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A Study of the Relationships between Superintendent Longevity, Board Member Longevity, Board Member Training, and School Districts Demonstrating Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) During the 2004-2005 School Year

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A STUDY OF THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN
SUPERINTENDENT LONGEVITY, BOARD MEMBER LONGEVITY,
BOARD MEMBER TRAINING, AND
SCHOOL DISTRICTS DEMONSTRATING ADEQUATE YEARLY PROGRESS (AYP)
DURING THE 2004-2005 SCHOOL YEAR.

by

Edward J. Maritz, Jr.

Submitted in partial fulfillment of

the requirements for the degree

Doctor of Education

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School of Education

Duquesne University

August 2006

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By

Edward J. Maritz, Jr.

2006

Abstract

Expectations for school districts and educators are high; and expectations for those governing schools are even higher yet. NCLB poses a substantial challenge to those governing school districts: all students must be 100% proficient in language arts and mathematics by 2014. In the face of the demands of the standards movement and the increased accountability placed upon those governing schools, school board members need to know if the research base has identified any characteristics to their service on school boards that can be found to have a correlation to improving the effectiveness of their school districts. This study employed correlation research to determine whether a relationship existed between superintendent longevity, school board member longevity, school board member training, and Pennsylvania school districts that demonstrated Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) during the 2004-2005 school year. AYP was selected as a barometer of school effectiveness because it is the most prominent and widely accepted National measure of school achievement in place as a result of NCLB. A two-part survey questionnaire was sent to Pennsylvania school district superintendents to investigate the following research questions: 1) What is the relationship between the tenure of the school district superintendent and districts demonstrating AYP? 2) What is the relationship between years of experience of school board members and districts demonstrating AYP? 3) What is the relationship between school board member participation in voluntary in-service training programs and districts demonstrating AYP? Findings revealed that there is not a statistically significant relationship between the tenure of the school district superintendent and districts demonstrating AYP. Conversely,

a positive correlation was found between the years of experience of school board members and districts demonstrating AYP. Last, there was not a statistically significant relationship between school board member participation in voluntary in-service training programs and districts demonstrating AYP. A Likert survey generated from a review of relevant literature found that nearly 60% of superintendents responding disagreed that District AYP is a valid measure of achievement in their school districts. Further research on identifying relationships of governance attributes as they relate to school districts ability to demonstrate AYP is recommended.

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CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

“If a marine boot were sent into action with the equivalent degree of training given a new school board member when he assumes his important duties, casualties would soar.” (Jones, 1973, p. 22)

The practices of school boards and individual school board members are areas that have not been empirically studied extensively. A review of literature offers some empirical and theoretical information concerning the purposes, characteristics, limitations, and problems of school boards. However, there is an absence of extensive research on the impact board member actions have on school achievement. Are there indirect variables to school governance, such as longevity of service or in-service training that can effectuate improvements in school performance? Current literature concerning school board members largely consists of advice and opinions of practitioners that are based entirely upon personal experiences (Keller, 1997). This dissertation examined if any correlation existed between school board and superintendent longevity, school board member training, and districts demonstrating AYP in Pennsylvania during the 2004-2005 school year.

The standards based reform movement has created a paradigm shift in public education throughout the last decade. The 2002 enactment of the Federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) promulgates demands for steady increases in student achievement in language arts and mathematics, with all students reaching 100% proficiency by 2014.

In addressing educational reform movements, the research is sparse and fragmented on how school board actions and decisions directly or indirectly impact and

affect student achievement. Federal and State officials need to know if there are any actions local school boards take that have an impact on student achievement (Dycus, 1986). This study aimed to examine potential relationships among three distinct variables of school governance: superintendent longevity, board member longevity, and board member participation in voluntary training programs among those Pennsylvania school districts demonstrating AYP during the 2004-2005 school year.

