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COLLECTIVE NEGOTIATIONS, IMPLICATIONS FOR PREPARATION OF ADMINISTRATORS.

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THE AUTHOR STATES THAT DEFINITION OF THE SUPERINTENDENT'S ROLE IN COLLECTIVE NEGOTIATIONS IS A MAJOR PROBLEM. THE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR MAY SERVE AS NEGOTIATOR FOR THE BOARD, SPOKESMAN FOR THE TEACHERS, MEDIATOR FOR BOTH, OR MAY BE COMPLETELY INDEPENDENT. A STUDY OF 98 SUPERINTENDENTS IN 469 SCHOOLS IN SEVEN MIDWESTERN STATES REVEALED THAT 87 PERCENT REGARDED THEIR ROLE AS CHANGED BY NEGOTIATIONS. THERE WAS LITTLE AGREEMENT ON THIS NEW ROLE FUNCTION IN RELATION TO TEACHERS AND BOARDS. INCREASED PROFESSIONALISM OF TEACHERS HAS BEEN A MAJOR FACTOR IN CHANGING THE ADMINISTRATOR ROLE. TEACHERS SEEK MORE CONTROL OVER DECISIONS WHICH AFFECT THEM. BECAUSE SCHOOLS OPERATE BOTH INTERNALLY AND EXTERNALLY IN A POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT, WITH A WIDE RANGE OF LOCAL, STATE, AND FEDERAL INVOLVEMENTS, THE PROSPECTIVE ADMINISTRATOR NEEDS A WORKING KNOWLEDGE OF POLITICAL POWER DYNAMICS, COMMUNITY POWER STRUCTURES, AND POLITICAL ASPECTS OF MASS MEDIA, ECONOMIC GOODS, AND SERVICES. AN INTERDISCIPLINARY SEMINAR APPROACH IN NEGOTIATING TECHNIQUES IS RECOMMENDED AS PART OF GRADUATE SCHOOL PREPARATION FOR ADMINISTRATORS, ACCOMPANIED BY A CONTINUOUS INSERVICE TRAINING PROGRAM OF CONFERENCES AND WORKSHOPS FOR THOSE ALREADY ENGAGED IN ADMINISTRATION. THE COMPLETE DOCUMENT, "COLLECTIVE NEGOTIATIONS AND EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION," IS AVAILABLE FROM THE UNIVERSITY COUNCIL FOR EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION, 65 SOUTH OVAL DRIVE, COLUMBUS, OHIO 43210, AND FROM DR. ROY B. ALLEN, COLLEGE OF EDUCATION, UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS, FAYETTEVILLE, ARKANSAS 72701. (JK)

COLLECTIVE NEGOTIATIONS AND EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION

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CHAPTER 6

COLLECTIVE NEGOTIATIONS: IMPLICATIONS FOR PREPARATION OF ADMINISTRATORS

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The topic as assigned to me has been dealt with by inference or in some cases rather directly by several of the preceding papers presented at this conference. One or two seemed to be particularly heavily laden with implications for preparation programs. So what I have this afternoon may be "old hat" on this next to the last session of the Seminar. What it may portray, however, is something of the attitudes, feelings, and thoughts of ninety-eight superintendents of schools from seven states as they were confronted by collective negotiation.

An attack upon an organism becomes evident at its most vulnerable spots. Collective negotiation, almost like an X-ray, reveals areas in the administrative structure and operation of the public schools which some educators for years believed needed strengthening. Consideration of certain of these areas and problems has vital implications for preparation programs for school administrators.

ROLE CONFUSION IN THE SUPERINTENDENCY

Collective negotiation has brought confusion and uncertainty to the proper role for the superintendent of schools. As the executive officer of the board of education, is he negotiator for the board? Or being the professional leader of the teachers, is the superintendent their spokesman? Or is he to serve somewhat as a mediator standing between the two parties? Or should he assume a completely independent stance?

A recent study of ninety-eight superintendents in 469 schools conducting negotiations between teachers and boards of education in the states of Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Ohio, Minnesota, and Wisconsin revealed that 87 per cent felt their role had been changed as a result of negotiations.[1] But there was little agreement among them as to what their new role was. They had different perceptions of their functions in relation to teachers and the board. In an attempt to interpret or describe their new role they indicated the following responses, some of them choosing more than one:

Description of the Role Status	Number of Superintendents
Less closely related to teachers and their work	17
Attempt to serve as mediator between teachers and the board	24
Serve as negotiator for the board	34
Attempt to establish an independent stance, representing what is good for education	24
Attempt to represent the point of view of the public	5
Indefinite; too early to define what the superintendent's role will become	30
None of the above descriptions fit	11

Telephone conversations, tape recorded, were held with each of the ninety-eight superintendents. Some appeared to accept willingly the task of negotiating for the board. A number were doing it because "the board wants me to" and in three or four cases they confided that they believed they could be more effective, all things considered, than anyone else presently available to them. Almost one-third declared they were negotiating with representatives of the teachers for the board.

