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Dissertation in Practice

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctorate in Education

APPOINTED AND ELECTED SUPERINTENDENTS IN FLORIDA'S GOVERNANCE

By

Candace L Habersham

Lynn University

2012

Order Number: _____

ELECTED AND APPOINTED SUPERINTENDENTS IN FLORIDA'S GOVERNANCE

Habersham, Candace L., Ed.D.

Lynn University, 2012

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The process which accompanied completing such task has made an extremely huge impact on my life. I have been blessed with a strong sense of determination which has contributed to my success in reaching this goal. The first person I would like to acknowledge is my son, Reginal Adams, II. Thank you Reg for remaining a responsible young man, tending to your own needs when I was mentally unavailable. This has been another long journey for the both of us.

As a minor, I was unexpectedly informed by my parents that we were not rich. Imagine my surprise to learn of such newsflash. Currently, as an adult, I now realize that I sort of had it right. Although we were not financially rich, we were afforded something better, stability and love. Without such constructive upbringing and positive words of encouragement from my mother, Janice Morgan, and father, Wilston Morgan, my determination would have been short lived. Thank you, mom and dad, for believing in me. Thank you for raising me in a manner which allows me to believe in myself.

I would be neglectful if I did not acknowledge the wonderful professors of Lynn University. Thank you, Dr. Valerie Storey and Dr. William Leary, for sharing your expertise in all aspects of educational leadership. Dr. Adam Kosnitzky, had it not been for your time, going above and beyond the call of duty to assist my cohort and me, such accomplishment would have been even more difficult. You are quite an asset to Lynn University.

I would like to extend a special thank you to Dwight Westbrook. Thank you for your ear during my time of venting and for your motivation when I needed that extra push. I will not forget your assistance which ranged from simply checking on me to ensure I was okay to calling out data for me to input into the system. You are appreciated.

ABSTRACT

When a specific system is chosen, in reference to selecting a school superintendent, contention between constituents who oppose such system ensues. Such issues range from demographics and differences in management style to which superintendent is more credentialed. In Florida, each county is considered a school district and has its own school superintendent. Thus, since Florida has 67 counties there are 67 school districts and 67 superintendents. Florida allows its districts to use one of two systems to select its superintendent, an election by popular vote or an appointive system.

This study replicated methods used in one of the leading studies conducted in Tennessee, Morgan (2003), which was under the direction of Jason Walton, Ph.D. The context of the study is limited to school districts in the State of Florida. As an extension to the Tennessee Study, the researcher explored if there existed significant differences between each system. Of the 67 superintendents, 27 (8 appointed and 19 elected superintendents) participated in the study.

Findings indicated, in comparison to their elected counterparts, appointed participants possessed higher levels of education, had higher annual incomes, and are more acquainted with superintendency prior to becoming a superintendent. On the other hand, the researcher found there was no significant difference in appointed and elected participants in reference to amount of time in office or student outcomes. In reference to appointed superintendents, findings indicated that majority of appointed participants were hired with the assistance of a recruiting agency and although majority of the appointed participants were from Florida, exactly 50% of them were from within their current district. In reference to superintendents in general, 41% of the participants shared the responsibility in developing policy and participants did not involve the community in the planning/advisory capacity at an equivalent rate of involving staff.

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

Introduction and Background

Prior to 1885, school superintendents were appointed by the governor in the state of Florida (Cochran, 1921). The history of public education in Florida has been said to date as far back as 1822, the year in which Florida was organized as a territory by Congress; for that year every sixteenth section of land through the Territory was reserved by the General Government for the purpose of aiding in the maintenance of primary schools (Cochran, 1921). In 1885, the selection process changed from the governor appointing the superintendent to a system by which the local citizens elected the superintendent (Florida Constitution Revision Commission, 1885, XII, 2). In 1968, various other Articles were revised, specifically one pertaining to public school superintendents. Such revisions paved the road for school boards to have the authority to appoint public school superintendents (Constitution of the State of Florida, 1968, IX, 5).

Statement of the Problem

When a specific system is chosen, in reference to selecting a superintendent, contention between constituents who oppose such system ensues (Dixon, 2006; Florida School Board Association, 2007; Leps, 1968; Morgan, 2003). Such issues range from demographics and differences in management styles (Brand, 1993) to which superintendent is more credentialed (Dixon, 2006; Morgan, 2003). The state of Florida allows its districts to use one of two systems to select its superintendent, an election by popular vote or an appointive system.

The focus of this study was to replicate and extend applicable methods used in one of the leading studies concerning the selection method of appointed and elected superintendents, Morgan (2003), yet in the context of the 67 districts in the State of Florida. As an extension to the

Tennessee Study, the researcher explored other avenues related to the selection method of employing superintendents, specifically to determine if differences occur in each system related to:

- Districts' Grade
- Student Population
- Student Graduation Rate
- Superintendents' Prior Employment
- Superintendents' Level of Education
- Superintendents' Salary

Since specificities of elected superintendents are bounded by Florida's Constitution, they are not impacted by recruiting agencies and must reside within the county of which they are employed.

Therefore, the researcher explored avenues related to appointed superintendents only:

- Use of Recruiting Agencies
- Prior Residence

In reference to superintendents in general, the researcher explored additional areas:

- Developing Policy
- Planning/Advisory

National Trends in Selecting Superintendents

Although the method in which to select a superintendent initially occurred via an election, appointing superintendents has gained more ground in the national realm. With the exception of Florida, Mississippi, and Alabama, all other states employ only appointed superintendents (Southern Regional Education Board, 2008). Under an appointive system, members of the districts' school board select the superintendent for their district. Elected superintendents are selected by the voters of the district and must reside in the district in question. There has been an

on-going debate as to which system, appointed or elected, serves as the more efficient method (Brand, 2003; Hoover, 2008; Morgan, 2003; Partridge & Sass, 2011; and Sello, 1987).

Interestingly enough, arguments for and against appointed or elected superintendents can be dated as far back as 1968, and to a large degree, mimicked present arguments for and against each system. Such arguments in favor of having an elected superintendent ranged from the public maintains control of the schools through an election to a superintendent elected by the people is more independent of the school board and better able to protect the people from ill-conceived plans of a poor school board (Leps, 1968, 17). Similarly, arguments in favor of having an appointed superintendent have been on-going as well, mimicking current views. Such arguments for systems appointing superintendents ranged from the said superintendents having more experience in the field to being more educated than their elected counterparts (Leps, 1968, 18; Dixon, 2006).

As stated previously, the task of deciding if school superintendents should be appointed or elected is on-going. In some states, even when the public has voted to change from appointed to elected, the issue would find itself on the ballot once more (Morgan, 2003, Florida Association of District School Superintendents, 2012). In reference to student achievement, some studies of the role of school districts' chief executive officers, offer vague suggestions of effective leadership characteristics and have not linked leadership styles to district or student performance (Education Writers Association, 2003). Morgan (2003) and Bennett, Finn, & Cribb (1999), indicated that teachers have the most influence on achievement rather than superintendents. Bennett et al. (1999) described individuals at the district level as the "blob" - an educational system made up of people who works outside of classrooms, soaking up resources and resisting reform without contributing to student achievement (Education Week, March 2, 1987).

Contrarily, other studies uncovered that when district leaders effectively address specific responsibilities, they can have a profound, positive impact on student achievement in their districts (Waters & Marzano, 2006; Petersen, 1999; and Institute for Educational Leadership, 2001).

Appointed and Elected Superintendent Model

The researcher created a model (Figure 1.1) which depicts the differences between appointed and elected superintendents. The model illustrated that irrespective of the method by which a superintendent is selected student outcomes (such as districts' grade, students' graduation rate, or student population) are not impacted. However, superintendent outcomes in reference to salary, level of education, or length of time in position are impacted by the method of which a superintendent is selected. Nevertheless, student outcomes are impacted when superintendents, (appointed or elected) collaborate with the staff, community, and school board.

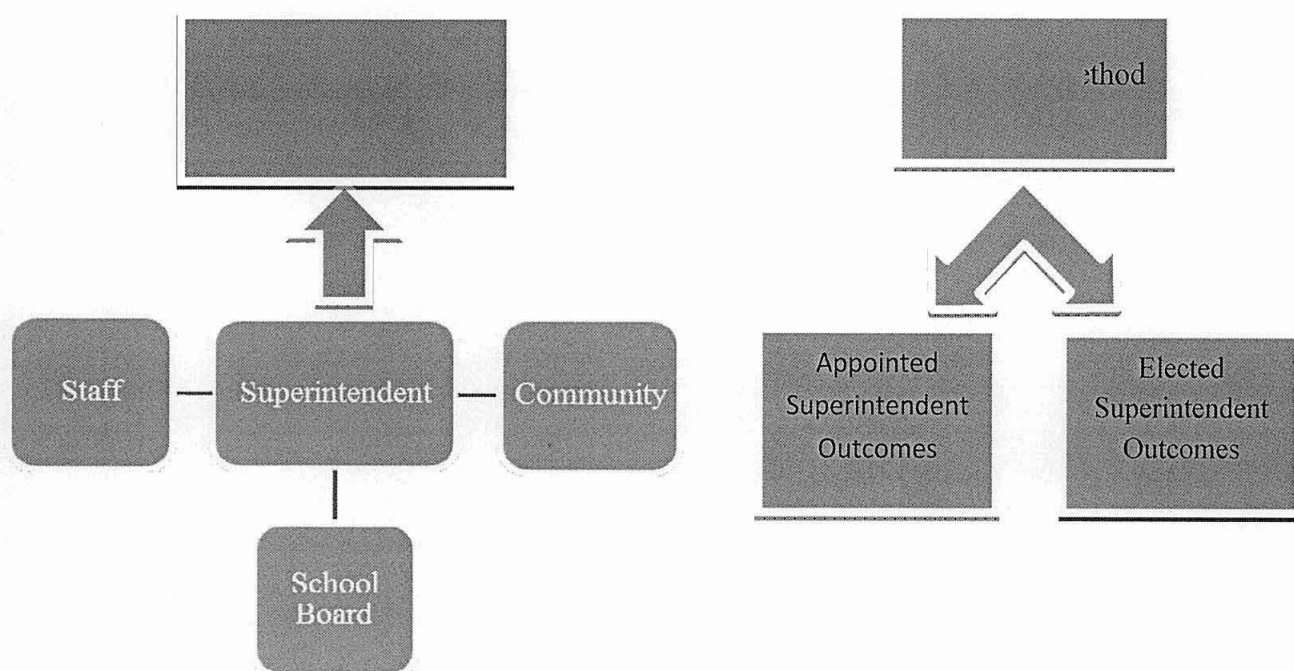


Figure 1.1: Appointed and Elected Superintendent Effects Model, (Habersham, 2012)

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to investigate if there was a statistically significant impact on student outcomes when a superintendent was employed under one system over the other. The scope of this study involved input from 4 entities: appointed and elected superintendents in the State of Florida, a member of Florida School Board Association (FSBA), and a member of Florida Association of District School Superintendents (FADSS), a member of Southern Regional Education Board (SREB). This study replicated and extended one of the leading studies, which was conducted in Tennessee under the direction of Jason Walton, Ph.D., *Elected vs. Appointed Superintendents: Questions and Answers*. Thus, the researcher utilized applicable methods implemented by the aforementioned study.

Research Questions

The main focus of this study addressed the following questions:

- RQ1. In Florida, was there a relationship between superintendent variables, analyzed in this study, and the selection method of the superintendent?
- RQ2. In Florida, was there a relationship between student outcomes, analyzed in this study, and the selection method of the superintendent?
- RQ3. In Florida, what percentage of appointed superintendents was hired from within their district?
- RQ4. In Florida, what percentage of appointed superintendents was hired with the assistance of a recruiting agency?
- RQ5. What percentage of Florida's superintendents shares the responsibility with the school board when developing policy?

RQ6. Do Florida's superintendents involve the community in the planning/advisory capacity at an equivalent rate staff are involved?

Rationale for the Study

With the exception Alabama and Mississippi, Florida is the only state which employs both elected and appointed school superintendents; all other states reflect an appointive system only. As far back as 1990, 6 states employed both systems. Georgia, Tennessee, and South Carolina have since been successful with changing their governance structure to run parallel with majority of the states. In the 3 states which currently have both elective and appointive systems, there exist elected superintendents who prefer to become appointed and appointed superintendents which prefer to govern under an elective system (Florida School Board Association, 2012).

