to appraise candidates including collecting biographical data, administering written tests, conducting structured interviews, soliciting job samples and using assessment center reports.<sup>31</sup>

Past performance has been shown to be an accurate predictor of future performance; therefore, biographical data is useful in screening candidates. To guard against inaccurate data, selectors should verify written applications and references by calling references and conducting site visits.<sup>32</sup>

Paper and pencil tests assess candidates' knowledge of specific information and the presence of specific aptitudes of a given skill such as the ability to write. Care should

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<sup>30</sup>Lynn M. Cornett, The Preparation and Selection of School Principals (Atlanta: Southern Regional Education Board, 1983), 7-9.

<sup>31</sup>United States Department of Education, Principal Selection Guide, (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1987), 23.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid.

be exercised not to overvalue test results since most have low predictive validity.<sup>33</sup>

Employment interviews should be structured. This requires a given set of questions for all candidates and a predetermination of desirable responses. Interviews should include questions based on hypothetical situations as well as past accomplishments. Candidates should do most of the talking.<sup>34</sup>

Selectors can obtain information concerning candidates' ability to perform a job by observing candidates during a site visit, assigning applicants as interns, or arranging simulated job situations. A new and promising technique involves a formal assessment process undertaken in an assessment center.<sup>35</sup>

In summary, the authors determine that all five selection methods are useful. In general, employers should always use biographical data, give structured interviews and obtain job sample information. The decision on selection methods should be based on information needed for a specific vacancy and the resources available at the time. The authors summed up the chapter on principal selection as follows:

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<sup>33</sup>Ibid., 24.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid., 25.

"Since selecting personnel is both a science and an art, selectors should expect to emphasize different methods depending upon the candidate and the situation. The various ways selection methods can be used are virtually unlimited - they are bounded only by the imagination of those using them."<sup>36</sup>

Gomez and Stephenson pointed out that most districts use interviews and reference checks to select principals. These methods for the most part exhibit low validity. While employment tests have a relative high validity correlation to subsequent job performance, these tests are seldom used because such tests have often been the subject of legal challenges.<sup>37</sup>

Gomez and Stephenson suggested that the best method for selecting principals is to place a candidate in the position and observe his performance during a trial period. This would argue for the use of internships or trial employment practices. However, these practices are often precluded by cost, time constraints or other administrative problems. They concluded that a logical alternative is job simulation provided by an assessment center.<sup>38</sup>

An assessment center is a method that uses multiple techniques to evaluate skills and behavior. These techniques

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<sup>36</sup>Ibid., 27.

<sup>37</sup>Joseph J. Gomez and Robert S. Stephenson, "Validity of an Assessment Center for the Selection of School-Level Administrators," Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis 9 (Spring 1987): 5.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid., 6.

can include tests and interviews, but they are based on limited job simulation exercises. Assessment centers have been used in industry since the 1950s. In the 1970s, the assessment center method was introduced into the field of public education by the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) in conjunction with the American Psychological Association.<sup>39</sup>

Joseph J. Gomez and Robert S. Stephenson reported on the validity of an assessment center utilized for the selection of principals in the Dade County Public Schools in Miami, Florida. This process, entitled the Management Assessment Center (MAC), was developed independently from the NASSP model. MAC was based on a job analysis of Dade County school-level administrators. This analysis determined that nine skills are needed for successful job performance as a principal - leadership, organizing and planning, perception, decision making, decisiveness, interpersonal, adaptability, oral communication and written communication.<sup>40</sup>

These nine skills are assessed in a two day process by a team of three incumbent administrators who have been trained in the process. Candidates perform three exercises including an in-basket exercise, a parent conference simulation and a teacher observation simulation. The results

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<sup>39</sup>Ibid., 1.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid., 2.

of a validity study of the MAC substantiated a positive, statistically significant relationship between assessment center indicators and subsequent job performance. These results are similar to the results obtained in the three year validity study of the NASSP assessment center undertaken by Neal Schmitt and associates beginning in 1979.<sup>41</sup>

The use of an assessment center can improve results in the selection of principals according to professors Lloyd E. McCleary and Rodney T. Ogawa of the Intermountain-NASSP Assessment Center project of the University of Utah. They indicated that the method used by the districts to select participants varies. Most districts screen applicants for principalship vacancies and then refer finalists for assessment. Some districts include candidates that have not been assessed. The districts use assessment center profiles as just one source of information in making employment decisions. The weight applied to the assessment center profiles varies from district to district.<sup>42</sup>

The assessment center offers two advantages in the selection of principals. The results provide a source of objective data about each candidate and a basis for selection on merit. Professors Ogawa and McCleary also warned of two

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<sup>41</sup>Ibid.

<sup>42</sup>Lloyd E. McCleary and Rodney T. Ogawa, "Locating Principals Who Are Leaders: The Assessment Center Concept," Educational Considerations 12 (Fall 1985): 10.

possible problem areas resulting from the use of assessment center data. If districts pre-select candidates to be assessed, they run the risk of eliminating more meritorious candidates. Second, employing officials need to take other factors than skill levels into consideration in the selection of principals including community norms, superintendent's preference regarding administrative style, and conditions in the school.<sup>43</sup>

Joyce Hogan and Larry L. Zenke reviewed four common procedures used in the selection of principals including interview, assessment center, selected assessment center exercises and paper and pencil inventories. Their study indicated that the assessment center and selected assessment center activities produced the most valid results; however, these procedures were expensive. The interview method was low in validity and reasonably high in cost. Paper and pencil tests were low in cost but also produced a low validity. The assessment center exercises produced the highest validity at the second lowest cost.<sup>44</sup>

Hogan and Zenke reported that most principals are selected on the basis of interviews. This process has

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<sup>43</sup>Ibid., 11.

<sup>44</sup>Joyce Hogan and Larry L. Zenke, "Dollar-Value Utility of Alternate Procedures for Selecting School Principals," Educational and Psychological Measurement 46 (Winter 1986): 935-942.

several problems in that it is subject to bias and abuse, has a low validity in predicting successful job performance, is time consuming and can be expensive especially when large panels of interviewers are used. While many school districts have attempted to improve interview procedures by making them more extensive, the effect is an increase in costs without increasing validity according to Hogan and Zenke. They suggest there are better alternatives including assessment centers or assessment center activities.<sup>45</sup>

Mark E. Anderson reported on research that indicated many school districts are not employing the most capable principals because districts often fail to help prepare candidates, use nonspecific vacancy announcements, utilize inadequate screening and selection methods and are faced with a limited pool of capable applicants. The pre-service training of principals has received widespread criticism during recent years from numerous sources including the national commissions and principals themselves. More authorities are calling for increased cooperation between employing school districts and universities to supply more field-based experiences. Several studies and authors, including the Carnegie Foundation and John Goodlad, have pointed out the need for internships for prospective

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<sup>45</sup>Ibid., 943.

principals. As noted elsewhere, school districts must bear some of the cost of training administrative candidates.<sup>46</sup>

A second problem reported by Anderson involves nonspecific selection criteria and vacancy announcements. In order to attract the right candidates, the vacancy announcement should be for a particular school and should contain information concerning the student body and their needs, staff characteristics, and type leadership or changes desired as well as data concerning the district and its existing administrative staff. Even more important is the need to develop and use specific selection criteria. This allows the process to focus on merit rather than employing a candidate with whom the selectors are merely comfortable.<sup>47</sup>

Inadequate data in the screening and selection steps was also common. Anderson argued for a two level screening process. The first level determines which candidates possess the minimum certification and experience levels. The second step should be based on matching qualifications with established selection criteria using objective data and blind ratings to insure merit.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>46</sup>Mark E. Anderson, Hiring Capable Principals: How School Districts Recruit, Groom, and Select the Best Candidates (Eugene, Oregon: Oregon School Study Council, 1988), 3-5.

<sup>47</sup>Ibid., 9-10.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid., 10.



Interviewers should be selected because they have qualifications such as alertness to cues, accurate perception, recording ability, willingness to rely on the established selection criteria and ability to suppress their personal bias. Interviewers should consider information gathered from other sources as well as the interview data. They should consider information from applications, transcripts, performance records, references and assessment center reports. When finalists are from outside the district, interviewers should conduct site visits in the finalists' home schools and districts to further verify and assess these candidates.<sup>49</sup>

Finally, the question of adequate candidate pool must be addressed. While available data indicates that candidates do exist, there is a growing feeling that the number of highly qualified candidates is decreasing just at the time when many vacancies are occurring. Anderson recommended increasing the candidate pool by outside recruitment extending the search to an area covering a 500 mile radius. Recruitment should expand beyond advertisements to include efforts to find and target qualified applicants from other districts. Efforts should be made within the district to expand the pool of qualified candidates by utilizing career ladders, internships and other forms of training programs.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>49</sup>Ibid., 12-13.