The telephone conversation, quite like a personal interview, presented opportunity to secure insight into situations and the superintendent's attitudes. There were many—over half in fact—who expressed considerable disappointment in the present turn of events with negotiation. One comment is revealing:

> You know, once in a while we get lost as a profession. When we come to, we discover we've

> forgotten about the kids and what's good for education. I hope we will soon come to our senses and remember where we left them.

In one way or another, many superintendents said they felt immobilized as professional leaders. One large city superintendent said it appeared to him as if teachers and their organizational leaders were caught up in the crowd spirit and were drunk in their newly discovered power. "They are affecting the public all right," he said, "but adversely."

Considerable doubt with a mixture of apprehension and confidence was expressed by several of those who believed it was too early for them to define what the superintendent's role would become. From the tape recording of one conversation, the following observations of a superintendent are extracted:

> Over the 30 years I've spent in the superintendent's chair, I've concluded that I am much less of a management representative for the board than I used to be. I wish I knew enough about education to become its spokesman as an independent observer—I mean not a representative for management nor the teachers. The role of the superintendent of the future may be that of proclaiming not only the kind of education that's good for youth but describing to people how good schools can insure the future of society. I guess that's the role of a prophet—which I can't be . . .

THE DILEMMA OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

Preparation programs for school administrators in the area of collective negotiation will be less than realistic until some reasonable consensus is developed to help resolve the dilemma of the superintendent. If the board assumes full responsibility for the conduct of negotiations and meets with the representatives of teachers, it is apparent that the superintendent's position is undermined and his administrative control of the school system is threatened. On the other hand, the conduct of negotiations by the superintendent threatens his position as professional leader of the teaching staff by establishing him as an adversary of teachers.

The investigation, earlier alluded to, included a survey among appointed representatives of departments of educational administration in eleven large Midwestern universities in the seven state area indicated. On the basis of questions previously submitted by the investigator to the professors appointed by their deans or departmental heads, personal interviews were held with each representative. They agreed that negotiation in education was here to stay, that it had seriously challenged the administrative role of the superintendent, and that the superintendent should be knowledgeable in the subject of negotiation. There was varied reaction on the question of whether the superintendent should or should not negotiate as the board's representative. There were as many professors of school administration who felt that he should be the board's negotiator as there were those who felt that he should not negotiate for the board under any circumstances. Another group felt that he might serve in that capacity under some conditions and still others felt that only in small school systems should the superintendent represent the board as negotiator. On the basis of the opinions expressed, there seems to be considerable lack of agreement and consistency in the professors' role perceptions of the superintendent as he is confronted with teachers and perhaps other school groups (principals?) seeking to negotiate with the board.

The substantive differences in the role perceptions and the general absence of clarity in describing what the administrator is to do generally may account for what appeared to be uncertainty or confusion among the professors regarding the selection and organization of content to teach collective negotiation.[2]

Based on the results of this study, there is no substantial evidence from either superintendents or professors of education defining the proper role of superintendents confronted with problems of collective negotiation.

The resolution of this dilemma, nevertheless, is a crucial and pressing issue. The way in which this is done may influence not only the future of public elementary and secondary school administration but decide perhaps the organizational structure of the professional education as-

sociation. Melby warns against the fragmentation of the professional and asks administrators a pointed question:

> Within this profession, no walls should be built between administrators and classroom teachers. If the superintendent of schools and his administrative staff, acting as bargaining agents for the board of education, engage one week in a bitter salary battle with teachers, how can they next week lead these same teachers in an educational endeavor which requires a high degree of cooperation.[3]

The superintendents in the sample not only recognize the problem Melby mentioned, but they visualize another which concerns them equally as much. They see a dilution of their authority as the inevitable result of negotiation, whoever does it, which may threaten their leadership potential within the school organization.

Clearly, then, the absence of an adequate definition of the superintendent's role, as teachers confront the school board in collective negotiation, appears to give little direction to professors of school administration in planning preparation programs in that particular area. If the superintendent is to negotiate, program preparation planners have several possible alternatives: refer superintendents in training either to schools of business, commerce, or labor-industrial relations institutes; appoint to departments of educational administration competent talent skilled in teaching collective bargaining theory and practice; or become sufficiently knowledgeable in the area so as to teach it themselves.