Given the fact that this is a new era where everyone, including district leaders, is being held accountable for student outcomes (Marzano & Waters, 2007), understanding the impact a specific system may have on such outcome would be beneficial. With the various reforms amongst us, now is a great time to determine if there is something indeed wrong with the system we use to employ our district leader. The ability to vote is anyone's right. However, when the majority of the country is utilizing another method to get the same job accomplished, one may wonder "What's wrong with Florida". Perhaps it's the rest of the country that could learn a lesson from Florida? Either way, answers need to be addressed as to whether there is a significant difference between each system.

Assumptions

This study will be based on the following assumptions:

- Method used in this study will replicate applicable components of Morgan (2003).
- All participants will respond in good-faith.

- Data retrieved from the individual district sites will be accurate.

Scope and Delimitations

This study will be limited to input from a member of FSBA, a member of FADSS, a member of SREB and superintendents in the state of Florida. Therefore, results will only be related to such setting. Additionally, some results will depend on self-reported responses from superintendents who are appointed or elected which may involve biased responses.

Definition of Terms

The following terms are defined for the purpose of this study:

Appointed superintendent: A public school superintendent who acquired the superintendency through appointment by the local board of education (Chester, 1987)

Appointive method: A system providing for the appointment of the superintendent by the school board (Sello, 1987).

Elected superintendent: A public school superintendent who acquired the superintendency through popular election by the people (Sello, 1987).

Elective method: A system providing for the election of the county superintendent by popular vote (Brand,1993).

School board: A group of persons who work with the superintendent of schools and whose function is to carry out the will of the state toward education as expressed by the state legislature (Brand,1993).

Search committee: An committee formed of persons with the sole responsibility of locating and reviewing promising candidates for supervisory and administrative positions within the school district (Brand,1993).

Superintendent: The chief school officer of the local school system (Sello,1987).

CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

The review of literature is divided into two sections: National trends pertaining to appointed and elected superintendents and the impact district leaders in general have on student achievement. A brief description of each section is as follows:

Section one involves research conducted on two systems used to select superintendents, appointed and elected. Given that the main focus of various reforms is to raise student achievement (Institute for Educational Leadership, 2001; No Child Left Behind, 2001; Marzano & Waters, 2007), insight will be provided on each of the selection methods as they relate to student outcomes. This section of the literature review exposes issues ranging from the difference in management styles of an elected and appointed superintendent (Brand, 1993) to findings of whether a specific selection method have more of an impact on student achievement than the other (Hoover, 2008; Partridge and Sass, 2011).

Section two, analyzes the impact district leaders, in general, have on student achievement via the community and the school board. Although research rejects a connection between district leaders and student achievement (Bennett et al., 1999), this section is also comprised of studies linking superintendents with student achievement (Educators Writers Association, 2003; Institute for Educational Leadership, 2001; Petersen, 1999; and Waters & Marzano, 2006). Such studies range from investigations involving three school districts to a meta-analysis involving 27 studies conducted since 1970. Evidence as to what the literature deems effective or ineffective in reference to superintendents (in general) and student achievement will be noted.

National Trends in Selecting Superintendents

This section consists of literature concerning five different studies in reference to four different states (Tennessee, Georgia, Florida, and Alabama) relating to selection methods of electing and appointing superintendents. During the time of each study, the states in question employed both elected and appointed superintendents. Three of the studies, Morgan (2003), Brand (1993), and Sello (1987), conducted interviews with government officials and sent surveys to superintendents in order to solicit specific information including how superintendents transitioned from an elected to an appointed system (Morgan, 2003) and what they perceived as differences between the selection methods of each system (Brand, 1993; Sello 1987). The remaining two studies, Hoover (2008) and Partridge and Sass (2011), focused on determining if there existed a positive impact on student outcomes in reference to the method utilized to select a superintendent. Although two of the five studies, Sello (1987) and Partridge and Sass (2011), were conducted in the same state, Florida, they had unparalleled concentrations.

Tennessee

When a state chooses one system over the other, in reference to how its districts should select their superintendents, controversy among legislators may arise. Such an incident occurred in Tennessee. Prior to 1992, school systems of the state of Tennessee used three methods to select their superintendent: public selection through popular elections; county commission appointment; and school board appointment (pp. i). The Education Improvement Act (EIA) of 1992 mandated superintendents in the State of Tennessee become appointed solely by the local school board. Legislators who opposed an appointive system proposed 28 bills, between 1992 and 2002, to change the selection method.

Such controversy distracted members of the House and Senate to the point where they requested the Comptroller of the Treasury's Office of Education Accountability (OEA) investigate the issue of having an elected versus appointed superintendents (pp. 1). In turn, Morgan (2003) was conducted.

The researcher uncovered the following:

- The change in selection method was one part of a larger effort to shift the overall authority of the superintendent.
- Forty-one of 127 respondents indicated that they felt no undue pressure to make personnel decisions that were consistent with board member preferences.
- The change in selection method primarily affected superintendents in county school districts.
- Of 127 survey respondents 37.8 percent of superintendents reported their district retained its elected superintendent as its first appointed superintendent. 19.7 percent of superintendents reported their district had an elected superintendent prior to the EIA, and subsequently appointed someone different.
- The majority of Tennessee school boards did not use superintendent recruitment organizations/firms.
- OEA survey responses showed the while Tennessee systems may shop for superintendent candidates beyond their borders, a large majority still hire from within the group.
- Of the superintendents who responded to OEA's survey, 74 percent favored appointment, 15 percent supported election, and 11 percent did not answer the question.
- Since EIA's passage, the politics of the superintendency has experienced a shift in Tennessee districts where there was a history of electing superintendents.

- Student performance cannot be attributed to selection method of the superintendent.
- Electing superintendents occurs only in the South, and is becoming increasingly rare.
- The EIA changed the minimum job requirements for the superintendents.

Morgan (2003) was successful at answering some questions in the debate over elected versus appointed superintendents. Most importantly, the researcher concluded that neither selection method can be statistically shown to advantage students or their performance as district leaders are too far away from the classroom (pp. 17). However, some of the answers presented raised additional questions (pp. 19). One can only imagine the unanswered questions as they were not provided. Perhaps such unrevealed questions involved whether there were demographic or management differences between appointed and elected superintendents, questions which were answered in Brand (1993).

Georgia

In another study involving the selection process of appointed and elected superintendents, Brand (1993) conducted her dissertation, *An Investigation of the Appointed Versus Elected Superintendent in the State of Georgia*, with the intent to investigate whether a causal relationship existed between the selection process of the superintendent and the effectiveness with which he/she managed the school system. Additionally, the researcher's purpose was to determine differences in elected and appointed Georgia superintendents' demographic information and the priority of their concerns (pp. 5). The study set out to answer two research questions:

1. Based on self-reported data, were there demographic differences between appointed and elected superintendents?

2. Were there perceived differences between the management of school districts of appointed and elected superintendents based on responses of principals within each district (pp.6)?

A questionnaire was sent to all 184 superintendents in position at the time of the study and randomly selected principals on each level from elementary to high school. 128 superintendents responded (which represented 70% return) and 333 principals responded (which represented a 65% return). The major findings of the study were as follows:

- Appointed superintendents were more experienced in administrative positions, held higher degrees, and were older.
- Elected superintendents held their position and had been in education for a longer period of time.
- Appointed superintendents were most concerned with school board relations; elected superintendents were most concerned with budget and finance.
- Principals perceived the appointed superintendent as superior overall in all administrative areas surveyed (pp. 97).

Brand (1993) is significant as it contributed another piece of evidence to the on-going issue surrounding the method in which to select a superintendent. Since efforts to increase student achievement initiated major educational reforms, i.e., school choice, school and district grades, teacher accountability, it only makes sense for researchers to investigate if there existed a statistically significant impact on student outcomes as it relates to the selection method of district leaders.

Florida

Similar to Morgan (2003) and Brand (1993), Sello (1987) conducted research to estimate the perceived differences (by members of the educational community) in the administration of school districts which have operated under both the elected and appointed superintendent (pp. 4).

His study was limited to the State of Florida. The following research questions were explored:

- (1) Are appointed superintendents perceived to be more competent?
- (2) Are there perceived differences in the administration of public schools of Florida which now have an appointed rather than an elected school superintendent?

The following areas were addressed:

- a. Professional training and experiences
- b. Curriculum
- c. Personnel
- d. Budget
- e. Capital Outlay
- f. Leadership
- g. Organization

- (3) Are administrators who have served under both elected and appointed systems more satisfied with the performance of the appointed superintendent?

Oral interviews were conducted and questionnaires were mailed to board members and administrators in selected districts. Information from an oral interview was gathered from eighty-four school board members and administrators from sixty-seven school districts in Florida (pp. 36). During the time he was employed as a lobbyist for Palm Beach County School Board at the State Capitol, the researcher was afforded the opportunity to interview twenty-six administrators and

twenty-eight board members on their perceptions concerning the superintendent's performance (pp. 37). An additional thirty-four administrators were interviewed at a week-long workshop for school administrators at the Grenelefe Resort in Haines City, Florida (pp.37).

The oral interview consisted of nine items:

1. What differences in competencies, if any, have you observed between the elected and appointed superintendents?
2. In what ways or instances, if any, have you observed the appointed superintendent being able to remove his administration from political decisions?
3. Please discuss the differences in fixed responsibilities you observed the appointed superintendent having which the elected superintendent did or did not have?
4. Please relate your opinions about the appointed superintendents' responsiveness to the needs of the community as compared to the elected superintendents'.
5. What is your viewpoint of the appointed and elected superintendent in relation to the principles of representative government?
6. What differences, if any, can you perceive in the administrative climate which exists in the school district under an appointed and an elected superintendent?
7. Please discuss the changes, if any.

The questionnaire data revealed at the .01 level of significance the following information was perceived that the appointed superintendents:

- Had more professional training than the elected superintendents
- Were better prepared in the area of curriculum development than the elected superintendents.

- Possessed more knowledge in the area of personnel selection than the elected superintendents.
- Had a better working knowledge of the budget process than the elected superintendents.
- Had a better working knowledge of capital outlay than the elected superintendents.
- Were better prepared in the area of leadership than the elected superintendents.

Thus, instead of focusing on the issue of whether each system possessed different management styles, the next two studies, Hoover (2008) and Partridge and Sass (2011), set out to explore if there existed a relationship between appointed and elected superintendents and student achievement.

Alabama

Adding to the investigations of appointed and elected systems, in her dissertation, *Elected Versus Appointed School District Officials: Is there a Difference in Student Outcomes?*, Hoover (2008) conducted a study in the State of Alabama, with the intent to explore the differences in student performance in school systems with publicly elected school officials as opposed to their appointed counterparts (pp. 637).

During this time, all 54 city school systems in Alabama appointed their school superintendents but could have either elected or appointed school boards, 22 of which were elected (pp. 638). However, county schools systems in Alabama, of which there were 56, were given the autonomy to either appoint or elect their superintendent; 35 were elected superintendents during the sample period (pp. 638). Thus, the researcher of the Alabama study was provided the opportunity to examine the impact of elected officials on student performance. Participants consisted only of systems that remained consistent throughout the research period.

The framework was based on the premise that publicly elected administrators need to make themselves more accessible to the public since it is those in the general public who will directly

decide their tenure. The researchers indicated that elected officials will engage in activities that will differ from those of their appointed counterparts... appointed officials are still subject to the public will but are somewhat insulated by at least one degree of separation by the appointed party (pp. 637), as noted in figure 2.1.

