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Does the training of school board members make a difference?

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DOES THE TRAINING OF SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

A Dissertation

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Department of Educational Leadership

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In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

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by

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to determine the perceptions of public school superintendents and school board presidents in the United States relative to the orientation and ongoing training that is believed to be necessary for newly elected or selected and experienced board members. At the national, state, and local levels, public education is under a great deal of scrutiny. Public education throughout America is undergoing a significant overhaul unlike any time in the past. Boards of school trustees and superintendents are under the microscope with regard to performance and accountability.

There is a lack of extensive research regarding the education, orientation, and training of newly elected or selected and experienced school board members and the perception of how that training might change the members' effectiveness to influence positively the direction of the school corporation of which they serve. In most states, school board members are not required to have orientation or ongoing training with regard to their role and responsibilities prior to being elected or selected to their seat on the board.

In conducting this study, the following questions were addressed and analyzed by a comparison of responses submitted by public school superintendents and school board presidents from coast to coast.

1. Are orientation and ongoing training for school board members important?
2. Do orientation and ongoing training for school board members make a difference?

Public school superintendents and school board presidents were randomly selected from throughout the United States from small, medium, and large size school districts. The sample size was 250 public school superintendents and 250 school board presidents from five regions of the country identified by the National School Boards Association as the Northeast, Southern, Central, Western, and Pacific regions.

A very high percentage (nearly 90%) of the school board presidents and superintendents reported that board members did attend programs, seminars, or workshops during their first year of service. There is a significant difference between what school board presidents believe and what superintendents believe regarding required or mandated training prior to newly elected or selected board members beginning their role as a member of the board. The majority (80%) of the school board presidents and superintendents in the country reported that board members should be required or mandated to attend programs, seminars, or workshops during their first year of service. On average, only 55% of school board presidents and superintendents in the country believe in-service programs, training seminars, and workshops should be required or mandated for experienced board members after their first year of service on the board.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Something I enjoy doing when the opportunity arises is to sneak in a little fly-fishing now and then. I have been very fortunate to travel most states in the country searching for new water to wet a line. During my travels I have met many interesting people from all walks of life. One fall afternoon, while I was fly-fishing a small river west of the Mississippi River, I struck up a conversation with a gentleman who was born and raised in the area. While talking, he asked me where I was from and what I did for a living. I shared that I was a superintendent of schools near Indianapolis, Indiana. He beamed with a smile and followed-up by saying, "I am a school board member." As a public school superintendent for nearly 20 years I asked him what his motivation was to serve on the board. His response was not what I expected to hear. Most school board members I had met during my tenure either had a single agenda, politically motivated, or sincerely wanted to serve the community in a meaningful way. However, my new friend was on his local school board for none of these reasons. He proceeded to tell me that in his small community it was difficult to find someone willing to serve on the school board. Therefore, if you were on the school board and didn't want your name to be on the ballot for another term you had to play poker. If you won the poker game it would keep your name off the ballot. However, sad as it sounds, if you lost your hand at poker that night you were the only name that would appear on the ballot for election to the school board. He then laughed out loud while saying,

“Guess I am not very good at poker because that is how I got elected to the school board.” Later in the day he invited me to dinner and we talked family, fly-fishing, and school boards. It was this defining moment that I realized the importance of orientation and training for school board members regardless of the community size and location. You see, my new friend, like some board members I have served during my career, had no idea what his role and responsibilities were as a school board member.

At the national, state, and local levels, public education is under a great deal of scrutiny. Public education throughout America is undergoing a significant overhaul unlike any time in the past. Boards of school trustees and administrators are under the microscope with regards to performance and accountability. Boards and administrators have traditionally focused on the management of schools and the day-to-day operations rather than the leadership of schools where the focus should be on student and teacher outcomes.

There is a lack of extensive research regarding the education and training of individual school board members and the impact training might have on member effectiveness to influence the direction of the school corporations they serve. Indiana is one example where school board members are not required to have any training or education with regard to their role and responsibilities prior to being elected or appointed to their seats on the board. Furthermore, there is no requirement to complete training or seek education with regard to their role after taking the oath of office.

In 2000, Gemberling, Smith, and Villani stated,

Being an effective member of a board of education has always been a challenge, but never more so than today. The Information Age has created demands for instant

responsiveness and increased accountability in all facets of society. Nowhere is that increased accountability more acute than in public education. (p. 1)

Because education is undergoing drastic reform there has to be more accountability placed upon those who choose to serve as school board members. “People are not born understanding the intricacies of school funding formulas, parliamentary procedure, open meetings, and public records requirements” (Bartusek, 2011, p. 1). According to the Lighthouse Inquiry presented April 2001 by the Iowa Association of School Boards, the understanding and beliefs of school boards in high-achieving districts and the presence of “training for board members was one of seven conditions that markedly was different from those of boards in low-achieving districts” (Rice, 2010, p. 14). A study of 10 districts in five states by Goodman and colleagues in 1997 found that districts with quality governance tended to have greater student achievement as measured by dropout rates, students entering college, and standardized test scores (as cited in Land, 2002, p. 249). Poor school board governance is defined by Todras (1993) as

when school board members through the lack of training spend a small amount of time on their primary function of implementing policy, but the majority of their time is spent on administrative concerns, which could possibly indicate that the board is unclear about its role and duties. (p. 72)

“A crucial problem facing school boards is that many micromanage the superintendent” (Glass, 2000, p. 42). “This primary problem is associated with school boards who have the lack of training for professional growth, inadequate or non-existent measurement tools to assess their personal performance, and the lack of accountability for board performance” (Danzberger, 1994, p. 367). Rice (2010) concluded from his recent study of school board quality that member training and evaluation are critical to the achievement of effective and accountable school

boards. Rice suggested that it is important that a mandatory board training and evaluation be considered in order to increase board effectiveness. It was recommended by Helton (1991) that his research be replicated on a national basis, involving a random sample of school superintendents. In recent years, research conducted by Rice (2010), Helton (1991), Fridley (2006), Maritz (2006), O’Cull (2001), and Schmitz (2007) identified the necessity and importance for newly elected or selected and experienced board members to participate in orientation and ongoing in-service training programs, seminars, and workshops. Three questions discovered in the literature review that remain to be answered on a national level are (a) What is the best delivery method for orientation and ongoing training, (b) how much training, and (c) what topics are most important for board members? The research by others demonstrates that orientation and ongoing training is important but fails to determine if it makes a difference in school board members’ competency. According to Schmitz, more research is needed to determine on a national level whether orientation and ongoing training of school board members actually improves the quality of the school district measured by improvement in graduation rate, student achievement, and cash balance of the district.

“Board training helps lay citizens get up to speed quickly with the practical knowledge to perform their role” (Dillon, 2010a, p. 1).

Research tells us that effective school board members seek training opportunities, take what they learned seriously and are able to articulate what they know with their peers and constituents. A question that remains to be answered is whether school board reform should include required training for all members of every board and should it be at the top of the agenda for state and national leaders. Although you will still see superintendents handling the orientation of incoming board members, a growing practice

is for members of the board itself to actually conduct the orientation as a means of demonstrating that board education is a top priority, not just another job to be passed along to the superintendent. (Eadie, 2005, p. 32)

“It is obvious that having the skills and knowledge to perform as a smart board is not enough” (Brown, 2006, p. xv). According to the National School Boards Association (NSBA), public schools are one of the largest businesses and employers in most communities. “No one thinks of a public school system as a ‘business.’ Yet it is a very complex business—one that is heavily statutorily regulated, usually unionized, responsible for large employment costs, policy-laden, and financially challenged” (Van Clay & Soldwedel, 2009, p. 4).

Increasingly, local school districts are being held accountable for what happens to students and how well they perform on a variety of assessment measures of which can now be a reflection on local school boards and their lack of training. (Gemberling et al., 2000, p. 5) Because school board members usually are not trained or licensed education professionals, there is a huge learning curve once a member is elected, takes the oath of office, and is seated on the board. “Without some preservice or orientation program, it is estimated that it will take at least two years of school board service before board members gain the background and confidence to perform effectively and confidently” (NSBA, 2007, p. 24). In recent years, research has validated the necessity of board member training and the National School Boards Association identified the following:

Ninety to 95% of most board members say they need more training to become more effective in tackling district problems. How do most school board members learn to be better board members? They learn on their own and by the seat of their pants. They

learn with others, sometimes in a formal workshop setting. And, they rely on books, magazines, newsletters, and the Internet. (NSBA, 2007, p. 25)

History of Schools and School Boards

A difficulty with history of schools and school boards is the multiplication of records as we move from the past to the future. Significant events were less numerous in former times when the focus was not on state standards, accountability, assessment, graduation rate, passing adequate yearly progress, the number of students attending college after graduation, and fiscal responsibility. “Few records and fewer artifacts survive from schools on the American frontier” (Pulliam & Van Patten, 2007, p. 17). Our educational system had grown slowly since the nation’s founding, “from highly-localized and religiously-based schools to a fairly uniform, if still locally controlled, network of schools that had become universal by the 20th century” (Bankston & Caldas, 2009, p. 1). The public school as we know it today was born in the mid-nineteenth century. Its founders called it the *common* school. Common schools were “funded by local property taxes, charged no tuition, were open to all White children, were governed by local school committees, and subject to modest state regulation” (Anderson, Cuban, Kaestle, & Ravitch, 2001, p. 11).

The first school boards can be traced to town meetings established in Massachusetts in the late 1700s. The position of the school superintendent was established in the 1830s to manage and handle the daily operations of the schools. Until that time, “unpaid school board members managed the schools but growing school populations forced boards to hire full-time personnel because the responsibility was becoming too cumbersome” (Marzano & Waters, 2009, p. 75). “Meaningful change in American education did not take place until the 1830s when Massachusetts developed a statewide common-school system” (Wilson, 2004, p. 11).

Throughout the 18th and 19th centuries schools were being developed and school systems devised and expanded by religious organizations and benefactors as well as those community leaders who believed education contributed to a better society. By 1862, the revised Code was introduced whereby grants were awarded to elementary schools, depending upon the achievement of their pupils. Across the country during the 1860s, state laws established the position of the state superintendent of instruction with the responsibilities to publicize educational causes and exemplary practices, collect and summarize statistics on education and administer the new education laws of the state (Anderson et al., 2001, p. 15). “Forster’s Education Act of 1870 established school boards in areas where there was a lack of elementary school provision” (Nutbrown, Clough, & Selbie, 2008, p. 5). Early 20th century schools were responding to changes in American society. In the decades from the end of the Civil War to World War I, unprecedented waves of immigrants had arrived. By 1908, a study by the U.S. Immigration Commission determined that a majority of students attending public schools were from immigrant families. “Public education was seen as a way to Americanize these young people in the English language and culture” (Bankston & Caldas, 2009, p. 2). “By World War I compulsory attendance laws shifted emphasis from students remaining in school until the mastery of certain knowledge to remaining in school until a certain age” (Webb, 2006, p. 201).

Since 1950, the number of school districts in the nation has been reduced from approximately 100,000 to about 14,000. “Among the states the number of school districts varies from as few as 17 in Nevada to 1,035 in Texas” (Webb, 2010, p. 327).

State statutes provide for the selection of lay citizens to serve on school boards. The governing body for the operation of a school district is the school board. Their primary

function is to set policy, approve budgets, and hire a superintendent who will handle day-to-day operations. (Webb, 2010, p. 325)

Local school governance has evolved over the past two centuries when school board members were appointed and given the responsibility to oversee the daily operations of the school(s) in their community. In the early 18th century, school boards began the practice of hiring a superintendent to manage the school(s) so school boards could dedicate their time to governance. Legislation over the decades has been enacted at the national, state, and local levels demanding more responsibility and accountability from schools. Across the country communities were electing or selecting ordinary citizens to school boards. Most had no formal education or training to handle the governance for oversight of facilities, transportation, breakfast and lunch, monitoring student health, special education, and a rigorous curriculum. The organizational structure of school districts across the country had to change dramatically. Displayed in Figure 1 is a simplified organizational chart that demonstrates the school board's place in this complex structure of districts in the United States.

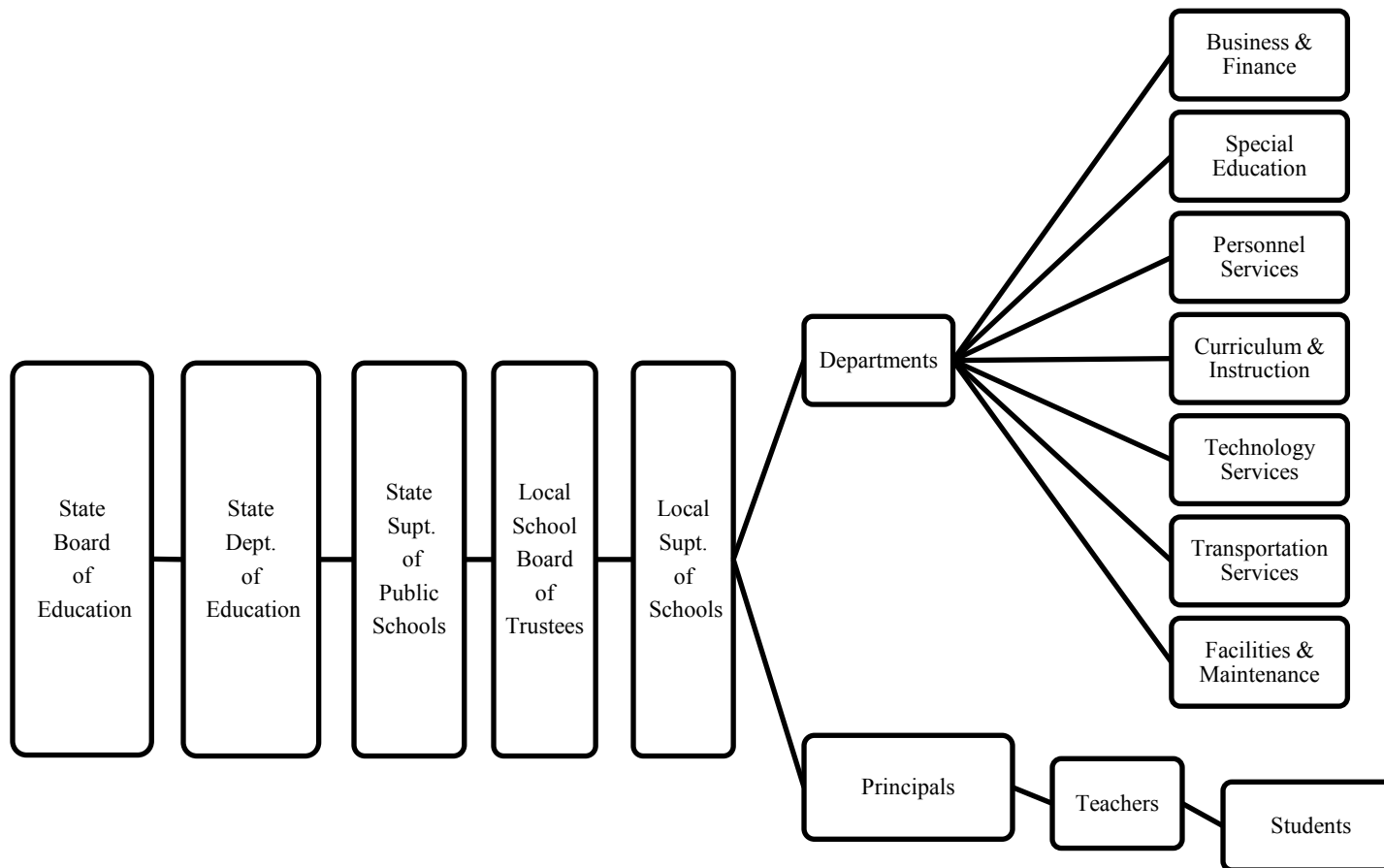


Figure 1. Organization of local school governance (adapted from Webb, 2010, p. 326)

Role and Responsibility of the School Board

“The role of the school board member today has to be one of leadership. The board needs to constantly push the system and ask the questions. It is governance, not management” (Walser, 2009, p. 12). The school board is the district’s legislative body and is almost always elected. Local school boards are almost always regarded as “the ones most responsible for school governance” (Chubb & Moe, 1990, p. 15).

School board members do not need to be educational professionals or organizational professionals; they must need to keep their focus on a desirable future, govern accordingly, and let the high-level brain trust they have in their superintendent to take care of details. (Reimer, 2008, p. 13)

Governing boards are groups of people with a job to do. “They are not mere figureheads, nor are they just pools of operational volunteers. The board’s job is to govern the organization and ensure its accountable performance” (Carver & Charney, 2004, p. 3). At the core, a board has six primary responsibilities:

1. It guides the accomplishment of the school district’s purposes, particularly focused on the education of children.
2. It screens and supports key projects identified to improve programs and operations, and it monitors progress.
3. It chooses, directs, and evaluates the superintendent of the district.
4. It oversees the planning and deployment of resources, both material and human.
5. It serves as the bridge between the district and the community; both in reflecting community desires and in promoting understanding and support.
6. It ensures fiscal, legal, staff, and programmatic accountability. (Smoley, 1999, p. 4)

Boards need to focus attention on these essential areas: vision, standards, assessment, accountability, alignment, climate, collaborative relationships, and continuous improvement (Gemberling et al., 2000). School boards govern; superintendents manage. “The board has the responsibility to establish core beliefs, create the vision, set goals, formulate an action plan, develop policy, approve policy, and allocate resources” (McAdams, 2006, p. 9). “Board members are accountable to various constituencies including parents, patrons, community/business leaders and other government officials, and it is up to them to ask probing questions about the organization’s strategic directions as well as the quality of leadership” (Bowen, 2008, p. 3). “They need to be proactive partners and work with the superintendent to achieve highly positive outcomes” (Bowen, 2008, p. 3). It is the responsibility of the board to govern by establishing beliefs, vision, goals, and policies and provide the necessary resources directed toward student achievement. School superintendents have the responsibility to lead their district by empowering staff to carry out the boards’ beliefs, vision, goals, and policies in order to improve student achievement. The superintendent is hired by the board to handle the day-to-day operations of the school district.

In order for a school board to remain faithful to its vision, policies, and performance, board members must be committed to regularly monitoring their performance. Faithful and rigorous self-monitoring of these policies allows the board to:

1. Compare its actions with its policy values to determine whether it has performed as committed to perform;
2. Provide a means for self-correction if actions deviate from vision, goals, and policy;
3. Maintain clarity of roles; and

4. Model continuing performance improvement, as well as build capacity for sustainability in the event of board or superintendent turnover. (Dawson & Quinn, 2011, p. 17)

Essentially, the role of the board is to address the big issues. The board cannot run the school. “A board’s responsibilities derive from law, custom, tradition, and current practice. Authority resides with the school board as the representative of the community. The board delegates authority to the superintendent to implement their vision and mission” (Shultz, 2000, p. 5). To help local school boards carry out their work, the Gemberling et al. (2000) developed a framework called the *Key Work of School Boards*. This framework outlined the eight essential areas on which boards need to focus attention: “vision, standards, assessment, accountability, alignment, climate, collaboration relationships, and continuous improvement” (Gemberling et al., 2000, p. 3). With each new school year come additional responsibilities and challenges for school board members. In order to govern effectively, members must not lose focus on matters that need attention by having clear vision that focus on continuous improvement and student achievement.

It is not the responsibility of a school board to involve itself in the daily operations of the school district. Instead, board members should focus on the larger picture by creating a vision for the district, establishing goals, making policy, and approving a budget.

School Boards: State Requirements

School board governance is the best example of governmental local control, and school boards face some of the biggest challenges in government today. Since education is the single largest line item in state government budgets, it attracts a lot of attention. “The public has strong expectations about how the school board should respond to particular needs” (Carver, 1990, p.

46). Neither the word *education* nor the word *school* appears in the Constitution of the United States. “This was not an error of omission, it was intentional because the authors chose not to include education among the functions of the federal government, the provision of schooling is a power reserved to the states” (Kirst, 1984, p. 95). Current mandated state requirements a person must meet to be elected or appointed to a local school board with regard to residency, high school graduate or GED, and minimum age are reflected in Table 1.