<sup>50</sup>Ibid., 6-8.

Anderson summarized his recommendations on selecting capable principals with the following ten steps:

- "1. Develop written policies. . . .
2. Develop specific selection criteria. . . .
3. Identify the specific opening in vacancy announcements. . . .
4. Create a pool of qualified candidates. . . .
5. Recruit widely. . . .
6. Involve a broad base of people in screening and selection. . . .
7. Train those who select principals. . . .
8. Use multiple means of assessment. . . .
9. Consider varied sources of information about candidates. . . .
10. Finding the most capable principal doesn't end with selection. . . ."51

### Participants

As described above, the process of selecting elementary principals is often complex and can involve several steps or specific methods. Likewise, the selection process can be carried out by the superintendent working alone or by representatives of various groups. The nature of this involvement has been addressed by several authors.

Working under a grant from the National Institute of Education of the United States Department of Education, Catherine D. Baltzell and Robert A. Dentler of Abt Associates, Incorporated produced a case study on the selection of principals in American public school districts. This 1983 work is one of the few extensive research attempts to address this subject to date. The first part of their

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<sup>51</sup>Ibid., 31-33.

case study reported on conventional selection practices as identified from randomly selected school districts. The authors concluded from this research that,

"Superintendents or a trusted deputy or veteran personnel director controlled nearly every facet of the process. . . . Teacher and parent impacts were minimal everywhere."<sup>52</sup>

Writing in Educational and Psychological Measurement in the winter of 1986, Joyce Hogan and Larry L. Zenke indicated that responsibility for selecting school principals typically rests with the superintendent. Often other administrators such as associate superintendents, directors, and/or administrative assistants are involved.<sup>53</sup>

Writing in the Principal in 1974, Professor Kenneth E. McIntyre argued for greater involvement of groups such as teachers, parents or pupils in the selection of principals.<sup>54</sup>

Writing in the American School Board Journal in September of 1981, Mary Lou Meese suggested greater involvement of groups of district personnel and clients in the selection of principals.<sup>55</sup>

Superintendent Milton R. Herzog outlined the procedures used in District 125 for employing a principal. This

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<sup>52</sup>Baltzell, Selecting Principals, 102.

<sup>53</sup>Hogan, "Alternate Procedures," 936-938.

<sup>54</sup>McIntyre, "The Way It Was/Is," 34.

<sup>55</sup>Mary Lou Meese, "Superintendents Who Shoot from the Hip on Hiring Decisions Sometimes Blow Off Their Own Toes," American School Board Journal 168 (September 1981): 40-41.

district involved students, teachers, administrators and board members in various stages of the selection process.<sup>56</sup>

Superintendent Laura R. Fliegner reported that many school districts traditionally involve representatives of the following groups in principal selection - "central office executives, principals, school board members, parents, teachers, students, and community members."<sup>57</sup>

Richard L. Fiander, Superintendent in Summit, New Jersey, recommended a committee which includes a school board member, parent, teacher from school involved, and another administrator in addition to the superintendent.<sup>58</sup>

Lynn Cornett, reporting on the Southern Regional Education Board's Conference on the Selection and Training of Principals held in May of 1982, listed various participants in the selection process including teachers, administrators and parents. However, sixty percent of the principals were selected by the superintendent with less than one-fourth selected by the school board.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>56</sup>Milton R. Herzog, "Selecting a New Principal This Year?" (Arlington, Virginia: Management Operations Information Bank, Educational Research Service, 1983), 7.

<sup>57</sup>Laura R. Fliegner, "How to Find Promising Principals," The Executive Educator 9 (April 1987): 17.

<sup>58</sup>Richard L. Fiander, "Don't Wing it When You Hire Principals," The Executive Educator 8 (December 1986): 24.

<sup>59</sup>Cornett, The Preparation and Selection of School Principals, 7.

Writing in the September, 1984 issue of the Principal, Perry A. Zirkel and Ivan B. Gluckman pointed out a unique benefit of inclusion of females on principal screening and selection committees. Their inclusion can be a relevant factor considered in sex discrimination cases.<sup>60</sup>

Crystal J. Gips and Paul V. Bredeson conducted an exploratory study focusing on teacher participation in the decision-making processes of personnel selection in public schools. The result of their study was reported at the 1984 annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association. Gips and Bredeson reported on extremely low level of involvement of teachers in the selection of principals with only 3.6 percent of those reporting personal involvement in the selection of a principal during the past three years.<sup>61</sup> However, those who were involved indicated their belief that teachers:

". . . had the ability to assess the candidates' sensitivity to the myriad concerns of teachers, to judge the candidates' compatibility with staff, community, and school philosophy and to assess a candidate's human relations skills. They also felt that they could evaluate the candidates' ability to handle discipline, that is, the likelihood that the candidate would meet their expectations for the principal's role in the

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<sup>60</sup>Perry A. Zirkel and Ivan B. Gluckman, "Sex Discrimination in Choosing Administrators," Principal 64 (September 1984): 52.

<sup>61</sup>Crystal J. Gips and Paul V. Bredeson, The Selection of Teachers and Principals: A Model for Faculty Participation in Personnel Selection Decisions in Public Schools (New Orleans: American Educational Research Association, 1984), 7-8.



management of student discipline. And finally, some expressed a need to determine 'if the candidates know anything at all about the education of children.'"62

Teachers also reported positive outcomes from their involvement in principal selection including enhancement of the teacher's role, development of a sense of staff harmony, partial elimination of politics, leadership continuity, and helping insure a better fit between principal and the system. Gips and Bredeson concluded that, ". . . higher levels of participation may be positively related to satisfaction in both the process and outcome of personnel selection decision making in schools."63

Doctoral student, Mark E. Anderson, conducted research on the employment of principals concentrating on exemplary procedures in Oregon. His work was published in May of 1988. One of the exemplary districts cited included the following representatives from each school:

"at least two teacher representatives.  
two classified representatives.  
one or two parents selected by the parent organization.  
one student (at the high school level only), selected by the student body officers.  
one school board member (optional).  
director of curriculum, assistant superintendent, and Hesling (personnel director)."64

In contrast, a second exemplary district did not always include parents, students and teachers to avoid elements of

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62Ibid., 18-19.

63Ibid., 19-20.

64Anderson, Hiring Capable Principals, 24.

a "beauty contest" in the selection process unless the vacancy occurred in a particular school where community support was in need of improvement. Normally, the district involved principals, central office administrators and staff development teachers. These administrators were used to obtaining varied perspectives to insure fairness and preclude a "good-old-boy" network. The superintendent was also involved as an equal partner.<sup>65</sup>

Anderson concluded that districts seeking to improve their principal selection process should involve a broad base of people including school-based administrators, teachers, and parents in order to prevent the "groupthink" syndrome that may occur in small, cohesive groups of central office administrators. He went on to recommend training these individuals in legal guidelines and proper assessment techniques to insure selection based on merit.<sup>66</sup>

### Roles

In addition to discussing who should be involved in the selection of principals, most researchers and authors went on to describe the extent of involvement of these participants. What roles are entrusted to the various participants in the selection of elementary school principals?

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<sup>65</sup>Ibid., 28-29.

<sup>66</sup>Ibid., 32.

Mary Lou Meese recommended an interview committee including administrators, parents, representatives of various academic and instruction levels and teachers. The committee narrows the candidates to three to five finalists.<sup>67</sup>

In revising the principal selection process in Nanuet, New York, various tasks were allotted to specific groups. The school board developed objectives for inclusion in the job description for a specific vacancy. In completing the job description, the superintendent sought feedback from staff members, community residents, students, and administrators relative to the special talents and abilities that were needed. The interviews were conducted by the superintendent and the assistant superintendent. Prior to a final decision, a visit to the finalists' home district or school was undertaken with visits including meetings with separate panels of parents, administrator colleagues, students and board members.<sup>68</sup>

Superintendent Richard L. Fiander used a screening/advisory committee comprised of a school board member, parent, teacher and another administrator to help him select principals in Summit New Jersey. He chaired the committee that was involved in establishing its procedures, surveying its constituency on kind of person needed, reviewing the principal's job description, determining

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<sup>67</sup>Meese, Superintendents, 40-41.