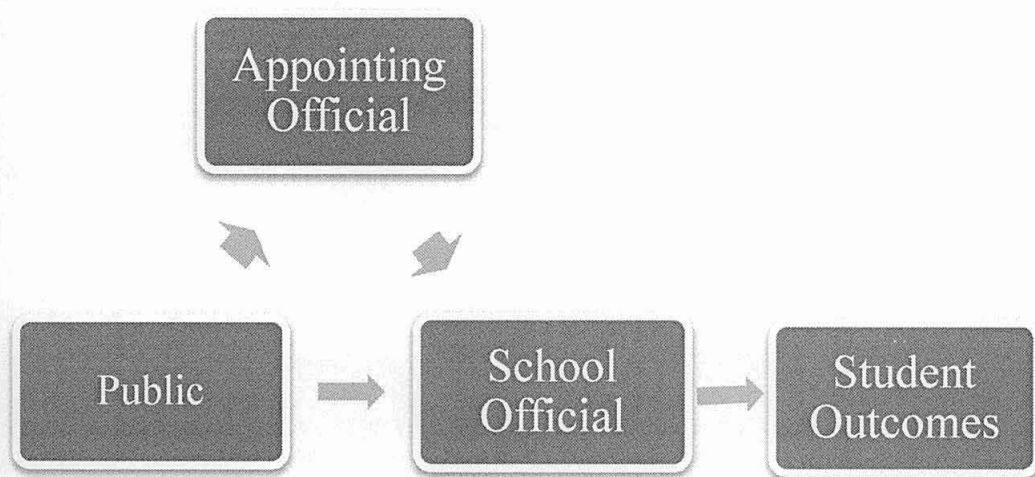


Figure 2.1: Public Accountability Flows (Hoover, 2008)

Various variables were taken into consideration when determining the impact a system had on student achievement (Hoover, 2008):

- Since the academic performance in the state of Alabama is measured using the Stanford Achievement Test (SAT), which is a standardized test administered to students in all public schools in the state system (pp. 638), data on such test was deemed useful. For the purpose of analyzing the long-term effect a system may have on student achievement, the researchers examined the outcomes of students who took the fourth- and eleventh-grade SAT exams. The raw scores of student achievement on their SAT were transformed into a letter grade for each school system (pp. 638).
- Researchers referenced Aaronson, Barrow, and Sanders (2007) a study which found that family income has a tremendous impact on student achievement. For that reason,

researchers included information on the percentage of students in a system who received a free lunch.

- The researchers used the argument that better trained teachers positively affect student performance. Although they did not have access to the nature of the advanced degrees of the faculty (since the research had taken place prior to the implementation of NCLB), the researchers used data on the percentage of teaching faculty in the district with at least a Bachelors of Arts or Science Degree.
- Research suggested pros and cons on the effectiveness of increased spending per pupil on student performance. Therefore, the researchers included per pupil expenditures in each school system in their formula as well.
- And finally, since “most research regarding student outcomes includes data on student/teacher ratios, with varying outcomes”, the researchers used data on the daily student enrollment afterschool had been in session for two months (since they were not successful with gathering consistent information on student/teacher ratios). (pp. 639-642)
- Two effects were tested: (a) the performance outcomes of public school students at the fourth- and eleventh- grade levels in the state of Alabama to see if there is any impact from having officials who held elected posts; and (b) the difference in performance when the school board is elected and when the system superintendent is elected. The data used span the time period 1998 through 2001. The findings revealed there was no statistically significant difference in student outcomes when either the superintendent or the school board was elected to the post (pp. 643).

Florida

Similarly, Partridge and Sass (2011) conducted a study, using data from Florida's 67 school districts, to compare academic outcomes of students in districts run by elected and appointed superintendents. As with the previous studies, researchers were afforded the opportunity to take advantage of the fact that Florida leaves it up to its individual school districts as to which system to utilize when selecting their district leader. The researchers employed a 10-year panel of data from Florida's 67 county-wide school districts and compared academic outcomes of students in school districts run by elected superintendents with the outcomes for students in districts led by appointed superintendents (pp. 134).

Depending on the value of λ , one of three models was used to estimate the effect of school superintendent selection method on student outcomes. If they assumed that the impact of educational inputs does not decay over time, then $\lambda = 1$ in (1) and the resulting district-level equation is (2B). Alternatively, if educational inputs have no lasting impact on student achievement after the year in which they are applied then $\lambda = 0$ and (2A) is the result.

$$(1) A_{ig} = \alpha X_{ig} + \beta E_{ig} + \lambda A_{ig-1} + \eta_{ig}$$

$$(2A) \Delta_d = \alpha_d + \beta S_d + \varepsilon_d$$

$$(2B) \Delta_d = \alpha_d + \beta S_d + \varepsilon_d$$

(Boardman & Murnane, 1979)

where A_{ig} is the achievement level for student i at the end of grade g , X_{ig} is a vector of student/family characteristics and E_{ig} represents educational inputs in grade g , A_{ig-1} which represents the achievement level in the prior grade, serves as a sufficient statistic for all historical student/family and school-based inputs, E depends on the method of superintendent selection, S , or $E = E(S)$ (pp. 137). If it was estimated that the impact of selection method on achievement was

biased, other strategies were employed to combat such selection bias. Such strategies are somewhat complex which involves adding potential determinants of the selection method and an instrumental variables (two-stage) approach (pp. 138). The study found that the equivalence of outcomes across superintendent selection methods suggests that elected officials are no less productive than appointed professionals (pp. 147).

Superintendents and Student Achievement

It should not be of any surprise when reports such as “A Nation at Risk” or laws such as the “No Child Left Behind” Act are referenced in any study pertaining to student achievement. The stinging criticism of such reports as “A Nation At Risk” as well as research demonstrating that the instructional leadership of school administrators has a significant impact on the academic achievement in schools has motivated many district administrators to investigate and implement instructional leadership (Petersen, 1999, p.4).

In reference to student achievement, some studies of the role of school districts’ chief executive officers offer vague suggestions of effective leadership characteristics and have not linked leadership styles to district or student performance (Education Writers Association, 2003). Morgan (2003) and Bennett, Finn, & Cribb (1999), noted that since district leaders are further away from the classroom, they do not impact student achievement. Bennett et al. (1999) described individuals at the district level as the “blob” - an educational system made up of people who works outside of classrooms, soaking up resources and resisting reform without contributing to student achievement (Cuban, 1998).

On the contrary, other studies uncovered that when district leaders effectively address specific responsibilities, they can have a profound, positive impact on student achievement in their districts (Waters & Marzano, 2006; Petersen, 1998; and Institute for Educational Leadership,

2001). Thus, although the first part of the literature included research on district leaders and student achievement, such leaders were categorized as elected or appointed. This section of the literature review will focus on district leaders, in general, and their relationship with the community and school boards in reference to student achievement.

Superintendents, School Boards, and the Community

As with any organization, two entities in search of the same outcome should intend to collaborate in a manner which is conducive to attaining such goal. In reference to positive student outcomes, the relationship between the superintendent, the community and school boards is also important. A superintendent and a board can't sing two different tunes and then expect the public to hum along (Fusarelli & Petersen, 1998, pp. 3). Poor relationships between the superintendent and the board of education deters school improvement (Danzberger, Kirst, & Usdan, 1992). While school boards have power, they are usually unpaid, part-time, and untrained and except for the information presented to them by the superintendent or perhaps what they pick up informally, they know little of the underlying issues for the scores of complex decisions (Cuban, 1976).

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB), is attempting to strengthen the linkages with communities, parents and schools (Petersen and Kowalski, 2005, p. 10). As evidence, parents and the community must be informed of their child's and school's status respectively, parents must be notified if their child's teacher is categorized as "not highly qualified", and parents are given a choice to relocate their child to a school in better standings if their child's present school is deemed ineffective (NCLB, 2001). This section of the literature exposes research pertaining to the relationship between superintendents, the community, and school boards in reference to student achievement.

Petersen (1999)

With an emphasis on district leadership and boards of education, Petersen (1999) conducted an exploratory case study on 5 school districts which were deemed successful with raising student achievement. The study explored the implications of three distinct trends on the relationship between superintendents and boards of education: (1) changing demographics; (2) changes brought about by school reform; (3) and changes in superintendents themselves (pp. 2). The study asked demonstrably effective instructional leaders to reflect on one question: "What is your perception of the district superintendent's role in the promotion of curriculum and instruction?"

Interviewee responses indicated that superintendents in this study perceived four attributes to be essential in their ability to be successful instructional leaders. These attributes are: (1) possession and articulation of an instructional vision; (2) the creation of an organizational structure that supports their instructional vision and leadership; (3) assessment and evaluation of personnel and instructional programs; and (4) organizational adaptation. It should be noted that support of the school boards permitted the superintendents in this study to take significant risks in their promotion of the technical core.

Petersen (2002)

Petersen (2002) study revealed "the importance of superintendent and his/her relationships with school and community personnel in leading an academically successful school district.... Participation in the development of instructional goals by school administrators, board members, teachers and community members is critical not only in appearance, but in the creation of an instructionally focused district culture (p. 10-11)".

Knowing the cultural background of the community of which one leads is a vital component of being a successful leader (Kowalski, 2006; Institute for Educational Leadership, 2001; Sergiovanni, 1994). Due to an influx of students of various cultures being enrolled in American schools, the task of increasing student achievement in today's society is even more challenging. The average superintendent is trained to deal with relatively homogeneous student bodies. They are instead managing districts that are populated by students who reflect the growing diversity of the United States (Institute for Educational Leadership, 2001, pp. 3-4). The implications of demographics for education are enormous (Hodgkinson & Montenegro, 1999). It was estimated that by 2100, the percentage of school age children who are members of the minority group will increase to 64 percent (U.S. Department of Education, 2009). The lack of diversity in superintendency and on school boards will make it difficult for school district organizations to sensitize themselves to significant cultural transformations occurring all around them (Institute for Educational Leadership, 2001, p.4).

Ahillen (2010)

Another study which focused on superintendents and the community was referenced in Ahillen (2010). In her dissertation, *A Superintendent's Role in Creating Community*, she used her experiences as a new superintendent to assist those new to the leadership profession. The motivation for her study was to develop an understanding of the complexity of the task of a superintendent as he/she attempted to develop a strong sense of district community (pp. 1). The specific research questions were as follows:

- (1) How does the superintendent work with the district leadership team to implement the changes necessary to build community?
- (2) How does the district leadership team respond to the superintendent's efforts?

This qualitative study was based on a recently hired superintendent, Mr. Edwards. The researcher used a framework which included the roles of the superintendent in each of the communities as a commonality, although the superintendent sees each community as separate as shown in the visual format in Figure 2.2 (pp. 147).



Figure 2.2: Roles of a Superintendent (Ahillen, 2010)

The findings included four emergent themes about the behaviors of the superintendent: the superintendent must be *visible*, must *communicate* with all stakeholders, must be *collaborative*, allowing opportunities for dialogue, must invite others to have a voice in decision making, and must *understand the change process* as they guide the district through cultural change (pp. 142).

The researcher stressed the importance of community building across school districts and to clarify some of the issues inherent in this work....It is imperative for the superintendent to internalize his/her role as an educative leader, as a communicator, as a public relations liaison, and as a leader who celebrates diversity in all communities (pp. 152).

The Council of the Great City Schools (2010)

The Council of the Great City Schools (2010) developed a guide for administrators and board members as a response to academic and fiscal urgency. In this document, it well noted the major role of the interaction between the superintendent, the board, and the community played in addressing such interactions. The document referred to the pyramid below – communicating to staff, the board and the community as their conceptual framework. “If all three are moving in the same direction, success follows (The Council of the Great City Schools, 2010, 1).

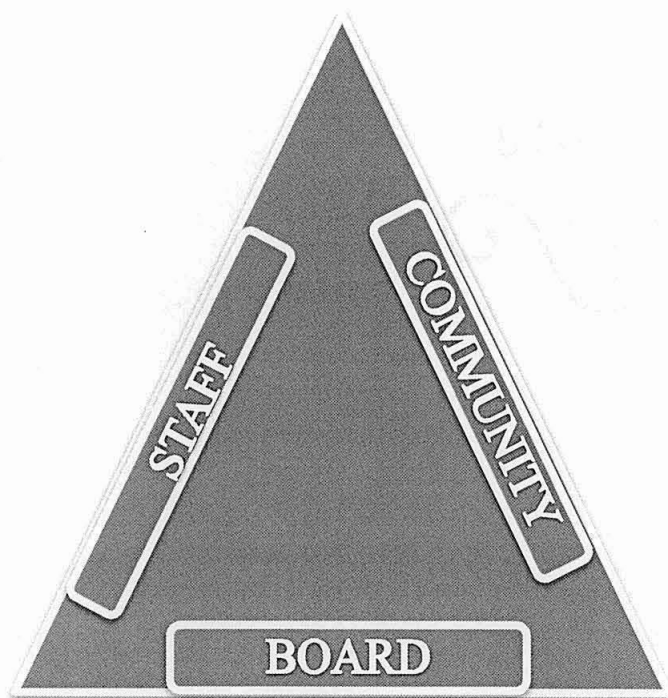


Figure 2.3: Community for Success (Council of the Great City School, 2010)

The study found that communicating to the community serves as an essential pathway to success for school districts. An effective method to involve the community into educational reforms is to effectively communicate the plan prior to launching such initiative. 42% of individuals in society get their information from other people – 12% through word of mouth, 14 percent from teachers and 16 percent from family (Council of the Great City Schools, 2010).

