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A SURVEY OF THE UTAH PUBLIC SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT'S METHODS
FOR SELECTING ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

by

Keith D. Hansen

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree

of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

in

School Administration

UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY
Logan, Utah

1959

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | Page |
|--|------|
| Introduction | 1 |
| Statement of the problem | 3 |
| Review of the literature | 5 |
| Need for adequate selection procedures | 5 |
| Screening procedures | 6 |
| Qualities possessed by successful school administrators | 8 |
| The selection procedure | 13 |
| Recruitment, screening, and selection of executives in industry | 15 |
| Programs being sponsored to assist in the selection of education administrators | 16 |
| General summary | 16 |
| Methods and materials | 18 |
| Construction of the questionnaire | 18 |
| Pretest of the questionnaire | 22 |
| Results | 25 |
| Screening procedures | 26 |
| Special considerations that may be determining factors in selection | 29 |
| Superintendents' preference of academic background and previous experience | 31 |
| Superintendents' perception of important characteristics ... | 32 |
| Summary and conclusions | 37 |
| Literature cited | 40 |
| Appendix | 43 |

INTRODUCTION

This thesis is part of a series of coordinated research projects undertaken by the College of Education at the Utah State University. The series was under the general direction of Dr. Walter R. Borg working cooperatively with the State Department of Public Instruction and the superintendents of Utah's forty school districts. The superintendents of the state of Utah in recognizing the importance of improved selection systems for administrators and upon noting the lack of any standard procedure for selection, asked the Utah State University to accept the problem for further research. The initial evaluation of the entire problem resulted in studies being undertaken in three separate areas.

The major area considered in this thesis was a survey of the current methods being employed by the superintendents of Utah in their selection of elementary and secondary school principals. The survey was designed to reveal the basic characteristics and qualities which the 40 district superintendents of Utah considered to be the most important. Additional information was requested concerning the importance of religion, previous experience, university preference,

types of examinations and interviews that are given, type of academic background which is preferred, etc.

Before making this survey, the writer had to determine what basic characteristics and qualities were considered to be important by authorities in the field of Education Administration. A detailed review of the literature proceeded as follows. In thirty-five studies, all of the characteristics mentioned as being important for a principal to possess were listed on separate cards. The cards were then sorted into individual piles and a tabulation was made of the number of studies that mentioned each characteristic. Information for this survey was based on the assumption that those characteristics which more authorities in the field of Education Administration listed as being important, were actually the important characteristics and qualities for a principal to possess.

Following the tabulation of the individual piles, the characteristics were then divided into major categories. Under the category of professional knowledge and skills were listed such areas as the knowledge of budgeting and finance, curriculum development, understanding of children, and school law. It also included skills in management and administrative ability, executive ability, and the ability to organize effectively.

A second category, intellectual ability, covered the areas of intelligence, good judgement, originality, and initiative. The personality characteristics were categorized and included such qual-

ities as optimism, confidence, emotional maturity, and a sense of humor. The human relations skills of being sociable, helpful, cooperative and democratic were listed as a separate group. Other smaller groups such as the physical characteristics, the ability to communicate freely, and interest in community responsibilities were also listed.

Those major categories and individual characteristics which were mentioned by most writers were used as a basis for this survey. From this list of characteristics and qualities, the Utah superintendents were to determine which were the most important and least important. The results of this survey gave an indication of the characteristics and qualities the Utah superintendent's considered to be important for their principals to possess and also showed the actual means of selection that were being used.

Statement of the Problem.

This research was built upon the premise that there are critical elements of administrative behavior that are important to success for a school principal. The primary problem for this research was to determine the principal's personality traits, academic achievement, and physical characteristics that are considered to be most important by the school district superintendents of Utah.

Information was gathered pertaining to other general areas which may influence the selection of a school principal. Some of the areas

which were explored by this survey are:

1. Are any measuring devices administered to candidates?
2. Is the candidate interviewed by anyone other than the superintendent?
3. Does membership in civic, fraternal or religious organizations influence selection?
4. Do superintendents prefer to select their principals from the teaching staff of their respective districts?
5. Do superintendents select a home-town candidate?
6. Are handicapped individuals given equal consideration with other candidates?

This survey was concerned with the specific items listed above and other related areas to give an indication of the principal selection problem in the state of Utah.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Need for Adequate Selection Procedures.

The need for adequate and consistent selection policies and practices has never been greater than it is at the present time in the field of Education Administration. Systematic selection practices are needed to study the demands of the job and then find the person with the qualities and training necessary to be a successful school administrator.

Richard L. Featherstone made an analysis of the practices regarding the selection and on-the-job training of elementary school principals in Ohio city schools (8). The data were obtained by two questionnaires, the first being sent to the superintendents of the 135 Ohio city school districts. A second questionnaire, to get more detailed information about the programs, was sent to selected superintendents who returned the first questionnaire.

The returns of Featherstone's study showed 52 superintendents who said they had appropriate policies regarding selection. However, his closer examination revealed that only 4 of these 52 could be considered well defined. Concerning on-the-job training, 11 superintendents said they had definite programs and 49 reported some appropriate policies. Featherstone's final data revealed that only 3 cities had a well defined program. Most of the programs consisted

of the superintendent working with the newly chosen principal.

An analysis of the selection programs as reported by Featherstone, showed several major factors were present in the selection process. The superintendents require the principal to have had some type of prior teaching experience. There were variations of both the amount and type of this teaching experience. Recommendations were required from a former principal or supervisor along with a transcript of credits. All districts reported that some type of oral examination or interview was being administered to the candidate, however, a closer examination revealed these to be a general, informal interview with the superintendent. Only a very few districts offered the candidate an interview with the board or administered any form of written examination. The results of the study showed that the final selection is in the hands of the superintendents without the benefit of any help from the school board. The majority of the cases studied showed that principals were chosen by the subjective judgment of the superintendent without the use of any objective data other than college credentials.

Screening Procedures.

The Editorial Committee of the National Elementary Principal conducted a questionnaire study to obtain information on selection practices (7). The questionnaires were sent to 689 city and town superintendents. When asked to report the major method used in screening the candidates, 373 replied. Of this number, 283 indicated

that observation by the superintendent was the major method. Other methods of screening reported in this study were made on the basis of age, sex, experience, and academic preparation. The superintendents listed 81 personal qualities they would desire in elementary principals. Sixty-three superintendents reported the use of examinations. However, these were found to be 48 physical examinations, 16 general examinations on education, 9 intelligence tests, 10 emotional maturity and stability tests, and 4 national teachers examinations.

The conclusions of this extensive study show that few cities have any plan to discover those who would make a good administrator. Only two in five cities attempt to keep a list of potential candidates. Some cities, especially larger ones, have made progress in setting up criteria with respect to personal qualities, experience, and professional preparation, however, most cities have not applied scientific methods. It was also found that superintendents select their principals with little or no help.