<sup>68</sup>Fliegner, Promising Principals, 17-18.



selection criteria, screening, interviewing and selecting two top candidates. Prior to the committee screening, the superintendent and the other administrator worked outside the committee only to weed out candidates who did not meet the minimum qualifications for the position. Finally the superintendent selected the successful candidate to recommend to the school board.<sup>69</sup>

Baltzell and Dentler concluded that in districts that rely on their superintendents to recommend principal candidates on merit as opposed to patronage, very few school board members take a direct part in screening rather, they rely on their role as policy setters to shape the selection process. The superintendent is the chief decision-maker in most instances.<sup>70</sup>

Crystal J. Gips and Paul V. Bredeson determined that teachers who have been involved in the selection process have performed a variety of tasks including paper screening, interviewing and the actual selection decision. However, few teachers saw the actual selection as solely their responsibility. Rather, they saw themselves in supportive and consultative roles providing input on selection criteria, processes and candidates. Gips and Bredeson concluded, "teachers need to make a stronger case for their involvement

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<sup>69</sup>Fiander, Hire Principals, 24-25.

<sup>70</sup>Baltzell, Selecting Principals, 54-62.

and the benefits which accrue to the process and to the organization as by-products of greater involvement.<sup>71</sup>

In reporting on exemplary selection procedures in Oregon, Mark E. Anderson reported on the following two districts. In the Lake Oswego School District, the director of personnel conducts a preliminary paper screening to eliminate candidates who do not meet the minimum qualifications. Then he conducts a training session with members of the screening and interview committee to insure compliance with legal requirements and to improve their interviewing skills. The committee which includes teachers, classified employees, parents, school board members and administrator's representatives complete their paper screening of candidates. Following a consensus building process they identify five to ten candidates to interview. The actual interview by this committee is very structured based on a set of eight to twelve situational questions. Again, consensus building is used to identify two or three top candidates for the superintendent to interview. Sometimes the superintendent sits through the interviews and participates in the consensus process. In the end, the superintendent makes the final employment decision based on

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<sup>71</sup>Gips, Selection Principals, 21-22.

the interviews, committee recommendations, and reference checks.<sup>72</sup>

Tegard Public Schools usually rely solely on administrators to staff the screening and interview committee. The superintendent also is included as an equal participant in the screening and interview process. This committee schedules a three-hour structured interview with each candidate. After the committee selects finalists, the superintendent arranges site visits in the candidates' school districts. The superintendent often is accompanied on these visits by one or two committee members. After the site visits, the committee reconvenes to again review the finalists. The superintendent makes the final selection at this meeting.<sup>73</sup>

Baltzell and Dentler concluded that the screening process should be divided into two phases with the initial phase limited to determining the list of eligible candidates on the basis of objective standards such as certification and prior experience. This phase should be undertaken by the personnel director or department. The second phase of screening or narrowing the candidate list is usually given to a committee. Baltzell and Dentler were concerned with the problem of "groupthink" limiting the judgment of the

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<sup>72</sup>Anderson, Hiring Capable Principals, 25-26.

<sup>73</sup>Ibid., 28-30.

committee especially when the committee was comprised of a close circle of administrators. They concluded that using parents and teachers on the committee can help mitigate this phenomenon. Baltzell and Dentler also pointed out that greater involvement on the screening committee also improved the degree of external legitimacy accorded the process.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>74</sup>Baltzell, Selecting Principals, 179-181.

## CHAPTER 3

### RESULTS

An investigation was conducted to identify and analyze the methods, participants and roles used in the selection of elementary principals in Indiana. The investigation was confined to the 1986-1989 school years. The analysis of data was divided into three major sections: selection methods, selection participants and the roles played by the participants. In addition, respondents were surveyed as to the existence in their school corporation of a written board policy covering the selection of elementary school principals.

To collect data for this study, questionnaires were sent to all the public school superintendents in Indiana.

Table 1 shows the population involved in the study and the responses.

TABLE 1

#### POPULATION INVOLVED IN THE STUDY AND RESPONSES

Number in Population	Number Returned	Percent Returned	Number Usable	Percent Usable
292	260	89%	256	87.7%

The total population available for this study included 292 Indiana school superintendents. Questionnaires were sent to all members of this population. The number of questionnaires returned was 260. Of the questionnaires returned, 256 or 87.7% of the subject population were usable.

The school years when respondents last employed an elementary principal was the first item considered in this study. Table 2 shows the distribution of the returns based on the school year of last elementary principal selection.

TABLE 2

DISTRIBUTION OF RETURNS BASED ON SCHOOL YEAR OF LAST  
ELEMENTARY PRINCIPAL SELECTION

School Year	Number of Usable Returns	Percent of Usable Returns	Cumulative Number	Cumulative Percent
1988-1989	72	28.1	72	28.1
1987-1988	43	16.8	115	44.9
1986-1987	30	11.7	145	56.6
1985-1986 or before	111	43.4	256	100

The total number of usable returns equaled 256. Of this number, 111 or 43.4 percent of the usable returns reported they had not employed an elementary principal since the 1985-1986 school year. No further data were collected

from this population as they had not selected an elementary principal from the time period under consideration by this study (1986-1989).

Returns from the 1986-1989 time period totaled 145 or 56.6 percent of the usable returns. Of this number, 30 or 11.7 percent were based on employments that occurred during the 1986-1987 school year; 43 or 16.8 percent from the 1987-1988 school year; and 72 or 28.1 percent from the 1988-1989 school year. Additional data were solicited from these 145 respondents.

#### Selection Methods

The questionnaire contained five sections devoted to selection methods utilized in the employment of elementary principals. Four of these sections contained single items: local applicant pool, written job description, screening and methods used in selecting finalists. The fifth section dealt with declaration of vacancy and contained three items: vacancy announcement, area of advertisement and information provided candidates prior to interview.

Table 3 shows the distribution of returns based on methods used by respondents to encourage the local applicant pool.

TABLE 3

DISTRIBUTION OF RETURNS BASED ON METHODS  
USED BY RESPONDENTS TO ENCOURAGE LOCAL APPLICANT POOL

Method - Local Applicant Pool	No.	Cum.No.	%	Cum.%
Help pay corporation teachers for taking graduate courses in school administration	15	15	10.3	10.3
Utilize acting principalships to prepare candidates	29	44	20.0	30.3
Utilize internships to prepare candidates	41	85	28.3	58.6
None of the above	81	166	55.9	114.5

(N=145)

Respondents were instructed to check all that apply, thus 166 responses or 114.5 percent were obtained from the 145 usable returns. Of these responses, 15 or 10.3 percent reported helping pay corporation teachers for taking graduate courses in school administration, 29 or 20.0 percent utilizing acting principalships to prepare candidates and 41 or 28.3 percent utilizing internships to prepare candidates. While 81 or 55.9 percent of the respondents indicated they had undertaken none of the listed measures to encourage administrative development.

The three items pertaining to declaration of vacancy comprised the next section of the questionnaire. Three items were devoted to this subject. Table 4 shows the distribution of returns based on the type of vacancy announcement listed.



TABLE 4

DISTRIBUTION OF RETURNS BASED ON THE TYPE OF  
VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT LISTED

Method - Declaration of Vacancy	No.	Cum.No.	%	Cum. %
Vacancy announcement listed specific school	76	76	52.4	52.4
Vacancy announcement listed only the school corporation	59	135	40.7	93.1
No response	10	145	6.9	100

(N=145)

The total number of questionnaires returned was 145. Of this number, 35 or 93.1 percent checked one of the two items offered while 10 or 6.9 percent did not respond to this item. Of the 135 responses, 76 or 52.4 percent of the returns listed the specific school where a vacancy existed. Fifty-nine or 40.7 percent listed only the school corporation.

Table 5 shows the distribution of returns based on where the vacancy announcement was advertised.

TABLE 5

DISTRIBUTION OF RETURNS BASED ON WHERE THE  
VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT WAS ADVERTISED

Method - Where Advertised	No.	Cum.No.	%	Cum. %
Only within school corporation	12	12	8.3	8.3

TABLE 5 - Continued

Only in immediate geographic region within 50 miles	7	19	4.8	13.1
Only within Indiana	84	103	57.9	71.0
Only in Indiana and adjacent states	39	142	26.9	97.9
Nationally	3	145	2.1	100.0

(N=145)

All 145 of the returns contained a response to this item. Twelve or 8.3 percent confined their advertising within the school corporation while another seven or 4.8 percent limited their efforts to the immediate geographic region. The number of returns advertising within Indiana was 84 or 57.9 percent of the responses. An additional 39 or 26.9 percent advertised in Indiana and adjacent states. Thus, 142 or 97.9 percent advertised in an area confined to Indiana and adjacent states. Only three or 2.1 percent advertised on a national basis.