Iowa Association of School Boards (2000)

Iowa Association of School Boards (2000) conducted a study in the state of Georgia (since Iowa did not have a reliable statewide student achievement database). 160 interviews were conducted by researchers from Iowa, and then analyzed by IASB. Districts of high and low achieving districts were compared. The results showed that school boards in districts with high student achievement:

- Consistently expressed the belief that all students can learn and that the school could teach all. In low-achieving districts, board members had limited expectations and often focused on factors that they believed kept students from learning, such as poverty, lack of parental support or societal factors.
- Were far more knowledgeable about teaching and learning issues, including school improvement goals, curriculum, instruction, assessment and staff development. They were able to clearly describe the purposes and processes of school improvement efforts and identify the board's role in supporting those efforts. They could give specific examples of efforts. They could give specific examples of how district goals were being carried out by administrators and teachers.
- Used data and other information on student needs and results to make decisions. The boards in high achieving districts regularly monitored progress on improvement efforts and modified direction as a result.
- Created a supportive workplace for staff.
- Boards in high achieving districts supported regular staff development to help teachers be more effective, supported shared leadership, decision-making among staff and regularly expressed appreciation for staff members.

- Are involved in their communities. Board members can identify how they connect with and listen to their communities. They focus on involving parents in education.

Shelton (2010) conducted a mix-methods research pertaining to the roles of school boards and superintendents in improving student achievement. The study addressed two questions:

- (1) What are the similarities and differences of superintendents and board members in the values and beliefs they exhibit as related to student achievement?
- (2) What are the relationships between the above and changes over time in district level student achievement in mathematics?

The theoretical framework used in the above study is based on the notion that student/community demographics are important in understanding the beginning level of mean achievement among students, but not the rate of upward growth from a baseline. Specific superintendent actions (time spent) on student achievement will cause gains in student achievement over time; and a specific set of beliefs and actions held by the school board can, over the long-term, affect the superintendents time spent on student achievement thus causing gains over time. In short, the theoretical model below depicts a belief that the sum of the two working as a team has a greater impact than either individually (p. 27).

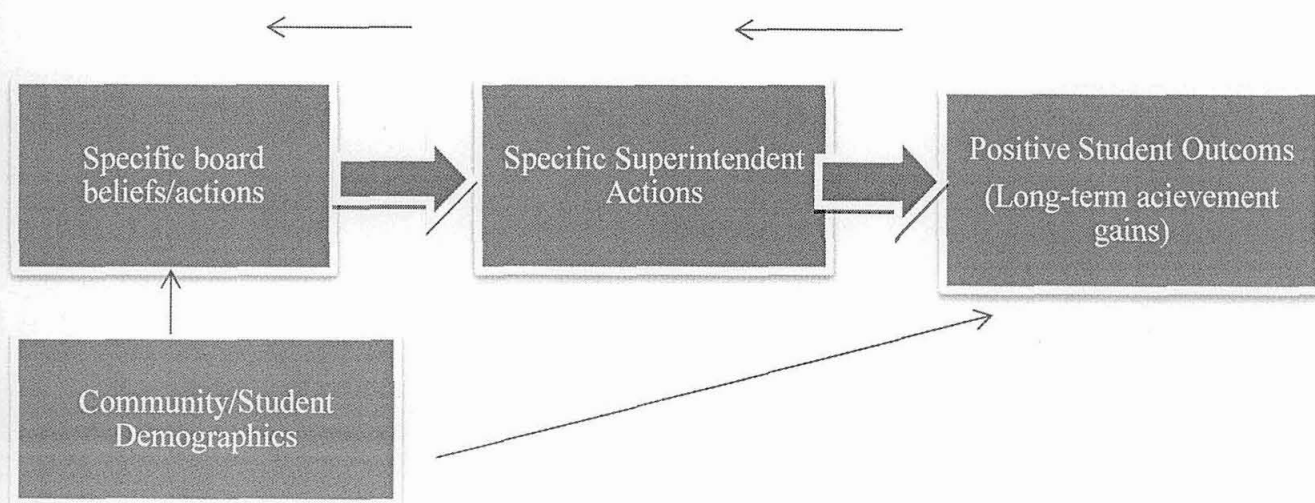


Figure 2.4: Theoretical School Board and Superintendent Effects (Shelton, 2010)

Results indicated the following predictors of positive 10-year achievement slopes: (1) Boards and superintendents independently agreed on the importance of three factors: the valuing of academic achievement outcomes, allocating time to those outcomes, and the importance of positive board-superintendent relationships. (2) A board with, on average, more formal education was more likely to produce higher academic achievement. (3) The best single measure of student achievement gain, net of community SES, was the extent to which the superintendent reported spending more time focused on academics. (4) Superintendent turnover was associated with a one-year drop in mathematics achievement, but with a long-term steeper gain curve in the same math measure. (p. 24).

Discussion of the Literature

The review of literature focused on two different areas: (a) the selection method of employing superintendents and (b) the impact superintendents, in general, may have on student achievement with an emphasis on their relationship with the community and school boards. So far, research has shown that the selection method of employing superintendents does not significantly impact student achievement (Sello, 1987; Partridge & Sass, 2011). This is not to assume that an impact on student outcome is not affected by such selection method. Perhaps the variables used to derive such results were inadequate. Nevertheless, the role of the superintendent has changed tremendously evolving from a position of management to now being held accountable for student achievement.

This literature pinpoints various aspects of what contributes to the success of the district leader, a strong relationship with the community and the school board plays an important role to

attaining such success (Ahiilen, 2010; Council of Great City Schools, 2010; Iowa Association of School Boards, 2000; Shelton, 2010). Although there exist research which does not run parallel with the idea of the superintendent having an impact on student achievement (Bennett, Finn, & Cribb, 1999) other research noted that district leadership makes a difference, affirming the long-held belief that sound leadership at the district level adds value to an educational system. How district leaders in general address the issue of student achievement will determine a negative or positive impact student achievement (Morgan, 2003).

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

Chapter III recounts the methodology of which the developmental phases of this study occurred in reference appointed and elected superintendents in the state of Florida. The chapter was organized into sections: introduction, problem statement, research questions, research design, target population, sample, instrumentation, data collection, ethical considerations, and threats to validity.

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to determine differences between elected and appointed superintendents in the state of Florida. Florida is 1 of only 3 states in the United States to currently employ elected superintendents. All other states have amended their governance structure to require that the superintendent is appointed, South Carolina being the last state to make such transition (Morgan, 2003). Given the unique governance structure of Florida, the researcher was afforded the opportunity to solicit input from its 67 superintendents.

Problem Statement

Unlike the majority of the states in the United States, Florida's K-12 public educational system is governed under an appointive or elective system. With having two different methods comes a difference of opinion by stakeholders as to which system is more appropriate (Dixon, 2006; Florida School Board Association, 2007; Leps, 1968; Morgan, 2003). Those in favor of an appointive system stressed arguments such as appointed superintendents are more credentialed than their elected counterparts (Leps, 1968). Those in favor of an elective system emphasize notions such as elected superintendents remain in office longer than their appointive counterparts.

Research Questions

RQ1. In Florida, was there a relationship between superintendent variables, analyzed in this study, and the selection method of the superintendent?

RQ2. In Florida, was there a relationship between student outcomes, analyzed in this study, and the selection method of the superintendent?

RQ3. In Florida, what percentage of appointed superintendents was hired from within their district?

RQ4. In Florida, what percentage of appointed superintendents was hired with the assistance of a recruiting agency?

RQ5. What percentage of Florida's superintendents shares the responsibility with the school board when developing policy?

RQ6. Do Florida's superintendents involve the community in the planning/advisory capacity at an equivalent rate staff are involved?

Data pertaining to research questions 1 and 2 were analyzed using an Independent Samples Test involving a T-Test for Equality of Means in conjunction with Levene's Test for Equality of Variances. Thus, each of the findings of the aforementioned questions was addressed based on the significance levels provided from the Independent Samples Test. The findings for research questions 3 through 4 were addressed based on Qualtrics Survey responses provided by each participant.

Research Design

Two-group Non-experimental Design

In order to maintain integrity of this study and enduring the appropriate replication of the Morgan (2003) study, these prescribed statistical measures were utilized by the researcher. Since

the study involved only two groups (appointed and elected superintendents), an Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was not the appropriate design. Thus, the researcher conducted an Independent Sample T-Test on all targeted variables.

Variables

After analyzing data provided by the 2010 -2012 Florida Department of Education databases (FLDOE) and a survey developed by the researcher using Qualtrics, the researcher intended to answer the aforementioned research questions. The dependent variables were student graduation rate, superintendent salary, student population, the average length of time each participant was in current position, percent of superintendents hired within the district, outside agency, superintendent credentials, and superintendents' level of education. The independent variables were elected and appointed superintendents. Below is a description of each variable:

1. Superintendents' Level of Education - Superintendents selected one of the following via the Qualtrics Survey: 2-year degree, 4-year degree, Master's degree, or Doctoral degree.
2. Superintendent Salary – Salary was retrieved from the 2010-2011 FLDOE databases on superintendents.
3. District Grade - District grades are based on student data from 2010-2011 and are calculated using a point system which involves the percent of students meeting “High Standards” in reading, math, writing, and science, percent of students making learning gains in reading, and the percent of students making learning gains in math. Districts are disqualified from achieving an “A” if 50% of students did not make learning gains in reading.
4. Student Graduation Rate - This data is in reference to 2010-11FLDOE cohort as of 11/03/11. Florida calculates the National Governor's Association (NGA) Compact

graduation rate, which includes both standard and special diploma recipients as graduates but excludes GEDs as graduates, both regular and adult. In addition, students who transfer to adult education are not included in this calculation. This graduation rate is currently used in Florida's school accountability system in the high school grades calculation. (Florida Department of Education, Cohort Graduation Data, 2011).

5. Student Population – Student population was based on data retrieved from 2010-2011 FL DOE database on school district information.
6. Length of Time – The amount of time each participant has been in his/her current position.
7. Credentials – superintendent's employment prior to being appointed.
8. Hired Within the District – Participants who resided within the district in question prior to becoming appointed.
9. Outside Agency – An organization utilized to assist in the recruiting process

Target Population and Setting

Sample

During the spring of 2012, all 67 appointed and elected superintendents in the state of Florida were invited to participate in the study (Appendix A). Involvement consisted of each participant's cooperation with completing a survey (Appendix B) via a link emailed to their electronic mail addresses listed on the Florida Department of Education database of current superintendents. The survey was anonymously administered through a program called Qualtrics.

Of the 67 superintendents in the State of Florida, 41 superintendents responded by starting the survey. Since several of the participants omitted most of the survey questions only answering no more than 3 survey questions, the researcher only took into account the responses of

superintendents who completed the survey. Thus, this study consisted of 27 participants, 8 (30%) of which were appointed and 19 (70%) elected. Given that of the 67 superintendents in the State of Florida, 26 (39%) are appointed leaving 41 (61%) to be elected, the sample in this study is closely proportional to the actual number of elected and appointed superintendents in Florida.

Sampling Plan and Procedure

The researcher utilized the population sample method to avoid problems inherent in random sampling. Population samples provide the opportunity for a larger sample allowing increased validity and reliability and increased opportunity to generalize findings (Maze, 2009). Participants self-reported their position as an appointed or elected superintendent. The position was cross referenced through the Florida Department of Education database of current superintendents.

The undertaking of this study evolved from the researcher selecting it out of other studies provided by the Director of the Ed.D. program at Lynn University. The study being replicated, Morgan (2003), distributed surveys to all superintendents in the State of Tennessee. Thus, the researcher selected applicable questions from the aforementioned study and created a survey via Qualtrics. Superintendent email addresses were obtained via a database provided by the Florida Department of Education. A request to complete the survey was emailed to every superintendent in the State of Florida. The purpose of the survey was to solicit descriptive input, related to their setting, from each superintendent.