If the superintendent is to be the interpreter of the needs of students and speak independently in behalf of good education as Godine,[4] the labor-industrial-relations writer, describes, his education may continue perhaps to be fashioned along the lines portrayed by Van Miller as he describes the "perceptive generalist."[5] The same could be said perhaps of the model portrayed by the AASA in its publication, *Roles, Responsibilities, Relationships of the School Board, Superintendent, and Staff*.[6]

Another description of the superintendent is that of the "top flight administrator," à la Talbot variety, again

for which the college of business administration would be more able to prepare.[7]

When reasonable consensus is reached on the role definition of the superintendent in the area of collective negotiation, preparation programs may be planned more precisely.

Professionalism Confronts Bureaucracy

Irrespective of the position the superintendent assumes in the negotiation process, he is more likely than not to be involved in some measure in controversy and conflict. Many social scientists, and teachers particularly, have come to view conflict as having primarily disruptive and dysfunctional consequences. In part, this may have come from the writings of Parsons whose interest in mental health led him to be concerned with mechanisms of social control that minimize conflict.[8] Lundberg, another sociologist, saw conflict as dissociative since it is characterized by a suspension of communication between the opposing parties.[9] To him, communication was the essence of the social process and anything that obstructed or impeded it was dysfunctional to the social system.

Certain other sociologists, like Warner for example, view social conflict—especially class conflict—as destroying the stability and endangering the structure of American society.[10]

There is, however, another point of view that considers some forms of conflict as a form of socialization. Coser contends that conflict as well as cooperation has social functions and he believes that

> . . . no group can be entirely harmonious, for it would then be devoid of process and structure. Groups require disharmony as well as harmony, dissociation as well as association, and conflicts within them are by no means altogether disruptive factors. Group formation is the result of both types of processes. The belief that one process tears down what the other builds up, so that what finally remains is the result of subtracting the one from the other, is based on a misconception. On the contrary, both "positive" and "negative"

> factors build group relations. . . . Far from being necessarily dysfunctional, a certain degree of conflict is an essential element in group formation and the persistence of group life.[11]

While teachers generally shy away from conflict and controversy, Corwin found that as teachers became more professional, that is, more specialized and possessing better backgrounds of knowledge, differences of opinion among themselves and their administrators increased in number and intensity.[12] It was, he found, their professional devotion that motivates them to differ with administrators.

There are many forces today that tend to require teachers to become more specialized. Scarcely anyone denies the astounding increase in the content of any subject matter field. Similarly there has been an increase in the application of knowledge. Present day scholars such as Bruner continue to find new meanings for education in the study of psychology.[13]

Students from other disciplines have turned their attention to the study of education. Sociologists have increasingly made contributions which have opened wide new vistas of new knowledge and understanding. Even anthropologists,[14] economists,[15] and political scientists[16] are at work investigating relationships between their field of specialty and education.

Changes as profound as recently have been made, Goodlad[17] claims, require a specialist to teach them with adequacy. School psychologists, counselors, and visiting teachers, considered indispensable in all but the smallest schools, are highly specialized. The use of instructional aides, programmed learning, and participation in teaching teams requires skills and competencies which come from extended study and continued practice.[18]

The growth and movement among teachers toward professionalism is apparent. They are expected to acquire a larger body of knowledge than was previously the case.[19] The period of training is being increased. The need for in-service education is greater than ever because many of the innovations in curriculum have been created by scholars from the various discipline fields in the colleges and universities. In order to become prepared to teach

in these areas literally hundreds of teachers have taken supplementary or refresher courses in the evenings, on Saturday, or during the summer. That some teachers in our better schools and many colleges would meet the professional criterion of having acquired a specialized body of knowledge and skills is recognized by reputable authorities—even the critics of the profession.[20]

As the teachers have become more specialized to handle the greater breadth and complexity of subject matter, increased knowledge about education and new demands in the larger society have pushed schools into taking on more functions. Soon after the Russians first put a satellite into orbit, there was public insistence on improved educational programs for the talented. School crises in the large metropolitan centers bear witness to the consequences of deprivation among the economically disadvantaged. In an effort to avoid the further disintegration of society in certain economically impoverished areas, both rural and urban, a massive federal, state, and local program has been launched with the schools assuming much responsibility for its accomplishment. Simultaneously, there has been an extensive program to reduce dropouts, rehabilitate the vocationally displaced, extend the high school through the institution of the community college, and integrate the racially segregated schools.

As schools have sought to accommodate the social pressures and have taken on many diverse functions, they have necessarily increased in size and complexity of organization. Campbell and his associates[21] claim the increased complexity is a function of the diversity of people required in the expanded programs. The requirements of planning, organizing, directing, coordinating, and controlling the varied and multiple activities of a modern school in a complex society have forced the development of a bureaucracy to manage it.