Past decades have seen many educational reforms, all of which are supportive of advancing student interests and providing the best possible educational experience. Huffman and Jacobson (2003), supported by DuFour & Eaker (1998), stated that although most of the reforms have been based on research, and the good intentions of their proponents, many of the reforms have failed to substantially improve schools and enhance academic performance. Clearly, given the demands of NCLB, now is a logical time to examine if any relationships exist between longevity of leadership, board member participation in voluntary in-service training programs, and districts demonstrating AYP.

Leithwood, Steinbach & Jantzi (2002) explained performance-based approaches to large-scale reform as being “nothing if not comprehensive in the array of tools they use to stimulate change” (p. 95). Leithwood, et al., (2002) further explained:

Nonetheless, increasing the accountability of schools is, to advocates of this approach, what a silicon chip is to a computer or what an engine is to an automobile. Without mechanisms for increasing accountability, a performance-based approach to reform is just a hollow shell. Indeed, the same reform efforts are often described in different places as both performance-based approaches

(Odden, 1999; Smith & O' Day, 1991) and instances of the new approach to educational accountability (Elmore, Abelman & Fuhrman, 1996). Accountability, as Adams and Kirst (1999) pointed out, is viewed by many reformers "as a springboard to school improvement." (p. 463) (Leithwood, et al., 2002, p. 95)

Existing research clearly supports standards based education with a mechanism for evaluating accountability, much like NCLB provides with yearly determinations of AYP. The implications for those governing schools, administrators in general and board members in particular, are many.

School boards in Pennsylvania are comprised of nine elected lay people with no mandated requirement for previous education or training. (Personal Communication, Cowell, 2002). The concept of laity and all of its implications have been under intense scrutiny for most of the twentieth century. Yet, despite sweeping reforms in public education, laity has survived as a governance model given the importance American citizens place on local control (Flores, 2001).

As public schools continue to operate under intense observation from all stakeholders, laity will continue to be questioned as an operating model for public schools. Fleetham (1998) asserted that most countries around the world prefer to let the State run the schools with educational practice and policy left to the government, educators, and parents. If the concept of laity is to be upheld as the primary governance structure for policy-making bodies, and if scrutiny of public education continues at its current level, the performance and effectiveness of the lay member should be studied.

When questioning the effectiveness and relevance of laity, a logical study of the training, preparation, and experience of the lay board member is warranted.

Huston (1989) noted that school board membership has become a more intricate responsibility than ever before. Even when viewed in a contemporary lens, laity is deemed necessary and valuable to uphold the ideals espoused in the Constitution. “Lay control, however, no longer is synonymous with uninformed control, and society is expecting more from school leadership” (p. 19). Historically, elected bodies charged with creating policy to be implemented through persons other than themselves has created opportunities for role conflict. McCloud & McKenzie (1994) stated:

In the past, school board members were charged with administering all aspects of the school. However, as city populations grew between 1820 and 1860, members of urban school boards were overwhelmed by the enormity of their task. As a result, the office of the superintendent was created in the 1840’s. From that day until now, there has been tension and, often, strained relationships between the board that makes policy and the superintendent who implements it. (p. 385)

Keller (1997) investigated the policy making orientation of school board members in Louisiana and asserted that school board governance is a complicated process because school boards simultaneously attempt to act as policy making organizations, relying on the expertise of the school superintendent and his/her staff, and as representative bodies, responding to the demands of parents and school community (Greene, 1992). The process is further complicated because individuals who are appointed or elected as

members of a school board bring to the table their own unique perspectives (Murdock, 1995).

A 1983 report titled *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform* stated that “the educational foundations of our society are presently being eroded by a rising tide of mediocrity that threatens our very future as a Nation” (The National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983, p. 1). The Commission’s findings were substantial in depth and breadth and concluded by stating: “society and its educational institutions seem to have lost sight of the basic purposes of schooling, and of the high expectations and disciplined effort needed to attain them” (p. 1).

While *A Nation at Risk* criticized the effectiveness of public education, other studies conclude that significant reform is needed for the very survival of public education. Nearly all-50 States have or are attempting to utilize a variety of reform methods from charter schools to privatization of school operations to for-profit firms. Yackera (1998) noted increasing numbers of National reform movements focusing on school-based management, school choice, National goals, teacher effectiveness, charter schools, and student assessment. Modern-day school directors clearly have ever-increasing expectations, demands, and pressures with apparently decreasing support, resources, and abilities from State and National agencies.