Mr. J.E. Green made a study of the methods of selection used in 31 large cities of the United States (14). In the area of recruitment, there was found to be no definite pattern in use by all cities. Some advertise in newspapers, some have constant files of applicants, others utilize university placement bureaus, and in one city, the classroom teachers are requested to recommend capable colleagues.

Green's study showed 40% of the cities employ a written test while 60% do not. The tests vary in length from one to twelve hours. Many variations of tests were used, most of which had little bearing on principal selection. The personal tests consisted chiefly of the personal interview with the superintendent which varied from an informal fifteen or twenty minutes to a very carefully planned meeting.

Thus far, the literature has shown that some problems exist in the present methods for principal selection being employed. The literature cited has also shown that many different methods for selecting school administrators are used. Most of these methods are similar in the sense that, the superintendent makes the selection, the candidate is interviewed, and the college credentials are examined.

Qualities Possessed by Successful School Administrators.

An excellent definition of an educational administrator is given by George S. Counts (5). He describes a school administrator as one who,

Must appreciate the significance of such basic American values as the worth and dignity of the individual, the freedom to teach regardless of church affiliation, the idea of human brotherhood, and the tradition of academic freedom. His decisions are not made in an ivory tower, but in a situation literally seething with conflict and pressure from which the school cannot enjoy immunity. All decisions must be made in the clear light of knowledge of these existing forces and conditions. Therefore, the administrator, in the realm of decision-making may rise to the highest levels of democratic leadership and statesmanship, or sink to the depths of political opportunism, selfish manipulation, or autocratic role.

The literature describes many personal qualities which are thought necessary for success as a school administrator. Shane and Yauch, in their book, Creative School Administration, have listed the personal and professional competencies of the mature leader (25).

The creative educational leader:

1. Possesses a practical, democratic philosophy which is applied in his relationships with others.
2. Develops a grasp of the principles of human learning, growth and development which sensitized him to the maturational needs of children, youth, and adults.
3. Attains emotional and intellectual security reflected in a quality of personal living consistent with good mental hygiene.
4. Has personal honesty and integrity which governs his thinking and behavior with regard to sincerity, courage, and candor.
5. Reflects the desire to improve his personal resources.
6. Possesses a growing general cultural background which is improved methodically and deliberately.
7. Consistently engages in acceptable recreational activities.
8. Is increasingly well-informed with regard to social, political, and economic trends which enable him to contribute to his community environment.
9. Participates in social consequential adult activities, both civic and professional.
10. Has physical health and motivation which are mirrored in vigorous working habits.
11. Has ability in self-expression which is essentially sound and free of demagoguery.

A report of a work conference on Developing Leaders for Education by the National Conference of Professors of Educational Administration states that it is likely that there are general qualifications which

would be desirable for the administrator of any school to possess in some combination (21). For the administrator of democratic inclinations and practices, it would appear desirable to have personal attributes such as these:

1. Abiding faith in and conviction of, the importance of education in a democratic society.
2. Superior intellectual capacity.
3. High degree of social intelligence.
4. Initiative, resourcefulness and inventiveness.
5. Cooperative attitude -- a desire to develop power in others rather than exercise power over others.
6. Personal attractiveness.
7. Drive -- the ability to work hard persistently toward desirable objectives.
8. Physical and mental health.
9. High moral character and personal integrity.
10. Sound judgement and common sense.

A report by A. Templeton on the Yonkers System of Selecting Principals, contained a list of qualities which they felt were necessary for success as a principal (31). Most of the characteristics mentioned in this study are also found in the study by the National Conference of Professors of Educational Administration cited previously. However, two additional characteristics were listed which merit mention. They are administrative ability and understanding of children. The principal of today's schools must be an effective leader for his teachers and understand the 'whys and wherefors' of his students.

A summary of 12⁴ studies on personal factors associated to leadership was completed by Ralph M. Stogdill (28). Additional characteristics given by this study are, dependability in exercising responsibilities, socio-economic status, self confidence, and verbal facility.

The combined results of the studies cited show the reader that the desired characteristics for a principal are numerous and overlap into many different categories. A total of 35 studies in the field of principal selection were carefully reviewed as part of this series of research projects. The result of this systematic review produced a list of the characteristics most frequently mentioned as important for the success of a principal. The reader is referred to the appendix for a complete listing of this review of the literature. Table I. shows the most important characteristics in their basic categories and the percent of studies which mentioned them.

Table I. Results of the listing operation of the important characteristics for principal success.^a

| Important Characteristics | Percentage of Mention |
|--|-----------------------|
| <u>Professional Knowledge</u> | |
| Child growth and development | 29 |
| Curriculum development | 69 |
| Philosophy of education | 31 |
| Professional training | 46 |
| <u>Professional Skills</u> | |
| Management and administrative ability | 91 |
| Executive ability | 60 |
| Good organizer | 63 |
| Participation in professional activities | 29 |

Table I. (continued)

| <u>Important Characteristics</u> | <u>Percentage of Mention</u> |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| <u>Intellectual ability</u> | |
| Good judgement | 57 |
| Initiative | 34 |
| Intelligence | 43 |
| Original | 43 |
| <u>Character</u> | |
| Honest | 11 |
| Loyal | 14 |
| Moral | 20 |
| Sincerity | 11 |
| <u>Human Relations Skills</u> | |
| Accepts suggestions | 37 |
| Cooperative | 60 |
| Faculty relationships | 89 |
| Fair | 31 |
| Sociable | 46 |
| Understands people | 34 |
| Conducts school democratically | 43 |
| <u>Personality Characteristics</u> | |
| Calm | 23 |
| Emotionally mature | 23 |
| Enthusiasm | 20 |
| Good personality | 31 |
| Liberal in thinking | 26 |
| Optomistic | 20 |
| <u>Physical Characteristics</u> | |
| Abundant energy | 34 |
| Neat appearance | 29 |
| Good health | 60 |
| <u>Communicative Skills</u> | |
| Communicate freely | 54 |
| <u>Community Responsibilities</u> | |
| Interest in community affairs | 60 |
| Public relations | 60 |

a Data based on 35 studies dealing with principal selection

The literature contains a wealth of data which supports the contention that a school administrator is a composite of many complex characteristics, traits, and skills. It also shows that many of the writers agree as to what some of the important characteristics are.

The Selection Procedure.

There is a general lack of a systematic approach to the selection problem. Studies have shown that even where districts do claim to have a selection program, actually, they do not except for a few unrelated procedures.

The literature reveals several different approaches to the selection problem. In order to select a new superintendent at St. Louis, the school board members asked the presidents of three universities to recommend one man each from their respective universities to act as an advisory committee. This committee was to recommend six candidates for the position (24).

The Yonkers School System selected their principals a little differently. Applications were invited and then the applicants were interviewed by a committee consisting of the superintendent and other system leaders. The committee scored the applicants on a point basis. After the interviewing was completed, they had eleven people who rated high on their evaluation system. The committee then recommended six of the remaining eleven and voted for the six they preferred. The final decision was left up to the superintendent (31).