Table 6 lists the distribution of returns based on the type of written information provided candidates prior to interview.

TABLE 6

DISTRIBUTION OF RETURNS BASED ON THE TYPE OF WRITTEN  
INFORMATION PROVIDED CANDIDATES PRIOR TO INTERVIEW

Method - Info Provided	No.	Cum.No.	%	Cum %
Specific school information	77	77	53.1	53.1
School corporation info.	95	172	65.5	118.6

TABLE 6 - Continued

Community information	72	244	49.7	168.3
None of the above	39	283	26.9	195.2

(N=145)

Respondents were instructed to check all that apply. This resulted in 283 checks from the 145 usable returns. Of these responses, 77 or 53.1 percent provided written information concerning the specific school where the vacancy existed, while 95 or 65.5 percent provided written information concerning the school corporation. Community information was listed on 72 or 49.7 percent of the returns. Thirty-nine or 26.9 percent of the returns indicated that none of this type written information was provided candidates prior to the interview.

The use of a written job description as part of the selection criteria was covered in the next area of the questionnaire. Table 7 shows the distribution of the returns based on use of a written job description.

TABLE 7

DISTRIBUTION OF THE RETURNS BASED ON USE  
OF A WRITTEN JOB DESCRIPTION

Method - Written Job Description	No.	Cum. No.	%	Cum. %
Was not used	35	35	24.1	24.1
Was available from previous vacancies	55	90	37.9	62.0

TABLE 7 - Continued

Was prepared or revised for this vacancy	54	144	37.2	99.3
No response	1	145	0.7	100.0

(N=145)

Of the 145 returns, 144 or 99.3 percent checked one of the options to this item. Thirty-five or 24.1 percent indicated a written job description was not used. There were 55 or 37.9 percent who used a written job description available from previous vacancies. Fifty-four or 37.2 percent either prepared or revised a job description for this specific vacancy.

Various methods of screening candidates were covered in the next section of the questionnaire devoted to selection methods. Table 8 shows the distribution of returns based on screening methods.

TABLE 8

## DISTRIBUTION OF RETURNS BASED ON SCREENING METHODS

Screening Methods	Numbers	Percent
Letters of application.....	140	96.6
Corporation application forms.....	124	85.5
Letters of recommendation.....	132	91.0
Proof of certification or ability to obtain	129	89.0
College transcripts.....	127	87.6
Blind ratings.....	16	11.0
Preliminary interview.....	120	82.8
Recommendation from university placement bureau.....	88	60.7
"Good old boy" network.....	30	20.7
Total.....	906	

(N=145)

Respondents were instructed to check all that apply. This resulted in 906 checks from the 145 usable returns. The use of letters of application as a screening measure was checked on 140 or 96.6 percent of the returns. The use of corporation application forms was indicated on 124 or 85.5 percent of the returns. Letters of recommendation were checked on 132 or 91.0 percent of the returns. Proof of certification was checked on 129 or 89.0 percent of the returns. The use of college transcripts was checked on 127 or 87.6 percent of the returns. Blind ratings was checked on 16 or 11.0 percent of the returns. Use of preliminary interview was checked on 120 or 82.8 percent of the returns. Recommendation from university placement bureau was checked on 88 or 60.7 percent of the returns, while 30 or 20.7 percent checked use of "good old boy" network.

Various methods of selecting finalists were covered in the last section of the questionnaire devoted to selection methods. Table 9 shows the distribution of returns based on selecting finalists.

TABLE 9

## DISTRIBUTION OF RETURNS BASED ON SELECTING FINALISTS

Methods - Selecting Finalists	Number	Percent
Written test.....	13	9.0
Simulation exercise.....	10	6.9
On-the-job observation.....	20	13.8
Written reference verification form.	61	42.1
Telephone check.....	112	77.2
Open interview.....	97	66.9

TABLE 9 - Continued

Structured interview.....	101	69.7
Assessment center report.....	6	4.1
Total.....	<u>420</u>	

(N=145)

Respondents were instructed to check all that apply. This resulted in 420 checks from 145 usable returns. The various methods for selecting finalists were checked as follows: written test on 13 or 9.0 percent, simulation exercise on 10 or 6.9 percent, on-the-job observation in 20 or 13.8 percent, written reference verification form on 61 or 42.1 percent, telephone check on 112 or 77.2 percent, open interview on 97 or 66.9 percent, structured interview on 101 or 69.7 percent and assessment center report on six or 4.1 percent of the returns.

### Selection Participants

The questionnaire contained one section devoted to participants involved in the selection of elementary school principals. Table 10 shows the distribution of the returns based on the various participants involved in the selection process.

TABLE 10

#### DISTRIBUTION OF THE RETURNS BASED ON THE VARIOUS PARTICIPANTS INVOLVED IN THE SELECTION PROCESS

Selection Participants	Number	Percent
Superintendent.....	140	96.6

TABLE 10 - Continued

Central office administrator with personnel responsibility.....	87	60.0
School board.....	74	51.0
Elementary principal.....	69	47.6
Teacher.....	58	40.0
Other central office administrator..	53	36.6
Parent.....	34	23.5
Secondary principal.....	33	22.8
School board member.....	30	20.7
Classified employee.....	23	15.9
Professional consultant service.....	0	0
Total.....	<u>601</u>	

(N=145)

Respondents were instructed to check all that apply. This resulted in a total response of 601 from 145 usable returns. The frequency of responses varied from a high of 140 or 96.6 percent for superintendent to a low of 0 for professional consultant service. Central office administrator with personnel responsibility received 87 or 60.0 percent checks. The next two highest responses were school board at 74 or 51.0 percent and elementary principal with 69 or 47.6 percent of returns. These items were followed by teacher at 58 or 40.0 percent and other central office administrator with 53 or 36.6 percent of returns. Following this grouping was classified employee with 23 checks or 15.9 percent.

### Roles

The questionnaire contained one section covering the roles with the various participants played in the selection

of elementary school principals. The data from this section is reported in the next 18 tables. Table 11 shows the distribution of the returns based on involvement of the participants in helping prepare the vacancy announcement.

TABLE 11

DISTRIBUTION OF THE RETURNS BASED ON INVOLVEMENT OF THE PARTICIPANTS IN HELPING PREPARE THE VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

Participant	Number	Percent
Superintendent.....	111	76.6
Personnel administrator.....	48	33.1
Other central office administrator..	33	22.8
Classified employee.....	16	11.0
Elementary principal.....	13	9.0
School board.....	7	4.8
Secondary principal.....	7	4.8
Teacher.....	3	2.1
School board member.....	3	2.1
Parent.....	1	0.7
Professional consultant.....	0	0
Total.....	<u>242</u>	

(N=145)

Respondents were instructed to check all that apply. Thus, 242 responses were obtained from the usable returns. The frequency of responses ranged from a high of 111 or 76.6 percent for superintendent to a low of zero for professional consultant service. The next two highest responses were personnel administrator with 48 or 33.1 percent and other central office administrator with 33 or 22.8 percent. They were followed by classified employee with 16 or 11.0 percent and elementary principal with 13 or 9.0 percent. The lowest number of responses were recorded by secondary principal and



school board with seven or 4.8 percent, teacher and school board member with three or 2.1 percent and parent with one or .7 percent.

Table 12 shows the distribution of returns based on the involvement of the participants in helping decide where to advertise.

TABLE 12

DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONSES BASED ON THE INVOLVEMENT  
OF THE PARTICIPANTS IN HELPING DECIDE WHERE TO ADVERTISE

Participant	Number	Percent
Superintendent.....	120	82.8
Personnel administrator.....	48	33.1
Other central office administrator..	34	23.5
School board.....	16	11.0
Classified employee.....	5	3.5
Elementary principal.....	5	3.5
Teacher.....	3	2.1
Secondary principal.....	3	2.1
School board member.....	2	1.4
Parent.....	1	0.7
Professional consultant.....	0	0
Total.....	<u>237</u>	

(N=145)

Respondents were instructed to check all that apply. This resulted in 237 checks from 145 usable returns. The frequency of responses ranged from a high of 120 or 82.8 percent for superintendent to a low of zero for professional consultant. The next two highest responses were 48 or 33.1 percent for personnel administrator and 34 or 23.5 percent for other central office administrator. School board received 16 or 11.0 percent. These were followed by

classified employee and elementary principal at five or 3.5 percent, teacher and secondary principal at three or 2.1 percent, school board member at two or 1.4 percent and parent at one or .7 percent.