School board member training and its relevance and importance has been the subject of much research over the last two decades. “The role of a school board member is much more complex today, and if these individuals do not have a thorough understanding of their role, there will be negative effects on the education of children and

in the public confidence of public education” (McReynolds, 1997, p. 1). Yackera (1998) suggested that the public has greater expectations for school board members than it does for other elected officials.

The necessity for adequate training of school directors is better understood when viewed in the context of their roles and responsibilities within school organizations. Everett & Sloan (1984) offered what can be considered a timeless yet accurate, eye-opening description of the lay board member: “school board members are (1) lay people, (2) generally the least trained people in the school system regarding the learning and education of children, and (3) hold the most power” (p. 2).

Current school board members receive training on a voluntary basis in Pennsylvania and have no formal mandate to participate in training as a school board member (Personal Communication, PSBA, 2002).

In the United States, a quarter of all board members are new to board service at any given time (NSBA, 1992). Nationwide, 60% of board members have fewer than three years of service (Funk & Funk, 1992). “Without some pre-service orientation program, according to the National School Boards Association, it is estimated that it will take six to 12 months of on-the-job experience before a board member functions effectively” (p. 12).

The requirements for school directors specify only entrance requirements as detailed in the PA School Code, 1949, as amended. The entrance requirements state that in order to be eligible for appointment or election to the school board you must be (1) 18 years of age or upwards; (2) a resident of the community for one-year prior to taking

office via election or appointment; and (3) of good moral character. School directors shall not be a holder of any office or position of profit under any government in the school district of which they are elected. Further, no school director shall be permitted to simultaneously be a member of the local municipal council (PA School Code, SC 322).

The Pennsylvania School Board Association (PSBA) states that the issues facing school board members are more complex and difficult than ever before, and that “the decisions call for an amount of experience, knowledge, and training unavailable to a member who does not attend conferences” (PSBA, 1995). Currently, Pennsylvania school directors often participate in voluntary, one-time training programs offered throughout the State by PSBA. Fullan (1996), discussed the widely accepted norm of “one-time” training sessions and offered:

It has long been known that skill and know-how are central to successful change, so it is surprising how little attention we pay to it beyond one-shot workshops and disconnected training. Mastery involves strong initial teacher education, and continuous staff development through the career, but it is more than this when we place it in the perspective of comprehensive change agency. It is a learning habit that permeates everything we do. It is not enough to be exposed to new ideas. We have to know where the new ideas fit, and we have to be skilled in them, not just like them. (p. 16)

Existing research and literature commonly identify generally accepted roles and responsibilities for participants in school governance structures. It is universally

understood that the board is responsible for setting policy and the chief administrator is obligated to implement policy. Crosby (1998) found that the preponderance of existing literature suggests that policy setting and policy administration cannot be totally separated and that more attention should be given to development of open communication and positive relationships between superintendents and school boards. “If communication is collaboratively shared on a basis for true decision making, as most successful boards and superintendents practice their roles, the separation of these roles is less important” (p. 2).

Defining what determines an effective school district is a complex process. This research will utilize District Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) determinations as reported annually each fall by the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) as means to identify which districts are effective as a result of demonstrating AYP.

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), as part of the Federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), makes schools accountable to students, their parents, teachers, and the community. The purpose of AYP is to ensure that all students have reading and math skills that prepare them for the future. This law states that all students must reach the Proficient level or higher in Reading or Language Arts and Mathematics by 2014. School districts and schools must show Adequate Yearly Progress on several measurable indicators: Attendance or Graduation Rate, Test Performance, and Test Participation. AYP targets measure whether a school or district is making sufficient annual progress toward the goal of 100% proficiency.