A nation wide sampling of superintendents' opinions was conducted by Nations School (1). Their basic area was "How Should a Superintendent be Selected?" The following are the results of the sampling:

1. Should the selection and employment of a superintendent be solely the responsibility of the school board?

Yes -- 75%, No -- 24%, No opinion -- 1%.

2. Should the local school board seek outside expert counsel in setting up procedures and qualifications for filling the positions of superintendent?

Yes -- 75%, No -- 19%, No opinion -- 6%.

3. Should the wishes and attitudes of citizens be reflected in any committee?

Yes -- 44%, No -- 47%, No opinion -- 9%.

4. Should teachers have any part in the selection or hiring of a superintendent?

Yes -- 25%, No -- 69%, No opinion -- 6%.

The literature reports that there is no one policy accepted by all school administrators as to who should make the actual selection. Some of the opinions of writers on the subject feel the superintendent should be fully responsible while others say the school board should make the decision. Committees have been suggested which are to be composed of teachers, laymen, the superintendent, and board members. A few writers have attacked the colleges of education by saying that if more selective measures were taken for admission into graduate work of education administration, then the finished product would not require such complex screening procedures when trying to obtain employment.

Recruitment, Screening, and Selection of Executives in Industry.

The field of industry has similar problems to education in choosing their executives and presently seems to be handling the situation with a fair degree of success. The following is the general procedure currently being used by industry (11)(17)(26):

1. The candidates are obtained from the factory personnel records, placement bureaus, and newspaper advertisements.
2. The candidates are given a series of verbal and non-verbal intelligence, personality, and emotional maturity tests.
3. The candidates are interviewed individually by several people which include, the psychologist, personnel manager, and the board of directors. The group encourage conversation about home, school life, work history, and spare time pursuits.
4. The group of candidates are given a guided tour around the plant where they observe the actual operation and note specific problem areas.
5. The group is given dinner with the board of directors where mental notes are made on their social and individual behavior.
6. The group is seated in a circle to participate in the leaderless group discussion and discuss any topic on which they may decide.
7. The group is given the problem situation discussion which is the same as the leaderless group discussion with the exception that they discuss a problem which was brought to their attention on their previous tour of the plant.
8. Each candidate is instructed to write a thumbnail sketch of the others and himself paying particular attention to the personality in connection with the position being applied for.

After participating in a selection process such as the one just described, the candidates are found to be happy with the proceedings. They feel that they have profited greatly from the experience and that the selection was fair (11). In industry, the final selection decision is the result of a group working on a cooperative basis. The group includes the personnel manager, board of directors, and psychologist.

Programs Being Sponsored to Assist in the Selection of Education Administrators.

Authorities in the field of education are not entirely unaware of the problem of administrator selection and several programs have been sponsored to try and work out a solution. One of the main groups sponsoring these programs is the C.P.E.A. (Cooperative Program in Educational Administration). The southwest C.P.E.A. with headquarters in the University of Texas is working on a "Block of Time Program" for the selection of candidates for graduate school in educational administration (19).

Ohio State University is leading the study on the role of the school principal. The main areas of this study include, (a) how is the principal selected? (b) what does he do? (c) what characteristics does he possess that contribute to his success? and (d) how much training has he had and what does his training consist of? (23).

Harvard University is determining the role of the leader and Stanford University is studying the educational leader, his role and characteristics (20).

General Summary.

The literature indicates the problem of principal selection to be common to all school districts in the United States. A large amount of literature has been written on the subject, however, for the purpose of this study, only studies made during the last 10 years were considered. It is noted that, generally speaking, superintendents utilize

very little if any objective data in the selection of principals. The data that is used usually consists of a personal interview with the candidate, a transcript of credits, and a letter of reference. Using this small amount of data, the superintendent usually makes the final decision without any assistance from the board.

The literature reviewed also showed many lists of characteristics which are considered to be important for principal success. Many writers have a general agreement as to some characteristics which are of prime importance. A systematic review of these characteristics is found in the appendix.

In the screening process, the literature recommended the use of examinations such as intelligence, emotional maturity, and personality tests. It is also suggested that the candidate be given the opportunity of participating in a leaderless group discussion to validate the test results. All the objective data that are available should be used in making the selection. In making the final selection, it is recommended that the decision be the result of a group (superintendent and board) rather than the superintendent alone.

METHODS AND MATERIALS

Construction of the Questionnaire.

The various parts of the questionnaire were constructed following a careful study of the literature noting the current trends and selective criteria that are either suggested or being used by authorities in the field. It was designed to reveal as much information as possible about the methods being used at the present time in the selection of principals in the state of Utah.

The discussion of questionnaire construction is limited to four major areas: methods being used in the screening of candidates; special considerations that may be determining factors in selection; the superintendents' preference of academic background and previous experience; and the superintendents' perception of important characteristics.

Screening Procedures. The current trends in the selection of administrators in business and industry employ the use of various examinations as predictors of success. These examinations are both written and oral. The transfer of this type of selective criteria to the field of education seems highly desirable, however, the current literature notes a definite lack of this type of procedure in the selection of administrators in education. The actual selection procedure is considered to be more valid if the decision is the result

of several people rather than merely one person (the superintendent). These areas were felt to merit a section in the questionnaire.

There appears to be a trend for administrators not to consider a letter of recommendation to be a valid representation of the individual due to the over usage of descriptive adjectives. The experimenter therefore designed a section of the questionnaire to determine whether the superintendents of Utah request more than the usual bits of information in their application forms. Included in this section is information concerning abstinence from tobacco and alcohol, medical certificate, membership in civic, fraternal or professional organizations, etc.

Special Considerations That May be Determining Factors in Selection. The questionnaire was designed to answer such questions as, do Utah superintendents prefer 'home town' candidates?, and do they prefer a candidate who is from their own district rather than bringing one in from another district?

The predominant religion in the state of Utah is the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints or more commonly referred to as the Mormon Church. With such a strong predominance existing among the populace of the state, it appeared to the experimenter that a religious preference may exist on the part of the superintendents. Therefore, information concerning this possible preference was desired.

With the many World War II and Korean War casualties going into the field of education, a section was designed to determine whether they would be given equal consideration with the other candidates. Also to be determined was the degree of impairment a physically handicapped person may possess before he should not be considered as a possible candidate.

Many authorities recommend that the candidate visit the prospective school district to note such things as living accommodations, religious and civic organizations, the society in general, educational facilities, etc. The current trend in business administration is for the company to pay the traveling expenses of the prospective candidate to make such a visit. A section was included to see if the school districts were following this trend.

Superintendents' Preference of Academic Background and Previous Experience. Some authorities in the field of educational administration seem to feel that certain types of academic backgrounds are more preferred than others. The same is true with the type of previous work experience. The questionnaire was designed to reveal the preferences of the superintendents. The academic backgrounds given consideration were degrees in accounting, business administration, education, political science, sociology, and physical education. Areas of work experience considered were bookkeeper, custodial work, business executive, salesman, bank teller, farmer, positions of church leadership, and outstanding public relationist.