Table 13 shows the distribution of responses based on the involvement of the participants in helping determine content of written material given to candidates prior to interview.

TABLE 13

DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONSES BASED ON INVOLVEMENT OF PARTICIPANTS IN HELPING DETERMINE CONTENT OF WRITTEN MATERIAL GIVEN TO CANDIDATES PRIOR TO INTERVIEW

Participant	Number	Percent
Superintendent.....	100	69.0
Personnel administrator.....	45	31.0
Other central office administrator..	39	26.9
Elementary principal.....	18	12.4
Secondary principal.....	10	6.9
Teacher.....	8	5.5
School board.....	5	3.5
School board member.....	4	2.8
Classified employee.....	3	2.1
Parent.....	1	0.7
Professional consultant.....	0	0
Total.....	<u>233</u>	

(N=145)

Respondents were instructed to check all that apply. This resulted in 233 responses from 145 usable returns. The frequency of responses ranged from a high of 100 or 69.0 percent for superintendent to a low of zero for professional consultant. The next two highest responses were 45 or 31.0 percent for personnel administrator and 39 or 26.9 percent

for other central office administrator. Elementary principal received 18 or 12.4 percent. These were followed by secondary principal at 10 or 6.9 percent, teacher at eight or 5.5 percent, school board at five or 3.5 percent, school board member at four or 2.8 percent, classified employee at three or 2.1 percent and parent at one or .7 percent.

Table 14 shows the distribution of responses based on the involvement of the participants in helping prepare or update written job description or position specifications.

TABLE 14

DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONSES BASED ON INVOLVEMENT OF  
PARTICIPANTS IN HELPING PREPARE OR UPDATE WRITTEN  
JOB DESCRIPTION OR POSITION SPECIFICATIONS

Participant	Number	Percent
Superintendent.....	102	70.3
Other central office administrator..	45	31.3
Personnel administrator.....	44	30.3
Elementary principal.....	29	20.0
School board.....	9	6.2
Teacher.....	8	5.5
Secondary principal.....	8	5.5
School board member.....	5	3.5
Classified employee.....	4	2.8
Parent.....	4	2.8
Professional consultant.....	0	0
Total.....	<u>258</u>	

(N=145)

Respondents were instructed to check all that apply. This resulted in 258 checks from 145 usable returns. The frequency of responses ranged from a high of 102 or 70.3 percent for superintendent to zero for professional consultant. The next highest responses were other central

office administrator at 45 or 31.0 percent and personnel administrator at 44 or 30.3 percent. Elementary principal received 29 or 20.0 percent. These were followed by school board at nine or 6.2 percent, teacher and secondary principal at eight or 5.5 percent, school board member at five or 3.5 percent and classified employee and parent at four or 2.8 percent.

Table 15 shows the distribution of responses based on the involvement of the participants in helping implement a procedure to increase principal applicant pool.

TABLE 15

DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONSES BASED ON INVOLVEMENT OF  
PARTICIPANTS IN HELPING IMPLEMENT A PROCEDURE TO INCREASE  
PRINCIPAL APPLICANT POOL

Participant	Number	Percent
Superintendent.....	67	46.2
Personnel administrator.....	35	24.1
Other central office administrator..	31	21.4
Elementary principal.....	15	10.3
Secondary principal.....	9	6.2
School board.....	5	3.5
Classified employee.....	4	2.8
Teacher.....	4	2.8
School board member.....	2	1.4
Professional consultant.....	1	0.7
Parent.....	0	0
Total.....	<u>173</u>	

(N=145)

Respondents were instructed to check all that apply. This resulted in 173 checks from 145 usable returns. The frequency of responses ranged from a high of 67 or 46.2 percent for superintendent to a low of zero for parent. The

next two highest responses were 35 or 24.1 percent for personnel administrator and 31 or 21.4 percent for other central office administrator. The next two highest responses were 15 or 10.3 percent for elementary principal and nine or 6.2 percent for secondary principal. These were followed by school board at five or 3.5 percent, classified employee and teacher at four or 2.8 percent and school board member at two or 1.4 percent. Professional consultant received one or .7 percent.

Table 16 shows the distribution of responses based on the involvement of the participants in helping screen candidates.

TABLE 16

DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONSES BASED ON INVOLVEMENT OF PARTICIPANTS IN HELPING SCREEN CANDIDATES

Participant	Number	Percent
Superintendent.....	126	86.9
Other central office administrator..	66	45.5
Elementary principal.....	66	45.5
Personnel administrator.....	51	35.2
Teacher.....	45	31.0
Secondary principal.....	32	22.1
Parent.....	27	18.6
School board.....	24	16.6
School board member.....	24	16.6
Classified employee.....	14	9.7
Professional consultant.....	0	0
Total.....	<u>475</u>	

(N=145)

Respondents were instructed to check all that apply. This resulted in 475 checks from 145 usable returns. The

frequency of responses ranged from a high of 126 or 86.9 percent for superintendent to a low of zero for professional consultant. The next two highest responses were other central office administrator and elementary principal at 66 or 45.5 percent. The next two highest responses were personnel administrator at 51 or 35.2 percent and teacher at 45 or 31.0 percent. These were followed by secondary principal at 32 or 22.1 percent, parent at 27 or 18.6 percent and school board and school board member at 24 or 16.6 percent. Classified employee received 14 or 9.7 percent.

Table 17 shows the distribution of responses based on the involvement of the participants in helping determine final recommendation for employment.

TABLE 17

DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONSES BASED ON INVOLVEMENT OF  
PARTICIPANTS IN HELPING DETERMINE FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS  
FOR EMPLOYMENT

Participant	Number	Percent
Superintendent.....	133	91.7
Other central office administrator..	59	40.7
School board.....	51	35.2
Elementary principal.....	49	33.8
Personnel administrator.....	47	32.4
School board member.....	34	23.5
Teacher.....	30	20.7
Secondary principal.....	22	15.2
Parent.....	16	11.0
Classified employee.....	6	4.1
Professional consultant.....	0	0
Total.....	<u>447</u>	

(N=145)

Respondents were instructed to check all that apply. This resulted in 447 checks from 145 usable returns. The frequency of responses ranged from a high of 133 or 91.7 percent for superintendent to a low of zero for professional consultant. The next highest responses were from other central office administrator at 59 or 40.7 percent, school board at 51 or 35.2 percent, elementary principal at 49 or 33.8 percent, and personnel administrator at 47 or 32.4 percent. These were followed by school board member at 34 or 23.5 percent, teacher at 30 or 20.7 percent, secondary principal at 22 or 15.2 percent and parent at 16 or 11.0 percent. Classified employee received six or 4.1 percent.

### Roles

The next 11 tables are devoted to a summary of the responses based on the individual participants in the process of selecting elementary school principals. Table 18 shows the distribution of returns based on the roles of a classified employee.

TABLE 18

DISTRIBUTION OF RETURNS BASED ON ROLES  
OF A CLASSIFIED EMPLOYEE

Role	Number	Percent
Prepare vacancy announcement.....	16	11.0
Screen candidates.....	14	9.7
Recommendation for employment.....	6	4.1
Decide where to advertise.....	5	3.5
Prepare or update job description...	4	2.8

TABLE 18 - Continued

Implement procedure to increase applicant pool.....	4	2.8
Determine material given prior to interview.....	<u>3</u>	2.1
Total.....	52	

(N=145)

Respondents were instructed to check all that apply. This resulted in 52 checks from 145 usable returns. The frequency of responses ranged from a high of 16 or 11.0 percent for help prepare vacancy announcement to a low of three or 2.1 percent for help determine content of material given prior to interview. The next highest response was 14 or 9.7 percent for help screen candidates. These were followed by six or 4.1 percent for help determine final recommendation for employment, five or 3.5 percent for help decide where to advertise and four or 2.8 percent for help prepare or update written job description and help implement a procedure to increase principal applicant pool.

Table 19 shows the distribution of returns based on the roles of a parent.

TABLE 19

## DISTRIBUTION OF RETURNS BASED ON ROLES OF A PARENT

Role	Number	Percent
Screen candidates.....	27	18.6
Recommendation for employment.....	16	11.0
Prepare or update job description...	4	2.8
Prepare vacancy announcement.....	1	.7
Decide where to advertise.....	1	.7



TABLE 19 - Continued

Determine material given prior to interview.....	1	.7
Implement procedure to increase applicant pool.....	0	0
Total.....	<u>50</u>	

(N=145)

Respondents were instructed to check all that apply. This resulted in 50 checks from 145 usable returns. The frequency of responses ranged from a high of 27 or 18.6 percent for help screen candidates to a low of zero for help implement a procedure to increase principal applicant pool. The next highest response was 16 or 11.0 percent for help determine final recommendation for employment. These were followed by four or 2.8 percent for help prepare or update job description and one or .7 percent for help prepare vacancy announcement, help decide where to advertise and help determine content of written material given to candidates prior to interview.