Instrumentation

Survey Guide

The survey consisted of the following items and was based on survey questions from Morgan (2003):

1. Are you an appointed or elected superintendent?

2. Of which district are you currently a superintendent?
3. How long have you been superintendent with the current district?
4. What is the highest level of education you have completed?
5. Enter the concentration of your highest degree attained.
6. When did you receive your highest degree attained?
7. Who takes the lead in developing policy?
8. How involved are parents and the community in decision making?
9. How often do you actively seek community participation?
10. Select ALL areas in which you involve the “community” in planning/advisory capacity.
11. Select ALL areas in which you involve “staff” in planning/advisory capacity.
12. Prior to becoming superintendent where did you reside?
13. Select the name of the other district.
14. Select the name of the other state?
15. Did your district’s school board contract with an outside agency/organization to recruit person’s to
16. How long have you lived within the district?
17. Prior to becoming a superintendent, what was your job title?

Data Collection

With the intent to triangulate, the researcher retrieved data from three resources: data from a survey created using Qualtrics, FLDOE (2010-11) superintendent and school district databases, and data from phone interviews.

Survey Data

Data relating to (a) type of system, elected or appointed, (b) professional experience, (c) level of education, (d) length of time in position, and (e) leadership were obtained through a survey, created by the researcher. The survey was emailed to the 67 superintendents of Florida via their public email address provided by the FLDOE, School District Database which was last updated 11/28/2011. 15 multiple choice items and 2 free response items were included in the survey. Selected items were considered based on literature related to the topic of appointed and elected superintendents.

The email sent to the participants described the researcher's current position, the purpose of the study, the number of survey items, a plea for their participation, the assurance of responses to be kept anonymous, and contact information of the researcher's Chairperson. Approximately 40% of the participants completed the survey within a three week period. Data retrieved from the Qualtrics Survey is listed below.

Data from Qualtrics Survey

- Length of Time in Position
- Percent of Participants Hired within the District
- Percent of Districts Utilizing an Outside Agency
- Participants' Credentials
- Participants' Level of Education

Data from FLDOE Databases (2010-11)

- Student Population
- Student Graduation Rate
- Superintendent Salary

- District Grade

Data from Interviews

- Florida School board Association (FSBA)
- Florida Association of District School Superintendents (FADSS)
- Southern Regional Education Board (SREB)

Ethical Considerations

In addition to the researcher receiving IRB approval through Lynn University, the following considerations occurred:

Freedom from Harm

- The researcher was sensitive to participants' personal information, such as the name of their district, exact salary, exact student population, and exact graduation rate. Such information was either omitted or provided in range format in the study. Additionally, the survey was defaulted to allow participants to skip questions.

Freedom from Exploitation

- Participants were protected from adverse situations. The researcher kept the names of all districts confidential and did not report exact figures, such as population sizes or participant salaries, which would have exposed participants. Participants via phone interview were listed as a member of their perspective organization.

The Right to Full Disclosure

- Participants were informed of the researcher's affiliation with the field, the nature of the study, and had the option to not participate.

Threats to Validity

Internal Validity

- Since the study was non-experimental and no manipulation with variables occurred, there was no threat to internal validity.

External Validity

Population Validity

- The sample denotes 40% of the total number of superintendents in Florida. Although the sample size is small, the percent of appointed and elected participants was nearly proportional to the percent of appointed and elected superintendents in the state of Florida.
- Since the participants in the study depended upon who responded to the survey, the researcher was unable to control for equal sample sizes. Thus, the researcher used Levene's Test for Equality of Variances to minimize this disparity.
- Findings are not generalizable across other types of populations not included in the study (i.e., such as colleges, universities, private schools). Thus, findings should be made in reference to only appointed and elected superintendents in Florida.

Reactive Effect of Survey

- Although the survey is anonymous, participants may feel obligated to answer certain questions in a way in which to make their particular system look favorable in their eyes, thus causing a Hawthorne Effect. The researcher assumed each participant acted in good faith.

Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to describe the methods utilized by the researcher to conduct this study. As stated in Chapter I, this study investigated if there existed a significant difference in school districts which are operated under an appointive versus an elective system in the State of Florida. The researcher collected most of the data from a survey administered via a survey program known as Qualtrics and various databases provided by the Florida Department of Education's (FLDOE) website.

Such data on self-reported responses were coded and analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) 19.0, one of the most popular comprehensive statistical software systems used to calculate statistics (Bachman, R., E-1, 2007). Using SPSS 19.0, the researcher created cross tabulations on districts' grade, superintendents' level of education, graduation rate of each district, the salary of each district, and the amount of time each type of superintendent remains in their current position in reference to appointed and elected participants. The researcher applied due diligence with all data retrieved via survey as well as interviews throughout the entire process.

CHAPTER IV: ANALYSIS OF DATA

Introduction

Since the researcher did not have data concerning differences within groups nor could the researcher conduct an ANOVA, MANOVA, etc., post hoc testing could not occur. Instead, via SPSS 19.0 (2011), the researcher conducted an Independent Samples Test involving Levene's Test for Equality of Variances and the T-test for Equality of Means. The researcher defined each group applying the same coding used when initially introducing the variables (Appointed Participants = 1 and Elected Participants = 2). Levene's Test for Equality of Variances was conducted in conjunction with the T-Test for Equality of Means to prevent type 1 and/or type 2 errors. Such testing provided the researcher with specific levels of significance outcomes which are what some of the findings are based upon.

Independence Samples Test Data

Of the 67 superintendents who were emailed a survey via an email address provided by the superintendent database of the FLDOE, 27 (8 appointed and 19 elected) completed the survey after two attempts to invite participants. Tables 4.1 – 4.6 indicated the districts' grade, education level, graduation rate, salary of each superintendent, student population, and the amount of time each participant has been in position. Table 4.7 shows the level of significance for each variable.

A relatively proportional sample of appointed and elected superintendents compared to the overall percentage of appointed and elected superintendents in the State of Florida participated in the study. In the State of Florida, approximately 39% of the superintendents are appointed leaving about 61% of the superintendents to be of an elective system. Of the 27 participants, approximately 30% were appointed and 70% of were elected. The researcher designed the first 6 tables to address

variables related to research questions 1 and 2 of the study. Table 7 displays the findings of each variable.

- Table 4.1 below represents the highest degree completed by each participant. The categories were coded as follows: High School Diploma = 1; 2-year College Degree = 2; 4-year College Degree = 3; Master's Degree = 4; and Doctoral Degree = 5. Appointed and elected participants had an average level of education of 4.75 and 3.95, respectively. 100% of appointed participants had a level of education of at least a master's degree where 75% possessed a doctorate degree. 84% of elected participants had a level of education of at least a master's degree. In reference to possessing a 2-year degree, 4-yr degree, master's degree, and doctoral degree, the percentages were approximately 5%, 11%, 68%, and 16%, respectively.

Table 4.1: Respondents' Highest Level of Education

Level of Degree	Appointed	Elected	Total
2-year College Degree	0	1	1
4-year College Degree	0	2	2
Master's Degree	2	13	15
Doctorate Degree	6	3	9
Total	8	19	27

Source: Data Retrieved from Self-reported survey via Qualtrics

- Table 4.2 illustrates the salary of each appointed and elected participant. The average salary of the appointed participants was calculated at close to \$180,000 ranging from just under \$112,000 to almost \$300,000. 88% of the appointed participants had a salary more than \$140,000. The average salary of the elected participants was around \$112,000 ranging from about \$87,500 to about \$143,500.

Table 4.2: Respondents' Salary Ranges

Salary Ranges	Appointed	Elected	Total
\$ 80,000-100,000	0	6	6
\$101,000-120,000	1	7	8
\$120,001-140,000	0	5	5
\$140,001-160,000	3	1	4
\$160,001-180,000	2	0	2
\$200,001-300,000	2	0	2
Total	8	19	27

Source: FLDOE (2011), Education Information & Accountability Services Data Report, 3

- Table 4.3 indicates the amount of time each appointed and elected participant has currently been in their position. In reference to the appointed participants, 62.5% were in their current position for no more than 2 years; 12.5% were in their current position for no more than 4 years; and 25% were in their current position for more than 8 years. In reference to the elected participants, 47% were in their current position for no more than 4 years; 5% were in their current position for no more than 6 years; 21% were in their current position for no more than 8 years; and 26% were in their current position for more than 8 years.

Table 4.3: Respondents' Years in Current Position

	Appointed	Elected	Total
0-2 years	5	0	5
2-4 years	1	9	10
4-6 years	0	1	1
6-8 years	0	4	4
More than 8 years	2	5	7
Total	8	19	27

Source: Data Retrieved from Self-reported survey via Qualtrics

Table 4.4 consists of district grades in reference to the appointed and elected participants. Such data was retrieved from the FLDOE website. As with other states, districts are given letter grades ranging from A to F based on a specific formula which includes student achievement on standardized assessments. Coding was as follows: A=4, B=3, C=2 and D=1. Since neither of the participants in this study (or in the state of Florida) received an F, the grade of an F was eliminated from the grading category. Districts under an appointive system had a grade average of 3.38. Districts of an elective system had a grade average of 3.26.

Table 4.4: Respondents' District Grade

Grade	Appointed	Elected	Total
D	0	1	1
C	1	3	4
B	3	5	8
A	4	10	14
Total	8	19	27

Source: 2010-11 Florida Department of Education (FLDOE), Districts' Grades

- Similarly to table 1, data for the following three tables were retrieved from the FLDOE database. Table 4.5 (below) depicts the graduation rate of each participating district. The average graduation rate of students under an appointive system was calculated at 77%. The average graduation rate of an elective system was calculated at approximately 80%.

Table 4.5: Respondents' Graduation Rate Ranges (2010-2011)

Graduation Rate Range	Appointed	Elected	Total
90 - 100%	1	3	4
80 - 89.9%	1	7	8
70 - 79.9%	5	6	11
60 - 69.9%	1	3	4
Total	8	19	27

Source: 2010-11 Florida Department of Education (FLDOE) Report, 9.

- Table 4.6 (bellow) specifies the population size for each participant. In this study, the average population of an appointive system is approximately 58,000. This includes an outlier of over 200,000. The average population that's governed under an elective participant was close to 15,000.

Table 4.6: Respondents' Student Population Ranges

Ranges	Appointed	Elected	Total
0 – 10,000	2	10	12
10,001 – 20,000	1	4	5
20,001 – 30,000	0	3	3
30,001 – 40,000	1	1	2
40,001 – 50,000	2	0	2
60,000 – 70,000	1	1	2
*100,000 –400,000	1	0	1
Total	8	19	27

Source: 2010-11 Florida Department of Education Database, Student Population by District

*This increment is intentionally larger for confidentiality purposes.

Table 4.7 displays the following via Independent Samples Testing:

- In the State of Florida is there a significant difference between appointed and elected superintendents in reference to Superintendents' Level of Education? Independent Samples Test results indicated significant differences among appointed ($M = 4.75$) and elected ($M = 3.95$) participants; $t(25) = 2.946$, $p < .05$.
- In the State of Florida is there a significant difference between appointed and elected superintendents in reference to Salary? Independent Samples Test results indicated significant differences among appointed ($M = \$179,366$) and elected ($M = \$112,157$) participants; $t(7.433) = 2.940$, $p < .05$.
- In the State of Florida, is there a significant difference between appointed and elected superintendents in reference to the average amount of time in their current position? Independent Samples Test results indicated no significant differences among appointed ($M = 1.13$) and elected ($M = 2.26$) participants; $t(25) = -1.828$, $p > .05$.
- In the State of Florida is there a significant difference between appointed and elected superintendents in reference to the Districts' Grade? Independent Samples Test results indicated no significant differences at $p < .05$ among appointed ($M = 3.38$) and elected ($M = 3.26$) participants; $t(25) = .300$, $p > .05$.
- In the State of Florida is there a significant difference between appointed and elected superintendents in reference to student graduation rate? Independent Samples Test results indicated no significant differences among appointed ($M = .774$) and elected ($M = .802$); $t(25) = -.746$ participants, $p > .05$.

- Independent Samples Test results indicated no significant differences among appointed (M = 58,254) and elected (M = 14,737); $t(7.237)=1.486$ participants, $p > .05$ in reference to student population.

Table 4.7: Summary of Independent Samples Test Outcomes

Variables	Equal Variances?	Levene's Value	T	Df	p-value
Education	Assumed	.890	*2.946	25	.007
Salary	Not Assumed	.001	*2.940	7.433	.020
Length on Job	Assumed	.421	-1.828	25	.080
Grade	Assumed	.432	.300	25	.767
Graduation Rate	Assumed	.139	-.746	25	.463
Student Population	Not Assumed	.014	1.486	7.237	.180

Source: Data retrieved from Independent Sample's Test, SPSS 19.0 (2011)

* $p < .05$ significance

Descriptive Data Based on Survey Responses

Tables 4.8 through 4.10 displays findings from descriptive data collected via the survey. As indicated in table 8, more appointed participants worked closer to the superintendent prior to being appointed superintendent compared to their elected colleagues.