Superintendents' Perception of Important Characteristics. The final section of the questionnaire is a list of basic characteristics or qualities which are frequently noted in the literature as being important for an administrator to possess. In order to develop this section, an extensive survey of the literature was made in all areas related to the selection of administrative personnel. Each characteristic that was mentioned in an article was listed on a separate card. The result of this careful survey and listing procedure amounted to 913 characteristic cards. The basic theory behind this operation is that each writer will list the characteristics he feels to be most important for an administrator to possess and those characteristics which most writers feel to be important are actually the most important and are worthy of consideration.

The mass of cards was then sorted into piles of like characteristics and card counts were made. Following the card counts, the characteristics were categorized into eleven basic parts which are as follows: professional knowledge; professional skills; intellectual ability; character; human relations skills; social activities and responsibilities; personality characteristics; physical characteristics; communicative skills; community responsibilities; and general knowledge and miscellaneous characteristics.

For the sake of brevity, several of these basic areas were combined in this questionnaire. The combined list included the following

categories: professional knowledge and skills; intellectual ability and personality characteristics; and human relation skills and other miscellaneous characteristics.

The questionnaire required the superintendent to go through the three separate lists and note the three most important and the three least important in each of the categories. Upon the completion of the third list, then the superintendent was instructed to go over the entire list (all three categories together) and note what he considered to be the three most important characteristics. Finally, he was to select the area which he felt was the most important for principal success.

Pretest of the Questionnaire.

Following a careful period of editing, the questionnaire was put into semi-final form. Such items as location, clearness and exactness of questions, elimination of ambiguity, and ease of administration and scoring were very carefully considered in assembling the final draft.

The questionnaire was then evaluated by several key personnel in the field of education at the Utah State University. Their comments resulted in a few minor changes. The questionnaire was then administered to two professors and one graduate student in the college of education

in an attempt to find the average amount of time required to complete the questions. The average was $9\frac{1}{2}$ minutes.

The geographical area of southern Idaho is very similar in many respects to Utah. Particularly is this true of the preferences, likes and dislikes of the people, social pressures, economic status, etc. With this in mind, the questionnaire was sent to 28 superintendents in southern Idaho, to see if there were any errors which had been overlooked. Along with the questionnaire went a letter of transmittal explaining what the study was about and soliciting the support of the superintendents on the project. Of the original 28 questionnaires sent for the pretest, 25 were returned. This is an example of the interest which administrators have in the problem. The returns showed the questionnaire to be fairly complete. A few minor changes were made as result of some excellent constructive criticism (see Appendix A for final form).

Prior to the time of administering the questionnaire, all of the superintendents of Utah were well acquainted with the problem of administrator selection since they had asked for the study and had voted to support the project.

The questionnaire was then placed in it's final form and mailed to the 40 superintendents of Utah. With it went a letter of transmittal signed by Dr. John C. Carlisle, Dean of the College of Education at the Utah State University. The letter explained briefly the project, the importance of the findings, and enlisted the subject's

aid in accomplishing the goal of the experimenter.

Of the original forty questionnaires that were sent, thirty-five were returned immediately. Four of the remaining five were returned after receiving a follow-up letter. The last questionnaire was returned after a telephone call was made by Dean Carlisle. The results of this study are based on a one hundred percent questionnaire return.

RESULTS

This section will deal only with the major findings of the questionnaire and for a complete list of all results, the reader is referred to the appendix.

The information received from the questionnaire results showed the problem of principal selection to be of major concern because in the state of Utah, the superintendents are hiring or appointing new principals at the average rate of one per year. The actual average is 3.125 principals hired per superintendent for the past three years. The most principals hired by a single superintendent in the past three years was fifteen. Six superintendents reported that no principals had been hired during the same period. This turnover rate indicates that the field of education administration offers many job opportunities for qualified personnel.

Once the administrator in education has attained the position of superintendent in the state of Utah, he can expect to remain employed for several years. The forty superintendents have been in their present positions an average of 8.575 years. Four superintendents have been in their present positions more than twenty years (the highest being twenty-five years). Many have been superintendents previously in positions other than the one they now hold. Thirty-nine of the forty superintendents hold a current administrator's certificate.

From the above information, it is easily noted that the superintendents of Utah are well qualified, permanent, professional people and that the selection of principals is one of the major problems they are confronted with. The one hundred percent questionnaire return shows their interest in doing all they can to improve the current methods being used in the selection program.

In discussing the results of this survey, the four major areas of selective criteria will again be used.

Screening Procedures.

When the candidates are being considered for a principalship, questionnaire data indicate that the screening procedures consist of very little if any objective measurement. The superintendents must rely on inspiration, intuition, and other forms of subjective evaluation. A total of 75% reported that no examination of any kind was administered, 20% give an oral examination following a definite set of previously prepared questions, and 5% administer a locally developed written examination. Thus, there is a definite lack of information pertaining to such important areas as intelligence, personality, interests, problem solving ability, leadership ability, etc.

All of the superintendents reported having a personal interview with the candidate and in most cases, this is the only interview they receive. Only 40% give the candidate a personal interview with the board. In most cases (60%), the superintendent alone must evaluate

the candidates potentialities and rely on his own judgement without the assistance from others in making this important decision.

Figure I. shows the comparison between the subjective and objective data being used by the superintendents in selecting their principals.

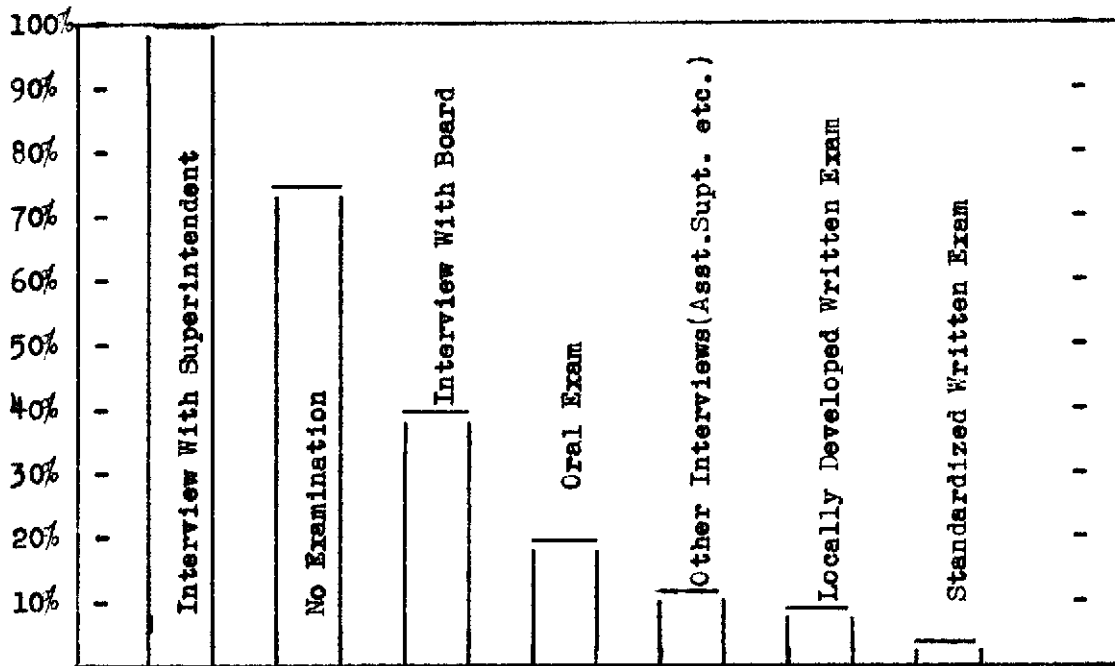


FIGURE I. Examinations and Interviews Given Candidates.