Table 20 shows the distribution of returns based on the roles of a teacher.

TABLE 20

## DISTRIBUTION OF RETURNS BASED ON ROLES OF A TEACHER

Role	Number	Percent
Screen candidates.....	45	31.0
Recommendation for employment.....	30	20.7
Determine material given prior to interview.....	8	5.5
Prepare or update job description...	8	5.5

TABLE 20 - Continued

Implement procedure to increase applicant pool.....	4	2.8
Prepare vacancy announcement.....	3	2.1
Decide where to advertise.....	3	2.1
Total.....	<u>101</u>	

(N=145)

Respondents were instructed to check all that apply. This resulted in 101 checks from 145 usable returns. The frequency of responses ranged from a high of 45 or 31.0 percent for help screen candidates to a low of three or 2.1 percent for help prepare vacancy announcement and help decide where to advertise. The next highest response was 30 or 20.7 percent for help determine final recommendation for employment. These were followed by eight or 5.5 percent for help prepare or update written job description or position specifications and four or 2.8 percent for help implement a procedure to increase principal applicant pool.

Table 21 shows the distribution of returns based on the roles of an elementary principal.

TABLE 21

DISTRIBUTION OF RETURNS BASED ON  
ROLES OF AN ELEMENTARY PRINCIPAL

Role	Number	Percent
Screen candidates.....	66	45.5
Recommendation for employment.....	49	33.8
Prepare or update job description...	29	20.0
Determine material given prior to interview.....	18	12.4
Implement procedure to increase applicant pool.....	15	10.3

TABLE 21 - Continued

Prepare vacancy announcement.....	13	9.0
Decide where to advertise.....	5	3.5
Total.....	<u>195</u>	

(N=145)

Respondents were instructed to check all that apply. This resulted in 195 checks from 145 usable returns. The frequency of responses ranged from a high of 66 or 45.5 percent for help screen candidates to a low of five or 3.5 percent for help decide where to advertise. The next highest responses were 49 or 33.8 percent for help determine final recommendation for employment and 29 or 20.0 percent for help prepare or update written job description or position specification. These were followed by 18 or 12.4 percent for help determine content of written material given to candidates prior to interview, 15 or 10.3 percent for help implement a procedure to increase principal applicant pool and 13 or 9.0 percent for help prepare vacancy announcement.

Table 22 shows the distribution of returns based on the roles of a secondary principal.

TABLE 22

DISTRIBUTION OF RETURNS BASED ON ROLES  
OF A SECONDARY PRINCIPAL

Role	Number	Percent
Screen candidates.....	32	22.1
Recommendation for employment.....	22	15.2
Determine material given prior to interview.....	10	6.9

TABLE 22 - Continued

Implement procedure to increase applicant pool.....	9	6.2
Prepare or update job description...	8	5.5
Prepare vacancy announcement.....	7	4.8
Decide where to advertise.....	3	2.1
Total.....	<u>91</u>	

(N=145)

Respondents were instructed to check all that apply. This resulted in 91 checks from 145 usable returns. The frequency of responses ranged from a high of 32 or 22.1 percent for help screen candidates to a low of three or 2.1 percent for help decide where to advertise. The next highest response was 22 or 15.2 percent for help determine final recommendation for employment. These were followed by 10 or 6.9 percent for help determine content of written material given to candidates prior to interview, nine or 6.2 percent for help implement a procedure to increase principal applicant pool, eight or 5.5 percent for help prepare or update written job description or position specifications and seven or 4.8 percent for help decide where to advertise.

Table 23 shows the distribution of returns based on the roles of a personnel administrator.

TABLE 23

DISTRIBUTION OF RETURNS BASED ON ROLES OF  
A PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATOR

Role	Number	Percent
Screen candidates.....	51	35.2
Prepare vacancy announcement.....	48	33.1

TABLE 23 - Continued

Decide where to advertise.....	48	33.1
Recommendation for employment.....	47	32.4
Determine material given prior to interview.....	45	31.0
Prepare or update job description...	44	30.3
Implement procedure to increase applicant pool.....	<u>35</u>	24.1
Total.....	<u>318</u>	

(N=145)

Respondents were instructed to check all that apply. This resulted in 318 checks from 145 usable returns. The frequency of responses ranged from a high of 51 or 35.2 percent for a help screen candidates to a low of 35 or 24.1 percent for help implement a procedure to increase principal applicant pool. These were followed by 48 or 33.1 percent for help prepare vacancy announcement and help decide where to advertise, 47 or 32.4 percent for help determine final recommendation for employment, 45 or 31.0 percent for help determine content of written material given to candidates prior to interview and 44 or 30.3 percent for help prepare or update written job description or position specifications.

Table 24 shows the distribution of returns based on the roles of an other central office administrator.

TABLE 24

DISTRIBUTION OF RETURNS BASED ON ROLES OF AN  
OTHER CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR

Role	Number	Percent
Screen candidates.....	66	45.5
Recommendation for employment.....	59	40.7

TABLE 24 - Continued

Prepare or update job description...	45	31.0
Determine material given prior to interview.....	39	26.9
Decide where to advertise.....	34	23.5
Prepare vacancy announcement.....	33	22.8
Implement procedure to increase applicant pool.....	<u>31</u>	21.4
Total.....	<u>307</u>	

(N=145)

Respondents were instructed to check all that apply. This resulted in 307 checks from 145 usable returns. The frequency of responses ranged from a high of 66 or 45.5 percent for help screen candidates to a low of 31 or 21.4 percent for help implement a procedure to increase principal pool. These were followed by 59 or 40.7 percent for help determine final recommendation for employment, 45 or 31.0 percent for help prepare or update written job description or position specifications, 39 or 26.9 percent for help determine content of written material given to candidates prior to interview, 34 or 23.5 percent for help decide where to advertise and 33 or 22.8 percent for help prepare vacancy announcement.

Table 25 shows the distribution of returns based on the roles of the superintendent.

TABLE 25

DISTRIBUTION OF RETURNS BASED ON THE ROLES  
OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

Role	Number	Percent
Recommendation for employment.....	133	91.7
Screen candidates.....	126	86.9
Decide where to advertise.....	120	82.8
Prepare vacancy announcement.....	111	76.6
Prepare or update job description...	102	70.3
Determine material given prior to interview.....	100	69.0
Implement procedure to increase applicant pool.....	<u>67</u>	46.2
Total.....	<u>759</u>	

(N=145)

Respondents were instructed to check all that apply. This resulted in 759 checks from 145 usable returns. The frequency of responses ranged from a high of 133 or 91.7 percent for help determine final recommendation for employment to a low of 67 or 56.2 percent for help implement a procedure to increase principal applicant pool. The next two highest responses were 126 or 86.9 percent for help screen candidates and 120 or 82.8 percent for help decide where to advertise. These were followed by 111 or 76.6 percent for help prepare vacancy announcement, 102 or 70.3 percent for help prepare or update written job description or position specifications and 100 or 69.0 percent for help determine content of written material given to candidates prior to interview.

Table 26 shows the distribution returns based on the roles of a school board member.

TABLE 26

DISTRIBUTION OF RETURNS BASED ON  
ROLES OF A SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER

Role	Number	Percent
Recommendation for employment.....	34	23.5
Screen candidates.....	24	16.6
Decide where to advertise.....	5	3.5
Prepare vacancy announcement.....	4	2.8
Prepare or update job description...	3	2.1
Determine material given prior to interview.....	2	1.4
Implement procedure to increase applicant pool.....	2	1.4
Total.....	<u>74</u>	

(N=145)

Respondents were asked to check all that apply. This resulted in 74 checks from 145 usable returns. The frequency of distribution ranged from a high of 34 or 23.5 percent for help determine final recommendation for employment to a low of two or 1.4 percent for help decide where to advertise and help implement a procedure to increase principal applicant pool. The next highest response was 24 or 16.6 percent for help screen candidates. These were followed by five or 3.5 percent for help prepare or update written job description or position specifications, four or 2.8 percent for help determine content of written material given to candidates prior to interview and three or 2.1 percent for help prepare vacancy announcement.

Table 27 shows the distribution of returns based on the roles of the school board.