Table 1

Mandated State Requirements for Local School Boards

State	Resident	High School Diploma	Minimum Age
Alabama	N/A	N/A	N/A
Alaska	N/A	N/A	N/A
Arizona	Yes	No	N/A
California	Yes	No	18
Colorado	N/A	N/A	N/A
Connecticut	Yes	No	18
Delaware	Yes	No	18
Florida	N/A	N/A	N/A
Georgia	Yes	No	18
Hawaii	N/A	N/A	N/A
Idaho	Yes	No	18
Illinois	Yes	No	18
Indiana	Yes	No	21
Iowa	Yes	No	18
Kansas	Yes	No	18
Kentucky	N/A	N/A	N/A
Louisiana	Yes	No	18
Maine	N/A	N/A	N/A
Maryland	Yes	No	18
Massachusetts	No	No	18
Michigan	Yes	No	18
Minnesota	Yes	No	21
Mississippi	Yes	Yes	18
Missouri	N/A	N/A	N/A
Montana	Yes	No	18
Nebraska	Yes	No	18
Nevada	N/A	N/A	N/A
New Hampshire	N/A	N/A	N/A
New Jersey	Yes	Yes	18
New Mexico	N/A	N/A	N/A

Table 1 (continued)

State	Resident	High School Diploma	Minimum Age
New York	Yes	No	18
North Carolina	Yes	No	21
North Dakota	Yes	No	18
Ohio	Yes	No	18
Oklahoma	N/A	N/A	N/A
Oregon	Yes	No	18
Pennsylvania	Yes	No	18
Rhode Island	N/A	N/A	N/A
South Carolina	Yes	No	18
South Dakota	Yes	No	18
Tennessee	Yes	Yes	18
Texas	Yes	No	18
Utah	Yes	No	18
Vermont	Yes	No	N/A
Virginia	Yes	No	18
Washington	N/A	N/A	N/A
West Virginia	N/A	N/A	N/A
Wisconsin	Yes	No	18
Wyoming	Yes	No	18

Source: NASB (2007)

Table 1 clearly demonstrates that nearly anyone who is at least 18 years old, if elected or selected can serve on a school board. It is perceived that the business side of education does not require an education. In 94% of the states, a person does not need a high school diploma to be elected or selected to a school board. Yet research has proven that it takes an individual who is truly interested in becoming educated and learning everything they can about the many facets of school board governance. The data reflected in Table 1 shows that it is not important according to current legislation that an individual be an educated person to serve on a local school board. The role of a school board member is complicated and it takes a special person who is interested in learning and has the ability to learn about board governance, leadership, budget and finance, duties and responsibilities of the board and superintendent, open door laws, communication,

personnel issues, ethics, policy development, legislative issues, confidentiality, student achievement, as well as many others. Recognizing the need for orientation and training is the first step toward becoming an effective and competent school board member.

Statement of the Problem

In most states, something is missing from legislation governing school boards: required orientation and/or ongoing training of school board members. Any layperson who is of legal age, was never convicted of a felony, and has proper residency as defined by law can be elected or appointed to a school board without any formal orientation and/or training before or after the election or appointment. Carver (2002) maintained that “the weakest link in public education is not teaching or administration, but governance, the quality of strategic leadership by elected or appointed citizens” (p. 565). According to Dillon (2010b), “ongoing professional development is not a luxury, but a must” (p. 15). Therefore, since it has been noted in the literature that orientation and ongoing training is important, I believe another study would determine if orientation and/or training programs, seminars, and workshops actually make a difference in the competence of school board members. Data need to be collected to determine whether orientation and ongoing training from the perception of school board presidents and superintendents are important and do make a difference.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine the perceptions of school board presidents and public school superintendents in the United States relative to the orientation and ongoing training believed to be necessary for newly elected or selected and experienced board members. At the national, state, and local levels, public education is under a great deal of scrutiny. Public education throughout America is undergoing a significant overhaul unlike any time in the past.

Boards of school trustees and superintendents are under the microscope with regard to performance and accountability. School boards and administrators have traditionally focused on the management of schools and the day-to-day operations rather than the governance of schools where the focus should be on student and teacher outcomes as a focus for building a quality school district. According to Smoley (1999), school boards fail for three reasons:

1. They work in a difficult situation, with conflict and misunderstanding among board, superintendent, and community;
2. Their role is unclear and misunderstood; and
3. In district after district, they repeat a handful of practical errors that interfere with their effectiveness. (p. 1)

Research Questions

In conducting this study, the following questions were addressed and analyzed by a comparison of responses submitted by school board presidents and public school superintendents from across the United States.

1. Are orientation and ongoing training for school board members important?
2. Do orientation and ongoing training for school board members make a difference?

Null Hypotheses

In relation to the two research questions asked, the following null hypotheses were developed:

H₀1. School board presidents and public school superintendents do not believe orientation and ongoing training for school board members are important.

H₀2. School board presidents and public school superintendents do not believe orientation and ongoing training for school board members make a difference.

Delimitations

The timeframe established for data collection was January 2012. The survey was directed to 250 school board presidents and 250 public school superintendents on a national level. The board presidents and superintendents were randomly selected from each of five national regions of the country, which have been identified by the National School Boards Association (see Appendix A).

Limitations

Public school superintendents are very busy and may not see the importance or relevance of this study. They represent a broad cross-section of the profession and live busy lives, and many will not take the time to respond to the survey. School board presidents have family and job-related responsibilities that go far beyond serving on a school board. It was possible that some school board presidents and superintendents would recognize they are not doing an adequate job assisting their newly elected or selected board members with orientation programs or their experienced members with on-going professional development and refuse to participate in the survey. Others may have been reluctant to participate in this study because they might have felt they did not want to admit they did not participate or see any importance in orientation programs and ongoing in-service training. Yet, there may be some school board presidents or superintendents chosen in the sample who did not have the ability or willingness to accurately articulate their reality. Some potential respondents/participants may have been preoccupied with issues of greater importance including work related issues or possibly even retiring at the end of the year.

Unknowns may have also influenced the results of this study and include school board presidents or superintendents who do not have active or accurate email addresses. Some

respondents may have experienced technical difficulty with completing the survey. Others may no longer be in their positions and did not have their email forwarded. Some respondents may not have received their letters of invitation to participate in this study because it was filtered or blocked and was considered to be spam.

Definitions

Board member is a member of the governing body who is elected or appointed to a specific length of service to a public school corporation.

Board of school trustees is the governing body of any Indiana public school corporation composed of lay members who are selected from within the boundaries of the school corporation.

Governance defines the expectations and distribution of power and provides structure for performance and evaluation of goals and success of the school corporation/district.

Governing body refers to the board where members are elected or appointed for the responsibility of administering the affairs of a school corporation.

In-service is a method of training for newly elected or selected board members in preparation of the tasks that will be performed during their tenure.

Orientation is the process that is used for welcoming a school board member and acclimating him or her to the duty, role, function, and responsibility of members and providing an introduction to the culture of governance of public schools.

School board means the board of school trustees, board of school commissioners, school board of incorporated towns and cities, and township school trustees; a person or agency in active charge and management of the school.

School corporation means a local public school corporation established under law, including a: school city, school town; metropolitan school district, county school corporation, community school corporation, and united school corporation.

Superintendent of schools is the chief executive officer of the school corporation and employed to administer the policies established by the board of school trustees.

Training is the action of teaching a person particular skills or a type of behavior in order to be a successful contributor and to better perform his or her job.

Summary

This research is divided into five chapters. Chapter 1 contains the introduction to the study, history of school and school boards, role and responsibility of the school board, school boards' state requirements, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research questions, null hypothesis, delimitations, limitations, and definitions. Chapter 2 contains a review of the literature, which discusses orientation and training by state, summary of how states provide training, importance of board member orientation, and board governance. Chapter 3 presents the research methodology, research design, participants and sample population, quantitative analysis of data, null hypotheses, and method for the study. Chapter 4 presents the summary and analysis of the data. Chapter 5 contains the summary, findings, recommendations, and conclusions.

CHAPTER 2

Literature Review

Long before the beginnings of recorded history, the early inhabitants of the American continent developed cultural traditions and social organizations that formed the core of education for successive generations. Education served to unite the generations and to define one's place among "the people" (Urban & Wagoner, 2009). "Some of the most salient accomplishments in American educational history were made, in particular, in the first few decades after the arrival of the Pilgrims, in 1620, and Puritans, in 1630" (Jeynes, 2007, p. 1). Most of the Puritan ministers who first came to America graduated from Oxford and Cambridge, two of the finest colleges in England. Since education was important, "the first schools in New England were established under the same high standards" (Jeynes, 2007, p. 4).

Although public education as it is known today has been part of the American culture for more than 200 years, it is only in recent history that school board governance has been examined by "linking the work of board members across the country to the achievement of their students" (Hess & Meeks, 2010, p. 4). The earliest instance of local school governance occurred when authority was "delegated by the town council to a committee of local townsmen under Massachusetts School Ordinance of 1642" (Brenner, 2002, p. 4). In 1789, Massachusetts passed legislation that authorized towns to employ special committees designed to supervise schools. These committees had extensive powers and responsibilities including "curricular decisions,

employing staff, choosing textbooks, building schools, awarding diplomas, and establishing administrative structures” (Alsbury, 2008, p. 82). Meaningful change in American education did not take place until the 1830s, when “Massachusetts developed a statewide common-school system with a state-level board of education” (Wilson, 2004, p. 11).

A governing board is “a social invention developed in many times and at many places to provide control and sponsorship for a governmental or private function. In Florence, Italy, the Brotherhood of Mercy Board has been in existence since A.D. 1240” (Houle, 1997, p. 3). One of the most basic forms of local government is the school board. “There are nearly 15,000 school districts in America, consisting of roughly 85,000 school board members” (Indiana School Board Activism Guide, 2011, p. 1). A local school board of education is, in its ideal form, “a group of citizen-volunteers who give unselfishly of themselves, usually without remuneration, to look after the affairs of the school system and, by extension, the community” (Maeroff, 2010, p. 1). The local school district and local school district governance are unique to America. Nowhere else in the world, except Canada, is education governed by a locally elected school board. Local school board elections provide “the closest example of democracy for the American people” (Alsbury, 2008, p. 5).

There are certain skills and attributes that are consistently present in successful board of education members. Good board members

1. keep children first;
2. maintain high standards of conduct;
3. accept criticism;
4. treat all individuals with respect;
5. maintain channels of communication;

6. focus on important issues;
7. demonstrate critical thinking skills;
8. maintain a sense of humor;
9. believe in public schools;
10. strive to reach consensus on difficult issues;
11. work out interpersonal conflicts appropriately;
12. manage stress and stressful situations;
13. take responsibility for actions;
14. are honest and sincere;
15. value and seek challenges;
16. get the information necessary to make good decisions; and
17. above all, have the capacity to learn and grow as they recognize the scope of the responsibilities of service on a local board of education. (Connecticut Association of Boards of Education, 2007, para. 2)

Whether running for a school board or already elected or appointed, “there are many options and materials available to learn how to become a more effective school board member” (Illinois Association of School Boards [IASB], 2011, p. 1). As accountability standards for service continue to rise at all levels and within every group involved in public education, “Today’s school boards are challenged by ever-expanding roles” (IASB, 2011, p. 1). There are three modes of governance that comprise governance as leadership, and when trustees work well in all three of these modes, the board will succeed in its role of leadership and governance.

Type I—the fiduciary mode, where boards are concerned primarily with the stewardship for tangible assets. Type II—the strategic mode, where boards create a strategic

partnership with management. Type III—the generative mode, where boards provide a less recognized but critical source of leadership for the organization through wisdom, insight, or creativity. (Chait, Ryan, & Taylor, 2005, pp. 6-7)

Eadie (2009) defined governance as leadership in a similar way with a bit of twist. In a close partnership with the superintendent and key administrators, there are three fundamental questions that must be collaboratively defined:

The Strategic Question—Where should your organization be headed and what should it become over the long run, its values, vision, targets, and strategies for diversification and growth?

The Operational Question—What should your organization be now and in the coming year or two, its mission, current programs, facilities, organizational structure, annual operational plan and budget, operational policies, and who the superintendent is and what his or her leadership priorities and targets are?

The Accountability Question—How well is your organization doing, programmatically and operationally, financially, administratively, and in terms of public perceptions and relationships with the wider world? (Eadie, 2009, pp. 4-5)

What is governance and what does governance leadership mean? Gill (2005) defined governance as the exercise of authority, direction and control of an organization in order to ensure that its purpose is achieved.

It refers to who is in charge of what; who sets the direction and the parameters within which the direction is to be pursued; who makes decisions about what; who sets performance indicators, monitors progress and evaluates results; and who is accountable to whom for what. Governance includes the structures, responsibilities and processes that

the board of an organization uses to direct and manage its general operations. These structures, processes and organizational traditions determine how authority is exercised, how decisions are made, how stakeholders have their say and how decision-makers are held accountable. Governance leadership is a process of providing strategic leadership by setting direction, making policy, and strategy decisions, overseeing and monitoring organizational performance, and ensuring overall accountability. (Gill, 2005, p. 15)

On the whole, board members are substantially more educated than the general adult population. According to a recent report, *Governance in the Accountability Era*, “74.2% of school board members have a bachelor’s degree, far exceeding the 29.5% of American adults over the age of 25 who hold at least a B.A. degree” (Hess & Meeks, 2010, p. 21). Though the research has found that school board members are well educated as individuals, there is a learning curve with regard to the need for knowledge regarding school governance and board development. A concern is that “a large proportion of in-service training content is determined by the trainer without any involvement or input and without regard to the individual expectations of those being trained” (Halik, 1973, p. 3). There are three realities that quickly sink in once an individual is seated on a school board. These realities are

1. You campaign as an individual, but serve as a member of a team.
2. You do not have the authority to fix the problems you campaigned to fix.
3. Your success as a board member is inextricably tied to the success of the board.

(California School Boards Association, 2007, p. 3)

Being an effective board member means “leading your school district on the journey to improve. The challenges in this journey of improvement are many” (Iowa Association of School Boards, 2009, p. 2). It takes more than a college education to be an effective board member; it

takes skill and knowledge in many specialty areas. “Ultimately, a successful school board functions as a team, relying on the strengths of individual members while pursuing a collective, child-centered vision and working together to translate it into a reality” (Duke University, 2010, p. 1). Effective school board members share a number of common characteristics, but it is important to realize that one does not become effective the instant one is elected. Many qualities are acquired through experience and are important to consider:

1. A conviction that public education is important.
2. The ability to make decisions.
3. Loyalty to the democratic process.
4. Time and energy to devote to board business, including board development opportunities.
5. Ability to accept the will of the majority.
6. Respect for school district staff.
7. Ability to communicate well with others.
8. Courage. (Minnesota School Boards Association, 2011, pp. 2-3)

A member of a board is likely to pass through three overlapping phases during his or her time of service.

1. Will first have a time of orientation and settling in.
2. Secondly, a period of major service and contribution will be experienced.
3. Finally, in time, will gradually merge into a time of seasoned wisdom, strength, and the provision of solid backing. (Houle, 1997, pp. 57-58)

Team building activities should be ongoing and continuous between school board members and superintendents. Unresolved conflict among board members and superintendents

distracts the leadership team from its ability to accomplish its mission of educating all children.

Board members and superintendents should

1. Gain an understanding of the importance of cultivating a strong, trusting working relationship with each other and the superintendent.
2. Learn how to identify areas of conflict.
3. Learn how to successfully deal with conflict in a positive, constructive manner.

(Mississippi School Boards Association, 2011, p. 1)

When board members learn to work collaboratively with one another as a team, they are less likely to be distracted from their duty to be responsive to values, beliefs, and priorities of their communities. The board is responsible for establishing and maintaining an organizational structure that supports the district's vision and empowers the professional staff. Although the board does not implement policies or programs, board members are responsible for

1. Employing the superintendent and setting policy for hiring other personnel;
2. Overseeing the development of and adopting policies;
3. Setting a direction for and adopting curriculum;
4. Establishing budget priorities, adopting the budget, and overseeing facilities issues;
and
5. Providing direction for and accepting collective bargaining agreements. (California

School Boards Association, 2011, p. 1)

School board training can provide the stimulus for taking an in-depth look at board members' roles, individually or collectively. A session or two discussing a book, an outline, a veteran board member, or a consultant, can help set standards from which to learn. Before the election, topics might include "background history, vision, and mission; role, responsibility, and

expectations of board members; bylaws and policy; finance and budget; strategic plan, major goals; current members, superintendent background and experience, and staff overview”

(Andringa, 2007, p. 109). Soon after the election topics might include

1. facility visit and staff introductions;
2. briefing on program strategies and results;
3. introduction to committees and advisory groups;
4. committee assignments and orientation;
5. calendar of meetings and events;
6. review of audits, insurance, and contracts; and
7. evaluation of board, superintendent, and staff. (Andringa, 2007, p. 136)

Most school board members want to do what is best for the community and its children.

“They run into trouble when they do not have a clear understanding of their role as a board member. This lack of knowledge can lead to common mistakes” (Wilson, 2004, p. 32). Proper training can minimize but not always prevent the 10 most common errors made by board members which are

1. lack of patience;
2. poor behavior;
3. publicly challenging board members;
4. acting independently;
5. hidden agendas;
6. embarrassing other members;
7. violating executive sessions;
8. failure to look at the big picture;

9. putting politics before children; and
10. maintaining balanced lives (Caruso, 2001, pp. 26-28)

For board members, “ongoing professional development is not a luxury, but a must.

Board training helps lay citizens get up to speed quickly with the practical knowledge to perform their role” (Dillon, 2010b, p. 15). Rice (2010) revealed that board members and superintendents agreed that training is an important component to success of school boards. Specifically, “many newly elected members fail to properly understand their roles and duties, which often lead to role confusion” (Rice, 2010, p. 183).

Orientation and Training by State

Alabama. Each of the 50 states provides some sort of training for board members and some states require attendance. Alabama does not require training but rather encourages board members to participate in the Alabama Association of School Boards (AASB, 2011) academy. From start to finish, the academy is designed to accommodate the many educational needs of members. Most of the conferences overlap weekends to reduce time away from jobs. Two additional meetings are held annually in each of AASB’s nine districts. Courses offered are

1. Roles and Responsibilities Orientation (formally Leadership I) provides an introduction to school board service for new school board members and new superintendents.
2. Effective Boards and Relationships Orientation (formally Leadership II) goes into further depth for new school board members and new superintendents on learning effective board leadership, working with your superintendent and board attorney, and advocating your school.

3. Leadership for Financial Accountability goes beyond the basics of finance to include strategies on passing tax referenda, understanding school accounting, and aligning your system's finances with its mission in ways that help raise student achievement.
4. Leadership for Developing Highly Effective Staff includes information on using student achievement data to make effective staffing decisions. It covers employee recruitment, staff development, the tenure and fair dismissal laws, sexual harassment, and effective evaluations.
5. Leadership for Academic Achievement is the heart of the National School Board Association's *Key Work of School Boards* and other pivotal new research aimed at raising student achievement.
6. Leadership to Create the Optimal Learning Environment stresses that the learning environment is more than just bricks and mortar. It includes strategies for managing facilities, keeping schools safe, improving parental involvement, expanding internal communication and teamwork.
7. Leadership for Policy and Planning help boards develop Policies that raise student achievement, fulfill their responsibilities, and comply with the law. It emphasizes strategic planning, using technology and keeping the community informed.
8. Leadership for Community Engagement provides you with more than just skills to survive a television interview. Community engagement brings together public relations, media relations and internal and external communication to enhance relationships between schools and those they serve. (AASB, 2007, pp. 5-23)

According to Salter (2007), even the most experienced board members never stop learning the technical details of the job, and those who are successful learn early that being

effective required more than knowing the detailed tenure law or interpreting the state budget forms. She added that effective board members must

1. Focus on “we,” not “me.” For board members to function effectively, each member must see the board as a team and respect the varying skills and perspectives his or her teammates bring to the area.
2. Treat staff and faculty with respect. Like good bosses in the corporate world, effective school board members support the superintendent’s efforts to ensure staff members are accountable for doing their jobs well.
3. Do your homework. One of the most difficult concepts for the public to grasp about the board’s operation is that (work sessions notwithstanding) the regular board meeting is not a time for fact-finding.
4. Listen. Another challenging aspect of school board service is learning to listen with an open mind to those with differing views. Effective school board members now that by listening to different points of view, they can gain new insights into issues.
5. Be courageous. Effective board members stick by their principles and make the decisions they believe best for students and the school system, even when faced with pressure from special interest groups to do otherwise.
6. Support the school system and board decisions. Humans are not infallible; therefore, mistakes can and will be made. However, effective school board members are optimistic about the system’s future and are committed to resolving problems without losing sight of the successes. Ineffective board members, on the other hand, focus almost exclusively on the shortcomings.