None of the superintendents allow several candidates to assemble at one time to give them the benefit of a leaderless group discussion. Thus, the few who administer examinations have no behavior measures with which to compare the results of their pencil and paper tests. A person can sometimes fake on these examinations and without the benefit of the leaderless group discussion or some other behavior

measure (where true personality characteristics are more likely to emerge) such falsification could go unnoticed.

When the application form is submitted, most superintendents require the three usual bits of information; references, previous experience, and a transcript of credits. The transcript of credits is the only real objective data, however, it has many limitations. Previous experience is valuable in that one can attempt to evaluate a candidate's potentialities by what he has already accomplished. In many cases, the letter of reference is of little value because the candidate will only obtain one from an individual whom he is certain will give him a good recommendation. Less than 50% of the superintendents ask for information such as religious preference, race, photograph, membership in civic, fraternal, or professional organizations, abstinence from tobacco and alcohol, and a medical certificate. It appears that the physical health of a candidate is of little importance in education even though the field of business administration considers it to be a very important factor. A comparison of the items required on the application forms by the superintendents are shown on Figure II.

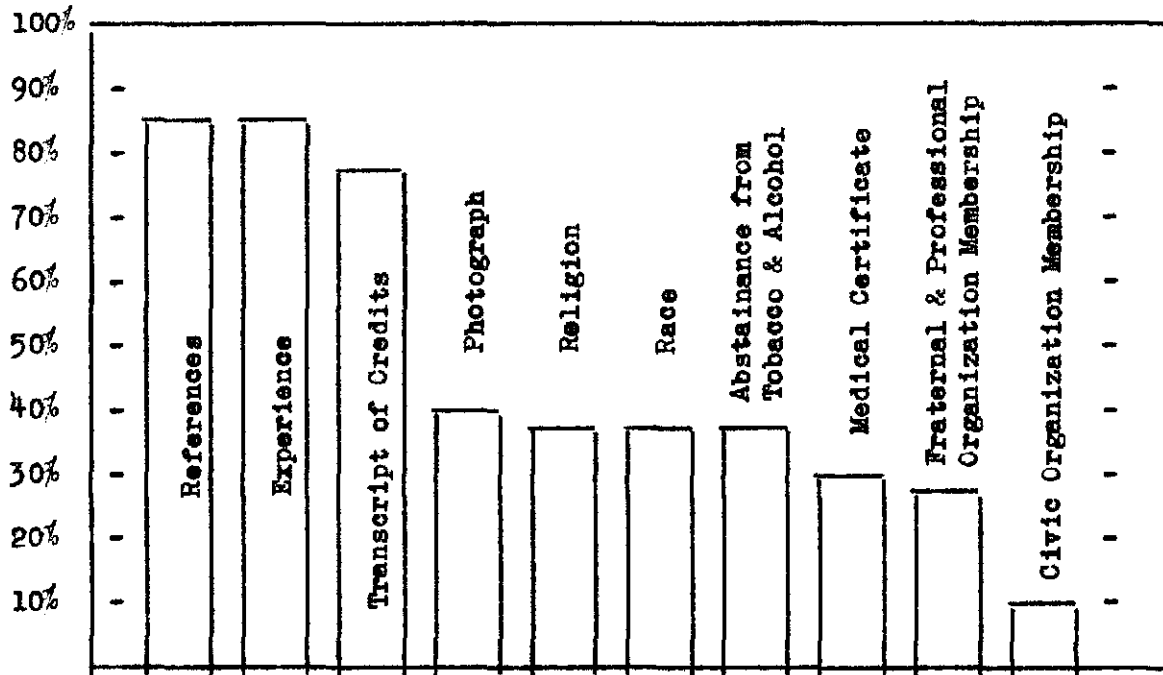


FIGURE II. Information Required on Application Forms.

Special Considerations That May be Determining Factors in Selection.

The large number of educators receiving higher degrees from certain renowned universities suggest the possibility that graduation from a large out-of-state university may be a determining factor in obtaining a desired employment. This is not the case in Utah because 68% of the superintendents felt the candidate for a principalship would have the same chance of obtaining the position if he was a graduate from either a large in-state university, out-of-state university, or a teachers college.

The data indicates the principal will have a better chance for employment in Utah if he is a member of the Church of Jesus Christ

of Latter Day Saints. The advantage of being a member of the predominant church in the state might be interpreted from the fact that 55% of the superintendents prefer principals who are members of the L.D.S. church. If 55% of the superintendents admit that a specific religious affiliation is important, then it is indicative that such a factor exists and probably is part of the selective criteria in use at the present time.

The data indicates that handicapped persons may continue in their pursuit of a degree in education administration and feel certain they will receive a fair chance in Utah as 60% of the superintendents feel the physically handicapped person is given equal consideration with the other candidates. However, this is true only in the case of minor handicaps up to and including the loss of a limb. There was almost unanimous agreement that those people with severe handicaps should not be considered as possible candidates. Those listed as severe were speech difficulties (stuttering, lisping, etc.), blindness, and deafness.

The data suggests that the position of principal is granted as an award for service rendered as a teacher rather than being a place of employment for the person who has completed a specific course of training. The chances are very slight of going immediately into a principalship upon completion of academic requirements, as 85% of the superintendents indicated a preference of the candidate who has come up through the teaching ranks of their respective districts.

The current trend for the employment of administrative personnel recommends that a candidate for an administrative position make a personal visitation to the place of possible employment. Such a visit must be made at the candidate's own expense in Utah. Most school districts do not seem to feel that a travel reimbursement service is necessary because 65% will not pay the traveling expenses of the potential candidate.

Superintendents' Preference of Academic Background and Previous Experience.

In determining the preferences of the academic background, the data showed that the superintendents of Utah evidently respect the training program given in the field of education because 100% of them felt the best possible background for a potential principal to have would be a degree in Education. Twenty percent listed a degree in Business Administration which is probably the result of the business like role the principal is required to play in the present day school. Even though many coaches are advanced to the principalship, only 3% of the superintendents consider Physical Education to be a good academic background for the position.

Having experience as an outstanding public relationist was considered to be the best type of background for a principalship candidate to have. This of course comes from the trait designated as 'understanding people' which was considered to be the most important characteristic in the Human Relations category, as indicated by the response from the Utah superintendents. Fifty-eight percent

listed experience as a business executive and 35% listed experience in a major position of church leadership. This still shows that leadership in religious activity is considered to be an important qualification in the selection procedure.