Purpose of the Study

The primary purpose of this study was to investigate if any correlations existed between superintendent and board member longevity, board member participation in voluntary in-service training, and Pennsylvania school districts that demonstrated AYP for the 2004-2005 school year. Superintendents were chosen as the focus of this study because “superintendents occupy one of the most unique and important positions within the formal organizational structure of school systems” (DiLeo, 1999, p. 1). According to Stipetic (1994), the role of the superintendent is unique because there is no parallel position within a school district. The Pennsylvania School Boards Association (PSBA), in many of its training programs, refers to the superintendent of schools as the crucial “tenth, non-voting member of the board of school directors poised to provide dynamic leadership for the board and the school district” (PSBA, Personal Communication, 2002). The superintendent of schools is the key leader involving leadership and governance of public school systems (Sergiovanni, Burlingame, Cooms, and Thruston, 1987; Konnert & Augenstein, 1990). Pennsylvania school superintendents were surveyed for this research as they function as the CEO of school districts working closely with locally elected lay board members. Superintendents, as chief executive officers, manage multi-million dollar enterprises, direct large numbers of employees, and have the potential to influence the direction of their districts.

Research Questions

1. What is the relationship between the tenure of the school district superintendent and districts demonstrating AYP?
2. What is the relationship between years of experience of school board members and districts demonstrating AYP?
3. What is the relationship between school board member participation in voluntary in-service training programs and districts demonstrating AYP?

Definition of Terms

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP): An individual State’s measure of yearly progress toward achieving State academic standards. “Adequate Yearly Progress” (AYP) is the minimum level of improvement that States, school districts and schools must achieve each year.

American Association of School Administrators (AASA): Professional organization serving school administrators in research, policy, and professional development capacities.

Boardsmanship Training: Completion of a seminar or course that focuses on the concepts, theories, and philosophies that are regarded as effective tenets of school directors.

In-service: An educational/information activity used to train individuals to handle tasks for which they are directly or indirectly responsible.

Laity: A concept of school governance whereby lay citizen members of a local community are elected and charged with establishing policy for public schools.

PA Act 48 of 1999: Legislation that took effect July 1, 2000 for all certified educators in Pennsylvania requiring any combination of collegiate studies, continuing professional education courses, or learning experiences equivalent to 180 hours every five years to maintain active certification.

PDE: Pennsylvania Department of Education.

Mandate: Legislation passed by the Pennsylvania General Assembly and signed into law by the Executive Branch that requires school districts to follow through on directives, programs, or policies in the management of public schools.

National School Boards Association (NSBA): An organization formed at the National level, which works with and through all of its individual State federation members, to foster excellence and equity in public education through school board leadership.

Pennsylvania School Boards Association (PSBA): Pennsylvania School Boards Association, founded in 1895 to serve as an advocate for public education and local governance while being responsive to the needs of boards of school directors (PSBA, 1995).

Policy: Principles, plans, or courses of action established, sought, and commanded by the governing body of a school system, dealing with values, aims, and desired ends, rather than means (Poston, 1994).

School Board Member/School Director: Any person elected or appointed as a member of a school board in a public school system in Pennsylvania. In Pennsylvania, school board members are generally referred to as school directors.

School Improvement: Schools or districts are designated as needing school improvement when they do not meet AYP targets for two or three consecutive years. School choice and supplemental education services are offered for schools in School Improvement.

School Board President: Any person elected to the central leadership role position of the school board by peer members of the board. In Pennsylvania, board presidents serve one-year terms and are elected annually at the mandated reorganization meeting of the board held the first week in December.

School District Superintendent: An individual employed by the school board in the public school systems of Pennsylvania to act as its Chief Executive Officer (CEO). Superintendents, acting as commissioned officers of the State by the Secretary of Education, serve as a non-voting member of the school board, charged with implementing policies adopted by school board.

Voluntary In-Service Training: For the purposes of this study, voluntary in-service training comprises a school director's completion of one or more PSBA in-service board training courses. The Association typically offers these courses in stand-alone, evening format sessions on a variety of school governance topics. Participation in these training sessions is voluntary and is not mandated as a pre-requisite to elected board service.