7. Know your role. Accepting the difference between the roles of the board and the superintendent can be tough. But board members intent on micromanaging can be highly disruptive to a school system. (Salter, 2007, pp. 1-7)

Alaska. The Association of Alaska School Boards recognizes that there is very little in anyone's previous experience that fully prepares them for serving as public official and a constructive member of a governing board. Making the most of the first year and assisting new board members with what they need to know is a priority. Though not mandatory, the following topics are covered in a series of meetings offered to new board members during their first year: "the Role of the Board; Board Standards; the Superintendent – communicating and building a relationship; Working with the Board; Meetings, meetings, and more meetings; Working with the Community; School Finance; and School Law" (Association of Alaska School Boards, 2011a, p. 4). For tenured school board members the Association of Alaska School Boards offers "Boardsmanship Academy, Annual Conference, Winter Academy, Leadership Conference, School Board Self-Assessment Training, and customized workshops" (Association of Alaska School Boards, 2011b, pp. 1-2).

Arizona. Throughout the year, Arizona School Boards Association (ASBA) provides "approximately 150 hours of education and training programs that are open to all board members, superintendents, and their staff. ASBA also provides resources in best practices and will tailor training for individual boards" (ASBA, 2011, p. 1).

Arkansas. Championing excellence in public education through training, advocacy and service for local school boards is the mission of the Arkansas School Boards Association (2011a). Act 1775 of 2005 established annual professional development requirements for Arkansas school board members:

1. All school board members must acquire at least six hours of training every calendar year.
2. Newly elected board members must achieve nine hours of training within 15 months of their initial election.
3. School districts must publish in their annual reports the number of training hours each board member has earned.
4. If a board member fails to meet the annual training requirement, the school district will be placed on probationary status for violating the Standards of Accreditation.
5. Rules do allow carryover of excess board training hours for up to three calendar years. (Arkansas School Boards Association, 2011a, para. 2)

“Arkansas School Boards Association hosts numerous conferences and seminars every year which provide board members with approved training credit to meet the state requirement” (Arkansas School Boards Association, 2011a, para. 3). Besides the annual conference and New Board Member Institute, Arkansas School Boards Association provides members with:

1. Board Academy—an extended weekend Board Academy strengthens school district leadership through team building and the principles of the *Key Work of School Boards*. The academy is a residential retreat for superintendent and board members to work in a group setting and learn to focus their efforts toward improving student achievement.
2. Sexual Misconduct: Investigation and Response—board members gain an understanding of the response and investigation process and learn how districts can limit their exposure to liability.

3. Administrative Directives—board members learn about statutory due process and their appropriate role and responsibility regarding employee performance.
4. Board Meetings from A to Z—this seminar is a practical overview of preparing for and conducting school board meetings. Board members and superintendents review the Freedom of Information Act, parliamentary procedure, meeting management, board agendas and other practical board meeting issues.
5. Ethics for School Leaders—board members are subject to state ethics rules, including laws regarding nepotism and business conflict of interest.
6. School Law Seminar—expert attorneys and others who practice school law in Arkansas present informative daylong programs for board members, superintendents and school attorneys. (Arkansas School Boards Association, 2011b, para. 5)

The Arkansas School Boards Association New Board Member Institute topics that were addressed in 2010 included

1. roles and responsibilities;
2. the anatomy of school board meetings;
3. things you need to know about your district;
4. advice from veteran board members;
5. board public relations;
6. millage campaigns;
7. avoiding fiscal distress; and
7. recovering from fiscal distress (Arkansas School Boards Association, 2011c, para. 2)

California. “Providing comprehensive continuing education opportunities for school board members has always been a major goal of the California School Boards Association”

(California School Boards Association, 2010a, para. 2). High quality training programs and events are offered to support school boards and administrators in their governance role. Board members and superintendents are encouraged to enroll and complete 60 hours of training provided in nine modules to be completed within two years from date of enrollment:

1. Foundations of Effective Governance—this module covers the roles and responsibilities of the governance team and focuses on the two core concepts of the Masters in Governance program: trusteeship and governance.
2. Setting Direction—this module will help the governance team understand how a district's vision, beliefs and strategic goals are interwoven into every facet of the district's education programs.
3. Human Resources—this module covers the elements of employing a superintendent who meets the district's needs; maintaining a positive working relationship with the superintendent; evaluating the superintendent according to establishes criteria; and establishing a framework for sound personnel practices across the district.
4. Policy and Judicial Review—this module will help governance teams develop skills in setting policy; learn to identify policy issues; set an appropriate process for developing sound policies; communicate and support policies; and review and revise policies to ensure their effectiveness.
5. Student Learning and Achievement—discover how to set expectations for student learning; ensure that appropriate processes are in place for curriculum development, review and adoption; communicate and support the curriculum; and assess student achievement and district programs.

6. **School Finance**—learn how to achieve a balance between district goals and student achievement by establishing budget priorities; developing appropriate processes for budget development, adoption and revision; implementing the budget; and monitoring and auditing the district's finances.
7. **Collective Bargaining**—this module provides an overview of the history of collective bargaining and the legal framework for collective negotiations in public schools. Topics covered include the board's responsibilities during negotiations; collective bargaining methodologies; and setting goals and objectives for the collective bargaining process.
8. **Community Relations and Advocacy**—explore strategies and proven methods to build community support; keep the community and media informed; be responsive to community concerns and interests; encourage community engagement and involvement; and engage in advocacy efforts at the state and national levels.
9. **Governance Integration**—this final module in the series integrates the concepts of trusteeship and the governance team with the jobs of the board. At the end of the session, graduates of the program receive the Masters in Governance certificate.
(CSBA, 2010b, para. 5)

Colorado. Colorado Association of School Boards web site is filled with useful information to assist school board members. However, it is only accessible by a user ID and password issued by Colorado Association of School Boards.

Connecticut. The Connecticut Association of Boards of Education (CABE, 2007) believes that only effective board members know that only informed decision-makers make

sound decisions. The Board Member Academy is a voluntary unique accreditation program designed to deliver high quality training for members. The curriculum includes

1. Board Relations with the superintendent, community and with each other
2. Policy
3. Curriculum
4. Finance
5. School Law
6. Labor Relations
7. Board Operations
8. Effective Meetings
9. Strategic Planning
10. Group Dynamics
11. Board Member Ethics
12. Board Operations (CABE, 2007, para. 7)

Delaware. There are 19 school districts in the State of Delaware that do not require formalized training. However, there is a *Board Member Handbook* published by the Delaware School Boards Association (2003) “to provide board members with information compiled expressly for this state” (para. 1).

Florida. The Board Development Program was established in January 1990 by the Florida School Boards Association (FSBA) to assist school boards with visionary leadership. The program is voluntary and is uniquely designed to serve the leadership developmental needs of school board members. The program

1. Supports school boards as they focus on enhancement of student achievement;

2. Assists school board members in developing a high level of Boardsmanship skills and knowledge;
3. Encourages school board members to take an active leadership role in education; and
4. Develops the ability of school board members and superintendent to work effectively as a governance team. (FSBA, 2011a, para. 3)

The Leadership Curriculum is extensive and includes

1. Consensus Building
2. Communication
3. Team Development
4. Ethical Management
5. Listening
6. Systems Thinking
7. Establishing Trust
8. Leadership Styles
9. Meaningful Change
10. Strategic Planning
11. Productive Meetings
12. Board Self-Evaluation
13. Conflict Resolution
14. Personal Styles
15. Core Beliefs
16. Problem Solving
17. Team Building

18. District Culture (FSBA, 2011b, para. 2)

The FSBA governance model focuses on creating a vision, developing a structure, establishing an accountability system, and engaging in advocacy. Master board programs are formalized training curriculum modules, which are custom designed for a school districts leadership team. Participation in this program for districts is once every two years and requires 12 months to complete. These customized four-hour training modules include “Effective Problem Solving, Creating Meaningful Change, Conducting Effective Board Meetings, *Key Works of School Boards*, Essentials of Leadership, Power Through Policy, and Strategic Planning” (FSBA, 2011b, para. 4).

Georgia. The Georgia School Boards Association (GSBA, 2011) asked experienced board members from across the nation to identify the most difficult lesson they had learned about board service from 2006-2010. Here is what they said most often.

1. Learning to acknowledge publicly that you have no power and authority as an individual board member; that only the board as a whole can make policies and decisions for the district.
2. Determining what your function is on the board and how to accomplish it effectively.
3. That no matter what you think you know about board service when you first come on the board, you still have a lot to learn.
4. Recognizing the difference between setting policy (the board’s job) and administering the schools (superintendent’s job).
5. That you must represent all the students. Your decisions must be made in the interest of the total school system and not made solely for special groups or interests.

6. Learning how to respond to the complaints and concerns of citizens, school administrators, and other staff.
7. That change come slowly.
8. That you can't solve everyone's problems by yourself.
9. That you must think deeply and sometimes accept a reality that is contrary to your own beliefs.
10. That elective board service means being able to hold the minority viewpoint when voting on a given issue, then openly supporting the majority vote of the board in your community.
11. Discovering how the schools are funded.
12. That the primary focus of all board decisions must be on student achievement.

(GSBA, 2011, para. 1)

By statute, the Georgia State Board of Education (GSBE, 2010) is required to adopt a training program for members of local boards of education by July 1, 2011 and may periodically adopt revisions to such training program as it deems necessary under (20-2-230(b)(1)). (para. 1)

The training program provisions and requirements include

1. Training requirements:
 - a. Newly elected members of local boards of education shall participate, as a minimum, in 15 hours of training within one year of taking office. Newly elected members may participate in such training for new board members after being elected as a member and before being sworn in to the post. At least
 - i. Five hours of such training shall be in school finance and budgeting provided

by the Finance and Budget Office of the Georgia Department of Education,
and

- ii. Three hours of such training shall be training in accordance with the whole board governance team training provision.
 - iii. Three hours of training shall be in a local district orientation session held within 60 days after the member's election or appointment. The purpose of the local orientation is to familiarize new board members with local board policies, board procedures, district goals and local board budget. A minimum of one hour of training under this subpart, and in addition to the hours required in subpart i. above, shall be in school finance and budgeting and shall be focused on the district's most recent audit, financial statements and budget. (The local superintendent, board chair and the local chief financial officer should conduct the district orientation.)
- b. Board members with one or more years of board service shall participate, as a minimum, in nine hours of training annually. Three of the nine required training hours shall include the whole board governance team training provision. Board members with a break in service of more than one year shall be considered new board members for training purposes.
 - c. Whole Board Governance Team training, as a minimum of three hours, shall be conducted annually. The purpose of such training is to enhance the effectiveness of the governance team and to assess the continuing education needs of the board and superintendent. The assessment of needs shall be based on the State-Board adopted standards for local school governance and shall be used to plan the locally adopted

board training program.

- d. Local board member training shall adhere to the locally adopted board training program required under 20-2-230 (2).
 - i. Each local board member training program must include training curricula aligned with SBOE governance standards for local boards. (SBOE Rule: 160-5-1-36)
 - ii. All required board member training shall be conducted by Training Providers approved by the State Board of Education. (Exception is local district orientation conducted by local superintendent, board chair and the local chief financial officer)
 - iii. Local boards and individual members may also participate in additional training based on identified needs.
 - iv. The board chair shall receive training related to leadership duties of a board chair as some portion of the annual requirement.
2. Training content for credit hours:
 - a. Training credit hours will be awarded only on approved content aligned with the SBOE governance standards for local boards.
3. Training Providers:
 - a. Training Provider Rationale:

The State Board of Education has adopted “SBOE governance standards for local boards” as the basis for local school board member training. The approved Training Providers will conduct local school board member training utilizing curricula aligned with SBOE governance standards for local boards and which meet identified areas for improvement as submitted in local boards’ training

program. (20-2-230 (2)) and (SBOE Rule: 160-5-1-.36)

- b. Training Providers wishing to provide local board member training must be approved by the State Board of Education. To be considered for such approval, Training Providers shall provide to the Department the following:
 - i. Overview of the individual(s) or entity wishing to provide training
 - ii. Experience in providing local school board training with references
 - iii. Instructors' qualifications
 - iv. Name(s) of training course(s)
 - v. Length of training course(s)
 - vi. Syllabus, which includes standard(s) to which each course is aligned
 - vii. Probable delivery method for delivery of content (whole board, large or small group, virtual, etc.)
 - viii. Proposed location(s) of training course(s)
 - ix. Fees (if any) to be charged for each training course
 - x. Participant evaluations of each training course
 - xi. List of local board members who participate in each training course
 - xii. Assurance that trainer will not provide training to local board members who are immediate members of the trainer's family without obtaining prior approval from the State School Superintendent or his designee. For the purpose of this assurance, immediate family members shall include a spouse, child, sibling, parent, or the spouse of a child, sibling or parent.
4. State Department of Education Provisions:
- a. The Department of Education will:

- i. Receive verification of the adopted local board of education training program plan.
- ii. Approve Training Providers and courses for training credit.
- iii. Develop reports and procedures to confirm local board of education member attendance at approved courses for awarding training credit hours. This will include developing an evaluation form for local board members to evaluate their training. Local board members will not receive training credit until the evaluation form is returned to the Department of Education.
- iv. Periodically review the school board training program requirements and make recommendations for improvement.
- v. Within three months of the required verification date of the local board training program plan publish the approved Training Providers and courses approved for training credit.
- vi. Report to the State Board of Education annually on compliance of the training program requirements by members of local boards of education and LEAs.

(Georgia State Board of Education, 2010, pp. 1-3)

Hawaii. The Hawaii Association of Independent Schools (HAIS) purpose is “to encourage high educational standards and academic excellence, promote independent education as an option for parents and children and lastly, preserve the independence of Hawaii’s private schools” (HAIS, n.d.a, para. 1). The HAIS is “an organization of member schools that advocates independent education in Hawaii and facilitates collaborative efforts among the membership on issues of mutual concern and address needs” (HAIS, n.d.b, para. 1).

Idaho. The Idaho School Boards Association (2011) offers its membership a variety of training opportunities (modules) customized for a district's specific needs. Below are examples of some of the training modules that are offered.

1. School Board Governance Module: participants are given an introduction to the role of the trustee and the basics of board governance.
2. Leadership for Student Achievement Module: emphasizes the important role the school board plays in student achievement. Information about building a culture of success in the district is a focus topic.
3. Education Law Module: a primer on Idaho education law for any school board member. Participants become familiar with the board's rights and responsibilities in conducting orderly open meetings, executive sessions and how trustees should handle patron input.
4. Human Resources-Personnel Module: board members are taught how to identify common pitfalls and liabilities in district hiring and termination practices. Also covered is the importance of policies related to human resources and collective bargaining with employees.
5. School Finance & Board's Oversight Role Module: in this module trustees will learn sources of funding, formulas used to allocate funding, items that can drive or drain a budget, budget law and ethics.
6. Collective Bargaining Module: is designed for boards that engage in bargaining contracts with employees. A brief explanation of bargaining tactics is included as well as some absolutes regarding bargaining.

7. Customized Training Module: the Idaho School Boards Association will customize training to suit your particular needs. The content will be developed in consultation with the Board chairman and superintendent.
8. Ten-Minute Training Modules: in an effort to assist school districts provide ongoing board training options, the ISBA has developed the Ten-Minute Training Modules. These are a great option for Boards to receive training at each of its meetings. They are quick, informative, and useful and are available on their webpage. (Idaho School Boards Association, 2011, para. 1-4)

Illinois. In Illinois, there are no training requirements for school board members. However, board members are encouraged to consider participating in seminars offered by the Illinois Association of School Boards (IASB) on topics such as school law, finance, and governance. “Board training events are held throughout the year. Most workshops and seminars are held at regional sites and customized to the needs of a board and district” (IASB, 2011, p. 4).

Indiana. There are no training requirements in Indiana; however, the Indiana School Boards Association (ISBA) sponsors seminars for school board members. “The seminars are usually one-day functions with the primary purpose being orientation for board members to their responsibilities” (ISBA, n.d., para. 1). Topics include leadership, budget and finance, school law, roles and responsibilities, and governance (ISBA, n.d.).

Iowa. The Iowa Association of School Boards offers numerous resources to assist board members on how to better serve children in their school district. The Iowa Association of School Boards recognizes that being an effective board member means leading your school district on the journey to improve. A variety of “specialized in-service programs can be custom-tailored to a board’s needs” (Iowa Association of School Boards, 2009, p. 6). Topics of on-site workshops

include “Team Vision and Goal-Setting, Board Job Descriptions/Roles and Responsibilities, Board Leadership Self-Evaluation, Superintendent Evaluation, Coming Together: Sharing and Change, and Custom Policy Manual Development” (Iowa Association of School Boards, 2009, p. 6).

The Iowa Association of School Boards created several learning toolkits, video/DVDs, online learning courses and other tools to help busy board members learn on their own schedule and board teams learn together at the board table. Topics of self-study toolkits include

1. School Boards and Student Achievement: Insights from the Iowa Lighthouse Research
2. Board Member Accountability Workbook
3. Introduction to School Finance in Iowa
4. School board Member Handbook
5. Budgeting Decision Points for School Board Members
6. Legislative Advocacy Toolkit
7. Facilitation Tools for Tough Budget Times (Iowa Association of School Boards, 2010, p. 7)

Kansas. The demands on school board members and school administrators have grown as new federal, state and local responsibilities are added to the agenda. The Kansas Association of School Boards (2011) offers board members certificated and special recognition for attending seminars, workshops, regional meetings, and the annual convention.

Kentucky. Board team development is important, therefore the Kentucky School Boards Association provides each board member with options for meeting the annual training requirements as defined by 702 KAR 1:115 and KRS 156.031, 156.070, 160.180. These include

the annual conference, summer leadership institute, fall regional meetings and winter symposium. Training requirements may also be met by participating in local board/superintendent team training provided by KSBA, Kentucky Center for School Safety trainings and conferences, and other locally approved trainings (State of Kentucky, 1991).

According to statutory authority in Kentucky, annual in-service training of district board members requires that administrative regulations relating to statutes amended by the 1990 Kentucky Education Reform Act provides that all local school board members shall complete an established number of hours of in-service training annually, based on the number of years of experience, and that the “State Board for Elementary and Secondary Education shall identify the criteria for fulfilling such requirements” (State of Kentucky, 1991, para. 1). This administrative regulation establishes standards for the annual in-service training of district board members.

KRS 160.180 Section 1. The annual in-service requirements for all district school board members shall be as follows:

1. Twelve (12) hours training for school board members with zero to three (3) years of experience.
2. Eight (8) hours training for school board members with four (4) to seven (7) years of experience.
3. Four (4) hours training for school board members with eight (8) or more years of experience.
4. (a) Newly appointed or elected school board members who take office after June 30th of a particular year shall be entitled, upon appropriate request, to an extension of time under Section 5 of this administrative regulation within which to acquire a maximum number of unacquired hours equal to the difference between the required

number of hours and one (1) hour per month for each full month actually served during the year, and such extensions shall extend no longer than through the remainder of the term being served or the next two (2) calendar years, whichever is longer.

- (b) Newly appointed or elected members who take office prior to July 1, but on or after March 1, of a particular year may be granted an extension of time under Section 5 of this administrative regulation, in appropriate cases and for an appropriate period of time not to exceed two (2) calendar years, within which to obtain the balance of any required, but unacquired in-service hours for the initial year of new service. Any such extension to acquire hours shall not exceed the difference between the required number of hours and one (1) hour per month for each full month actually served during the year.

KRS 160.180 Section 2. The topics relating to the responsibilities of board members may include but not be limited to the following subjects:

1. The basic role and responsibility of the district board and its members
2. Instructional programs
3. District finance
4. Relations with superintendent and staff
5. School law
6. Community relations

KRS 160.180 Section 3-

1. (a) The Kentucky School Boards Association (KSBA) is recognized as the provider of eight (8) hours of district board member in-service training for

board members who are required to obtain twelve (12) hours annually. This arrangement equates to the KSBA being the provider of thirty-two (32) of the forty-eight (48) hours required during the four (4) -year period for new board members.