Superintendents' Perception of Important Characteristics.

This section will consist of a discussion on those characteristics which the superintendents perceived to be considered important for principal success. A comparison will be made between those characteristics mentioned most frequently in the literature and those the superintendents consider to be most important. In each of the major categories, the characteristics will be listed in the order of their importance as determined by the number of times they were mentioned.

PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS.

| <u>Literature Mentioned</u> | <u>Superintendents' Response</u> |
|---|---|
| 1. Management & administrative ability. | 1. Management & administrative ability. |
| 2. Curriculum development. | 2. Philosophy of education. |
| 3. Professional training. | 3. Understanding of children. |
| 4. Understanding of children. | 4. Professional training. |
| 5. Philosophy of education. | 5. Curriculum development. |
| 6. Child growth & development. | 6. Child growth & development. |

It may be noted that the data from the Utah public school superintendents and the data from professional literature are very similar in those characteristics they feel to be most important in the category

of professional knowledge and skills. Both list the most important characteristic as management and administrative ability. The superintendents list a professional skill as the most important, however, the next five are all in the area of professional knowledge. Apparently, knowledge is considered to be more important than skills when it comes to the selection of principals. It is interesting to note that the superintendents list a philosophy of education as being the second most important characteristic even though it is very difficult to define.

The three characteristics listed as least important are knowledge of budgeting and finance, participation in professional activities, and delegation of authority. The experimenter thought a knowledge of budgeting and finance would have been considered to be more important because of all the problems on budgets, expenditures, requisitioning, etc. that now confront a principal. It is evident that the superintendents want this knowledge to remain in their own offices where they can dictate policy on financial matters.

Apparently, membership and participation in professional organizations is not considered to be an item of particular importance. Possibly, this is the result of making membership compulsory in certain local, state, and national organizations.

INTELLECTUAL ABILITY AND PERSONALITY CHARACTERISTICS.

| <u>Literature Mentioned</u> | <u>Superintendents' Response</u> |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. Good judgement. | 1. Emotionally mature. |
| 2. Intelligence. | 2. Good judgement. |
| 3. Original. | 3. Intelligence. |
| 4. Initiative. | 4. Good personality. |
| 5. Good personality. | 5. Initiative. |
| 6. Liberal in thinking. | 6. Enthusiasm. |

There is general disagreement between the data from professional literature and the Utah school district superintendents' response in the major category of intellectual ability and personality characteristics. The top four characteristics listed by the literature data are all in the area of intellectual ability and include good judgement, intelligence, originality, and initiative. The superintendents' response is categorized more evenly. They listed three personality characteristics (emotionally mature, good personality, and enthusiasm) and three intellectual ability characteristics (good judgement, intelligence, and initiative) with a fairly even distribution. It is indicative that the data from professional literature considers intellectual ability to be much more important than personality characteristics however, the superintendents perceive their ideal principal as an individual who has a more even distribution in both areas. The superintendents list emotional maturity as the most important and the literature data does not place this characteristic in the top six. Both groups are similar in that the literature data lists the two most important as good judgement and intelligence. The superintendents

list these items as second and third respectively.

The superintendents list as the least important characteristics in this category, liberal in thinking, optimistic, and calmness. All three are personality characteristics and are usually associated with successful administrators. However, the superintendents feel that it is more important for a candidate to be emotionally mature and have a good personality and enthusiasm.

HUMAN RELATIONS SKILLS & MISCELLANEOUS CHARACTERISTICS.

| <u>Literature Mentioned</u> | <u>Superintendents' Response</u> |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. Cooperative. | 1. Understands people. |
| 2. Public relations. | 2. Cooperative. |
| 3. Interest in community affairs. | 3. Fair (democratic). |
| 4. Good health. | 4. Public relations. |
| 5. Communicate freely. | 5. Accepts suggestions. |
| 6. Conducts school democratically. | 6. Communicate freely. |

When considering the category of human relations and miscellaneous characteristics, the data from professional literature lists a fairly even distribution of human relations, community responsibility, physical characteristics, and communicative skills. This is not the condition with the superintendents who show a response that is heavily weighted with human relation characteristics. They did not consider good health to be an important factor. This is further exemplified when only 33% require a medical certificate with the application form. Authorities in education administration encourage

the educational administrator to become interested and participate in community affairs. The Utah superintendents did not mention this characteristic possibly because in the community and predominant church, it is rather difficult to escape activity.

The characteristics of sociability, abundant energy, and appearance were listed as the least important. Such a response is rather peculiar because public relations rated fourth on the important list and both sociability and appearance are definitely part of the public relations area. This indicates that the superintendents feel that if a principal possesses ability in the human relations skills, then personal appearance will automatically take care of itself. Such may be the case.

When all of the characteristics are considered together as one group, the superintendents of Utah listed their ideal principal as being three parts professional knowledge, one part professional skill, and one part personality. Those characteristics listed as the most important are; management and administrative ability, understanding of children, emotionally mature, philosophy of education, and understands people. The superintendents, in listing their preferences, have shown their desired principal to be an emotionally mature, skillful administrator who is well versed in the field of education and the understanding of children and people.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The findings of this survey may be summarized as follows:

1. Each Utah superintendent has hired or appointed an average of one principal per year for the last three years.
2. Principals for Utah schools are selected on the basis of very little if any objective data. The only objective data consists of a transcript of credits and an interview with the superintendent. Seventy-five percent reported that no examination of any kind is administered to the candidate.
3. Most principals in Utah are selected by the superintendent with little help from the board. Only 40% give the candidate an interview with the board.
4. The principal would stand a better chance of obtaining employment in Utah if he was a member of the L.D.S. church. If 55% of the superintendents admit a preference for a candidate to be a member of the L.D.S. church, it is indicative that such a factor exists in the selection procedure.
5. The candidate stands a better chance of obtaining employment as a principal if he has come up through the teaching ranks in the same school district where the job opening is located. Eighty-five percent of the superintendents listed this preference.

6. The superintendents of Utah consider the best academic background for a candidate to have is a degree in Education. The responses are unanimous (100%) on this point.
7. Data from professional literature and the responses from the Utah school district superintendents are very similar in their preferences of important characteristics in the category of professional knowledge and skills. Both list the most important characteristic as management and administrative ability. The superintendents list a philosophy of education as second in importance even though such a characteristic is very difficult to define.
8. The superintendents' preferences in the category of intellectual ability and personality characteristics do not agree with the data from professional literature. This disagreement is in favor of the superintendents who categorize their responses on an even 50% intellectual ability and 50% personality characteristics basis. The data from the literature is heavily weighted when the top four are all intellectual ability characteristics.
9. The Utah school district superintendents' responses and the data from professional literature do not agree on the human relations and miscellaneous characteristics category. The literature data has a fairly even distribution of human relations, community responsibility, physical characteristics, and communicative skills. The superintendents show a response that is heavily weighted with human relations skills. They did not consider good health to be an important factor and listed personal appearance as one of the least important characteristics.