CHAPTER II REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A. School Board Governance

“School board members are lay people, generally the least trained people in the school system regarding the learning and education of children, and typically hold the most power.” (Everett and Sloan, 1984, p. 2)

History of Lay Boards of Education

School boards as a governance structure have a rich heritage dating back several centuries. Local control of public schools by citizens closest to the schools remains the centerpiece of America’s public school governance. Poyourow-Ripple (1989) traced the origin of local school boards in Pennsylvania dating back to the 18th Century. In 1834, legislation mandated that each ward in each city and each municipality was charged with overseeing the operation of schools. The management responsibilities at the time were perfunctory, generally relating to acquiring materials and staff.

Glimpses of modern day school boards slowly began to evolve as population continued to grow and as school districts merged into larger school systems. These mergers resulted in school systems that became too complex for the lay board to manage effectively. As time evolved, the necessity for assistance from professionals led to the creation of the position of county superintendent by the Pennsylvania Legislature in 1854.

Despite the intent of the Pennsylvania Legislature to provide a clear connection between schools and the State department in creating county superintendents, the move proved unpopular with local school boards (The First 150 Years, 1995). “Gradually,

more and more of the school board's original duties became delegated to the everyday responsibility of the superintendent and other professional employees" (Poyourow-Ripple, p. 24).

A new constitution drafted in Pennsylvania in 1873 delineated several major educational mandates. Compulsory attendance for all students six years of age and upwards was required; funding for sectarian schools was prohibited and equity to women was established (Del Collo, 2001, p. 19).

Pennsylvania is considered a pioneer in its creation of the Nation's first school boards association in 1895 whose intent was to keep local school boards as informed as possible about educational initiatives (Reflecting on Our Past, 1995).

The role, function, and design of school boards changed substantially throughout the twentieth century as driven by economic, societal, and political subtexts. Poyourow-Ripple (1989) cited world events, such as the 1957 Soviet launching of Sputnik, as the driving force behind an intense debate over education in the United States, especially at the secondary level.

A myriad of societal challenges throughout the last century, from World Wars to an economic depression, to the 1956 Supreme Court *Brown v. The Board of Education* desegregation order continued to have an impact on public education. The impact of all these societal forces posed increased challenges to school leaders.

Morrison (1996) suggested that historically low voter turnout for school board elections across the country is an indicator that while school directors continue to shape the future direction and policies of their respective schools, they often are elected without

a substantial mandate from their respective constituents. Despite the increased political attention being paid to public schools throughout the United States, governance structures “involving lay people is one of those American traditions that seldom gets much attention” (p. 13).

School Board Governance and the Policy Making Function

In Pennsylvania, “a system of free public education is mandated under the State constitution which states in Article IIB, Section 14: The Legislature shall provide for the maintenance and support of a thorough and efficient system of public education” (The Pennsylvania School Boards Association, 1991, p. 5). Elected school board members are considered agents of the State acting under charge of the Pennsylvania General Assembly to administer schools in carrying out the Mandate of Article IIB. (Pennsylvania Constitution, as amended).

Chand (1989) identified major functions of school boards in terms of areas to be focused upon while board members are discharging their duties.

The board should establish and maintain written policies on dealing effectively with instructional goals, educational philosophy of the district, administration of the district, board-superintendent relations, evaluation of district programs and staff, school finance, public relations, communications, conducting meetings, planning, personnel, facilities management, staff development, complaints, and other appropriate areas of school governance. (p. 34)

While policy making is readily defined, the lines of policy making get blurred by individual school directors providing their own interpretation and definition of the policy making function. The Twentieth Century Fund, Inc. (1992) describes the board/superintendent relationship in regard to setting and administering policy as follows:

Training of superintendents perpetuates the myth that superintendents administer school systems and boards only make policy; in fact, policy and administration have become gray areas with the increasing complexity of public education and shifting constituent expectations. Most board members know they are supposed to set policy, but they also know that boards are legally responsible for everything that occurs, or fails to occur, in their school districts. (p. 74)

A dual sponsored publication by the National School Boards Association (NSBA) and the American Association of School Administrators (AASA) sought to identify key areas of responsibility for school directors (Houston & Shannon, 1994). Specific responsibilities of elected school boards were found:

- To make clear that the board's primary roles are the establishment of policy, the development of a vision for the schools and providing an environment and structure to enable the vision to be achieved while working to develop high expectations for achievement with assessments that measure achievement so that the school board can be accountable to the public.