(b) New, inexperienced board members shall be exposed to basic information and skills that make them informed and effective board members. Topics that new, inexperienced board members shall acquire hours in shall be offered annually by KSBA from the following list of topics:

1. School law
2. School finance
3. Community relations
4. Policy development
5. Personnel relations
6. Instructional programs
7. Superintendent/board relations
8. Goal setting/decision making
9. Employment and evaluation of the superintendent
10. Educational services provided for the exceptional, gifted and other special population children

(c) KSBA shall offer hours in at least seven (7) of the ten (10) topics listed in paragraph (b) of this subsection annually. No topic shall be made available less frequently than once in every twenty-four (24) month period.

(d) Board members in the zero to three (3) year experience period shall be allowed a

maximum of four (4) hours per year, or sixteen (16) hours for the four (4) -year period, as flexible hours of in-service. If board members in this category opt to get all of their hours through the KSBA, then they shall have KSBA credit them for these hours. If they determine to acquire a portion or all of the sixteen (16) flexible hours through sources other than KSBA, then they shall get credit through their own school board's action at a board meeting, and a copy of that record shall be sent to KSBA so that proper credit can be given.

2. Those district board members in the four (4) to seven (7) years experience category may acquire their hours anywhere, through any source they desire. If they obtain their hours through any source other than the KSBA, they shall have local board approval and send a copy of the record (board minutes) to KSBA.
3. Those board members in the eight (8) or more years experience category are subject to subsection (2) of this section.
4. As the approved provider, the KSBA shall, in cooperation with the chief state school officer, annually develop an in-service training plan for the review and approval of the State Board for Elementary and Secondary Education. In-service training for district board members shall be provided at a minimum of five (5) geographic locations, on a variety of dates.
5. The local district board of education shall by board action certify completion of all qualifying flexible hours of in-service training in writing to KSBA, which shall combine such hours with hours of in-service training received through its approved activities. The certification to KSBA shall include a description of the time, date, location, and description of the in-service training. These records shall be submitted annually to the

State Board for Elementary and Secondary Education. (State of Kentucky, 1991, para. 1-6)

Louisiana. According to ACT 705 of 2010 in Louisiana, “school board members shall receive training and instruction annually; to require that a certain minimum number of hours focus on certain topics for school board members in certain districts; to provide for effectiveness; and to provide related matters” (Louisiana School Board Association, 2011, p. 1). Louisiana school board members training required per law is as follows:

- A. (1) Each member of a city, parish, and other local public school board shall receive a minimum of sixteen hours of training and instruction during his first year of service on the board in order to receive the designation of “Distinguished School Board Member” pursuant to Paragraph (B)(3) of this Section.
- (2) Except as provided in Paragraph (1) of this Subsection, each member of a city, parish, and other local public school board shall receive a minimum of six hours of training and instruction annually.
- (3) The training and instruction referred to in Paragraphs (1) and (2) of this Subsection shall be in the school laws of this state, in the laws governing the powers, duties, and responsibilities of city, parish, and other local public school boards, and in educational trends, research, and policy. Such training and instruction also shall include education policy issues, including but not limited to the minimum foundation program and formula, literacy and numeracy, leadership development, dropout prevention, career and technical education, redesigning high schools, early childhood education, school discipline, and harassment, intimidation, and bullying. Training also shall include instruction relative to the

provisions of the Open Meetings Law, R.S. 42:11 et seq. and the Public Bid Law, Chapter 10 of Title 38 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950.

- (4) In a city, parish, or other local public school district that has one or more schools identified as academically unacceptable or in need of academic assistance as defined by the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education pursuant to policies developed and adopted by the board for implementation of the school and district accountability system, at least two of the hours referred to in Paragraphs (1) and (2) of this Subsection shall focus on the improvement of schools identified as failing schools as defined by the state board pursuant to such policies.

B. (1) Any such instruction required by Subsection A of this Section may be received from any of the following sources:

- (a) A postsecondary education institution in this state.
- (b) Instruction sponsored by the state Department of Education.
- (c) An in-service training program conducted by a city, parish, or other local public school board central office or the Louisiana School Boards Association provided that the instruction and the method for demonstrating attendance are preapproved by the Louisiana School Boards Association.
- (d) Training and instruction received at any conference presented by the National School Boards Association or by the Council of the Great City Schools, provided that verification of attendance by the school board member at any such training is obtained.

- (2) Each school board member's attendance shall be reported by the instructor to the Louisiana School Boards Association.

- (3) The postsecondary education institution, the state Department of Education, the school board central office, or the Louisiana School Boards Association that provides such instruction shall issue a certificate of completion annually to each school board member who completes the instruction required by this Section, and a copy of such certificate shall be entered into the minutes of the school board on which such member serves. The superintendent of the school system on which school board the member serves shall be responsible for verifying that any of the training or instruction received by the school board member pursuant to Subsections A and B of this Section meets the requirements of this Section.
- (4) A school board member who has received a certificate of completion for the initial sixteen hours of training and instruction required by Paragraph (A)(1) of this Section and has also received an annual certificate of completion of the training required by Paragraph (A)(2) of this Section for the subsequent three consecutive years shall receive the designation of “Distinguished School Board Member” and the State Department of Education shall issue each such member an appropriate certificate attesting to such designation. A school board member in office on January 1, 2011, who has prior service on the board may receive the designation if he receives a certificate of completion of sixteen hours of training during 2011 and receives a certificate of completion of the required training for the subsequent three consecutive years.
- C. (1) The Louisiana School Boards Association shall post on its website regularly updated information relative to the number and subject matter of training hours completed by each school board member pursuant to the provisions of this

Section.

- (2) At least annually, the superintendent of the school system on which school board the member serves shall transmit to the newspaper which is the official journal of the school board a press release detailing the information for his school board that is posted on the Louisiana School Boards Association website pursuant to Paragraph (1) of this Subsection and also shall include in such press release information concerning each school board member who has been designated a “Distinguished School Board Member” pursuant to Paragraph (B)(4) of this Section (Louisiana House Bill No. 488, 2010, pp. 1-4).

Maine. The Maine School Management Association’s purpose is to serve and represent the School Boards comprising the Association; promote and maintain local control of public schools; promote closer cooperation among the individual School Boards; represent the combined interest of School Boards in the legislative process; cooperate with other agencies in the State interest in improvement of public education; provide information for School Boards and the general public about the needs and accomplishments of the public schools; and sponsor, develop, and encourage those projects and programs that promote better public education in Maine. (Maine School Management Association, 2011, para. 3)

Training for elected officials including school board members on Maine’s Freedom of Access Law is a requirement. Minimum requirements for training are designed to be completed in less than two hours, which includes “the general legal requirements regarding public records and public proceedings; the procedures and requirements regarding complying with a request for a public record; and the penalties and other consequences for failure to comply with the law”

(State of Maine, 2006, para. 7).

After completing the training, elected officials are required to make a written or electronic record attesting that the training has been completed. The record, which will be available to the public, must be kept by the elected official or filed with the public entity to which the official was elected (Maine School Boards Association, 2011). The Maine School Management Association offers training expertise to school boards on these topics: “School finance, School policies, Collective bargaining, Personnel issues, Legislation affecting education, Effective communication, Rules of governance, Comprehensive insurance coverage” (Maine School Management Association, 2011, para. 1).

Maryland. The Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE) offers orientation sessions for both adult and student board members with a broad overview of the various roles, background knowledge, and skills required of new members. Topics include “The Key Work of School Board, Roles and Responsibilities, The Legal Role, Policy Issues, Budget Issues, Becoming a Better Board Member, and Dialogue with the State Superintendent” (MABE, 2009a, para. 1).

After completing the first year of board service, members have the opportunity for comprehensive continuing education through MABE’s leadership programs. These programs provide members the next level of knowledge and skills necessary to govern effectively (MABE, 2009b).

The Leadership I program consists of the following elements and may be completed in one to two years:

1. Eight (8) courses selected from the boardsmanship Academy courses, and MABE and/or NSBA conferences.

2. Attendance at a Maryland State Board of Education meeting.
3. Attendance at a board of education meeting other than your own.
4. Completion of a leadership project.
5. Participation in MABE activities such as committee membership, conference facilitation, and seminar or academy presentations. (MABE, 2009b, para. 2)

Courses offered during Years 1 and 2 on the board include

1. Key Work of School Boards—the elements of Key Work and strategies for implementing them.
2. Policy Development—the policy development process including strategies for using board policies in the decision making process.
3. Assessment—the elements of assessments and using data to drive student achievement.
4. Leadership—understanding the nature and process of board leadership.
5. Budget—the underlying components of funding formulas and budget process,
6. Communication—effective skills that enhance communication with fellow board members and stakeholders.
7. Working With the Media—strategies for “staying on message” and effectively managing media relations.
8. Team Building—components of effective teams and leadership strategies at each stage of team development—Roles Roles and Responsibilities of Board Members
9. Continuous Improvement—components of continuous improvement as a habit of mind and process.
10. Facilitating Meetings—strategies for effectively conducting a meeting.

11. Legislative Skills—methods and strategies for working with local, state, and federal legislators to advance the public education agenda.

12. Leadership in Supervision and Evaluation of the Superintendent—best practices and use of evaluation tools to achieve system goals. (MABE, 2009b, para. 3)

The Leadership II program builds on the skills and concepts learned in Leadership I. This advanced program is designed to provide experienced board members with the next level of boardsmanship expertise. In addition to in-depth seminars, the program combines course work and hands-on leadership activities with a specific emphasis on advocacy and community engagement. This program consists of the following elements and may be completed in one to two years:

1. Four (4) courses selected from the Boardsmanship Academy courses, and MABE and/or NSBA conference attendance.
2. Participation in MABE activities such as committee membership, conference facilitation, and seminar or academy presentation.
3. Completion of 3-4 in-depth, book based seminars. (MABE, 2009b, para. 4)

Massachusetts. Field Services representatives from the Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC) “are available to meet with school committees and superintendents to address a variety of issues of interest” (MASC, 2011a, p. 1). These field representatives “also provide onsite workshop and consultation on topics such as school committee self-evaluation, superintendent evaluation policy development, education reform, roles and responsibilities, and effective meetings” (MASC, 2011a, p. 2).

MASC offers a wide range of professional development opportunities through workshops and information sessions held throughout the state. Programs address relevant topics designed to

assist school committee members and administrators in more effectively carrying out their responsibilities and better serving their communities. Also, MASC also offers “Charting the Course, an Orientation Program for New and Veteran School Leaders” (MASC, 2011b, para. 1).

Michigan. The Michigan Association of School Boards (MASB) offers it membership customized training services at an onsite location most convenient to participants. Each workshop focuses on the specific problems and situations that are unique to individual school boards (MASB, 2011).

Mississippi. “Training is one of the most important services provided by Mississippi School Boards Association (MSBA). Continuous learning focused on improving schools and student achievement is very important for all education professionals” (MSBA, 2011, para. 1). While “training is focused for board members, superintendents and other district leaders” (MSBA, 2011, para. 1) are welcome to participate. “MSBA believes and advocates that superintendents and boards must work together as a TEAM to improve schools” (MSBA, 2011, para. 1).

Mississippi school board members “are provided regionally scheduled evening and Saturday courses to satisfy state requirements for earning six (6) hours of continuing education annually. At least two 3-hour courses are provided each year, focusing on timely issues and areas of need” (MSBA, 2011, para. 2).

Missouri. Missouri’s Outstanding Schools Act requires all school board members to receive 16 hours of training, within their first 12 months of service. Missouri School Boards Association’s Certified Board Member (CBM) program since 1989 offers Essential Board Member Certification, which fulfills this requirement and provides the foundation for becoming an effective board member (Missouri School Boards Association, 2011, para. 1). The state of

Missouri affirmed the need for leadership training by making board orientation mandatory as part of the Outstanding Schools Act in 1993.

Missouri school board members “initially elected or appointed after August 28, 1993, shall successfully complete orientation and training requirements within one year of the date of the election or appointment” (Missouri State Statute, 2011, para. 2). The orientation and training shall consist of at least 16 hours with the cost of such training to be paid by the district. All orientation programs and training required under the provisions of this law shall be offered by a statewide association organized for the benefit of members of boards of education or be approved by the state board of education (Missouri State Statute, 2011).

Missouri School Boards Association’s free Essential Board Member Certification fulfills the state mandated 16-hour requirement for board member training in Missouri. ECBM addresses all the state-required content and provides the foundation for becoming an effective board member. Topics included in the 16 hours are “Student Achievement, School Law, School Finance, Board Policy, Board Relations, Board Operations, Goal Setting, Advocacy, and School Boards and Communications” (Missouri School Boards Association, 2011, para. 1).

Montana. “Since 1926, the Montana School Boards Association (MTSBA) has been firmly committed to the concept of public education policy being determined by locally elected school board members and has served as the service association for those individuals” (MTSBA, 2011, para. 1). MTSBA provides members “access to a wide range of services, including seminars, legislative representation, legal assistance, personnel services, search services, policy development, in-district consulting services, and insurance programs” (MTSBA, 2011, para. 1).

Nebraska. The Nebraska Association of School Boards (NASB) provides services to School Boards to strengthen public education for all Nebraska Children. The Nebraska

Association of School Boards provides training seminars and workshops districts with consultation, board development, and training (NASB, 2011).

Nevada. The Nevada Association of School Boards participates in collaboration with the Nevada Association of Counties, the Nevada League of Cities and Municipalities, and Extended Studies at the University of Nevada, Reno, in the Certified Public Official Program for Nevada's public officials.

The program is designed to assist Nevada's incumbent, newly elected, and/or appointed officials in meeting the managerial, legal, financial, ethical, and political challenges of public office. In addition, the program provides a thorough overview of the skills and knowledge required of the public official. Completion of the program leads to the Certified Public Official designation.

Faculty for the program are public officials, university instructors, and other acknowledged experts in such fields as public and business administration, finance, human resources, community development, and law—all chosen for their depth of knowledge, teaching skill, and real-life experience. The program includes seven mandatory orientation modules:

- Module 1—Realities of Public Life: Roles and Relationships of Public Office (one hour)
- Module 2—Budgets: Revenue Sources, Projections, and Forecasts (2 1/2 hours)
- Module 3—Ethics in Nevada (1 1/2 hours)
- Module 4—Nevada's Open Meeting Law (1 1/2 hours)
- Module 5—Citizen Participation and Public Information (2 hours)
- Module 6—Interviewing and media Relations (1 hour)
- Module 7—Employment Law: Keeping Your Agency Out of Court (4 hours)

In addition to the above, other units must be accumulated in these areas. Four units in miscellaneous areas are required. (Nevada Association of School Boards, 2011, p. 1)

As a rule, two contact hours equal one unit. Participants may attend courses offered by the Nevada Association of School Boards, the Nevada Association of Counties, the Nevada League of Cities and Municipalities, or nationally affiliated associations, as well as courses offered by the University of Nevada, Las Vegas Division of Educational Outreach, or Extended Studies at the University of Nevada, Reno. (Nevada Association of School Boards, 2011, p. 1)

“Program participants must accrue four units of annual association meetings or conferences. Regular, mandatory attendance at boards and committees the public official represents does not apply toward this requirement” (Nevada Association of School Boards, 2011, p. 2). “The Nevada Association of School Boards works directly with Extended Studies at the University of Nevada, Reno, to ensure that attendance at NASB conferences and workshops receives credit toward the Certified Public Official Program” (Nevada Association of School Boards, 2011, p. 2).

New Hampshire. “For more than 50 years, the New Hampshire School Boards Association (NHSBA) has supported and assisted local school boards by providing training in a variety of areas, including school board governance” (NHSBA, 2011, para. 3). Training topics include “School Board Roles and Responsibilities, Chairmanship, Running Effective Meetings, Collective Bargaining, Community Engagement, Goal Setting, Policy Making, Right-to-Know Law, School Law, Evaluating Superintendent Performance, and Board Self-Evaluation” (NHSBA, 2011, para. 3).

New Jersey. “In 2007, the New Jersey School District Accountability Act was signed into law. This multi-faceted legislation impacts school boards/charter school trustees in a variety of ways and one key area is board member/trustee training” (New Jersey School Boards Association [NJSBA], 2011, para. 1). NJSBA was “selected, by the state, as the designated training provider for all of the mandated training courses” (NJSBA, 2011, para. 1). “All board members and charter school trustees must attend training in each of their first four years of board service, and thereafter the first year of subsequent re-elected/re-appointed term” (NJSBA, 2011, para. 3). Mandated training courses include

1. Governance I—1st term, 1st full year of board service—New Board Member Orientation
2. Governance II—1st Term, 2nd full year of service—Finance
3. Governance III—1st Term, 3rd full year of service—Student Achievement
4. Governance IV—Reelected/Reappointed Board Members in the first year of any succeeding term—Legal Update. (NJSBA, 2011, para. 5)

New Mexico. School board members “must complete an advanced curriculum and participate in the Master Board Member Program” (New Mexico School Boards Association [NMSBA], 2011, para. 3) facilitated by the NMSBA. School board candidates “must have achieved the Outstanding Leadership Award (Level II) resulting in 36 hours of professional development training” (NMSBA, 2011, para. 3). After completing the required training the board member “must file a Master Board Member Declaration of Candidacy form with the NMSBA Executive Director” (NMSBA, 2011, para. 3). Then the board member “must complete an advanced curriculum and earn a total of 12 Master Board Member Points” (NMSBA, 2011, para. 3) and shall file a Completion Form with the Executive Director.

Candidates must complete the required curriculum on “Orientation class, Finance, Legal issues, Legislative, and Boardsmanship” (NMSBA, 2011, para. 3). Candidates must complete a practicum in four of the following seven areas:

1. Participate at Interim Legislative Meeting
2. Lobby at State and or National Level
3. Lead a Day at the Capital
4. Serve on a State or Region Task Force
5. Write an Article for NMSBA Newsletter
6. Present at an NMSBA Conference
7. Other activity with prior NMSBA approval. (NMSBA, 2011, para. 3)

Upon completion the board member must provide evidence, demonstrate achievement, and/or develop a report substantiating completion of these activities.

The purpose of the Master Board Member Program is to develop a diverse team of highly skilled, knowledgeable, and experienced school board leaders who promote the best practices of school board governance and are committed to sharing their expertise by serving as resources, mentors, and role models for all school board members in New Mexico. (NMSBA, 2011, para. 1)

New York. “New York law requires a total of 12 hours of state-mandated training for newly elected school board members within their first year of office” (New York State School Boards Association [NYSSBA], 2011, para. 1). Six hours are required in fiscal oversight training and six hours of governance skills training (NYSSBA, 2011).

North Carolina. A major goal of the North Carolina School Boards Association (NCSBA) is to provide growth opportunities for school board members. Through the NCSBA

Academy for School Boardsmanship, school board members are provided high-quality training programs to help them effectively fulfill their responsibilities as leaders of public education in North Carolina. In addition, the program provides opportunities for school board members to meet the requirement of G.S.115C-50 mandating 12 clock hours of training annually (NCSBA, 2011, p. 1). The requirement for training of board members in North Carolina is

- (a) All members of local boards of education, whether elected or appointed, shall receive a minimum of 12 clock hours of training annually. The 12 clock hours of training may include the ethics education required by G.S. 160A-87.
- (b) The training shall include but not be limited to public school law, public school finance, and duties and responsibilities of local boards of education.
- (c) The training may be provided by the North Carolina School Boards Association, the School of Government at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, or other qualified sources at the choice of the local board of education (State of North Carolina, 2009, para. 1-3).

North Dakota. “The North Dakota School Boards Association (NDSBA) provides various opportunities for professional development through its annual events, publications, and other services” (NDSBA, 2010, para. 2). Three areas of focus include a “legal services program to keep school districts from becoming involved in litigation” (NDSBA, 2010, para. 2), policy services program which is “available on a subscription basis to support and improve policy making by school boards” (NDSBA, 2010, para. 2), and a “legislative advocacy for school board issues on both the state and federal levels” (NDSBA, 2010, para. 2).

Ohio. The Ohio School Boards Association (OSBA) provides its membership with individual board training to help boards work effectively as a team, OSBA also offers

customized workshops on a variety of topics, including: “Board self-evaluations, Goal setting, and Superintendent or treasurer evaluation (OSBA, 2011, para. 6).

Also, the OSBA offers training on the following topics at regional and state meetings: “Cyberlaw Workshop, ESC Workshop, Levy University, School Finance Seminar, School Law for Treasurers, Special Education Workshop, and State Legislative Conference (OSBA, 2011, para. 5).