10. The most important characteristics for a principal to possess as determined by the Utah school district superintendents are, management and administrative ability, understanding of children, emotional maturity, and to have a philosophy of education.

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A P P E N D I X

APPENDIX A

The questionnaire which was sent to the forty school district superintendents of Utah. The results are tabulated either in percentages or by the actual number of responses.

Superintendent's Name _____

School District _____ No. of years in present position (av. 8.575)

Do you hold a current Utah Administrator's Certificate? _____

No. of principals you have hired in the past 3 years (av. 3.125) _____

No. of schools in your district -- Elementary _____ Secondary _____

Total student population _____.

Please consider the problem of trying to fill a vacancy in the principalship of one of the schools in your district and answer the following questions accordingly.

Please CIRCLE the letter which designates your answer.

1. The candidate would have a better chance of getting the job if he was a graduate from:
 - A. The B.Y.U., U.S.U., or U. of U. (33%)
 - B. An out-of-state university.
 - C. A teachers college. (3%)
 - D. No difference. (68%)

2. Indicate the type of examinations that are given the candidate.
 - A. Oral examination (following a definite set of questions) (20%)
 - B. Standardized written examination (please specify) (3%)
 - C. Locally developed written examination. (5%)
 - D. No examination. (75%)

3. Indicate the type of interview(s) the candidate is given.
 - A. Personal interview with the superintendent. (100%)
 - B. Personal interview with the board. (40%)
 - C. Interview with the other candidates as a group.
 - D. No interview at all.
 - E. Others (specify) (5%) _____

4. Do most superintendents prefer the candidate who has come up through the teaching ranks of their respective districts rather than bringing in a candidate from outside the district?

- A. Yes. (85%)
- B. No. (15%)

5. Please attach a copy of your application form used in selecting principals. If your form is not available, please check the following items that you require in an application form.

- A. Religion. (38%)
- B. Race. (38%)
- C. Membership in civic organizations. (13%)
- D. Membership in fraternal or professional organizations. (28%)
- E. Photograph. (40%)
- F. References. (83%)
- G. Experience. (83%)
- H. Abstainance from tobacco and alcohol. (38%)
- I. Medical certificate. (33%)
- J. Transcript of credits. (78%)
- K. List any other important items not previously mentioned _____

6. Do most superintendents prefer a "home town" candidate?

- A. Yes. (13%)
- B. No. (75%)

7. Most superintendents in this state prefer principals who are members of:

- A. The L.D.S. Church. (55%)
- B. Non-L.D.S. Churches.
- C. No difference. (43%)

8. Is an Administrator's Certificate always required in your district?

- A. Yes. (83%)
- B. No. (17%) Explain _____

9. Is the physically handicapped person given equal consideration with other candidates?

- A. Yes. (60%)
- B. No. (30%)

10. Which of the following should not be considered as a potential candidate:
- A. One who has a speech difficulty (stuttering, lisping, etc.) (75%)
 - B. One who has a muscular difficulty to either the arm or leg. (20%)
 - C. One who is blind. (93%)
 - D. One who is deaf. (93%)
 - E. One who has an amputated limb. (17%)
11. Does the district encourage visits by the prospective principal by paying his traveling expenses?
- A. Yes. (35%)
 - B. No. (65%)
12. Which of the following academic backgrounds would be the best for a potential principal:
- A. Degree in Accounting. (3%)
 - B. Degree in Business Administration. (20%)
 - C. Degree in Education. (100%)
 - D. Degree in Political Science. (3%)
 - E. Degree in Sociology. (8%)
 - F. Degree in Physical Education. (3%)
 - G. Other _____
-
13. Which of the following types of previous experience would you consider best for a potential candidate:
- A. Bookkeeper. (8%)
 - B. Custodial work.
 - C. Business executive. (58%)
 - D. Salesman. (10%)
 - E. Bank teller.
 - F. Farmer.
 - G. Positions of church leadership. (35%)
 - H. Outstanding public relationist. (80%)

Questions 14, 15 & 16 are lists of characteristics that have been described in studies of principal selection. Examine the list for question 14 then circle the letters designating the 3 characteristics you feel to be most important and make an X through the letters designating the 3 characteristics you feel to be least important. Do the same for questions 15 & 16.

14. Professional knowledge and skills.

| | 0 | X | # |
|--|----|----|----|
| A. Child growth and development. | 13 | 1 | 1 |
| B. Management and administrative ability. | 25 | 3 | 12 |
| C. Curriculum development. | 14 | 3 | - |
| D. Executive ability. | 12 | 7 | 5 |
| E. Philosophy of education. | 23 | 1 | 9 |
| F. Good organizer. | 3 | 6 | 1 |
| G. Professional training. | 18 | - | 4 |
| H. Participation in professional activities. | - | 30 | - |
| I. Understanding of children. | 19 | - | 10 |
| J. Delegates authority. | - | 27 | - |
| K. Knowledge of budgeting and finance. | - | 31 | - |

15. Intellectual ability and personality characteristics.

| | 0 | X | # |
|-------------------------|----|----|----|
| A. Calm. | 1 | 19 | - |
| B. Good judgement. | 21 | - | 6 |
| C. Emotionally mature. | 26 | - | 10 |
| D. Initiative. | 10 | 1 | 1 |
| E. Enthusiasm. | 9 | 1 | 2 |
| F. Intelligence. | 19 | - | 6 |
| G. Loyal. | 6 | 6 | - |
| H. Good personality. | 13 | - | 3 |
| I. Moral. | 8 | 2 | 3 |
| J. Original. | - | 19 | - |
| K. Sincere. | 6 | 3 | 1 |
| L. Liberal in thinking. | 3 | 25 | - |
| M. Optimistic. | - | 23 | - |

16. Human relations skills and other misc. characteristics.

| | 0 | X | # |
|-----------------------------------|----|----|---|
| A. Accepts suggestions. | 11 | 5 | 2 |
| B. Abundant energy. | 3 | 19 | - |
| C. Interest in community affairs. | 3 | 7 | - |
| D. Cooperative. | 25 | - | 3 |
| E. Appearance. | - | 12 | - |
| F. Communicate freely. | 8 | 13 | 1 |
| G. Public relations. | 15 | - | 3 |
| H. Fair (democratic). | 21 | 2 | 4 |
| I. Good health. | 4 | 3 | - |
| J. Sociable. | - | 24 | - |
| K. Understands people. | 29 | 3 | 8 |

17. Please go back and examine all the characteristics listed in questions 14, 15 & 16, and place a (#) in front of the letters designating the 3 characteristics you feel are THE MOST IMPORTANT.

18. Which of the following basic areas is the most important in principal selection:

- A. Professional knowledge and skills. (4)
- B. Intellectual ability. (1)
- C. Personality characteristics. (4)
- D. Human relations skills. (3)
- E. All are of equal importance. (30)

REMARKS

APPENDIX B

The results of reviewing 35 studies dealing with principal selection. Each characteristic that was mentioned was listed on a separate card. Tabulation was made on the number of times each characteristic was mentioned.