- To support the superintendent in all decisions that conform to board policy while holding the superintendent responsible and accountable for the administration of the schools through regular, constructive, written, and oral evaluations that are based on goals established by the board with the advice of counsel of the superintendent.
- To provide the superintendent with an employment contract that is comprehensive, while offering fair and adequate compensation that will attract excellent staff in all areas.
- To assist the superintendent in familiarizing her/him with the local system, community interests, and individual board member's expertise.
- To hold all board meetings with the superintendent or a designee present and to always consult the superintendent on all matters as they arise on which the board may take action.
- To develop a plan for board-superintendent communications by channeling communications with school employees through the superintendent including complaints and other communications. Doing so ensures that such communications can be processed in a coordinated manner that is responsive to staff, students, and patrons. The board should also have a policy on effective management of complaints against district personnel.
- To take action on matters only after hearing the recommendation of the superintendent while always providing the superintendent with administrative assistance especially in the area of monitoring teaching and learning.

- To exercise oversight of all educational programs while working in concert with other governmental agencies, and when appropriate collaborating with other school boards to let our elected officials know of local concerns and issues.
- To mandate and provide resources for high quality board and professional development programs using qualified trainers to provide excellent policy leadership for the school system. The board must provide for self-evaluation of the board's own effectiveness in meeting its goals and performing its role in public school governance. (pp. 8-10)

Individual State school boards associations identify desired roles and responsibilities of board members. Campbell & Greene (1994) identified the California School Boards Associations list of school board roles which is divided into seven categories to further define needs and methods of training. These areas included: setting the vision for the district and creating a climate for excellence; appointing and evaluating the superintendent; adopting the budget and ensuring fiscal accountability; developing curriculum standards and ensuring program accountability; governing through policy; collective bargaining; and advocacy.

Roles and responsibilities of school directors are well established and defined in literature, journals, and empirical studies. Despite this, the functionality of the lay board member remains an area of active debate. Keller (1997) underscored the importance of school boards in our democratic society in noting that school boards historically have been charged with the sole responsibility to make local education policy. Keller (1997)

further posed the question in wondering if there is a real understanding of what school boards do and the perspective their members bring to the policy-making role. Kaufhold (1993) investigated what many perceive to be the universally understood model of board members developing policies and superintendents administering them. A substantial perception exists among existing superintendents that board members continue to do both, thereby negating the authority of the superintendent. Kaufhold noted:

If we persist in comparing the American Education System with that of other countries, we also need to ask if other countries burden their educators with boards of amateurs who use their elected positions for self-serving ends and circumscribe teachers and administrators who seek to do a job for which they have four to eight years of training. (p. 1)

Scrutiny of School Board Performance

The performance of America's public schools has remained a centerpiece of many National political election campaigns since the late 1970's. Education operates as a somewhat jaded profession given the ever-increasing number and frequency of educational reform initiatives that are borne from political subtexts. School choice, vouchers, charter schools, and the standards movement are evidence of a growing frustration with the status quo (Dietrich, 2000 p. 40). School boards are clearly under fire by reform groups claiming that local control is outdated (Bryant & Grady, 1991).

Flynn (1998) identified an external "fierce and diffused climate" driving public education which is pressuring school board members to acquire enhanced skill sets in leadership, communications, and collaborative problem-solving. Engle (1999) suggested

that local education policy boards be created to replace local school boards, which he believes are too far involved in the administrative minutiae of operating a school system to provide effective policy leadership.