Oklahoma. School board development and training in Oklahoma is done entirely by the Oklahoma State School Boards Association (OSSBA). The OSSBA had developed comprehensive board development programs that are offered during workshops, conventions, district and regional meetings with the focus being on students (OSSBA, 2011).

Oregon. The Oregon School Boards Association offers a variety of on-site workshops for board development. Because school board members hold the most important elected position in the country, the Oregon School Boards Association has customized board and leadership team training, facilitation, and consultation that is up-to-date (Oregon School Boards Association, 2011). Training is available on the following topics:

1. Educational Equity: Four separate workshops are designed to help boards expand their understanding of educational equity issues and support collaborative planning around their solutions.
2. Roles and responsibilities: Who does what and why? What are the usual pitfalls, and how can board members avoid them? Topics covered include things such as board research, best practices, and protocols and the understanding of these critical roles and their impact on student achievement.
3. Public meetings: This session is an overview of public meetings, minutes, and

executive sessions. Among the issues covered are:

- a. The letter of the law or the court of public opinion
 - b. Hot topics and recent developments
 - c. How to handle e-mail and electronic meetings
4. Ethics: This workshop covers what board members need to know about Oregon's ethics laws, covering selected case studies, and the consequences for failure to comply.
 5. Data-driven decision-making: This workshop assists boards in supporting district staff in using assessment and other data effectively to drive decisions, improve student achievement and close performance gaps.
 6. School finance and budgeting: This session provides an overview of the roles of the board and budget committee in setting goals and guidelines for the budget process, and a step-by-step review of the annual budget process.
 7. Budget committee training: The budget committee is a key part of a district's decision-making process in setting local budget priorities.
 8. Community engagement: How to work with parents, the public, and partner organizations to build understanding and active involvement in education, thereby increasing resources for academic achievement, reducing dropout, and improving student behavior.
 9. Policy 101: The legislature gave boards the authority to lead their districts by setting policies. Learn what policy is and the role administrative regulations play in the implementation of policy.
 10. Superintendent evaluation: Superintendent evaluation is one of those board

responsibilities that can make board members squirm and superintendents cringe. A clear plan, well understood expectations and effective communications would make this very important board responsibility go smoothly.

11. Effective meetings: State law requires that “Any duty imposed upon the district school board as a body must be performed at a regular or special meeting...” But conducting and participating in efficient and effective meetings requires more than knowledge of parliamentary procedure.
12. Trust and school climate: Research demonstrates that districts with high trust levels enjoy higher test scores and higher graduation rates. Discover the 18 elements of trust that affect relationships among board members and between the board and the superintendent, staff, and community.
13. Conflict management: We each have our own way of looking at situations and we bring our own values, needs, and points of view to the process. This workshop will help you to look at conflict objectively, analyze the causes and talk about the good as well as damaging results of conflict within a group.
14. Dealing with people you can’t stand: Acquire new skills for dealing with angry, irate, and just plain difficult individuals whether they are board members, staff members or members of your community.
15. Leading – even when you’re not in charge: Knowing how to lead is fundamental to getting things done. Wherever we go in life we can’t accomplish all of our goals by ourselves. In school board work collaboration is key but it is difficult to achieve.
16. Charter schools: Charter schools are one of the innovative educational endeavors used to meet the wide range of needs for a variety of learners. The goal is to help districts

and charter schools with the legal framework, policies, and leadership skills that ensure beneficial relationships among districts, charters, and community.

17. 21st century skills for a global society: The pace of change is not slowing down. Is the district preparing students for their future or the adults' past? Boards gain an understanding of the legal and ethical impacts of the use of new technology and what it will take to prepare students to succeed in a global society.
 18. Advanced governance: Among the topics covered in this workshop are the board's role in policy, community engagement, superintendent evaluation, strategic planning and district climate.
 19. Strategic planning: Do you have a common understanding of what success looks like in your district? Are your resources aligned for maximum impact? High performing districts need more than feel-good statements to be hung on the wall. Goals must be used as a lens for all decisions, and everyone needs to pull in the same direction.
- (Oregon School Boards Association, 2011, para. 2-21)

Pennsylvania. “One of the most effective board development opportunities offered by Pennsylvania School Boards Association (PSBA) is the on-site customized workshop” (PSBA, 2011, p. 1). As leaders in public education, school directors and administrators need to embrace life-long learning. PSBA offers conferences, workshops, and seminars to fill this need.

Workshop topics include

1. Board Self-Assessment
2. Conducting Superintendent Evaluations
3. Dealing with Conflict
4. Enhancing School Governance

5. Goal Setting
6. Labor-Employee Relations
7. Operating Successfully as a Team of Ten
8. Parliamentary Procedure
9. Policy, Regulation, Procedure . . . What's the Difference?
10. Teambuilding
11. The Key Work of School Boards
12. Understanding PSSA Results (PSBA, 2011, para. 2)

Rhode Island. Rhode Island Association of School Committees (RIASC) is dedicated to training and improving the effectiveness of Rhode Island school committee members in meeting their role and responsibilities to students, parents, administrators, and taxpayers, while playing a leading role in shaping and advocating public education policy at the State and National levels. (RAISC, 2004, para. 1)

“In 2010, the General Assembly passed a law requiring Rhode Island school committee members to annually undertake six hours of RIASC professional development” (RAISC, 2004, para. 1).

The Rhode Island College in cooperation with the Rhode Island association of school committees shall develop a professional development educational program for Rhode Island school committees that will include instruction in labor and labor relations, negotiating collective bargaining agreements, employee contract analysis, school finance, school law, duties and responsibilities of the committee duties and responsibilities of the superintendent, ethics, the requirements of the open meetings law, student achievement, strategic planning, educational standards, student assessment, school accountability, data interpretation and analysis, collaboration building, advocacy, and annual performance

evaluation of the school superintendent and the local school committee. (RIASC, 2011, para. 4)

South Carolina. “With the challenges facing public schools in South Carolina, South Carolina School Boards Association (SCSBA) is committed to equipping board members to govern effectively” (SCSBA, 2011, para. 1). “Training is offered in a variety of settings including teleconferences and regional workshops” (SCSBA, 2011, para. 2). “State law mandates that all new board members attend an orientation” (SCSBA, 2011, para. 4). “The annual district report card will report the percent of the district’s new board members attending training and the average hours of training for all district board members” (SCSBA, 2011, para. 5). South Carolina Code of Laws, Section 59-19-45 states that “orientation for school district boards of trustees and county boards of education shall be completed within one year of taking office, all persons elected or appointed as members of a school district board of trustees after July 1, 1997” (State of South Carolina, 2010, para. 5). The required orientation program includes “the powers, duties, and responsibilities of a board member including, but not limited to: Topics on policy development, Personnel, Superintendent and board relations, Instructional programs, District finance, School law, Ethics, and Community relations” (SBSCA, 2011, para. 5).

South Dakota. Being a school board member is a tough job and a big responsibility.

Associated School Boards of South Dakota (ASBSD) Board Development Services offers professional development for board members and administrators with a specific focus on the knowledge and skills necessary to effectively govern K-12 systems at the local level. (ASBSD, 2011, para. 1)

ASBSD’s core board development programs offer three levels of “training on the

foundations of school board governance, building understanding on the purpose and scope of school boards” (ASBSD, 2011, para. 2). Learning outcomes and titles of each of the three learning opportunities refer to the GAVEL Program Overview and GAVEL Learning Opportunities documentation. All GAVEL events can also be offered as an in-district, whole-board training session. The areas of focus of the three GAVEL programs are: “School Board Governance, Fiscal Responsibility, and Strategic Planning” (ASBSD, 2011, para. 8).

Tennessee. In Tennessee,

State Law mandates that school board members attend training. State Board of Education Rules and Regulations require that every board member participate in seven hours of training annually. The Tennessee School Boards Association (TSBA) provides the training in the five core modules: Board/Superintendent Relations, Advocacy, Vision, Policy/Board Operations and School Finance, and other electives such as school law, planning, school facilities, managing change and teambuilding. (TSBA, 2011, para. 1)

Texas. State law in Texas mandates that school board members attend training. State Board of Education Rules and Regulations require that every board member participate in seven hours of training annually. The Texas Association of School Boards provides the training in the five core modules: “Board/Superintendent Relations, Advocacy, Vision, Policy/Board Operations, and School Finance” (Texas Association of School Administrators [TASA], 2011, para. 1).

Also, other electives are available for members to choose such as school law, planning, school facilities, managing change, and teambuilding (TASA, 2011). Each new board member must participate in a local district orientation session within 60 days before or after the board member’s election or appointment. Within the first year of service, each newly elected board

member must receive a basic orientation to the Texas Education Code and relevant legal obligations, with special emphasis on statutory provisions related to governing Texas school districts, delivered by the regional education service center (ESC) and three hours in length. The topics must include, but not be limited to, Parental Rights and Responsibilities and Local School Health Education Advisory Council and Health Education Instruction of the Texas Education Code (TASA, 2011).

Utah. “The importance of educating ourselves and knowing the facts about public education is where we must begin. Do you know the statistics of school enrollment, the public education general fund, per pupil spending, and pupil-teacher ratio?” (Utah School Boards Association [USBA], 2011a, p. 1). The USBA professional development programs “provide local board members with pre and in-service training at a variety of meetings” (USBA, 2011b, p. 1).

Vermont. These are challenging times for public education, and even more challenging is the work of local school board members. Today’s local board of education is the leader on the front lines of public education. The board is responsible for putting in place the proper keystones for students to learn and achieve at the highest level possible. Board members’ primary agenda is raising student achievement and involving the community in the attainment of that goal. (Vermont School Boards Association [VTVSBA], 2010, para.. 1)

In an effort to help local school boards best fulfill their role, the VTVSBA recognizes the NSBA’s well-articulated *Key Work of School Boards* as ‘a framework for raising student achievement through community engagement. It is designed to give school boards concrete action tools to help them be effective in their roles as community leaders. The

framework is based on the premise that excellence in the classroom begins with excellence in the boardroom.’ (VTSBA, 2011, para. 2)

Virginia. The Virginia School Boards Association (VSBA) Center for School Board Development offers individualized team-building development activities designed for school boards in a professional environment. The VSBA Center for School Board Development benefits participating members by:

1. Providing opportunities for school board members to distance themselves from everyday concerns in order to concentrate on the content of the Center program;
2. Emphasizing the importance of team- and trust- building;
3. Defining the appropriate roles and responsibilities of school board members, superintendents, and administrative staffs; and
4. Offering opportunities for strategic planning, goal setting, evaluation of the superintendent, and self-evaluation of the school board. (VSBA, n.d., para. 1)

Participants in the VSBA Center for School Board Development receive Virginia School Boards Association Academy credit. (VSBA, n.d., p. 3)

Washington. The Washington State School Directors' Association (WSSDA) is the only organization representing the school board/governance perspective in improving and promoting public education and student learning. Your membership in WSSDA gives you access to a range of services that can help boards be successful in their leadership role. (WSSDA, 2011, para. 1)

While WSSDA offers a number of fee-based programs, the core of your association membership value lies in dues-supported services—services that would be costly or cost-prohibitive for districts to acquire individually. The benefits associated with WSSDA

membership are even more important during difficult fiscal times like these. These include: Advocacy, Policy Support, Leadership Development, Information, and Member Expertise. (WSSDA, 2011, para. 2)

West Virginia. In 2007, the West Virginia School Boards Association (WVSBA) offered “one of the most comprehensive orientation programs in the nation (at that time only 14 states required school board member training” WVSBA, 2011, p. 1). West Virginia “maintained the distinction of being the only state requiring school board member orientation though today several others have followed their lead” (WVSBA, 2011, p. 1).

Wisconsin. The *Key Work of School Boards* is to improve student achievement and increase community engagement to promote student achievement. The Key Work framework, developed by the National School Boards Association in collaboration with the American Association of School Administrators, serves as the core curriculum for Wisconsin Association of School Boards board governance development. (Wisconsin Association of School Boards, 2011, para. 2).

Wyoming. The Wyoming School Boards Association (WSBA, 2011) believes that “whole-board trainings are more productive than area workshops as they can be customized to meet the individual district’s needs” (WSBA, 2011, para. 24). Other advantages include “individualized handouts, practical suggestions and guidelines addressing local issues and availability of follow-up activities” (WSBA, 2011, para. 24).

Summary of How States Provide Training

Each state provides voluntary training for school board members, and some states require attendance for mandatory training. School board associations in each state provide orientation programs for newly elected or selected and experienced board members. Providing

comprehensive continuing education opportunities for school board members should be a goal for each state, but some states emphasize the importance of training more seriously than others. A review of the website for every school board association or organization in the United States was an important part of this comprehensive study. Revealed was the fact that no two associations or organizations representing school boards in this country have the same focus on orientation and/or ongoing training for its membership. Though there are some parallels with regard to the topics that are considered important for school board members to be trained, there is absolutely no consistency among the states.

The Florida School Board Association has a “Governance Model” that focuses on creating a vision, developing a structure, establishing an accountability system and engaging in advocacy, whereas in Illinois, there are no training requirements for school board members. In Kentucky, board team development is important and, according to statutory authority, annual in-service training is required for both newly elected and experienced board members. The Michigan Association of School Boards offers its membership customized training services at an on-site location most convenient to participants, whereas in New Mexico, school board members must complete an advanced curriculum and participate in the Master Board Member Program. According to the research, effective school board members seek training opportunities, take what they learned seriously, and are able to articulate what they know with their peers and constituents. However, “without some preservice or orientation program, it is estimated that it will take at least two years of school board service before board members gain the background and confidence to perform effectively and confidently” (NSBA, 2007, p. 24).

Importance of Board Member Orientation

Every new board member should receive an orientation that brings him or her up to speed with where things stand. “Orientation is nothing more than figuring out where you are and where you are headed” (Carpenter, 2007, p. 31). New board member training should begin prior to the election or their appointment to the board. This should be a priority due to the fact that the new member oftentimes has ill-conceived ideas of his or her roles and functions. Thus, “to prevent a prospective one-issue board member from becoming non-productive and disillusioned a well-planned pre-election in-service program might provide insights to the roles and responsibilities of boards and individual members” (Helton, 1991, p. 29).

In past years, a typical response from new directors when asked about their board orientation was “They gave me a big binder” (Nadler, Behan, & Nadler, 2006, p. 42). Now, however, “the fundamental shift from the ornamental to the working board requires a more thoughtful and thorough integration for new board members. And it needs to be done quickly” (Nadler et al., 2006, p. 42). Most board members want to do what is best for the community and its children. They run into trouble when they do not have a clear understanding of their role as board members. “This lack of knowledge can lead to common mistakes that can be very disruptive to the school district” (Wilson, 2004, p. 32).

The work of a board of directors/trustees typically involves oversight of audits, budgets, investments, compensation, facilities, and superintendent performance and enacts policies and practices that promote and improve student achievement. Boards are expected to serve the interests of the organization, not self-interest. To accomplish this important job “time must be spent being properly oriented and [receiving] on-going training” (Chait et al., 2005, p. 35).

All board members need continuous education; orientation is merely one part of a larger commitment to having the necessary skills and insights for governance. Proper preparation of new board members requires that they become thoroughly familiar with the process and the current values of the board they are joining. “It can be simply called job training and often the best person to do the training is a present board member” (Carver, 2006, p. 298).

According to Hayes (2001), the primary responsibility for orienting new members of a board of education lies with the superintendent. Topics that should be discussed are

1. Mission statement
2. Policy manual
 - a. Personnel
 - b. Use of facilities
 - c. Extracurricular activities
 - d. Teacher evaluation
 - e. Field trips
3. School board minutes for the past year
4. Explanation of the organization chart
5. Procedures for board meetings
 - a. Robert’s Rules of Order
 - b. How the agenda is determined
 - c. Open door law
6. How to deal with complaints from
 - a. Parents
 - b. Patrons

- c. Staff
- 7. Budget and finance
 - a. How to read a budget
 - b. What is contained in a treasurer's report
 - c. State Board of Accounts audit process and report
- 8. Academic programs and curriculum
 - a. Role of the Department of Education
 - b. Student achievement and test interpretation
 - c. Graduation rate (drop-out rate)
 - d. Special education delivery
 - e. Integration of technology into the curriculum
 - f. Eligibility policy
- 9. Personnel and personnel issues
- 10. Facilities
- 11. Transportation
- 12. School Calendar
- 13. Organizations available to help new board members
- 14. How to handle questions from the media
- 15. Role of the school attorney. (Hayes, 2001, p. 24)

There is so much that board members need to bring to the table. Understanding the complexities related to legislation and financial reports are crucial. Having the ability to detect and examine emerging trends and then strategically anticipate opportunities and impacts is powerful. This cannot be accomplished without obtaining the skills and knowledge through training. "Board

members will be judged by their competence and collective incompetence” (Brown, 2006, p. xv).

Board Governance

In 1963, Edward Tuttle wrote, “Individual board members are sometimes dominated by partisan instead of by public loyalties” (p. 42). There is no place on the board of education for personal ambitions or grudges, for the selfish interests of individuals or special interest groups, for partisan politics, or for anything else except complete devotion to the educational needs of the community. The best prevention from this happening is “providing a quality-training program for school board members” (Tuttle, 1963, p. 42).

Carver (2002) maintained that the weakest link in public education is not teaching or administration, but governance, the quality of strategic leadership by elected citizens. It is not so much the individual school board members as it is the inadequate and largely unexamined governance process that fails to tap the available wisdom and vision of board members. “The quality of governance in public education must be transformed and this can only be done through legislation and education” (Carver, 2002, p. 565).

Boards face a new world of governance, and directors should avail themselves of top-notch seminars. This is particularly true for the many first-time board members. But experienced trustees should also take part in any available seminars or training. There are subjects boards must understand, some of which may need to be custom-designed for a particular board. Charan (2005) believes those subjects are “strategies for improvement, performance measurements, budgets and finance, superintendent evaluation and compensation, management succession, technologies, and facilities and acquiring and holding property” (Charan, 2005, p. 158).

Given the current accountability requirements, board members need more skills than at any other time. Board members need to have enough awareness about educational issues to begin asking critical questions, and they need enough knowledge about those issues to evaluate the answers. They need enough experience to begin to formulate policy to institutionalize the answers. Training is also important for board members to become acculturated to their role. Learning about how to handle the issues and instances that come at you as a school board member cannot be learned in isolation, but by mingling with more experienced members from your district and others. They need to be critical thinkers and have a vision that student achievement is possible for every student and sometimes that means a variety of applications, not a one size fits all approach. “One of the big threats to school board governance is the single-issue candidate” (Walser, 2009, p. 77).

Board members should have access to materials and/or conferences that will support and enhance their understanding of governance. A great deal of wisdom that can be helpful is obtained from a variety of sources. Note that most available board literature is not written from a policy governance perspective. However, “taking care and time to learn from the many resources that are available is essential” (Carver, 2006, p. 224).

Inexperienced board members often feel frustration when first joining the school board. They find they cannot make decisions that make a difference in their children’s education, which is why they wanted to serve on the board in the first place. The superintendent is the key person helping new board members succeed. He or she can do the following to make life easier for new and experienced board members alike.

1. Discuss with the board the respective rules regarding superintendent and board relationship.

2. Develop long-range comprehensive plans for the school district that give guidance and direction.
3. Work with the board to keep clear channels of communication open.
4. Work with new board members to help them understand policies and how they are carried out.
5. Never have any surprises for board members (new or old). Make sure each member has a packet of materials and agenda delivered to him or her several days before each meeting.
6. Meet with new members before they take office and ask the Board President to assign an experienced member to work with the new member.
7. As soon as a new member is chose, provide him or her with a packet of information about the school system.
8. Arrange training seminars for new members by the president of the board or the superintendent.
9. Schedule tours of schools and school facilities. (Wiles & Bondi, 1985, p. 63)

Boards need to monitor themselves and assure that their members have the knowledge, skill, and budget support necessary for effective governance. “Training will be used as necessary to orient candidates and new members, as well as to maintain and increase current member skills and knowledge, including consultative coaching and attendance at conferences and workshops” (Quinn & Dawson, 2011, p. 34).

Most school board members lack even the kind of basic information available to a stockholder of a public company in an annual report. School board members lacking information are timid in trying to convince the public that their schools are performing well.

“Training in the area of student and teacher performance is essential and should be relevant and understandable” (Genck, 1991, p. 81).