I. Professional Knowledge

| | | |
|-----------|-----|---|
| <u>9</u> | 1. | Budgeting and finance. |
| <u>10</u> | 2. | Child growth and development. |
| <u>24</u> | 3. | Curriculum development. |
| <u>4</u> | 4. | Clear concepts of education. |
| <u>1</u> | 5. | Knowledge of desirable practices and procedures for effective personnel administration. |
| <u>8</u> | 6. | Inspection of plant and grounds. |
| <u>11</u> | 7. | Philosophy of education. |
| <u>16</u> | 8. | Professional training. |
| <u>3</u> | 9. | Psychological knowledge. |
| <u>3</u> | 10. | School law. |
| <u>1</u> | 11. | School housing. |
| <u>12</u> | 12. | Understanding of children. |
| <u>1</u> | 13. | Additional work in guidance and counseling. |
| <u>20</u> | 14. | Miscellaneous professional knowledge. |

II. Professional Skills

| | | |
|-----------|-----|---|
| <u>32</u> | 1. | Management and administrative ability. |
| <u>9</u> | 2. | Can make decisions. |
| <u>6</u> | 3. | Discipline. |
| <u>21</u> | 4. | Executive ability. |
| <u>8</u> | 5. | Experience. |
| <u>4</u> | 6. | Faculty evaluation. |
| <u>22</u> | 7. | Good organizer. |
| <u>6</u> | 8. | Maximum use of faculty. |
| <u>10</u> | 9. | Participation in professional activities. |
| <u>6</u> | 10. | Keeps superintendent informed. |
| <u>6</u> | 11. | Professional attitude. |
| <u>8</u> | 12. | Professionally up to date. |
| <u>4</u> | 13. | Suboriented. |
| <u>3</u> | 14. | Ability to teach. |
| <u>9</u> | 15. | Miscellaneous professional skills. |
| <u>9</u> | 16. | Delegates authority. |
| <u>13</u> | 17. | Maintains standard procedures. |

III. Intellectual Ability

| | | |
|-----------|----|---------------------|
| <u>5</u> | 1. | Evaluative ability. |
| <u>20</u> | 2. | Good judgement. |
| <u>5</u> | 3. | Have a goal. |
| <u>12</u> | 4. | Initiative. |

Intellectual Ability (continued)

- 15 5. Intelligence.
- 15 6. Original.
- 6 7. Plans ahead.
- 3 8. Has insight.
- 5 9. Miscellaneous intellectual ability.

IV. Character

- 1 1. Character.
- 4 2. Honest.
- 5 3. Loyal.
- 7 4. Moral character.
- 6 5. Personal integrity.
- 1 6. Religious (wholesome attitude toward).
- 4 7. Sincerity.
- 7 8. Miscellaneous character traits.

V. Human Relations Skills

- 5 1. Ability to work with people.
- 13 2. Accepts suggestions.
- 4 3. Approachable.
- 3 4. Capitalizes on talents of teachers.
- 21 5. Cooperative.
- 3 6. Courteous.
- 3 7. Encourages high morale.
- 4 8. Encourages professional growth.
- 8 9. Faculty recognition and support.
- 31 10. Faculty relationships.
- 11 11. Fair.
- 1 12. Frank.
- 8 13. Gives encouragement.
- 7 14. Group dynamics.
- 5 15. Helpful.
- 3 16. Helps teachers improve.
- 16 17. Sociable.
- 7 18. Stimulate co-workers.
- 9 19. Tact and diplomacy.
- 12 20. Understands people.
- 12 21. Watches human relationship factors constantly.
- 15 22. Will conduct his school democratically.
- 6 23. Miscellaneous human relations skills.

VI. Social Activities and Responsibilities.

- 5 1. Refinement.
- 8 2. Socially active.

VII. Personality Characteristics

- 4 1. Adaptability.
- 8 2. Calm.
- 3 3. Confident.
- 7 4. Considerateness.
- 3 5. Courageous.
- 8 6. Emotionally mature.
- 7 7. Enthusiasm.
- 1 8. Fit his sex role.
- 3 9. Forcefulness.
- 4 10. Good disposition.
- 11 11. Good personality.
- 9 12. Liberal in thinking.
- 7 13. Optimistic.
- 3 14. Patience.
- 1 15. Persistent.
- 4 16. Sense of humor.
- 10 17. Miscellaneous personality characteristics.

VIII. Physical Characteristics

- 12 1. Abundant energy.
- 10 2. Appearance.
- 21 3. Good health.
- 5 4. Poise.

IX. Communicative Skills

- 19 1. Communicate freely (speak, write, etc.).

X. Community Responsibilities

- 21 1. Interest in community affairs.
- 9 2. Parent-school relationships.
- 21 3. Public relations.

XI. General Knowledge and Characteristics

- 1 1. Ambition.
- 5 2. Breadth of interest.
- 5 3. Consistent.
- 8 4. Efficient work habits.
- 4 5. Philosophy.
- 7 6. Promptness.
- 19 7. Sense of responsibility.
- 3 8. Variety of experiences.
- 3 9. Marital status.
- 4 10. Self improvement.
- 5 11. Miscellaneous general characteristics.

XII. Unclassified 5

APPENDIX C

Pretest Letter of Transmittal

Dear Sir:

The enclosed questionnaire is part of a research project undertaken by the College of Education at the Utah State University. The research project is a pilot study on the important personality, physical, and intellectual characteristics necessary for principals and the criteria for their selection in the intermountain area.

Through a series of pre-tests, it was found that it takes an average of $9\frac{1}{2}$ minutes to complete the questionnaire.

It will be appreciated if you will fill out the questionnaire for us. In addition to supplying the responses called for, will you please make notations on any question which is not clear, misleading, etc. Also, use the remarks section for any general criticism or recommendations you may have.

Upon completion, please return the questionnaire in the self addressed envelope which is provided. Your participation in this project will be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely yours,

John C. Carlisle
Dean

Encl.
sjc

APPENDIX D

Final Letter of Transmittal

Dear Sir:

The attached questionnaire concerned with selection of principals is part of a state-wide study being carried on cooperatively by the State Department of Public Instruction and the three Utah Universities. This phase of the research is concerned specifically with determining the present status of principal selection in our state. The results of this study will help to provide preliminary criteria to be used for developing improved selection procedures and for improving administrator training programs.

We are particularly desirous of obtaining responses from all superintendents in the state of Utah and hope that you will give this questionnaire your careful consideration. The questionnaire has been tested with a sampling of school administrators and we have revised it in order to make it possible for us to obtain all necessary data while requiring a minimum of your time. The average time required for administrators trying out the questionnaire was $9\frac{1}{2}$ minutes.

It will be appreciated if you will complete the questionnaire as soon as possible and return it in the stamped envelope enclosed.

Other phases of the research can not be carried out until we complete analysis of these data. We would welcome any comments that you may have concerning any aspect of principal selection not covered in the questionnaire. We will be pleased to send you a summary of questionnaire results if you desire. Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely

John C. Carlisle
Dean

encl.
sjc