Table 4.8: Participants' Prior Position

Title of Position	Appointed	Elected	Total
Assistant Superintendent	4	2	6
Area Superintendent	1	0	1
District Employee	0	1	1
Director of Finance	0	3	3
Executive Director	0	1	1
Principal	0	10	10
School Board Member	0	1	1
State Representative	0	1	1
Superintendent	3	0	3
Total	8	19	27

Source: Data retrieved from self-reported survey via Qualtrics

Since elected superintendents are not affiliated with recruiting agencies and must reside within the district, they were not provided the opportunity to answer questions pertaining to recruiting agencies and prior residence in the survey. Thus, the next 2 table consists of data from appointed superintendents only.

- Table 4.9 indicates that 50% of the appointed participants resided within their current school system prior to being appointed. 75% of the appointed participants resided in the State of Florida.

Table 4.9: *Appointed Superintendents' Prior Place of Residence*

	Appointed	Total
I resided within the school system of which I currently serve.	4	4
I resided within another school district inside the State of Florida.	2	2
I resided outside the State of Florida.	2	2
Total	8	8

Source: Data retrieved from self-reported survey via Qualtrics

- As indicated in table 4.10, majority of the appointed participants, all but 1 participant, indicated that an outside agency/organization was utilized in the process of them being appointed superintendent.

Table 4.10: *Appointed Participants Hired by a Recruiting Agency*

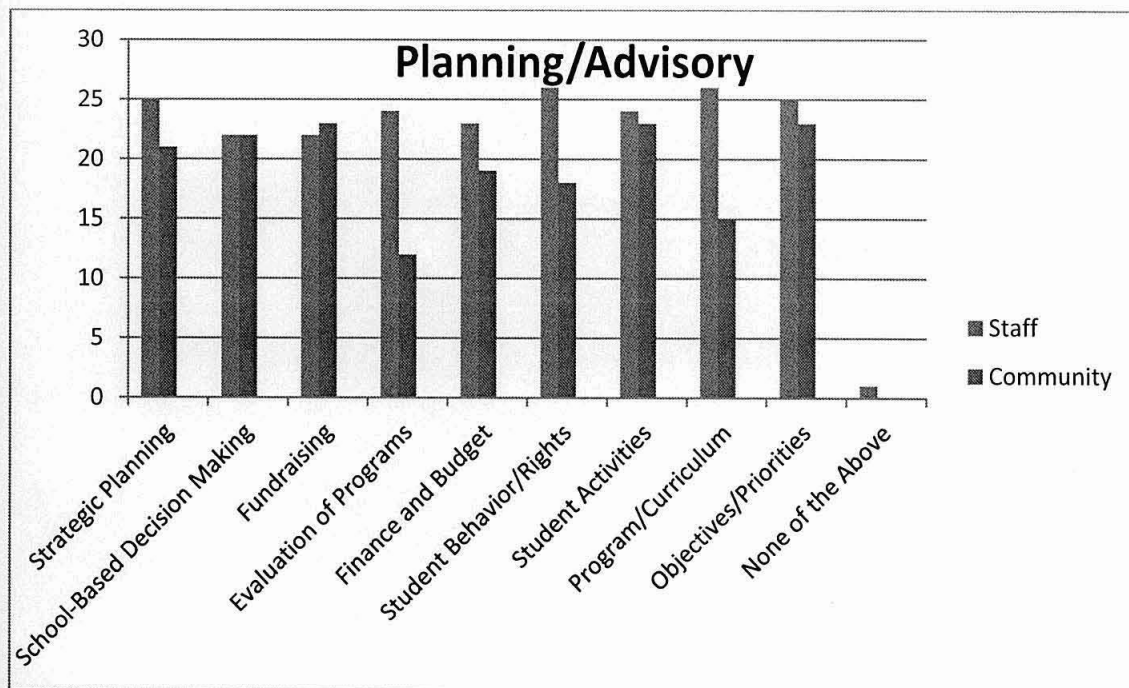
	Appointed	Total
Yes	7	7
No	1	1
Total	8	8

Source: Data retrieved from self-reported survey, Qualtrics

Descriptive Data Related to Superintendents in General

- Table 4.11 (see below) represents all areas in which participants involved staff and the community in the planning/advisory capacity. Over 90% of participants involved staff in the following areas: Strategic Planning, Finance and Budget, Student Behavior/Rights, Program/Curriculum, and Objectives/Priorities. The percentages of participants who involved staff in School-Based Decision Making, Fundraising, Evaluation, and Student Activities were 82%, 82%, 89%, and 89%, respectively.
- In reference to the areas of which participants involved the community, responses varied from how participants involved staff. Objective/Priorities (85%), Student Activities (85%), School-Based Decision Making (82%), and Fundraising (85%) were among the most popular areas being selected.

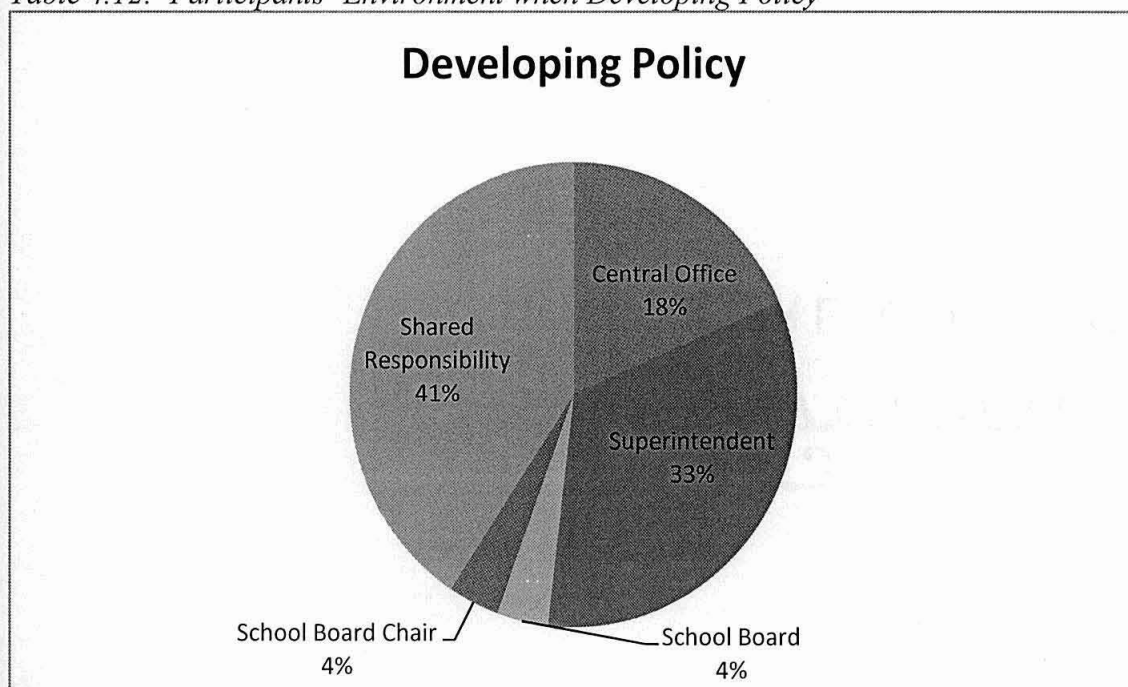
Table 4.11: Staff and Community Involved in Planning/Advisory



Source: Data retrieved from self-reported responses, Qualtrics Survey

- Table 4.12 depicts the environment concerning the manner in which participants develop policy. Of categories including central office, superintendent, school board, school board chair, and shared responsibility, approximately 74% of the participants selected superintendent or shared responsibility.

Table 4.12: Participants' Environment when Developing Policy



Source: Data retrieved from self-reported responses, Qualtrics Survey

- Table 4.13 depicts data retrieved from the survey concerning planning/advisory and developing policy. Column 1 represents participants' district grade. Columns 2 and 3 represents the percent out of the 30% and 63% of participants that selected "all areas" the participant involved the community and staff, respectively, in the planning process. Column 4 represents the percent out of the 30% of participants that indicated their parents and community were "very involved" in decision making. Column 5 represents the percent of participants out of the 41% who selected "shared the responsibility" when taking the lead in developing policy.

Table 4.13: Student Outcomes when Participants Involved Community, Staff, and the School Board

Grade	Community	Staff	Parents & Community	Developing Policy
A	63% All Areas	53% All Areas	75% Very Involved	64% Shared Responsibility
B	25% All Areas	29% All Areas	25% Very Involved	18% Shared Responsibility
C – D	12% All Areas	18% All Areas	0% Very Involved	18% Shared Responsibility

Source: Data retrieved from self-reported responses, Qualtrics Survey

Data from Interviews

In the Tennessee study, several stakeholders were interviewed and provided input concerning their position on the two systems. Thus, in addition to the 67 school superintendents of Florida, the researcher invited other stakeholders related to the field to participate in the study. Members from 3 associations accepted the invite by agreeing to participate in the study via phone interviews. Below are the questions and responses conducted via a phone interview in question/answer format. The discussion section of this chapter elaborates on additional comments made by each member.

Florida School Board Association (FSBA) Phone Interview

Below are a transcribed account of the phone conversation which had taken place between the researcher and a member of the FSBA.

- *Question:* As you are aware, Florida currently utilizes two methods of which to select superintendents, appointed and elected. In general, what are your thoughts about each selection process?

Answer: The member stated that in general, she does not prefer one system over the other as they each have strengths and weaknesses.

- *Question:* Research states that appointed superintendents can be hired with the assistance of a recruiting agency. About what percent of appointed superintendents are hired via a recruiting agency?

Answer: At least 50% of appointed superintendents of Florida are hired via a recruiting agency.

- *Question:* Given that appointed superintendents can be hired locally or abroad, where are most of Florida's superintendents from?

Answer: Majority of Florida's superintendents are from a different district but within the State of Florida.

- *Question:* What is the average amount of money spent on recruiting a superintendent?

Answer: No more than \$7,000.

Florida Association of District School Superintendents (FADSS) Phone Interview

Below are a transcribed account of the phone conversation which had taken place between the researcher and a member of the FADSS.

- *Question:* As you are aware, Florida currently utilizes two methods of which to select superintendents, appointed and elected. In general, what are your thoughts about each selection process?

Answer: Participant prefers Florida's method of having both systems.

- *Question:* What are the criteria for becoming an elected superintendent in the State of Florida?

Answer: An elected candidate must be at least 18 years of age and a resident of the county in question.

- *Question:* What are the criteria ranges for becoming an appointed superintendent?

Answer: Most school districts requests for candidates to have a Ph.D. in education, business oriented, experience running a school district or large corporation.

- *Question:* Are either participant of each system required to enroll in a superintendent preparations program?

Answer: Only appointed superintendents whose contract stipulates such requirement.

- *Question:* How long can an elected superintendent remain in office?

Answer: There are no term limits in Florida, but an election is held every 4 years.

Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) Phone Interview

- *Question:* What is your perspective on school systems that appoint and elect school superintendents?

Answer: It's more important for smaller rural districts to have elected superintendents. On the other hand, appointed superintendents can look outside of their district and does not have to run for office while on the job.

Question: Have you noticed any major movements, similar to such movement in Tennessee to eradicate the elective system?

Answer: Yes, Mississippi and Alabama each have tried but has failed in each instance.

Question: How long do you think the 3 states will continue to employ both systems?

Answer: Both systems in each of the 3 states will be around for years to come.

Summary of Findings

The researcher gathered, analyzed and presented findings on the subject of comparing appointed and elected superintendents in the state of Florida. The following provides the outcome of each research question which was based on the previous variables tested.

- RQ1: In Florida, was there a relationship between superintendent variables analyzed in the study and the selection method of the superintendent?

Independent Samples Test results indicated significant differences at $p < .05$ among variables related to appointed and elected superintendent outcomes.

- RQ2. In Florida, was there a relationship between student outcomes, analyzed in this study, and the selection method of the superintendent?

Independent Samples Test results indicated insignificant differences at $p < .05$ among variables related to student outcomes.