Although superintendents handle the orientation of incoming board members, a growing practice is for members of the executive, or governance, committee to actually conduct the orientation themselves as a means of visibly demonstrating that board education is a top priority, not just another job to be passed along to the superintendent. School governance is anything but a static field; instead, every day that passes is this wild and wonderful field where yesterday’s golden rules are challenged. “Board members must stay abreast of new developments in this rapidly changing environment” (Eadie, 2005, p. 32).

No board member will remain qualified in the face of accelerating change without some form of ongoing education and training. This is the impetus behind the recent emphasis on staff development programs. In effectively orienting new board members to the district, policies must be thoroughly explained. “A knowledge and understanding of facilities, finance, personnel and instructional programs must be conveyed” (Rebore, 1984, p. 208).

In time, experience and on the job training can gradually make someone a better board member. This is a natural process and it cannot be replaced. However, “the most successful school board members grow faster and learn more than other members who are less focused. Attending seminars, workshops, and conferences give you an advantage toward becoming a successful member of any board” (Hamilton, 2008, p. 44).

A study regarding board development in 1992 revealed the only assessment item with a score above 4.5 on a Likert scale of one to five was for involvement in state school boards associations’ activities. However, board development activities of these associations are, for the most part, “geared to individuals who serve on boards, not to the development of boards as

corporate governing bodies” (Danzberger, Kirst, & Usdan, 1992, p. 60).

Without some orientation program, it is estimated that it will take at least two years of school board service before board members gain the background and confidence to perform effectively and confidently. According to a study conducted in 1992 by the American Association of School Administrators, 90 to 95% of most board members say they need training to become more effective in tackling school district problems (NSBA, 2007, p. 24).

Effective boardsmanship is not automatic when an individual is seated as a school board member. Data from interviews with board members from the Institute for Educational Leadership (IEL) indicate that many members initially were ignorant of the extent of information and skills required of them as board members. The conviction is growing that board members need to be part of a continuous program of education and development (IEL, 2003, p. 45).

As a means to better serve schools, the best boards regularly pause to advance their own training and knowledge. DeKuyper (2003) recommended examples of professional development for board members:

1. Workshops on governance regarding shared roles of board and administration
2. Presentations on current issues and challenges facing schools
3. Discussions about changing demographics and diversity
4. Advancements in technology. (pp. 102-103)

“It is vital that there is an ongoing plan of professional development in place” (DeKuyper, 2003, p. 103).

Some school boards and districts require more state oversight and involvement than others. “Often the ‘home rule authority’ can get a school board in trouble when members do not understand their purpose, role, and function leading to dysfunction” (Epstein, 2004, p. 68).

Therefore, “meaningful orientation of new members can help institutionalize the board’s governance process as well as prepare new members for immediate participation. New member training must be built primarily around preparation for strategic leadership” (Carver, 1990, p. 204).

Summary

A review of the literature found that school boards in each of the 50 states have some form of orientation and ongoing training available to them. The research was clear there is no uniformity in the training, and expectations regarding training varied throughout the country. Newly elected or selected and experienced school board members primarily receive orientation programs and ongoing training from their state association. Though a variety of training opportunities are provided electronically online, attendance at state and national conferences, hired consultants for individual school districts or regions, as well as books and magazines, are available resources.

Training of school board members is mandatory in some states such as Arkansas, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Minnesota, Missouri, New Jersey, and North Carolina. However, in most states, training is voluntary without consistency in delivery and content. The research was clear that school board governance is complicated in today’s challenging educational environment. Schools are generally one of the largest businesses in the community in which they serve with multi-million-dollar budgets that include personnel, facilities, transportation, technology, and food service. The importance of training for school board members has been a topic of conversation in recent years because the role and responsibility of serving on the school board has become complex.

In most states, something is missing from legislation governing school boards: required

orientation and/or ongoing training of school board members. Any layperson of legal age, never convicted of a felony, and with proper residency can be elected or appointed to a school board without any formal orientation and/or training.. The purpose of this study was to determine the perceptions of school board presidents and public school superintendents in the United States relative to the orientation and ongoing training that is believed to be necessary for newly elected or selected and experienced board members.

For this study, the following questions were addressed and analyzed by a comparison of responses submitted by school board presidents and superintendents throughout the country. The two questions were simple *yes* and *no* answers.

1. Are orientation and ongoing training for school board members important?
2. Do orientation and ongoing training for school board members make a difference?

A survey was developed specifically for both school board presidents and superintendents to collect their perceptions regarding the importance of orientation and ongoing training and does training make a difference.

CHAPTER 3

Research Methodology

This chapter addresses the methodologies utilized to investigate whether the training of school board members impacts school board quality. My intent was to determine whether orientation for newly elected or selected school board members and ongoing training seminars, workshops, and conference sessions attended by experienced board members made a difference in that role. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to determine the perceptions of school board presidents and public school superintendents in the United States relative to the importance of orientation and ongoing in-service training for newly elected or selected and experienced board members.

There is a lack of extensive research regarding the education, orientation, and training of newly elected or selected and experienced school board members and the perception of how that training might change the member's effectiveness to influence positively the direction of the school corporation of which they serve. In most states, school board members are not required to have orientation or ongoing training with regard to their role and responsibilities prior to being elected or selected to their seat on the board.

Research Design

This quantitative national study was designed to collect data from school board presidents and public school superintendents to examine their perceptions about orientation and ongoing

training for school board members. The survey (Appendix A) was specifically designed for this study in order to collect data for the following research questions.

1. Are orientation and ongoing training for school board members important?
2. Do orientation and ongoing training for school board members make a difference?

Participants and Sample Population

School board presidents and public school superintendents were randomly selected from throughout the United States from small, medium, and large school districts. The sample size included 250 school board presidents and 250 public school superintendents from five regions of the country identified by the NSBA as the Northeast, Southern, Central, Western, and Pacific regions (Appendix B).

Quantitative Analysis of Data

Using the survey information collected from the 500 randomly selected public school districts throughout the country, data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, Pearson chi-square, comparison of the means, and real number values for the *yes* and *no* responses received. The survey instrument was sent by email for review and validation to Dr. John Ellis, Executive Director of the Indiana Association of Public School Superintendents, Dr. John Boardman, Associate Professor of Mathematics at Franklin College, and Dr. Michael Adamson, Director of Board Services for the Indiana School Boards Association.

Each survey included a cover letter that introduced the purpose of the study, brief explanation of the survey, the items included, and instructions (Appendices C and D). Further, each cover letter included language regarding confidentiality and anonymity for all participants. The survey instrument was examined and approved by Indiana State University's Institutional Review Board (IRB, Appendix E).

Participants

The 500 randomly selected participants for this study included 250 school board presidents and 250 public school superintendents. Fifty school board presidents were randomly selected from each of the five national regions as identified by the NSBA as well as 50 randomly selected superintendents from each of the same five regions: Pacific, West, South, Central, and Northeast.

The Pacific Region is composed of nine states that include Alaska, Washington, Oregon, Idaho, California, Nevada, Utah, Arizona, and Hawaii. Of the 3,089 public school superintendents representing the Pacific region, 50 were randomly chosen to participate in this study by selecting every 61st ($3,089 \div 50$) name on the list.

The West Region is composed of nine states that include Montana, Wyoming, Colorado, New Mexico, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, and Oklahoma. This region consists of 1,700 public school superintendents. Fifty were randomly chosen to participate in this study by selecting every 34th ($1,700 \div 50$) name.

The South Region is composed of 12 states that include Texas, Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Tennessee, Alabama, Georgia, Florida, South Carolina, North Carolina, Virginia, and West Virginia. There are 2,827 public school superintendents within this region and every 56th ($2,827 \div 50$) name was selected for participation in this study.

The Central Region is composed of nine states that include Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, Wisconsin, Illinois, Michigan, Indiana, Kentucky, and Ohio. Of the 3,635 superintendents in this region, every 72nd ($3,635 \div 50$) name was selected for participation in this study.

The Northeast Region is composed of 11 states that include Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island,

Delaware, and Massachusetts. Of the 1,600 public school superintendents in this region, every 32nd ($1,600 \div 50$) name on the list was selected to participate in this study.

The same process used to select superintendents was utilized to identify school board presidents for this study. To accomplish this, a reverse order of all school superintendents in each region was completed. A second list of superintendents was selected beginning with every 60th name in the Pacific Region, every 33rd name in the West Region, every 55th name in the South Region, every 71st name in the Central Region, and every 31st name in the Northeast Region. This was done to ensure there was no duplication of names. Each superintendent selected during this second round received an email containing the message found in Appendix F. Each letter contained a direct link to the survey if they chose to participate in the study. One week following the initial request inviting school board presidents and public school superintendents to participate, a second request was made. The purpose of the second request was to thank the school board presidents and superintendents for their participation and to remind those who may have wanted to participate but forgot to complete the survey that they still had time. The data collection period was 16 days.

Null Hypotheses

In relation to the two research questions asked, the following null hypotheses were developed:

H₀1. School board presidents and public school superintendents do not believe orientation and ongoing training for school board members are important.

H₀2. School board presidents and public school superintendents do not believe orientation and ongoing training for school board members make a difference.

Method

Survey questions were adapted from similar studies conducted by Helton (1991), Maritz (2006), and Wilson (2004). All three studies were related to the training of school board members and cited in Chapter 2. Additional survey questions were developed based on the literature review. The time frame established for data collection was early January 2012. The survey was directed to 250 school board presidents and 250 public school superintendents from five regions as identified by the NSBA across the country to email addresses, which were obtained from an online resource, Email Marketing List (2012). The email (Appendix C) included the link to the survey (Appendix A).

Summary

The purpose of this study was to examine the perception of public school superintendents and school board presidents on whether orientation programs for newly elected or selected school board members and ongoing training for experienced school board members are important and make a difference according to perceptions of the participants of this study. Analyses were made to identify the value of board member participation in orientation and ongoing training programs, seminars, conferences, and on-site board development workshops as perceived by school board presidents and public school superintendents. Using data from randomly selected public school districts from around the country, data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, Pearson's chi-square, comparison of the means, and the number of *yes* or *no* responses received. The collected data were analyzed to determine what were believed to be the preferred staff development topics of such programs as perceived by public school superintendents and school board presidents from around the country. Additionally, participants were able to report on barriers to training.

CHAPTER 4

Data Analysis

The objective of this national study was to determine the perceptions of school board presidents and public school superintendents in the United States relative to the orientation and ongoing training that are believed to be necessary for newly elected or selected and experienced board members. This study was designed to determine if school board members throughout the country participated in orientation programs and ongoing training and what topics school board presidents and superintendents believed were important. Also, data were collected on whether orientation and ongoing training was making a difference and what topics were important for board members to receive training, from the perception of school board presidents and superintendents.

From the review of the literature, knowledge was acquired on the importance for school board members to receive training either prior to becoming a newly elected or selected member or an experienced member of the board. The literature review revealed several areas or topics that school board members must be knowledgeable about if they are sincerely interested in servant leadership and board governance. Three questions on the survey instrument focused on discovering which topics board presidents and superintendents considered as being important. If school boards trained in a variety of areas, I asked for confirmation. Lastly, if the boards trained for it, I attempted to assess if the training made a difference. According to the research, topics boards should receive training in include responsibilities of the board and of the superintendent,

open door law, strategic planning, budget and finance, facilities, transportation, personnel issues, superintendent evaluation, board ethics, accountability, conflict resolution, consensus building, school governance, and legislative issues to name a few.

The survey was emailed to 250 school board presidents and 250 public school superintendents throughout the United States. Of the 500 surveys emailed, 117 usable surveys were completed and electronically returned, a 23.4% response rate. Table 2 illustrates the distribution of all respondents. It should be noted that not everyone who participated in this study responded to every item on the survey. The total response rate from the 117 participants was 94%.

Table 2

Total Response Rate by Position and Gender

Gender	Board President	Superintendent
Male	29	52
Female	11	25
Total	40	77

Survey Questions and Results

Each survey question relative to the research questions for this study was analyzed. The data results collected for each question were treated individually. Using data from randomly selected public school districts from around the country, data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, Pearson's chi-square, comparison of the means, and the number of *yes* or *no* responses received. Survey Questions 1 through 13 gathered demographic information.

Survey Question 14. Do newly elected or selected board members in your district attend orientation in-service programs, training seminars, or workshops prior to beginning their term of service? School board presidents and superintendents were asked whether newly elected or selected board members in their district attended orientation programs, seminars, or workshops prior to taking office. The responses collected were a simple *yes* or *no*. Table 3 illustrates the number of school board presidents and superintendents who responded accordingly. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Of the 110 respondents, 58% of the school board presidents and 59% of the superintendents reported that board members did attend programs, seminars, or workshops prior to beginning their term of service. This indicated that nearly two-thirds of the school boards in the nation received some training prior to being elected or selected to office.

Table 3

Number of Elected or Selected Board Members Attending Orientation In-Service Programs, Training Seminars, or Workshops Prior to Beginning Their Term of Service (N = 110)

Answer	Board President	Superintendent
Yes	21	44
No	15	30
Total	36	74

Survey Question 15. Do newly elected or selected board members in your district attend orientation in-service programs, training seminars, or workshops during their first year of service. School board presidents and superintendents were asked whether newly elected or selected board members in their district attended orientation programs, seminars, or workshops

during their first year of service? The responses collected were a simple *yes* or *no*. Table 4 illustrates the number of school board presidents and superintendents who responded *yes* or *no*. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Of the 109 respondents, 86% of the school board presidents and 89% of the superintendents reported that school board members did attend programs, seminars, or workshops during their first year of service. This indicated nearly 90% of the school boards in the nation received some training during their first year of being elected or selected to office.

Table 4

Number of Elected or Selected Board Members Attending Orientation In-Service Programs, Training Seminars, or Workshops During Their First Year of Service (N = 109)

Answer	Board President	Superintendent
Yes	31	65
No	5	8
Total	36	73

Survey Question 16. Do you believe orientation in-service programs, training seminars, and/or workshops should be required or mandated prior to newly elected or selected board members begin their role as a member of the board? School board presidents and superintendents were asked whether in-service programs, training seminars, and/or workshops should be required or mandated prior to being newly elected or selected to the board. The responses collected were a simple *yes* or *no*. Table 5 illustrates the number of school board presidents and superintendents who responded *yes* or *no*. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Of the 108 respondents, 56% of the school board presidents and 75% of

the superintendents reported that board members should be required or mandated to attend programs, seminars, or workshops prior to beginning their term of service. Nearly 60% of the school board president's responses illustrated that they believed training should be required or mandated prior to being elected or selected to the board. The superintendents who responded illustrated a 20% difference of opinion regarding required or mandated training for board members prior to being elected or selected to the board. The Pearson's chi-square test was used to examine the relationship between the responses and determined there is a significant difference between what board presidents believe and what superintendents believe regarding required or mandated training prior to newly elected or selected board members beginning their role as a member of the board as noted below.

Table 5

Number of School Board Presidents and Superintendents Who Believe Orientation In-Service Programs, Training Seminars, and/or Workshops Should Be Required or Mandated Prior to Newly Elected or Selected Board Members Beginning Their Role as a Member of the Board

Answer	Board President	Superintendent
Yes	20	54
No	16	18
Total	36	72

Note. $X^2 = 4.21$; $df = 1$; $p\text{-value} = 0.04$; ($N = 108$)

Survey Question 17. Do you believe orientation in-service programs, training seminars, and/or workshops should be required or mandated during the newly elected or selected member's first year of service? School board presidents and superintendents were asked whether in-service

programs, training seminars, and/or workshops should be required or mandated during a board member's first year of service. The responses collected were a simple *yes* or *no*. Table 6 illustrates the number of school board presidents and superintendents that responded *yes* or *no*. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Of the 109 respondents, 75% of the school board presidents and 80% of the superintendents reported that board members should be required or mandated to attend programs, seminars, or workshops during their first year of service on the board. Although 75% of the school board president's responses illustrated that they believed training should be required or mandated during the first year of service on the board, the superintendents who responded illustrated only a 5% difference of opinion regarding required or mandated training for board members during their first year being elected or selected to the board. The Pearson's chi-square test was used to examine the relationship between the responses and determined there was no significant difference between what board presidents believe and what superintendents believe regarding required or mandated training during a newly elected or selected board members first year of service as a member of the board as noted below.

Table 6

Number of School Board Presidents and Superintendents Who Believe Orientation In-Service Programs, Training Seminars, and/or Workshops Should Be Required or Mandated During a Newly Elected or Selected Members First Year of Service

Answer	Board President	Superintendent
Yes	27	59
No	9	14
Total	36	73

Note. $X^2 = 0.49$, $df = 1$, $p\text{-value} = 0.48$. ($N = 109$)

Survey Question 18. Do you believe orientation in-service programs, training seminars, and/or workshops attended by newly elected or selected members make a difference? School board presidents and superintendents were asked if they believed orientation in-service programs, training seminars, and/or workshops attended by newly elected or selected members made a difference. The responses collected were a simple *yes*, *no*, or *members do not attend*. Table 7 illustrates the number of school board presidents and superintendents who responded *yes*, *no*, or *do not attend*. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Of the 110 survey respondents, 92% of the school board presidents and 81% of the superintendents reported that newly elected or selected board members who attended programs, seminars, or workshops made a difference. Only 10% of the school boards across the country reported that newly elected or selected board members did not attend training.

Table 7

Number of School Board Presidents and Superintendents Who Believe Orientation In-Service Programs, Training Seminars, and/or Workshops Attended By Newly Elected or Selected Members Make a Difference (N = 110)

Answer	Board President	Superintendent
Yes	33	64
No	0	3
Do not attend	3	7
Total	36	74

Survey Question 19. Do experienced board members (with more than one year of experience) in your district attend ongoing in-service programs, training, or workshops? School

board presidents and superintendents were asked if experienced board members in their district attended ongoing in-service programs, training seminars, and/or workshops. The responses collected were a simple *yes* or *no*. Table 8 illustrates the number of school board presidents and superintendents who responded *yes* or *no*. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Of the 109 respondents, 89% of the school board presidents and 78% of the superintendents reported that experienced board members attended programs, seminars, or workshops. The superintendents who responded illustrated a strong 21% difference of opinion whether experienced board members attended training.

Table 8

Number of School Districts Where Experienced School Board Members Attend Ongoing In-Service Programs, Training Seminars, and/or Workshops (N = 109)

Answer	Board President	Superintendent
Yes	31	58
No	4	16
Total	35	74

Survey Question 20. Do you believe ongoing in-service programs, training seminars, or workshops should be required or mandated for experienced board members after their first year of service on the board? School board presidents and superintendents were asked whether in-service programs, training seminars, and/or workshops should be required or mandated for experienced board members after their first year of service on the board. The responses collected were a simple *yes* or *no*. Table 9 illustrates the number of school board presidents and superintendents who responded *yes* or *no*. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics.

Of the 111 respondents, 56% of the school board presidents and 64% of the superintendents reported that board members should be required or mandated to attend programs, seminars, or workshops following their first year of service on the board. The Pearson's chi-square test was used to examine the relationship between the responses and determined there was no significant difference between what board presidents believe and what superintendents believe regarding required or mandated training for experienced school board members after their first year of service as a member of the board as noted below. There was an 8% difference in opinion between school board presidents and superintendents when asked if training should be required or mandated for board members after their first year of service.

Table 9

Number of School Board Presidents and Superintendents Who Believe Ongoing In-Service Programs, Training Seminars, and/or Workshops Should Be Required or Mandated for Experienced Board Members After Their First Year of Service

Answer	Board President	Superintendent
Yes	20	47
No	16	27
Total	36	74

Note. $X^2 = 0.64$; $df = 1$; $p\text{-value} = 0.42$. ($N = 111$)

Survey Question 21. Do you believe ongoing in-service programs, training seminars, or workshops make a difference for experienced board members after their first year of service on the board? School board presidents and superintendents were asked if they believed ongoing in-service programs, training seminars, and/or workshops attended by experienced board members

after their first year makes a difference. The responses collected were a simple *yes*, *no*, or members *do not attend*. Table 10 illustrates the number of school board presidents and superintendents who responded *yes*, *no*, or *do not attend*. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Of the 109 respondents, 83% of the school board presidents and 85% of the superintendents reported that experienced board members who attended programs, seminars, or workshops made a difference.