Rallis & Criscoe (1993) found that “while the intent of school boards is to provide leadership, boards lack vision and the necessary processes to be leaders in restructuring.” Rallis & Criscoe further elaborated with a scathing analysis of modern day boards of education:

Boards do not have an articulate vision of precisely what is in the best interests of children and how to provide access to favorable learning conditions for all children. Because board members are lay persons who may not have substantive exposure, much less training, about the new understandings of the cognitive processes involved in thinking and learning, they may hold outdated beliefs and best practices. (p. 6)

Morrison (1996) provided a rationale for the increasing scrutiny of the current governance structure for public school systems by discussing the need for an effective process to ensure a quality school system:

Only through an effective school governance process can school boards see that the districts’ children get a quality education and that the public’s money is wisely spent. This is also the only way that boards of education can prove to their constituents and State lawmakers that their schools are doing a satisfactory job. An effective system of school governance

provides the superintendent and the board with the means to exercise responsible and effective leadership for the district. (p. 20)

Criticism of school boards and their elected members often times centers on the performance of the board member (by virtue of their votes cast) and the collective action of the entire board once a consensus vote is reached. Research exists to help board members better understand scrutiny of their performance by following effective tenets of performance. Council (1994) identified nine lessons for school board members to adhere to in order to be more effective board members:

1. *Trust*: Board members must trust one another.
2. *Responsibility versus Authority*: Every board member has basically the same amount of authority.
3. *Effective Communication*: What happens when you are listening not when you are talking?
4. *Control of Meetings*: Does the board stay on task?
5. *Committee Structure*: Use your committees to keep from airing the board's dirty laundry in public.
6. *Problem-Solving Approaches*: Use brainstorming to solve problems, listen to your fellow board members.
7. *Board Development*: Make training and development an integral part of the board's operating philosophy.
8. *Superintendent Relations*: Open communication is a vitally key element in the board's relationship.

9. *Mission*: The board must have firm command of the school district's mission. (p. 26)

Existing research on school boards proves that as a governance body they are not without their critics. Board members operate within a fishbowl, with each vote cast subject to public scrutiny and criticism. Danzberger (1994), supported by Morrison (1996), identified ten areas of common criticisms of local school boards with training being a focus in several of those areas:

1. School Boards fail to provide far-reaching or politically risky leadership for reform;
2. School boards have become another level of administration, often micro-managing the district;
3. School boards are so splinted by attempts to represent special interests or meet their individual political needs that boards cannot govern effectively;
4. School boards are not spending enough time educating themselves about issues or about education policy making;
5. School boards have not provided the leadership required to mobilize other agencies and organizations to meet the health and social service needs of students and their families;
6. School boards do not exercise adequate policy oversight, lack adequate accountability measures, and fail to communicate progress to the public;
7. School boards rely on rhetoric rather than action in regarding decision making on the board;

8. School boards exhibit serious problems in their capacity to develop positive and productive lasting relationships with superintendents;
9. School boards pay little or no attention to their performance and to their needs for ongoing training; and
10. School boards tend either to make decisions in response to the “issue of the day” in changing communities or to govern to maintain the status quo in more stable communities. (p. 369)

The critics of public education are well supported by utilizing as props examples of declining achievement of United States pupils. Nikolai (1999) held that not since the 1950's and 1960's in our efforts to regain our competitive edge against the Russians in space technology has our national attention been so focused on improving the overall quality of public education.

Performance of school board members leads to logical questions of qualifications and competence. Banach (1989) suggested that school boards as a governance body do not function as effective teams because board members often have no specific qualification for board service except being citizens (p. 23).

Gursky (1992) cited a 1992 NSBA survey in which 100 board members and 71 superintendents from urban school districts were surveyed. The findings concluded “both superintendents and board members ranked the lack of understanding of role differences, poor communications, and the personal agenda of some board members as the leading cause of unstable relationships” (p. 1).