- RQ3. In Florida, what percentage of appointed superintendents was hired from within their district?

Self-reported survey responses indicated exactly 50% of Florida's superintendents resided within their current school district prior to being appointed.

- RQ4. In Florida, what percentage of appointed superintendents was hired with the assistance of a recruiting agency?

Self-reported survey responses indicated approximately 88% of appointed superintendents in Florida were hired with the assistance of a recruiting agency.

- RQ5. What percentage of Florida's superintendents shares the responsibility with the school board when developing policy?

Self-reported survey responses indicated 41% of the participants selected that they share the responsibility with the school board when developing policy.

- RQ6. Do Florida's superintendents involve the community in the planning/advisory capacity at an equivalent rate staff are involved?

Self-reported survey responses indicated that in reference to the planning/advisory capacity, Florida superintendent participants involved staff at a higher rate compared to the community in the following categories: strategic planning; evaluations of programs; finance & budget; student behavior/rights; and program/curriculum. On the other hand, such participants indicated they involve the community and staff approximately at the same rate concerning school-based decision making; fundraising; student activities and objectives/priorities.

CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION

Chapters I – IV provided insight on the undertakings for this research. Such chapters elaborated on the nature and background of the problem leading to this study, a review of literature concerning appointed and elected superintendents, the methodology, and the findings on the data collected by the researcher, respectively. Taking the previous chapters into consideration this chapter, reiterated the study's purpose, sought to recapitulate and draw conclusions from the findings.

Introduction

Replicating Morgan (2003), this study investigated if there were indeed significant differences between appointed and elected superintendents in the state of Florida. This study consisted of 4 main research questions. Research questions 1 and 2 related to differences between appointed and elected superintendents. Such differences were in reference to superintendent level of education, salary, time in current position, previous employment, districts' grade, graduation rate, and student performance.

In addition to such differences, the researcher explored data pertaining to appointed superintendents only (which relates to research questions 3 and 4). Specifically, such questions pertained to the percentage of superintendents that was hired within their district as well as the percentage that was hired with the assistance from a recruiting agency. Due to sub-dividing research questions 1 and 2, the researcher addressed a total of 9 questions.

The study's findings pertaining to participants' level of education, salary, student population, length of time in current position, and student graduation rate were compared using SPSS to identify if significant differences between appointed and elected participants existed in such areas. Findings in reference to the percentage of appointed participants being hired from

within their current district, the percentage of appointed participants being hired with assistance from a recruiting agency, and the credentials of appointed participants compared to their elected counterparts were based on survey responses provided by participants.

Summary of Findings

Discussion on Independent Samples Test Findings

An Independent Samples T-test identified significant differences between appointed and elected participants in reference to participants' level of education at $p < .05$ level of confidence. Appointed participants' level of education averaged .80 levels (almost 1 level) higher than their elected colleagues.

Similar to the findings concerning participants' level of education, Independent Samples Test involving a T-test for Equality of Means in conjunction with Levene's Test for Equality of Variances identified significant differences between appointed and elected participants in reference to salary at $p < .05$ level of confidence. The average difference between the salary of appointed ($M = \$179,366$) and elected ($M = \$112,157$) participants was \$67,209.

The remaining findings pertaining to districts' grade, graduation rate, student population, and participants' length of time in their current position were also analyzed using T-Test for Equality of Means in conjunction with Levene's Test for Equality of Variances. All 4 outcomes indicated no significant differences at $p < .05$ level of confidence between appointed and elected superintendents in such categories.

However, of the 4 aforementioned categories, regardless of if Levene's Test for Equality of Variance assumed equal or unequal variances, outcomes for districts' grade and graduation rate would have been the same (no significant differences at $p < .05$ level of confidence). Contrarily, if Levene's Test for Equality of Variances assumed the variances were assumed, findings would have

indicated significant differences between appointed and elected superintendents at $p < .05$ confidence level in reference to student population.

This situation emphasizes the necessity for simultaneously running Levene's Test for Equality of Variances with the T-Test for Equality of Means. Had such amalgamation not taken place, the researcher would have falsely found significant differences between student populations of elected and appointed superintendents in the state of Florida. Hence, a type 2 error by the researcher would have ensued.

Discussion on Findings from the Survey

Of the appointed participants, 100% were an area superintendent, deputy superintendent, assistant superintendent, or a superintendent prior to being appointed to their current position. Elected participants had more of a diverse background compared to their appointed counterparts. About 53% of the elected participants were a principal prior to being elected to become a superintendent. Approximately 11% were assistant superintendents. The remaining 36% identified their previous position ranging from being the director of a finance department to being a member of a school board.

Additionally, 50% of the appointed participants resided within their current district and 75% of the appointed participants resided outside their current district, yet, in Florida prior to appointment. Findings also indicated approximately 88% of the appointed participants utilized an outside agency/organization to assist with the recruiting process.

Discussion on Findings Related to Superintendents in General

With the exception of the fundraising category, a higher percentage of participants involved staff in the planning/advisory capacity as compared to involving the community in such area. The areas which yielded the highest discrepancies were Evaluation of Programs (45% discrepancy), Finance and Budget (26% discrepancy), Student Behavior/Rights (29% discrepancy), and Program/Curriculum (40% discrepancy). In reference to developing policy, the school board and the school board chair were the least popular entities taking the lead in developing policy.

Discussion on Findings Related to Interviews

Member of FSBA Interview

This participant prefers Florida's system of having two methods of which to select a superintendent. Such system was built into Florida's constitution with an intentional goal to "insulate education from the flow of politics". Unlike other states in the U.S., the mayor cannot dictate to the superintendent how to operate. In reference to favoring an appointive or elective system, the participant stated that he/she does not prefer one system over the other, yet acknowledged that the "sounder governance structure" is an appointed superintendent with an elected board. In such system, the board is nothing more than the policy maker and the superintendent is the CEO who implements and make things work. Unlike elected superintendents, appointed superintendents have the autonomy to negotiate several aspect of their contract including their salary and other kinds of working conditions.

The appointed superintendent is answerable to the board and the board is answerable to the people. Serving under an elective system is like having two bosses and can cause a very difficult situation, such circumstance can become political. Nevertheless, there are appointed

superintendents who prefer to govern under an elective system and vice versa. At the end of the day, the participant stressed, differences depend on the dynamics of the school district and not the way in which superintendents are selected.

Member of FADSS Interview

This participant was very adamant about his/her feelings concerning Florida's method of selecting superintendents stating "I like Florida's method because we leave it up to the people". It's a process that has to take place rather "something that happens overnight". This participant specified due to the fact that each district has its own individual phenomena, reasons to have an appointive system in one county may not exist in another county.

The participant stressed that "in reality, there is no difference between elected or appointed superintendents". The differences show up in the size of the district, in reference to student population, not the type of system.

Member of SREB Interview

This participant stated SREB looked into the issue of elected and appointed superintendents for the first time in 1990. It was found that Mississippi, more so than Alabama, has continuously tried to eliminate the elective system. Additionally, the participant informed me of the fact that Mississippi has tied the superintendent to student outcomes via Senate Bill 2149. The participant shared reports conducted by SREB which included information concerning Legislative actions on each of the southern states.

In reference to Mississippi, Senate Bill 2149 calls for the removal of an elected or appointed district superintendent if, for two consecutive years, the district is designated by the state Board of Education as being underperforming (or has 50 percent or more of its schools designated as underperforming), and the district has been under the administration of the same superintendent

during those two years. An elected superintendent will be barred from running for reelection for a period of one full term of office. Residents of the district will be notified in a full-page newspaper advertisement that a new superintendent may be appointed upon approval in a special election, scheduled after the board receives a signed by not less than 20 percent of eligible voters in the county (SREB, August 2008, pp. 14).

Conclusions

Research Question 1

Was there a relationship between superintendent variables, analyzed in the study, and the selection method of the superintendent? The variables analyzed in the study in reference to superintendents were: superintendents' level of education, salary, length of time in position, and employment prior to becoming superintendent.

In reference to the participants' level of education, appointed participants possessed higher levels of education in comparison to the elected participants. Additionally, appointed participants, compared to elected, had higher annual incomes as well as more experience in a superintendent or an assistant superintendent's position. These findings run parallel to one of the arguments in favor of appointed superintendents (Dixon, 2006) as well as findings indicated in previous research on appointed and elected systems (Brand, 1993; Chester, 1987).

On the other hand, the researcher found there was no significant difference in appointed and elected participants in reference to amount of time in office. This finding does not support arguments and outcomes mentioned from previous studies or the interview conducted by the researcher (Dixon, 2006; Brand, 1993; FSBA, 2012). However, this variable was .03 points away from being considered significant. Perhaps a larger sample of this study would have yielded a different outcome.

Research Question 2

Was there a relationship between student outcomes, analyzed in this study, and the selection method of the superintendent? The variables analyzed in this study in reference to student outcomes were: student population, districts' grade, and student graduation rate. Findings of the study indicated no significant differences in reference to all 3 variables analyzed. These findings are consistent with previous studies which endorses there is no relationship between student outcomes and the method in which superintendents are selected or superintendents in general (Morgan, 2003; Bennett, Finn, & Cribb, 1999, FSBA Interview, 2012; FADSS Interview, 2012).

Research Question 3

Are majority of the appointed superintendents hired from within their district?

Findings indicated that although majority of participants were from Florida, exactly 50% of the appointed participants were from within their district. This outcome coincides with Dixon (2006) which indicated appointed superintendents are more often candidates from outside the area.

Research Question 4

Are majority of appointed superintendents hired with the assistance of a recruiting agency?

Findings indicated that majority of appointed superintendents were hired with the assistance of a recruiting agency. This finding supports the claim that appointed superintendents will more than likely be coupled with an added expense, recruiting agencies (Dixon, 2006; FSBA, 2012), yet, contradicts findings from Morgan (2003).

Research Question 5

What percentage of Florida's superintendents shares the responsibility with the school board when developing policy? The researcher found that of 41% of the participants shared the

responsibility of taking the lead in developing policy. Of such participants, 64% of them oversee “A-rated” school districts. This finding supports previous studies which indicated the relationship between superintendents and school boards is an important aspect in providing positive student outcomes (Fusarelli & Petersen, 1998; Danzberger & Usdan, 1992; Petersen, 1999; Sawyer, 2010).

Research Question 6

Do Florida’s superintendents involve the community in the planning/advisory capacity at an equivalent rate that staff is involved in such area? There existed discrepancies between the percent of participants who had involved staff in the planning advisory capacity compared to the percent of participants who involved the community. Nevertheless, majority of the participants who involved both their staff as well as their communities in the planning/advisory process were from A-rated school districts. Involving staff and the community in educational reforms served as an essential pathway to success for districts (Ahillen, 2010; Council of the Great City, 2010; Petersen, 2002).

FSBA, FADSS, and SREB Interviews

Data gathered by the researcher from FSBA and FADSS participants agrees with one another in specifying that the dynamics of the school district makes more of a difference rather than the method of which each superintendent is chosen. Such comments run parallel to findings from previous research (Morgan, 2003; Bennett, Finn, & Cribb, 1999). On the other hand, the participant of SREB enlightened the researcher of the fact that Mississippi has made the superintendent accountable for student achievement. Such accountability is not limited to one particular system, yet, both systems. Such actions coincide with the theory that superintendents, in general, impact student outcomes (Shelton & Stringfield, 2011; Waters & Marzano, 2007).

Strengths to the Study

- Since the study depended on participants completing the survey once, sample mortality was not an issue since the study depended on participants completing the survey only once.
- The researcher did not know any of the participants and thus had no influence on their responses.
- No biasness in reference to the selection process occurred since the study was dependent upon who completed the survey.
- Triangulation occurred. The researcher was afforded the opportunity to triangulate data provided in the survey with stakeholders from different associations, FSBA, FADSS, and SREB).

Limitations

Sample Size Limitations

- The sample size represents only 40% of Florida's superintendents. Since a larger sample size would have enhanced outcome reliability, the researcher would have preferred a sample size of more than half the population, at least 60%.
- Sample sizes were unequal. In some instances, districts were more than 3 times larger than other participating districts. Even though the researcher made statistical adjustments, this could not account for true samples.