Table 10

Number of School Board Presidents and Superintendents Who Believe Ongoing In-Service Programs, Training Seminars, and/or Workshops Attended by Experienced Board Members After Their First Year Makes a Difference (N = 109)

Answer	Board President	Superintendent
Yes	30	62
No	1	6
Do not attend	5	5
Total	36	73

Survey Question 22. Which delivery system should be used to bring the necessary information and training to new and/or experienced school board members? School board presidents and superintendents were asked which delivery system for information and training they believed was the best for ongoing in-service programs, training seminars, and/or workshops attended by newly elected or selected and experienced board members. The responses collected were from a list of providers that included *State Departments of Education*, *State School Boards Associations*, *Professional Consultants*, *Board Members and/or Superintendents*, or *Others*

(*please list*). Table 11 illustrates the number of school board presidents and superintendents who responded to each delivery system listed above. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Of the 110 respondents, 69% of the school board presidents and 76% of the superintendents reported that state school board associations were the delivery of choice for training programs, seminars, or workshops and 3% of the board presidents and 9% of the superintendents believed that *all of the above* should be utilized for the training of school board members.

Table 11

Number of School Board Presidents and Superintendents Who Believe Which Delivery System Is Best to Bring Information and Training to New and/or Experienced Board Members (N = 110)

Answer	Board President	Superintendent
State Board of Education	3	2
State School Board Association	25	57
Professional Consultants	1	2
Board Members and/or Superintendents	6	7
Others (please list)	1	7
Total	36	74

Survey Question 23. Please choose 0-4 for each topic listed below, 0 being *not important* or *not making a difference* and 4 being the *most important* or *making the most difference* regarding a list of 38 topics for board training. The purpose of this question was to establish what topics school board presidents and superintendents believed were the most important and the least important for training. According to the literature review, the 38 topics

that were selected for this survey were the topics considered to be the most important for new and experienced board members to receive training. The survey revealed that school board presidents and superintendents believed training was important for all 38 topics. Respondents were asked to rank order each topic with 0 being *least important* and 4 being *most important*. The data were analyzed, calculating and comparing the means between school board presidents and superintendents for each of the 38 topics. The software used to calculate the means did not default to the scale used in the survey. It should be noted that the means were calculated using a Likert scale of 1-5 rather than the scale of 0-4 that was used in the survey. Table 12 illustrates that there was very little to no difference in the means between school board presidents and superintendents. Also, it should be noted that of the 38 topics, there was no significant difference between the means of the two groups surveyed. Both school board presidents and superintendents, according to this survey, believed training in all 38 areas was important because nearly every response fell within the upper quartile. Table 12 illustrates that there was very little to no difference in the means between school board presidents and superintendents.

Table 12

Mean of School Board Presidents and Superintendents Who Believe These Topics For Training Are Either Important or Not Important (N = 110)

Topic	Board President	Superintendent
	Mean	Mean
Duties and responsibilities of the board	4.79	4.87
Duties and responsibilities of the superintendent	4.86	4.91
Superintendent and board relationship	4.85	4.80
Open door law	4.42	4.08
Leadership styles	4.12	3.80
Strategic planning	4.58	4.25
Student achievement	4.78	4.63
Standardized test scores and interpretation	3.93	4.19
Budget and finance	4.65	4.77

Table 12 (continued)

Topic	Board President	Superintendent
	Mean	Mean
Annual self-evaluation of the board	3.81	4.00
Annual evaluation of the superintendent	4.63	4.65
Annual evaluation of teachers	.00	4.15
Vision, mission, and goals	4.48	4.55
Communication	4.68	4.72
Facilities	4.31	3.98
Personnel issues	4.19	4.26
Transportation	3.85	3.74
Policy development	4.48	4.65
Ethics	4.59	4.72
School law and legal issues	4.48	4.47
Accountability	4.59	4.38
Strategic planning	4.58	4.13
Collective bargaining and labor relations	3.62	3.96
The Key Work of the School Boards	4.15	4.29
Legislative issues	4.24	4.24
School governance	4.35	4.40
Team building	4.12	4.15
Community relations	4.54	4.31
Confidentiality	4.65	4.74
Conducting effective meetings	4.42	4.33
Conflict resolution	4.19	4.02
Consensus building	4.08	4.17
Establishing trust	4.54	4.44
Robert's Rules of Order	4.00	3.94
Graduation and dropout rates	4.35	4.09
Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)	4.19	3.94
Leadership	4.58	4.31
Networking and collaboration	4.08	4.00

Note. Mean of 5.00 = *very important*.

Survey Question 24. For each of the 38 topics on the list, do you train for it? School board presidents and superintendents were asked whether their boards trained for each of the 38 topics listed. The responses collected were a simple *yes* or *no*. Table 13 illustrates the number of school board presidents and superintendents who responded *yes* or *no*.

Table 13

Number of School Board Presidents and Superintendents Who Believe Their Boards Do or Do Not Train For Each of the 38 Topics Listed

Topic	Answer	Board President	Superintendent
Duties and Responsibilities of the board	Yes	22	0
	No	7	6
Duties and responsibilities of the superintendent	Yes	22	53
	No	4	4
Superintendent and board relationship	Yes	13	44
	No	13	12
Open door law	Yes	13	33
	No	13	20
Leadership styles	Yes	6	26
	No	19	30
Strategic planning	Yes	12	33
	No	14	21
Student achievement	Yes	9	43
	No	17	11
Standardized test scores and interpretation	Yes	7	37
	No	19	16
Budget and finance	Yes	21	45
	No	6	9
Annual self-evaluation of the board	Yes	9	24
	No	17	31
Annual evaluation of the superintendent	Yes	14	39
	No	12	17
Annual evaluation of teachers	Yes	4	33
	No	21	23
Vision, mission, and goals	Yes	17	39
	No	9	17
Communication	Yes	11	40
	No	14	15
Facilities	Yes	5	28
	No	20	28
Personnel issues	Yes	8	41
	No	18	14
Transportation	Yes	4	20
	No	22	35
Policy development	Yes	12	39
	No	14	15
Ethics	Yes	12	41
	No	14	14

Table 13 (continued)

Topic	Answer	Board President	Superintendent
School law and legal issues	Yes	17	42
	No	10	12
Accountability	Yes	10	30
	No	15	23
Strategic planning	Yes	9	31
	No	17	23
The Key Work of School Boards	Yes	11	39
	No	15	14
Legislative issues	Yes	8	33
	No	18	23
School governance	Yes	13	42
	No	12	13
Team building	Yes	8	30
	No	17	25
Community relations	Yes	10	33
	No	16	23
Confidentiality	Yes	14	38
	No	11	18
Conducting effective meetings	Yes	12	32
	No	14	24
Conflict resolution	Yes	9	28
	No	17	27
Consensus building	Yes	7	21
	No	19	33
Establishing trust	Yes	6	28
	No	19	28
Robert's Rules of Order	Yes	10	29
	No	16	26
Graduation and dropout rates	Yes	5	32
	No	20	24
Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)	Yes	8	42
	No	17	14
Leadership	Yes	8	34
	No	17	20
Networking and collaboration	Yes	6	25
	No	19	28

The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. When school board presidents from around the country were asked on which topics board members received training, only three topics

scored 75% or higher and 32 topics were scored at 50% or lower. On the other hand, superintendents around the country believed their board members received training in 11 of the topics that were scored 75% or higher but only three topics were scored by superintendents at 50% or lower.

The three topics board presidents most believed training was being received by their board included duties and responsibilities of the board, duties and responsibilities of the superintendent, and budget and finance. Superintendents identified 11 topics that included duties and responsibilities of the board, duties and responsibilities of the superintendent, superintendent and board relationship, student achievement, budget and finance, personnel issues, ethics, school law and legal issues, *Key Work of School Boards*, school governance, and adequate yearly progress.

Since the school board presidents scored 32 of the 38 topics at 50% or lower these were not listed. Table 13 clearly identifies those topics by the low numbers recorded from the surveys. The three topics from the list of 38 that superintendents identified that their boards were not trained include leadership styles, annual self-evaluation, and consensus building.

Survey Question 25. Please choose 0-4 for each topic listed below, 0 being *not important* or *not making a difference* and 4 being the *most important* or *making the most difference* regarding the list of 38 topics for board training. The purpose of this question was to establish what topics school board presidents and superintendents believed were topics in which board members did receive training and *did* or *did not make a difference*. According to the literature review, the 38 topics that were selected for this survey were the topics considered being the most important for new and experienced board members to receive training and that training did make a difference.

According to the data, the survey revealed that school board presidents and superintendents believed training did make a difference. According to the means, the difference was not significant. Respondents were asked to rank order each topic with 0 being it made the *least difference* and 4 being it made the *most difference*. The data were analyzed calculating and comparing the means between school board presidents and superintendents for each of the 38 topics. The software used to calculate the means did not default to the scale used in the survey. It was noted that the means were calculated using a Likert scale of 1-5 rather than the scale of 0-4 that was used in the survey. Also, Table 14 does illustrate that there was not a significant difference among the means of the 38 topics and noted that the majority of the responses fell within the second quartile.

Table 14

Mean of School Board Presidents and Superintendents Who Believe These Topics For Training Make a Difference (N = 110)

Topic	Board President Mean	Superintendent Mean
Duties and responsibilities of the board	3.92	3.98
Duties and responsibilities of the superintendent	4.29	4.29
Superintendent and board relationship	3.74	3.93
Open door law	3.37	3.63
Leadership styles	2.31	2.72
Strategic planning	3.65	3.44
Student achievement	3.31	3.68
Standardized test scores and interpretation	2.59	3.53
Budget and finance	4.14	4.11
Annual self-evaluation of the board	3.19	2.74
Annual evaluation of the superintendent	4.11	3.71
Annual evaluation of teachers	2.29	3.34
Vision, mission, and goals	3.94	3.68
Communication	3.53	3.73
Facilities	2.79	3.31
Personnel issues	3.07	3.62
Transportation	2.33	2.73

Table 14 (continued)

Topic	Board President	Superintendent
	Mean	Mean
Policy development	3.68	3.78
Ethics	3.82	3.72
School law and legal issues	3.86	4.11
Accountability	3.75	3.63
Strategic planning	3.43	3.54
Collective bargaining and labor relations	2.56	3.51
The Key Work of School Boards	3.65	3.51
Legislative issues	3.27	3.40
School governance	3.72	3.82
Team building	3.00	3.22
Community relations	3.29	3.60
Confidentiality	3.82	3.86
Conducting effective meetings	3.65	3.45
Conflict resolution	3.20	3.13
Consensus building	2.79	3.03
Establishing trust	2.93	3.20
Robert's Rules of Order	3.00	3.49
Graduation and dropout rates	3.00	3.42
Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)	3.38	3.35
Leadership	3.14	3.78
Networking and collaboration	3.00	3.18

Note. Mean of 5.00 = being very important.

Survey Question 26. Please list barriers that exist making it difficult for school board members to participate in in-service programs, training seminars, and workshops. This open-ended question provided an excellent summary and illustrated the barriers that school board presidents and superintendents believe exist that make it difficult for school board members to receive training. Of the 117 respondents, 53% of the school board presidents and 49% of the superintendents across the United States provided their thoughts about why training was difficult to accomplish.

School board presidents identified five basic reasons why it is difficult for board members to attend training. The five barriers they identified beginning with the most to least frequent responses included time, work and family schedules, willingness, distance, and cost or budgets. Superintendents identified the identical five reasons that school board presidents did as to why it is difficult for board members to attend training. The superintendents most to least frequent responses were time, work and family schedules, willingness, distance, and cost or budgets.

Summary

The objective of this national study was to determine the perceptions of public school board presidents and superintendents in the United States relative to the orientation and ongoing training that is believed necessary for newly elected or selected and experienced board members. This study was designed to determine if school board members throughout the country participated in orientation programs and ongoing training and identified the topics school board presidents and superintendents believed important. Also, data were collected on whether orientation and ongoing training were making a difference and what topics are important for board members to receive training, from the perceptions of school board presidents and superintendents. The analysis of the data collected is summarized as follows:

1. The majority (60%) of school board presidents and superintendents reported that board members did attend programs, seminars, or workshops prior to beginning their term of service. This indicated that nearly two-thirds of the school boards in the nation received some training prior to being elected or selected to office.

2. A very high percentage (nearly 90%) of the school board presidents and superintendents reported that board members did attend programs, seminars, or workshops during their first year of service.
3. There was a significant difference between what school board presidents believe and what superintendents believe regarding required or mandated training prior to newly elected or selected board members beginning their role as a member of the board. There was a 20% difference in the responses provided by school board presidents and superintendents. Using a Pearson's chi-square test with a critical value of 0.05, $p = 0.04$.
4. The majority (80%) of the school board presidents and superintendents in the country reported that board members should be required or mandated to attend programs, seminars, or workshops during their first year of service.
5. Of the 110 survey respondents, 92% of the school board presidents and 81% of the superintendents reported that newly elected or selected board members who attended programs, seminars, or workshops made a difference.
6. A difference of 21% existed between school board presidents and superintendents across the country. The data collected illustrated that 89% of school board presidents and 78% of superintendents believe that experienced school board members attend programs, seminars, or workshops.
7. On average, only 55% of the school board presidents and superintendents in the country believe in-service programs, training seminars, and workshops should be required or mandated for experienced board members after their first year of service on the board. The majority (85%) of the school board presidents and superintendents

- throughout the country believed that experienced board members who attended programs, seminars, or workshops made a difference.
8. Interestingly, school board presidents and superintendents by a 75% majority believed that state school board associations were the delivery of choice for training programs, seminars, or workshops.
 9. Both school board presidents and superintendents, according to the survey results, believed training in all 38 topics was important. It was noted, on a Likert scale of 1-5, that nearly all of the 38 topics fell within the upper quartile.
 10. There was a significant difference between what school board presidents and superintendents believe regarding the topics board members receive training. School board presidents identified only three topics as where superintendents identified 11 topics where school board members were trained. The Pearson's chi-square test used to examine the relationship between the responses revealed $X^2 = 4.21$; $df = 1$; $p = 0.04$ and determined there was a significant difference between what board presidents believe and what superintendents believe regarding required or mandated training prior to newly elected or selected board members beginning their role as a member of the board as noted below.
 11. School board presidents and superintendents from across the country agreed on the barriers that exist making it difficult for school board members to participate in in-service programs, training seminars, and workshops. The five detractors in order of most to least frequent are time, work and family, schedules, willingness, distance, and cost or budgets.

CHAPTER 5

Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Summary

The purpose of this national study was to determine the perceptions of school board presidents and superintendents throughout the United States relative to the orientation and ongoing training that is believed to be necessary for newly elected or selected and experienced board members. This research also examined whether board presidents and superintendents believed training made a difference. Two additional areas were also examined for this study. School board presidents and superintendents were asked to identify the topics they believed were the most important for board members to be trained. It was also determined through this study which delivery system school board presidents and superintendents believed school board members preferred to facilitate training.

The literature reviewed revealed the importance of the two research questions which were constructed for this study. Due to the lack of research-based information about perceptions of school board presidents and superintendents concerning training, two research questions were developed for the this study:

1. Are orientation and ongoing training for school board members important?
2. Do orientation and ongoing training for school board members make a difference?

These two research questions were the focus of a survey instrument that was developed as a result of a review of the literature regarding the orientation and ongoing training of school board members across the country. The review of the literature was composed of four sections, which explored the importance of orientation and ongoing training of school board members.

The review of the literature revealed that there were numerous research studies on the subject by noted authors such as Bartusek (2011), Carpenter (2007), Carver (2009), Danzberger (1994), Dawson and Quinn (2011), Eadie (2009), Kirst (1984) and Rice (2010). There was a great deal of attention given in Chapter 2 where a comprehensive study was completed during the literature review which focused on each of the 50 state associations or organizations that represent school boards across America. The 50 state associations have collectively identified 38 topics which are believed to be important for school board members to receive training. Interestingly, only about one-third of the states have mandated orientation or training for newly elected or selected or experienced school board members.

For this study an electronic survey instrument was developed using Qualtrics with a URL link on the Internet through Indiana State University, which provided easy access for both the respondents and the researcher. The survey was divided into three blocks and had a total of 26 questions. Block 1 contained general questions 1-13 which gathered demographic and general information about the respondents and the school districts they represent. Block 2 contained questions 14-25, which sought participant opinions concerning the importance of training and whether training made a difference in board competency. Finally, Block 3 contained question 26, which provided respondents the opportunity to list barriers they believed existed, making it difficult for school board members to participate in orientation and ongoing training.

Of the 500 electronic surveys distributed nationally by email to school board presidents and superintendents, 23.4% or 117 surveys were returned, with 94% being completed in entirety. Using data from randomly selected public school districts from around the country, data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, Pearson's chi-square, comparison of the means, and the number of *yes* or *no* responses received.

Conclusions

Once the 117 surveys were received from school board presidents and superintendents throughout the country, the data were compiled for each of the survey questions and calculations completed. The statistics provided a clearer picture of how school board presidents and superintendents perceived orientation and ongoing training for school board members. With the exception of a couple of questions, the respondents were closely parallel in their answers all across the country.

The results of this study revealed many interesting facts about what school board presidents and superintendents believe about the importance of training, the training they do, and the difference this training makes in board competency, if any. Nearly two-thirds or 60% of newly elected or selected board members attend training programs, seminars, or workshops prior to their terms of service. Though this number is respectable, the research clearly established that 100% of all new board members should attend some kind of orientation program in order to be effective.

The vast majority, which is 90% of newly elected or selected board members, attend training programs, seminars, or workshops during their first year of service. The question remains and is answered in this conclusion how much training occurs and on what topics new board members are being trained.

A 20% difference exists between what school board presidents believe and what superintendents believe regarding required or mandated training prior to newly elected or selected board members beginning their role as members of the board. Three-fourths (75%) of the superintendents and only half (50%) of the school board presidents believe training should be required or mandated. The research in this study is conclusive that board presidents and superintendents believe orientation and ongoing training have value, but this statistic is evidence that at least 50% of the board presidents do not want required or mandated training prior to beginning their terms in office. However, 75% of the superintendents in the country believe orientation prior to a board member taking office should be required or mandatory. This would suggest that many people who are running for election for the office of school board member might object to attending orientation or training prior to being elected.

Interestingly 80% of both school board presidents and superintendents surveyed in the country reported that they believe board members should be required or mandated to attend programs, seminars, or workshops during their first year of service. This national figure strongly validates that required or mandated training of school board members in this country would be widely accepted.

School board presidents and superintendents both strongly agree that newly elected or selected board members who attended programs, seminars, or workshops during their first year of service made a difference. The finding that 92% of the school board presidents and 81% of the superintendents in the country believed training does make a difference helps drive home the point that required or mandated training of school board members would not be an unreasonable expectation.

It was a strong majority of school board presidents, nearly 90%, who reported they believed experienced board members do attend ongoing training programs, seminars, or workshops. To the contrary, only 78% of superintendents believed experienced board members attend ongoing training programs, seminars, or workshops. This 21% difference is alarming because the national perception of school board presidents is one thing and that of the superintendents is another. Should training ever become required or mandated in this country, it would certainly resolve the misperception perhaps that superintendents have about the training of their experienced board members. It could be that school board presidents believe they participate in more training than they really do. This perception will be addressed later in this summary when the data are reported and summarized regarding in which of the 38 topics board presidents and superintendents believe their board members do receive training.

An earlier assumption was there would be little objection should ongoing training become required or mandated because 80% of the school board presidents reported they do attend training programs, seminars, and workshops. Interestingly, when board presidents were asked the question if ongoing training should be required or mandated, there was a resounding 45% of board presidents who do not believe training should be required or mandated. It could be assumed that there would be resistance to requiring or mandating training for experienced board members. Though school board presidents believe they attend appropriate training voluntarily, overwhelmingly, they do not want it required, though this study has revealed that both board presidents and superintendents believe training does make a difference.

Though the purpose of this study was to focus on whether orientation and ongoing training are important and whether they make a difference, one interesting piece of knowledge obtained during this study is what delivery system for training school board presidents and

superintendents preferred. The survey gave five options that included state departments of education, state school board associations, professional consultants, board members and/or superintendents, and other. The majority, 75% of school board presidents and superintendents, prefer to participate in orientation and ongoing training programs, seminars, or workshops that are sponsored or facilitated by their state school board association.

When school board presidents from around the country were asked on which topics board members received training, only three topics scored 75% or higher and 32 topics were scored at 50% or lower. On the other hand, superintendents around the country believed their board members received training in 11 of the topics that were scored 75% or higher and only three topics were scored by superintendents at 50% or lower.