As they have developed professionally, teachers have sought ways to exercise more control over decisions which affect them. On matters having to do with instruction, Sharma[22] found teachers wanting to obtain much more professional responsibility than they were originally permitted to assume. Generally, they opposed plans devised by

administrators and boards of education to evaluate their teaching.[23]

Collective negotiation is the device utilized by teachers to win, among other things, recognition of their professional expertise against bureaucratic control. That the conflict is real, is inescapable, and is serious is confirmed by Barstow[24] as he points to the need for exploration and search for alternative means for resolving critical disputes between teachers and boards of education.

In one of her addresses before a conference of industrial leaders over forty years ago, Mary Follett is reported to have said:

> If a man is known by the dilemmas he keeps, one test of your business organization is not how many conflicts you have, for conflicts are the essence of life, but *what* are your conflicts? And how do you deal with them? It is to be hoped that we shall not always have strikes, but it is equally to be hoped that we shall always have conflict, the kind which leads to invention, to the emergence of new values.[25]

Like collective negotiation, it appears that the trend in professionalism will continue and as schools continue to increase in size and complexity their organizational structure may tend to become more bureaucratic. If this is a reasonable assumption, it seems necessary that preparation programs for administrators consider the elements of professionalism, some study in the nature of conflict, and knowledge in the dynamics of group process. Emphasis on the concepts of bureaucratic organization and hierarchy most likely are already included in the study of the theory and practice in administration.

The Superintendent in the Political Milieu

The advent of collective negotiation most assuredly has denied the persistent myth that the schools in the United States should be aloof from political activity. The tradition has been that involvement in partisan politics represented by national parties with distinct ideologies is not in the best interest and welfare of the public schools. It has been in this interest perhaps that historically many state legisla-

tures provided for non-partisan school elections held at different times from the general elections. This endeavor may have developed the notion that the schools were above politics.

This idea is contrary to the facts as they exist today. Education is a governmental activity and hence political, and the school administrator who ignores this does it at his peril. The political involvement in collective negotiation is intricate and extensive. It extends to state and federal statutes, court decisions, and attorney's general opinions.

Another concept of politics refers to power, that is, the more effectively one participates in public policy making in the school district, the more powerful he is. Such individuals or aggregates of individuals may be differentiated quantitatively according to how effectively they participate in the making of school district or community policy. Thus it is, that power systems may be specified and a community power structure defined.

Today's school superintendent serves in an environment generally heavily charged with political tensions. These may be internal to the school system or external and located in the local community or in the state. An example of the former might be student and faculty unrest expressed against a school principal. If the tension explodes beyond the confines of the school and parent groups become identified, it becomes both internal-external.

Schools compete for power and influence with other institutions for the resources of society. This competition takes the form of people deciding what amounts they will pay for educational services and what they will retain for private purposes. Their allocation of relative values may be responsive to the influence of the basic socio-economic forces of society. The strivings of teachers for higher salaries, smaller classes, or better working conditions generally are not judged solely on the demonstrated needs. More often they are judged in relation to other influences coexistent in the community at the time.

Much of educational policy today has its beginnings in the basic social, economic, political and technological

forces of American society. Witness, for example, the educational ramifications arising from the Supreme Court's ruling on segregation, the President's leadership and the passage by Congress of the Anti-Poverty Program, or the continued extension of automation not only in business and industry but its adaption to education, too. The schools are encircled and affected by the total milieu of society.

Whether it be the legal complexities of negotiation, the striving of groups for power and influence, or the competition for the limited resources of society, the school superintendent is in the middle of an ever moving stream of political activity. In order for him to do more than operate in this complex environment guided by intuition or his unaided judgment, it is necessary that he have some background or reading and study in political science and political decision-making.

Among the ninety-eight superintendents in the investigation described earlier, only four indicated they had taken any graduate-level courses, seminars or guided reading in political science or the politics of education.

Among the areas in which it would seem helpful for a superintendent to have workable knowledge might include (a) the nature and dynamics of political power; (b) community power structures, both competitive and monopolistic; (c) political power and economic goods and services; and (d) mass media and political power. In addition to the reading and study, guided observation and experience in actual situations are valuable. Much has been learned already about the value of administrative internships. Short period work-experience in state education offices, municipal government, the state legislature, personnel offices in business and industry, or experiences making school-community surveys do appear to be valuable.

The Superintendent's Preparation for Negotiation

Eighty-two of the ninety-eight superintendents indicated that they thought study and preparation in the area of collective negotiation should be offered in the graduate school preparation program.