Survey Limitations

- Since all findings were based on responses from the survey (which consisted of mostly multiple choice items), the researcher was limited to participants' item selection. This eliminated opportunities for elaboration or clarification on behalf of the participant.
- Although the researcher assumed each participant responded in good faith, loyalty to one's system may have occurred. Participants may have felt obligated to answer in way which makes his/her system appear favorable.
- Superintendent previous employment was solely based on the position held just prior to becoming superintendent and does not take into consideration other positions possibly held by participants from prior years. Therefore, participants may have had experience with serving as a superintendent yet may have gone unnoted.
- The variables of the study restricted more rigorous and informative statistical measures to occur (which excluded the option to utilize post hoc testing). The researcher was obligated to such variables due to the study being a replicated study.

Generalizability

- Since the outcomes are based on responses provided by superintendents of Florida, findings are generalizable to only Florida's superintendents.

Recommendations for Future Research

- Improvements to this study would occur if the research design had undergone mixed methodology in a setting where all superintendents of Florida are present and willing to participate in the study.

- Other settings employing elected superintendents such as Mississippi and Alabama would benefit from conducting a study similar to this study. Such studies would assist in confirming or negating findings from this study.
- Interviews with more stakeholders, in addition to the individuals in this study, will enhance the study. Such data will provide a wider range of perspectives on the topic concerning elected and appointed superintendents.
- Since larger sample sizes improve the reliability of findings, the researcher recommends replicating this study in a setting where all potential participants are present.
- The member from FADSS indicated only appointed superintendents whose contract stipulate he/she must complete a superintendents preparations program are required to partake in such program. Such opportunity is optional for all others. The researcher recommends research comparing differences between superintendents who have completed a superintendent preparations program to their counterparts who have not enrolled in a preparations program for superintendents.

Implications for Practice

As the researcher gathered and analyzed data, the following implications for practice were drawn:

- Since the method of which superintendents are selected does not impact student outcomes in the state of Florida, school districts may want to revisit the financial differences associated with appointing versus electing superintendents.
- Given that elected superintendents in Florida only need to be a registered voter and reside within the district, legislators may want to revisit criteria necessary for elected individuals to qualify for candidacy.

- Findings of the study provided specific characteristics of each system in Florida; outcomes may assist potential elected or appointed superintendents of Florida with self-assessment.
- Given that Florida's educational statutes are covered under its Constitution, a 61% vote by the tax-payers is needed to change from one system to another. Provided that such an issue appears on a ballot, constituents should consider the findings in order to make an informed decision in reference to which system is best for their district.

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APPENDIX A: LETTER TO FLORIDA'S SUPERINTENDENTS

Dear Florida Superintendent,

I am a Doctoral student at Lynn University (Boca Raton, Florida) who is currently replicating a study concerning elected and appointed superintendents. Please assist me by clicking on the link below to answer a few questions. Your responses will remain anonymous and are greatly appreciated as it will afford me the opportunity to provide descriptive data in my dissertation. Thank you in advance for completing the following survey which consists of no more than 15 multiple choice and 2 free response questions.

https://lynn.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_1SQd1hQ8tIM0DQ0

If you have any questions or concerns feel free to contact my Chairperson, Dr. Adam Kosnitzky at [REDACTED] ([REDACTED]).

Sincerely,

Candace Habersham

APPENDIX B: LETTER TO OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

Hello,

Thank you for your time. My name is Candace Habersham. Currently I am a high school math teacher as well as a doctoral student at Lynn University located in Boca Raton, Florida. My dissertation is concerning appointed and elected superintendents in the state of Florida, thus, it is my intention to solicit input from you in reference to this topic. So far, I have been afforded the opportunity to receive and analyze responses from superintendents throughout Florida. At your availability, I would love to set up an interview if you would so kindly agree. I have only about 4 questions which can be answered via telephone. A personalized copy of my findings will be shipped to you in exchange for your cooperation. Your participation in my study is greatly appreciated.

I look forward to hearing from you soon,

Sincerely,

Candace Habersham



APPENDIX C: QUALTRICS SURVEY

1. Are you an appointed or elected superintendent?

- Appointed (1)
- Elected (2)

2. Of which district are you currently a superintendent?

- Alachua (1)
- Baker (2)
- Bay (3)
- Bradford (4)
- Brevard (5)
- Broward (6)
- Calhoun (7)
- Charlotte (8)
- Citrus (9)
- Clay (10)
- Collier (11)
- Columbia (12)
- Desoto (13)
- Dixie (14)
- Duval (15)
- Escambia (16)
- Flagler (17)
- Franklin (18)
- Gadsden (19)
- Gilchrist (20)
- Glades (21)
- Gulf (22)
- Hamilton (23)
- Hardee (24)
- Hendry (25)
- Hernando (26)
- Highlands (27)
- Hillsborough (28)
- Holmes (29)
- Indian River (30)
- Jackson (31)
- Jefferson (32)

- Lafayette (33)
- Lake (34)
- Lee (35)
- Leon (36)
- Levy (37)
- Liberty (38)
- Madison (39)
- Manatee (40)
- Marion (41)
- Martin (42)
- Miami-Dade (43)
- Monroe (44)
- Nassau (45)
- Okaloosa (46)
- Okeechobee (47)
- Orange (48)
- Osceola (49)
- Palm Beach (50)
- Pasco (51)
- Pinellas (52)
- Polk (53)
- Putnam (54)
- Santa Rosa (55)
- Sarasota (56)
- Seminole (57)
- Saint Lucie (58)
- Saint Johns (59)
- Sumter (60)
- Suwannee (61)
- Taylor (62)
- Union (63)
- Volusia (64)
- Wakulla (65)
- Walton (66)
- Washington (67)

3. How long have you been superintendent with the current district?

- 0-2 years (0)
- 2-4 years (1)
- 4-6 years (2)
- 6-8 years (3)
- More than 8 years (4)

4. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

- Some College (1)
- 2-year College Degree (2)
- 4-year College Degree (3)
- Master's Degree (4)
- Doctoral Degree (5)
- Professional Degree (JD, MD) (6)

5. Enter the concentration of your highest degree attained.

6. Age When did you receive your highest degree attained?

- 1940 (1)
- 1941 (2)
- 1942 (3)
- 1943 (4)
- 1944 (5)
- 1945 (6)
- 1946 (7)
- 1947 (8)
- 1948 (9)
- 1949 (10)
- 1950 (11)
- 1951 (12)
- 1952 (13)
- 1953 (14)
- 1954 (15)
- 1955 (16)
- 1956 (17)
- 1957 (18)
- 1958 (19)
- 1959 (20)
- 1960 (21)
- 1961 (22)
- 1962 (23)
- 1963 (24)
- 1964 (25)
- 1965 (26)
- 1966 (27)
- 1967 (28)
- 1968 (29)
- 1969 (30)

- 1970 (31)
- 1971 (32)
- 1972 (33)
- 1973 (34)
- 1974 (35)
- 1975 (36)
- 1976 (37)
- 1977 (38)
- 1978 (39)
- 1979 (40)
- 1980 (41)
- 1981 (42)
- 1982 (43)
- 1983 (44)
- 1984 (45)
- 1985 (46)
- 1986 (47)
- 1987 (48)
- 1988 (49)
- 1989 (50)
- 1990 (51)
- 1991 (52)
- 1992 (53)
- 1993 (54)
- 1994 (55)
- 1995 (56)
- 1996 (57)
- 1997 (58)
- 1998 (59)
- 1999 (60)
- 2000 (61)
- 2001 (62)
- 2002 (63)
- 2003 (64)
- 2004 (65)
- 2005 (66)
- 2006 (67)
- 2007 (68)
- 2008 (69)
- 2009 (70)
- 2010 (71)

- 2011 (72)
- 2012 (73)

7. Who takes the lead in developing policy?

- Principal (1)
- Central Office Staff (2)
- Superintendent (3)
- School Board (4)
- School Board Chair (5)
- Shared Responsibility (6)
- Other (7)

8. How involved are parents and the community in decision making?

- Extremely Involved (1)
- Very Involved (2)
- Involved (3)
- Slightly Involved (4)
- Not Involved (5)

9. How often do you actively seek community participation?

- All the time (1)
- Frequently (2)
- Seldom (3)
- When Required (4)
- Never (5)

10. Select ALL areas in which you involve the "community" in planning/advisory capacity.

- Objective/Priorities (1)
- Program/Curriculum (2)
- Student Activities (3)
- Student Behavior/Rights (4)
- Finance and Budget (5)
- Evaluation of Programs (6)
- School-Based Decision making (7)
- Fundraising (8)
- Strategic Planning (9)
- None of the above (10)

11. Select ALL areas in which you involve "staff" in planning/advisory capacity.

- Objective/Priorities (1)
- Program/Curriculum (2)
- Student Activities (3)
- Student Behavior/Rights (4)
- Finance and Budget (5)
- Evaluation of Programs (6)
- School-Based Decision making (7)
- Fundraising (8)
- Strategic Planning (9)
- None of the above (10)

Answer If Are you an appointed or elected superintendent? Appointed Is Selected

12. Prior to becoming superintendent where did you reside?

- I resided within the school system of which I currently serve. (1)
- I resided within another school district inside the State of Florida. (3)
- I resided outside the State of Florida. (4)

Answer If Prior to becoming superintendent where did you reside? I resided within another school district inside the State of Florida. Is Selected

13. Select the name of the other district.

- Alachua (1)
- Baker (2)
- Bay (3)
- Bradford (4)
- Brevard (5)
- Broward (6)
- Calhoun (7)
- Charlotte (8)
- Citrus (9)
- Clay (10)
- Collier (11)
- Columbia (12)
- DeSoto (13)
- Dixie (14)
- Duval (15)
- Escambia (16)
- Flagler (17)
- Franklin (18)
- Gadsden (19)
- Gilchrist (20)
- Glades (21)
- Gulf (22)
- Hamilton (23)
- Hardee (24)
- Hendry (25)
- Hernando (26)
- Highlands (27)
- Hillsborough (28)
- Holmes (29)
- Indian River (30)

- Jackson (31)
- Jefferson (32)
- Lafayette (33)
- Lake (34)
- Lee (35)
- Leon (36)
- Levy (37)
- Liberty (38)
- Madison (39)
- Manatee (40)
- Marion (41)
- Martin (42)
- Miami-Dade (43)
- Monroe (44)
- Nassau (45)
- Okaloosa (46)
- Okeechobee (47)
- Orange (48)
- Osceola (49)
- Palm Beach (50)
- Pasco (51)
- Pinellas (52)
- Polk (53)
- Putnam (54)
- Santa Rosa (55)
- Sarasota (56)
- Seminole (57)
- Saint Lucie (58)
- Saint Johns (59)
- Sumter (60)
- Suwannee (61)
- Taylor (62)
- Union (63)
- Volusia (64)
- Wakulla (65)
- Walton (66)
- Washington (67)

Answer If Prior to becoming superintendent where did you reside? I resided outside the State of Florida. Is Selected

14. Select the name of the other state?

- Outside of the U.S. (1)
- Alabama (2)
- Alaska (3)
- Arizona (4)
- Arkansas (5)
- California (6)
- Colorado (7)
- Connecticut (8)
- Delaware (9)
- Florida (10)
- Georgia (11)
- Hawaii (12)
- Idaho (13)
- Illinois (14)
- Indiana (15)
- Iowa (16)
- Kansas (17)
- Kentucky (18)
- Louisiana (19)
- Maine (20)
- Maryland (21)
- Massachusetts (22)
- Michigan (23)
- Minnesota (24)
- Mississippi (25)
- Missouri (26)
- Montana (27)
- Nebraska (28)
- Nevada (29)
- New Hampshire (30)
- New Jersey (31)
- New Mexico (32)
- New York (33)
- North Carolina (34)
- North Dakota (35)
- Ohio (36)
- Oklahoma (37)

- Oregon (38)
- Pennsylvania (39)
- Rhode Island (40)
- South Carolina (41)
- South Dakota (42)
- Tennessee (43)
- Texas (44)
- Utah (45)
- Vermont (46)
- Virginia (47)
- Washington (48)
- West Virginia (49)
- Wisconsin (50)
- Wyoming (51)

Answer If Are you an appointed or elected superintendent? Appointed Is Selected

15. Did your district's school board contract with an outside agency/organization to recruit person's for your superintendent position?

- yes (1)
- no (2)

Answer If Are you an appointed or elected superintendent? Elected Is Selected

16. How long have you lived within the district?

- 1-3 years (0)
- 3-5 years (1)
- 5-7 years (2)
- 7-9 years (3)
- More than 9 years (4)

17. Prior to becoming a superintendent, what was your job title?

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