The three topics board presidents identified that their boards received training for were duties and responsibilities of the board, duties and responsibilities of the superintendent, and budget and finance. Superintendents identified 11 topics that included duties and responsibilities of the board, duties and responsibilities of the superintendent, superintendent and board relationship, student achievement, budget and finance, personnel issues, ethics, school law and legal issues, *Key Work of School Boards*, school governance, and adequate yearly progress. It is obvious that superintendents believe board members receive training regarding more topics than school board presidents believe they receive. Future research might answer the question of why there is a significant difference between school board presidents and superintendents.

School board presidents and superintendents from across the country agree on the barriers that exist making it difficult for school board members to participate in in-service programs, training seminars, and workshops. The five detractors in order of most to least frequent are time, work and family, schedules, willingness, distance, and cost or budgets. None of the barriers

reported by the survey respondents is surprising. Many states are overcoming these detractors by providing training in nontraditional ways. According to the literature review, many states are providing online training for school board members. Other efforts being made by several of the state associations to reach their membership are onsite training in local boardrooms as well as regional seminars and workshops to save board members travel time and reduce expenses.

Recommendations for Further Study

This study focused on determining if school board presidents and superintendents believed orientation for newly elected or selected board members and ongoing training programs, seminars, or workshops for experienced board members were important. Another focus of this study was to determine if board presidents and superintendents believed orientation and ongoing training made a difference. Data were collected for this study to determine which of the 38 training topics identified in the literature review were believed by board presidents and superintendents to be important. Further study should be conducted to determine which of the 38 topics are believed by board presidents and superintendents to be the focus during newly elected or selected board member orientation and which topics should be part of ongoing training for experienced board members. This study only identified which of the 38 topics board presidents and superintendents believed were important, which topics they trained, and whether the training made a difference.

This was a national study where 500 surveys were sent electronically to 250 school board presidents and 250 superintendents. In order to assure random selection and even distribution throughout the country, 50 surveys were sent to each of the five regions defined by the NSBA. Because some states have laws that require/mandate training and other states do not have legislation requiring/mandating training for school board members, in a future study it would be

beneficial to collect survey data where respondents identified in which region or state their school district was located. It would be interesting to know if what school board presidents and superintendents believe is different by region or individual states, especially where training is required. In states where training has become the norm because it is required or mandatory, board presidents and superintendents may respond differently when asked a question about whether training should be required or mandatory.

This study focused on finding out what school board presidents and superintendents believed about the importance of training and if training made a difference. Since school board presidents are experienced school board members and this study does not give a good picture of what newly elected or selected board members believe about the importance and value of orientation and training, I recommend a similar national study be conducted to find out what newly elected or selected board members believe about the importance of training and whether or not it makes a difference. Furthermore, it should be determined what school board presidents believe are the topics that are most important to them regarding training during their first few months and throughout their first year of service on the board.

This study proved that school board presidents and superintendents believe ongoing in-service programs, training seminars, and workshops are important and make a difference. However, only 50% of the school board presidents believe such training should be required or mandated. If this study is replicated, the researcher should try to establish why so many school board presidents do not think ongoing training should be required or mandated, especially since they believe training is important and does make a difference.

This study provides evidence that school board presidents and superintendents believe orientation and ongoing training are important and do make a difference. However, further

research needs to be conducted to determine whether training of board members directly impacts the quality of a school district. The variables, which might be considered for comparison, could be graduation rate, adequately yearly progress, and fiscal responsibility. Though this would be difficult to prove because of the many outside factors that exist beyond the control of the school board, it might still provide some insight as to whether training impacts the quality of the school district.

This study has important implications for future researchers interested in investigating required or mandated training for newly elected or selected and experienced school board members. Without question it has been determined that board presidents and superintendents believe training is important and makes a difference. This study has proven that nearly half of the board presidents around the country do not favor the idea of training being required or mandated. The literature review revealed required or mandatory training is necessary and clearly outlines the topics, which should be required. This study validates that voluntary participation in training is not consistent throughout the country, especially with regard to the 38 topics that were investigated. Below is a list of recommendations for future researchers in this field.

1. Further research should be conducted to determine which of the 38 topics for training should be the focus of orientation programs and which should be part of ongoing training.
2. It would be interesting to know what school board presidents and superintendents believe about required or mandated training by either region or by state. This would be important because one-third of the states in the country already require/mandate training. It would be nice to know if school board presidents and superintendents are in agreement with the legislation or laws that require or mandate training.

3. Since this study focused on what experienced board members believed, future research should focus on newly elected or selected school board members to find out if they believe orientation training is important prior to or during the first year of service and what topics they believe are important.
4. Future research should try to establish why nearly 50% of the school board presidents in the United States do not believe ongoing in-service training, seminars, and workshops should be required or mandated.
5. Additional research should be conducted in this field to determine whether there is a direction correlation between school boards where all members are trained in a variety of the 38 identified topics and the performance of their school district with regard to graduation rate, passing adequate yearly progress, and fiscal responsibility.

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APPENDIX A**Survey for Public School Superintendents and Board Presidents**

Block 1

1. Gender:

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female

2. Age:

- ☐ Less than 31
- ☐ 31 - 40
- ☐ 41 - 50
- ☐ 51 - 60
- ☐ 61 - and over

3. Highest educational degree:

- ☐ Associates
- ☐ Bachelors
- ☐ Masters
- ☐ Specialists
- ☐ Doctorate

4. What is your position in your district?

- ☐ Board President
- ☐ Superintendent

5. Number of years as a school board member or superintendent in your district:

- ☐ Less than 1 year
- ☐ 1 - 4 years
- ☐ 5 - 9 years
- ☐ 10 -14 years
- ☐ 15 - 19 years
- ☐ 20 - 24 years
- ☐ More than 24 years

6. How many members serve on the board in your district:

- ☐ 5
- ☐ 7
- ☐ 9
- ☐ More than 9

7. Type of school district:

- ☐ City
- ☐ Town
- ☐ County
- ☐ Rural
- ☐ Other

8. What is the student enrollment of your school district:

- ☐ Less than 1,000
- ☐ 1,000 - 4,999
- ☐ 5,000 - 9,999
- ☐ 10,000 - 19,999
- ☐ 20,000 - 49,000
- ☐ 50,000 or greater

9. Board members are:

- ☐ Appointed
- ☐ Elected

10. What percentage of the students in your district is designated as free or reduced lunch?

- ☐ Less than 10%
- ☐ 10% - 19%
- ☐ 20% - 29%
- ☐ 30% - 39%
- ☐ 40% - 49%
- ☐ 50% - 59%
- ☐ 60% - 69%
- ☐ 70% - 79%
- ☐ 80% - 89%
- ☐ 90% - 100%

11. To the best of your knowledge, under the No Child Left Behind legislation, how frequently during the past 10 years has your district been designated as "passing" AYP (Adequately Yearly Progress)?

- ☐ Never
- ☐ 1 or 2 years
- ☐ 3 or 4 years
- ☐ 5 or 6 years
- ☐ 7 or 8 years
- ☐ 9 or 10 years
- ☐ Unsure

12. To the best of your knowledge, in the past 10 years, how frequently has your high school(s) graduation rate exceeded 90%?

- ☐ Never
- ☐ 1 or 2 years
- ☐ 3 or 4 years
- ☐ 5 or 6 years
- ☐ 7 or 8 years
- ☐ 9 or 10 years
- ☐ Unsure

13. In your district's General Fund is the percentage of your cash balance:

- ☐ Equal to or greater than 12% of the total fund
- ☐ Less than 12% of the total fund
- ☐ Unsure

14. Do newly elected/selected board members in your district attend orientation in-service programs, training seminars, or workshops prior to beginning their term of service?
- ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No
15. Do newly elected/selected board members in your district attend orientation in-service programs, training seminars, or workshops during their first year of service?
- ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No
16. Do you believe orientation in-service programs, training seminars, and/or workshops should be required or mandated prior to newly elected/selected board members begin their role as a member of the board?
- ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No
17. Do you believe orientation in-service programs, training seminars, and/or workshops should be required or mandated during a newly elected/selected members first year of service?
- ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No
18. Do you believe orientation in-service programs, training seminars, and/or workshops attended by newly elected/selected members make a difference?
- ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No
 - ☐ Newly elected/selected board members do not attend programs, seminars, or workshops prior to beginning their term of service.
19. Do experienced board members (with more than one year of experience) in your district attend ongoing in-service programs, training seminars, or workshops?
- ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No
20. Do you believe ongoing in-service programs, training seminars, or workshops should be required or mandated for experienced board members after their first year of service on the board?
- ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No

21. Do you believe ongoing in-service programs, training seminars, or workshops make a difference for experienced board members after their first year of service on the board?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Experienced board members do not attend programs, seminars, or workshops.

22. Which delivery system should be used to bring the necessary information and training to new and/or experienced school board members?

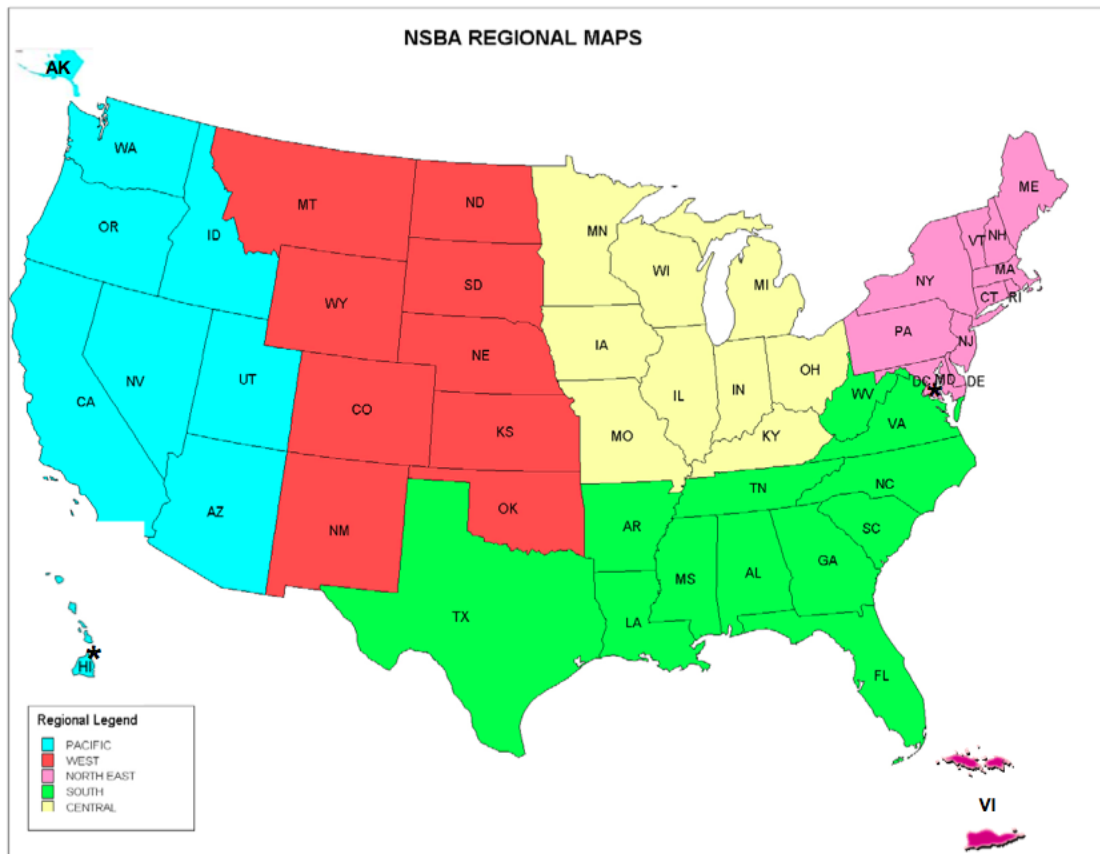
- ☐ State Departments of Education
- ☐ State School Board Associations
- ☐ Professional Consultants
- ☐ Board Members and/or Superintendents
- ☐ Others (please list)

Block 2

Please choose 0-4 for each topic listed below, 0 being not important or not making a difference and 4 being the most important or making the most difference.												
	Is it important?					Do you train for it?		Did the training make a difference?				
	0	1	2	3	4	Yes	No	0	1	2	3	4
Duties and responsibilities of the board	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Duties and responsibilities of the superintendent	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Superintendent and board relationship	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Open door law	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Leadership styles	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Strategic planning	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Student achievement	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Standardized test scores in interpretation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Budget and finance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Annual self-evaluation of the board	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Annual evaluation of the superintendent	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Annual evaluation of teachers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Vision, mission, and goals	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Communication	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	Is it important?					Do you train for it?		Did the training make a difference?				
	0	1	2	3	4	Yes	No	0	1	2	3	4
Conflict resolution	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Consensus building	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Establishing trust	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Robert's Rules of Order	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Graduation and dropout rates	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Leadership	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Networking and collaboration	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please list barriers that exist making it difficult for school board members to participate in in-service programs, training seminars, and workshops.

APPENDIX B**National School Board Association Regional Maps**

APPENDIX C

Invitation to Participate Email

Dear Superintendent,

As a doctoral student at Indiana State University I am collecting data for my dissertation. Your school board president was randomly selected to participate in my national study. I would like to ask a favor of you; could you please forward this email to your board president and ask he or she to participate in my research by completing the electronic survey. The link is provided in my letter below.

APPENDIX D**Letter to Superintendents****Indiana State
University**

January 15, 2012

Dear Superintendent,

I am a doctoral student at Indiana State University and I am conducting a study to determine the perception of public school superintendents and board presidents in the United States relative to the orientation and ongoing training that is believed to be necessary and beneficial for newly elected/selected and experienced board members. The objective of this research project is to attempt to understand whether superintendents and board presidents believe orientation and ongoing training for school board members is important and if it makes a difference. Through your participation, I eventually hope to understand how best to satisfy the orientation and ongoing training needs of school boards across the country

As a fellow administrator, I am well aware of your hectic schedule, the demands of your position, and the time restraints you work within. This is a special request for your support of important research!

James Halik and Dr. Steve Gruenert, from the Educational Leadership, Administration & Foundations Department at Indiana State University are conducting this study as part of a dissertation. There are no known risks if you decide to participate in this research study. There are no costs to you for participating in the study. The information you provide will add important information in the body of research about the training of school board members. The questionnaire will take about 10 minutes to complete. The information collected may not benefit you directly, but the information learned in this study should provide more general benefits.

This survey is confidential. It is a web-based survey, and information will not be collected as to where the survey came from. However due to it being a web-based survey, absolute anonymity

cannot be guaranteed over the Internet. No one will be able to identify you or your answers, and no one will know whether or not you participated in the study. Individuals from the Institutional Review Board may inspect these records. Should the data be published, no individual information will be disclosed.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. By completing the survey of short responses available at: https://indstate.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_6xvqyGQGonrUoeg and completing a brief demographics page, you are voluntarily agreeing to participate. You are free to decline to answer any particular question you do not wish to answer for any reason.

If you have any questions about the study, please contact James Halik at 317-522-7474 or send an e-mail to jhalik@indstate.edu or Dr. Steve Gruenert at 812-238-2902 or send an email to steve.gruenert@indstate.edu.

If you have any questions about your rights as a research subject or if you feel you've been placed at risk, you may contact the Indiana State University Institutional Review Board (IRB) by mail at Indiana State University, Office of Sponsored Programs, Terre Haute, IN, 47809, by phone at (812) 237-8217, or by e-mail at irb@indstate.edu.

Sincerely,

James M. Halik

James M. Halik
Doctoral Student

APPENDIX E

Letter to Board Presidents



Indiana State University

January 15, 2012

Dear Board President,

I am a doctoral student at Indiana State University and I am conducting a study to determine the perception of public school superintendents and board presidents in the United States relative to the orientation and ongoing training that is believed to be necessary and beneficial for newly elected/selected and experienced board members. The objective of this research project is to attempt to understand whether superintendents and board presidents believe orientation and ongoing training for school board members is important and if it makes a difference. Through your participation, I eventually hope to understand how best to satisfy the orientation and ongoing training needs of school boards across the country

As a fellow administrator, I am well aware of your hectic schedule, the demands of your position, and the time restraints you work within. This is a special request for your support of important research!

James Halik and Dr. Steve Gruenert, from the Educational Leadership, Administration & Foundations Department at Indiana State University are conducting this study as part of a dissertation. There are no known risks if you decide to participate in this research study. There are no costs to you for participating in the study. The information you provide will add important information in the body of research about the training of school board members. The questionnaire will take about 10 minutes to complete. The information collected may not benefit you directly, but the information learned in this study should provide more general benefits.

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Sincerely,

James M. Halik

James M. Halik
Doctoral Student

APPENDIX F

IRBNet Board Action Approval

From: Thomas Steiger <no-reply@irbnet.org>
Add to Contacts

To: Brad Balch <brad.balch@indstate.edu>; Steve Gruenert <sgruenert@indstate.edu>;
James Halik <halikj@att.net>

Please note that Indiana State University Institutional Review Board has taken the following action on IRBNet:

Project Title: [272529-1] Does The Training Of School Board Members Make A Difference
Principal Investigator: James Halik, PhD

Submission Type: New Project
Date Submitted: December 8, 2011

Action: EXEMPT
Effective Date: January 10, 2012
Review Type: Exempt Review

Should you have any questions you may contact Thomas Steiger at thomas.steiger@indstate.edu.

Thank you,
The IRBNet Support Team

www.irbnet.org

APPENDIX G

Additional History

The first major indication of the role that a state would come to play in American education, indeed the first education law in the colonies, was the Massachusetts Education Law of 1642. This law was aimed at not only promoting literacy but also strengthening social order. Five years later, the colony enacted the Education Law of 1647, which actually required the establishment of schools. In 1639, the town of Dorchester, Massachusetts is the first town credited for providing schools by direct taxation of its inhabitants. Public funding led to public administration. Dorchester is the first town to appoint a special committee to oversee the school. In 1645, they actually elected “able and efficient men” as wardens or overseers of the grammar school. The responsibility of these elected officials was to:

1. Ensure that the school was supplied with an able and sufficient schoolmaster.
2. Ensure that the school is kept in good repair and empowered to tax the people for upkeep and repairs.
3. Ensure that before the end of September there is brought to the schoolhouse twelve sufficient cart loads of wood for fuel and empowered to tax the people for the wood.
4. Ensure that the schoolmaster faithfully performs his duties (Webb, 2006, p. 69-78).

In 1789, Massachusetts passed legislation that authorized towns to employ special committees designed to supervise schools; they had extensive powers and responsibilities, including:

1. Curricular decisions
2. Employing staff
3. Choosing textbooks
4. Building schools
5. Awarding diplomas
6. Establishing administrative structures

Though school boards employed superintendents, who had some assigned duties and responsibilities, the local board retained the majority of control. Formal authority over schools at the state and federal level were almost nonexistent.

The relationship between school boards and superintendents in American public schools has been fraught with controversy since their inception in the mid-1800s. This relationship has been notoriously characterized as tense and conflict laden, and largely because of this board-superintendent teams today are often characterized as dysfunctional. While board development programs and superintendent preparation programs continue to try to educate board members and superintendents on their roles and responsibilities, the problems associated with school boards and superintendents have continued to exist for the past 200 years. In 1837, Horace Mann, state superintendent of Massachusetts, visited several European school systems. During his trip Mann found that Prussia's school governance model was the best he had seen. Mann believed the success of Prussia's system was due to its high level of supervision with each district. This

debate dragged on until 1895, when school boards were reduced in size and superintendents were given complete control of instructional programming.

However, even with the school governance system changed, between 1915 and 1960, complaints about school board members and lay governance continued. Most of these complaints came from influential scholars. During the 1950s the federal government began to heavily intervene in school governance. As federal interest in education grew individual state education departments were assigned more control diminishing powers once held by local school boards (Alsbury, 2008).

Also in the period following the Civil War, schooling expanded throughout the West and South, where it assumed different and unique characteristics. Schools were becoming mature institutions and the formalization of the educational process and school management began and the early outlines of modern school bureaucracies emerged. Throughout the nation, as enrollments steadily increased at the grammar school level, a growing demand for secondary schooling emerged, although patterns of attendance and success varied widely. Finally, although mostly in urban areas, early patterns of centralized school governance began to appear as the common-school system matured (Altenbaugh, 2003).