Over half of the superintendents indicated that the problem was one of the most serious confronting the schools today. The conversations on their assessment of the negotiation movement were interesting. Many of the superintendents may have unintentionally and perhaps unconsciously revealed the injury that came to their professional self-concept as teachers chose new patterns of behavior in collective negotiation. A few were openly hostile to teachers' organization. Others honestly and sincerely questioned the wisdom of the Associations to compete with the Federation for membership in representative elections. A few were outspoken in their criticism of the state education associations as they encouraged the threat of sanctions to bring about a "master contract" for teachers. This action they felt could lead to the removal from the local board of education of control over teachers' salaries and working conditions and place them in the hands of the state.

The crucial nature of the problem led most superintendents to ask for help in terms of how to conduct negotiations. Their most urgent request for help was in negotiating techniques; second request was how to prepare to negotiate.

There was no indication from the superintendents that graduate study in negotiation should consist of another course added to the program of studies. On the contrary, they seemed to see it as a broad area consisting of elements from labor and industry, political science, the behavioral sciences, law, and administration. They favored the interdisciplinary seminar approach with college or university specialists from labor and industry, political science, and the law.

They were practically unanimous in their requests for continuous in-service opportunities to study collective negotiation. Their first choice of the type of in-service activity was a conference that would be planned and offered cooperatively by several related agencies in education, business, industry, and labor. Their second choice was for a short term workshop offered through a department or college of education.

Superintendents revealed scarcely any knowledge of the proposals to learn the processes and techniques of negotiation by the use of simulated materials.

WHO IS TO CONTROL EDUCATION?

Superintendents revealed grave concern about the future control of education. About 25 percent showed alarm about the long-term consequences of the use of coercion by the teachers to win immediate goals. They felt that the leaders in teachers' organizations were more anxious to win benefits now than to consider the long-term consequences upon the public, who in the end controls the purse. They feared that the techniques of the organization leaders might well produce instant progress with long term regression.

Many superintendents, some from each of the states, indicated their disappointment in seeing the National Educational Association "every year become more like a labor union." These men were not indicating opposition to labor unions. In fact, several of them explained that their fathers had been active in the union and one superintendent had been a member of a trade union before he began his graduate study. They recognized the contributions that labor unions have made in the evolution of the system of free public education in the United States. However, they felt the fact that the federation is rendering a service to some teachers, especially in the large cities, did not lead to the conclusion that teacher organizations should be attached to any organization representing only a segment of American society.

As several superintendents spoke to this issue, completely unsolicited, they conveyed the general idea that the fundamental issue at stake is the purpose of education. The first mandate is to inform and enlighten all of the people, without fear or favor of the special interests to any particular group or class. The inherent purpose of education in a free society is to serve all of the people by preparing them for informed and responsible discharge of individual and social living. If teachers in large numbers were to become allied with a particular segment of society, it would be most difficult, if not impossible, for the profession to

retain independence so as to take a stand unhampered by any organizational commitment except the high purpose of dedication to the needs of youth and others who seek to learn. Without exception, among those superintendents who expressed themselves on this matter, it was their strong conviction that teachers' organizations should maintain friendly relations with all agencies which seek to support and improve our system of free public schools, but should officially ally themselves with no segment of society.

CONCLUSION

Like many innovations, collective negotiation offers opportunity for creative change as well as some liabilities. The improvement of preparation programs in the area of collective negotiation will be aided materially if consensus can be achieved as to the proper role of the superintendent of schools. The definition of his function in broad outline with allowance for variations in local situations and the personality attributes of the superintendent will do much not only to provide guidelines in operation but to remove the uncertainty in the minds of superintendents.

Collective negotiation focuses attention on the apparent conflicts between professionalism and bureaucratic organization. More extended study and research on the similarities of the two phenomena may aid in developing ways and means to avoid open confrontation between them.

The need to strengthen and reinforce emphasis on the superintendent's knowledge and expertise in the political arena is patently confirmed by the experiences in negotiation. Perhaps there is no other area—excepting philosophy of education—in which more opportunity is presented for the varied expression of the skills of human relations, administration, communication, and leadership than in the design and administration of policy.

The hard and practical reality of negotiating with teachers and the board leads superintendents today to ask for help in devising negotiating techniques. The urgency of the crisis prompts them to ask for "emergency service" which must be met by in-service opportunities. The long-term approach will be served better by study not only in

the theory and practice of labor relations but generous allocation of time and effort in the social and behavorial sciences.

The final issue which is of concern to a larger audience than superintendents and professors of educational administration has to do with the question of who is to control education.

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