TABLE 27

## DISTRIBUTION OF RETURNS BASED ON ROLES OF THE SCHOOL BOARD

Role	Number	Percent
Recommendation for employment.....	51	23.5
Screen candidates.....	24	16.6
Decide where to advertise.....	16	11.0
Prepare or update job description...	9	6.2
Prepare vacancy announcement.....	7	4.8
Determine material given prior to interview.....	5	3.5
Implement procedure to increase applicant pool.....	5	3.5
Total.....	<u>117</u>	

(N=145)

Respondents were asked to check all that apply. This resulted in 117 checks from 145 usable returns. The frequency of responses ranged from a high of 51 or 23.5 percent for help determine final recommendation for employment to a low of five or 3.5 percent for help determine content of written material given to candidates prior to interview and help implement a procedure to increase principal applicant pool. The next highest response was 24 or 16.6 percent for help screen candidates. These were followed by 16 or 11.0 percent for help decide where to advertise, nine or 6.2 percent for help prepare or update written job description or position specifications and seven or 4.8 percent for help prepare vacancy announcement.

Table 28 shows the distribution of returns based on the roles of a professional consultant.

TABLE 28

DISTRIBUTION OF RETURNS BASED ON THE  
ROLES OF A PROFESSIONAL CONSULTANT

Role	Number	Percent
Implement procedure to increase applicant pool.....	1	.7
Recommendation for employment.....	0	.0
Screen candidates.....	0	.0
Decide where to advertise.....	0	.0
Prepare or update job description...	0	.0
Prepare vacancy announcement.....	0	.0
Determine material given prior to interview.....	0	.0
Total.....	<u>1</u>	

N=145)

Respondents were asked to check all that apply. This resulted in a single response from 145 usable returns. The only response was to help implement a procedure to increase principal applicant pool.

School Board Policy

The last section of the questionnaire contained a question regarding the existence of a written board policy covering the selection of elementary principals. Table 29 shows the distribution of the returns based on a written board policy covering the selection of elementary principals.

TABLE 29

DISTRIBUTION OF RETURNS BASED ON A WRITTEN BOARD POLICY  
COVERING THE SELECTION OF ELEMENTARY PRINCIPALS

No. Usable Returns	No. Yes	% Yes	No. No	% No	No Response	Percent
145	16	11.0	126	86.9	3	2.1

Respondents were asked to indicate if their school board has a written policy covering the selection of elementary school principals. All but three answered the question. Of this number, 16 or 11.0 percent indicated the existence of such a written policy while 126 or 86.9 percent indicated their school board did not have a written policy covering the selection of elementary school principals.

## CHAPTER 4

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Chapter four is divided into three parts. A summary of the findings is reported in the first part. Conclusions are reported in the second part. The final section of the chapter contains recommendations.

#### Summary

The purpose of this study was to investigate the selection of elementary principals in Indiana during the 1986-1987, 1987-1988 and 1988-1989 school years. The study dealt with selection methods, participants and roles of these participants in the selection of elementary school principals.

The population consisted of the 292 public school superintendents in Indiana. The questionnaire along with a cover letter and a letter of endorsement were mailed on March 29, 1989. By April 28, 1989, 260 questionnaires had been received. Of this number, 256 or 87.7 percent of the population were usable. The questionnaire contained five sections covering year selected, methods, participants, roles and an existence of board policy relative to the selection of

elementary principals. The principle findings of this study are as follows:

1. A majority of the corporations did not check any of the three options for encouraging a local applicant pool.

2. When methods of increasing the applicant pool were checked, they follow in descending order of indicated use: utilize internships, utilize acting principalships and help pay corporation teachers for taking graduate courses in school administration.

3. Vacancy announcements listed the specific school where a vacancy existed in a little more than one-half of the responses.

4. The vast majority of corporations advertised in an area confined to Indiana and adjacent states.

5. Only a little over one-half of the corporations provided information concerning the specific school where the vacancy existed and over one-fourth of the corporations provided no written information for candidates prior to the interview.

6. A written job description was available or prepared for this vacancy in over three-fourths of the corporations responding.

7. Several screening methods were checked by over 80 percent of the corporations. They follow in descending order of use: letters of application, letters of recommendation,

proof of certification or ability to obtain, college transcripts, corporation application forms and preliminary interview.

8. The use of blind ratings as a screening method was checked by only 11 percent of the corporations.

9. Three methods of selecting finalists were used by over two-thirds of the corporations. They follow in descending order of use: telephone check, structured interview and open interview.

10. Three methods of selecting finalists were used by less than ten percent of the corporations. They follow in descending order of use: written test, simulation exercise and assessment center report.

11. The major participant in the selection process in almost all of the corporations was the superintendent.

12. Several participants were utilized in the selection process by less than one-fourth of the corporations. They follow in descending order of use: parent, secondary principal, school board member, classified employee and professional consultant service.

13. The major participant in preparing the vacancy announcement in over three-fourths of the corporations was the superintendent.

14. The major participant in deciding where to advertise was the superintendent.

15. The major participant in determining the content of the written material given to candidates prior to the interview was the superintendent.

16. The major participant in preparing written job descriptions or position specifications was the superintendent.

17. No one participant was listed by over one-half of the corporations as helping implement a procedure to increase the principal applicant pool.

18. The major participant in helping screen candidates was the superintendent.

19. The major participant in over 90 percent of the corporations in helping determine the final recommendation for employment was the superintendent.

20. When classified employees were used in the selection of elementary principals, their most frequent roles included helping prepare a vacancy announcement and screen candidates.

21. When parents were used in the selection of elementary principals, their most frequent roles included helping screen candidates and recommend for employment.

22. When teachers were used in the selection of elementary school principals, their most frequent roles were helping screen candidates and recommend for employment.

23. When elementary principals were used in the selection of elementary principals, their most frequent roles were helping screen candidates and recommend for employment.

24. When secondary principals were used in the selection of elementary principals, their most frequent roles were helping screen candidates and recommend for employment.

25. When personnel administrators were used in the selection of elementary principals, they were involved fairly equally in all of the selection roles.

26. When other central office administrators were used in the selection of elementary principals, they were involved to a significant extent in all of the selection roles.

27. The superintendent was very involved in all of the roles connected with selecting an elementary principal and helped determine the recommendation for employment in over 90 percent of the corporations.

28. When school board members were involved in the selection of elementary principals, their most frequent roles were helping recommend for employment and screen candidates.

29. When school boards were involved in the selection of elementary principals, their most frequent role was to help recommend for employment.

30. The use of professional consultants in the selection of elementary principals in Indiana is almost nonexistent.



31. Over 86 percent of the corporations did not have a written board policy covering the selection of elementary principals.

### Conclusions

The following conclusions were based on the findings of the study:

1. Despite statistics that indicate a substantial turnover in elementary principals in the next ten years, it does not appear that the majority of Indiana school corporations are attempting to build an applicant pool in their districts. More than one-half indicated that they were taking none of the listed steps to build the applicant pool. This is consistent with the related literature on a national basis. Unless steps are taken to build applicant pools, there will be a shortage of qualified candidates for elementary principal vacancies in the near future.

2. Most Indiana school corporations limit their advertising for elementary principal candidates within the state. Only 26.9 percent include adjacent states and only a little over two percent advertise nationally. The limitation on advertising further contributes to a growing scarcity of quality applicants for specific elementary principalships.

3. Many Indiana corporations are not preparing a specific job description for elementary principal vacancies. Almost one-fourth did not use a written job description while

over one-third relied on an available job description. Only 37.2 percent prepared or revised a job description for the current vacancy. Failure to prepare or revise a job description for a particular vacancy eliminates an opportunity to involve the various individuals who have an interest and stake in the position. Further, it eliminates an opportunity to consider and determine the exact expectations of the successful candidate and the qualifications desired or necessary to carry out these tasks.

4. The methods used to screen candidates for elementary principal vacancies in over 80 percent of Indiana school corporations include use of letters of application, letters of recommendation, proof of certification, college transcripts, corporation application forms and preliminary interviews while only 11 percent of the corporations used blind ratings. There is a strong reliance on traditional screening methods. These methods rely on the candidate to provide information to the corporation and most information is in written form or presented in an interview where identity of the candidate is known at the time results are evaluated and rated. As a result, the sources of information used in the screening process are limited and the content is at least partially controlled by the candidates. Further, the identity of the individual candidates is known throughout the screening process thereby increasing the possibility of

prejudice for or against individual candidates by members of the screening team.

5. The methods used to select finalists by over two-thirds of the corporations include telephone check, structured interview and open interview; while less than ten percent of the corporations use written test, simulation exercise or assessment center report. While there is a strong reliance on traditional methods such as telephone checks and personal interviews, it would appear that Indiana corporations are attempting to improve their selection methods as a slightly greater percentage utilized structured interviews, which are regarded in the literature as more objective in nature and more able to measure candidates' abilities in a uniform manner, than used open interviews. Unfortunately, the selection methods identified in the literature as better able to measure candidates' abilities were used by only a small number of corporations. These under-used selection methods include written test, simulation exercise and assessment center report.

6. Consistent with the professional literature, the dominant participant in the screening and selection process in Indiana is the superintendent. There is a definite exclusion or limited use of many groups in most Indiana corporations. These groups include parents, principals, school board members and classified employees. The use of professional consultants is almost nonexistent in Indiana.

The strong reliance on the school superintendent supported to a lesser degree by other central office administrators and the school board can limit access to principalships to only those candidates who have the direct support of the superintendent regardless of their qualifications for the position. The limitation on input not only limits the accuracy of the selection process to the ability of those involved, it often further perpetuates a singular administrative philosophy. When there is a sense that the application process is not equitable, this feeling can limit the number of qualified candidates and/or reflect unfavorably on the candidate selected. Further, the exclusion of other members of the profession or community detracts from their confidence in and support of the successful candidate.

7. The exact role of Indiana school boards is not delineated by individual board policy in the vast majority of Indiana school corporations. This is reflected in the diversity of answers relative to their exact roles. The function of Indiana school boards in the selection of elementary principals is not clear. While slightly over one-half of the school boards were involved in the overall selection process, the extent of their exact involvement was substantially limited in all the roles surveyed. This would seem to indicate that most school boards were not involved to any significant extent in the process prior to voting on the final candidate recommended by the superintendent.

Recommendations From the Study

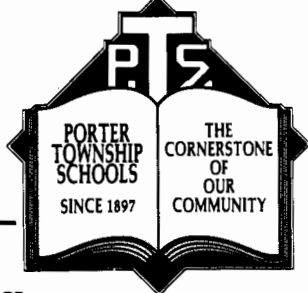
1. Indiana school corporations should begin to identify and train a qualified pool of candidates for elementary principalships long before specific vacancies arise.
2. When vacancies occur, Indiana school corporations should aggressively recruit on a much wider geographic basis in order to increase the quantity and thus the quality of candidates.
3. In order to pick the best candidate for particular vacancies, specific job descriptions should be updated or prepared for individual elementary principal vacancies.
4. During the screening and selection of elementary principals, Indiana school corporations should use a greater variety of selection methods. In addition to improving interviewing techniques, corporations should consider obtaining data from more objective sources including written tests, simulation exercises and assessment center reports.
5. Indiana school corporations should utilize and train a greater variety of individuals on elementary principal selection teams to both increase the reliability of the selection process and the credibility of the process and the candidate selected.
6. Indiana school boards should develop written policies covering the selection of elementary principals.

Such policies should cover a commitment to hiring the best qualified candidate, the selection process, participants, and the specific roles of the various participants.

#### Recommendations for Further Study

1. A follow-up study should be conducted in several years to determine if changes are occurring in the selection of Indiana elementary principals.
2. Further research is needed in the identification and training of participants involved in the selection of elementary principals.
3. Further research is needed to identify and study the variables that affect the selection process.
4. Finally, research is needed to determine and improve the predictive value of selection methods.

APPENDIX A



**Porter  
Lakes  
Elementary  
School**

DR. JAMES H. RICE  
SUPERINTENDENT

MRS. CEAN CARTWRIGHT  
PRINCIPAL

March 29, 1989

Dear Superintendent:

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter. In order to complete my doctoral thesis at Loyola University, I need your response concerning the selection of elementary principals. Please invest five minutes to complete and return the enclosed survey. If I receive your response by April 14, 1989, I will not be required to mail a follow-up letter.

Data gathered will be reported in general data tables. Individual districts will not be identified. Research results will be provided to the Indiana Association of Public School Superintendents and to any superintendent requesting a copy. Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

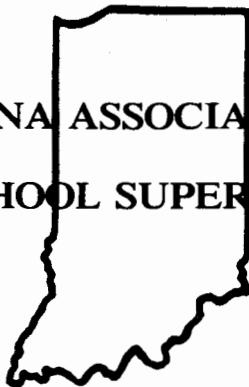
*Cean K. Cartwright*  
Cean K. Cartwright

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APPENDIX B

INDIANA ASSOCIATION OF  
PUBLIC SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS



March 22, 1989

Cean K. Cartwright  
8925 Liable Road  
Highland, IN 46322

Dear Cean:

The Executive Committee of the Indiana Association of Public School Superintendents, at a meeting on March 16, 1989, officially endorsed your doctoral dissertation. IAPSS believes your dissertation topic pertaining to the selection of elementary principals in Indiana is timely. The collection of data through your study should provide information which will be of practical value to the members of IAPSS. We respectfully request a summary of your survey results.

IAPSS strongly encourages the public school superintendents in Indiana to complete Cean Cartwright's survey instrument and return it as soon as possible. This important research project warrants a one hundred percent (100%) return.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Charles E. Fields".

Charles E. Fields  
IAPSS Executive Secretary

CEF/so

APPENDIX C

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# Survey: Selection of Elementary School Principals In Indiana

Please complete the following brief survey.

- I. When did your school corporation last employ an elementary school principal (principal of a school where the majority of students are in grades K-6):  
Check the most recent:

\_\_\_\_\_ '85--'86 or before

\_\_\_\_\_ '86--'87

\_\_\_\_\_ '87--'88

\_\_\_\_\_ '88--'89

If you checked 1985--1986 or before, please stop at this point and return survey. If you checked one of the later years, please complete the survey using your most recent employment procedure as the basis for your answers.

II. Selection Methods

- A. **Local applicant pool** --The corporation used the following methods to encourage administrative development (Check all that were used):

\_\_\_\_\_ help pay corporation teachers for taking graduate courses in school administration.

\_\_\_\_\_ utilize acting principalships to prepare candidates.

\_\_\_\_\_ utilize internships to prepare candidates.

\_\_\_\_\_ none of the above.

B. **Declaration of Vacancy**

1. Vacancy announcement listed (check one):

\_\_\_\_\_ the specific school where vacancy existed.

\_\_\_\_\_ only the school corporation where vacancy existed.

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2. Vacancy announcement was advertised (check one):

only within school corporation.

only in immediate geographic region -- within 50 miles.

only within Indiana (includes state university placement bureaus).

only in Indiana and adjacent states.

nationally.

3. Candidates were provided, in written form prior to interview, the following information (check all that apply):

specific school information.

school corporation information.

community information.

none of the above.

C. Selection Criteria -- a specific, written job description or position specifications (check one):

was not used.

was available from previous vacancies.

was prepared or revised for this vacancy.

D. Screen (check all that were used):

letters of application

corporation application forms.

letters of recommendation.

proof of certification or ability to obtain.

college transcripts.

blind ratings (interviews rate written data without identity of candidate).

preliminary interview.

---

recommendation from university placement bureau.

"good old boy" network

**E. Methods used in selecting finalists -- (check all that were used):**

written test.

simulation exercise.

on-the-job observation.

written reference verification form.

telephone check.

open interview (interviewers develop questions during the interview).

structured interview (questions determined prior to interview).

assessment center report.

**III. Selection participants (check all of the following who were involved to any extent in the selection process):**

classified employee

parent

teacher

elementary principal

secondary principal

central office administrator with personnel responsibility

other central office administrator

superintendent

school board member

School Board

professional consultant service

IV. Roles (for each of the participants checked in III, indicate on the vertical lines the extent of their participation by checking all that apply):

Roles	Classified Employee	Parent	Teacher	Elem. Prin.	Sec. Prin.	Persnl. Admin.	Other Central Office Admin.	Superintendent	School Board Member	School Board	Professional Consultant
help prepare vacancy announcement											
help decide where to advertise											
help determine content of written material given to candidates prior to interview											
help prepare or update written job description or position specifications											
help implement a procedure to increase principal applicant pool											
help screen candidates											
help determine final recommendation for employment											

V. Other

Does your School Board have a written board policy covering the selection of elementary principals?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes      \_\_\_\_\_ No

<p><b>For Office Use Only</b></p> <p>Computer Code _____</p>
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APPROVAL SHEET

The dissertation submitted by Cean Cartwright has been read and approved by the following committee:

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The final copies have been examined by the director of the dissertation and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated and that the dissertation is now given final approval by the Committee with reference to content and form.

The dissertation is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education.

November 28, 1989  
Date

Howard S. Smucker  
Director's Signature