B. School Governance and Effective Schools Research

Correlations between School Governance and School Achievement

Research identifying direct linkages between variables of school governance structures and school achievement is scarce. Even in the face of the sweeping reform movements impacting education today, the body of research offers little empirical evidence to suggest correlates between select variables of school governance such as training and longevity, and districts that are labeled as demonstrating AYP such as in Pennsylvania. Empirical research that has been conducted often stops short of identifying specific variables of governance which might have relationships between governance and the results of student achievement in school districts. Ironically, while an abundance of research exists suggesting what effective school governance structures *should* look like, the research stops at the doorstep of thoroughly studying existing governance behaviors to see if any potential relationships exist between school governance and school achievement. Peterson, Murphy & Hallinger (1986) found the existence of “tight linkages” between the management of schools and classroom instruction in school districts. Griffin & Chance (1994) further underscored this reality and pointed out that the research base was virtually silent on the influence of those governing schools and the effectiveness in America’s schools. Dycus (1986) stated at the time of his work that little research had been conducted concerning the roles of superintendents or the roles of school board members in developing effective school districts. Dycus found the research base at that time to focus primarily on teacher and administrator leadership. Not much further empirical evidence has been conducted since

Dycus' work in 1986 to identify relationships between select variables of school governance and the resultant achievement of students in school districts. Further, researchers as recent as Borba (2002) and researchers as far back as Cubban (1984), and Murphy & Hallinger (1986) all concluded that an abundance of research exists on school districts but little if any concrete empirical evidence exists on direct linkages between school governance actions and school achievement. For instance, what actions can school board members take to foster improvements in school achievement? Can board members seek longer terms of service or can they seek out additional training on their roles and responsibilities? Few researchers went down the path of identifying relationships between select variables of district governance and school district achievement. Griffin & Chance (1994) asserted that there was cause to believe that there is a link between the practices and activities of those that lead schools and the effectiveness of those schools.

Peterson, et al., (1987) studied the coordination, control, and assessment procedures that school boards approved and superintendents employed in effective school districts. Peterson found the existence of "tight linkages" between the managerial level and classroom instruction in school districts by finding that district governance should specify learning chains and teaching approaches through structures such as goal setting, evaluation, professional development, and budgetary allocations to ensure school goals are met.

Borba (2002) delineated work by Purky & Smith (1985) which examined school effectiveness literature and found strategies and policies which effectuated and stimulated

school reform. They identified four key tasks that boards of education and superintendents should execute: (a) determine guidelines that facilitate the process of school improvement; (b) specify goals for the district after seeking input from school employees, labor unions, and the parent and community groups; (c) hold central office administrators and school staffs accountable for designing and implementing a school improvement plan; and (d) prescribe a timeline for improvement. (Borba, 2002, pp. 49-50). Plut & Jacobs (2000) cited earlier work by Kurth & Pavalko (1975) which examined causes for differences in school district performance. Research at that time indicated a relationship between economic and cultural forces and school achievement. More recent research suggested that correlations may exist between select variables of those that lead schools and the overall performance of those school districts. When examining the functionality of those governing schools and its impact on school achievement, an examination of the performance of superintendents in general and school board members in particular, is warranted. Lawton, Scane & Wang (1995) cited school board performance as one of the most important factors affecting school level authority and compliance. Lawton, et al., found that school employees view school boards and its members as part of a bureaucracy, much like state governance. Klaymeier-Wills (2003) further supported Lawton, et al. (1995) and stated:

If leadership at the school level is not satisfied with the performance of the school board the production of the school board can suffer the consequences. Because schools are often slow to change and since schools are often burdened with their own levels of bureaucracy, school boards

must work to effectively manage themselves within these complex environments. (p. 106)

Ineffectiveness of school governance structures has been realized in large-scale districts in Pennsylvania, most recently in the Pittsburgh Public Schools, the 2nd largest school district out of all 501 Pennsylvania school districts next to Philadelphia. In July 2002, three local charitable foundations, the Heinz Endowments, the Pittsburgh Foundation, and the Grable foundation, informed then Superintendent John Thompson that they had lost confidence in the governance and leadership structures of Pittsburgh Public Schools and would shelve nearly four million dollars for a wide array of grant funded educational programs already in place in Pittsburgh. Lyttle (2004) interviewed foundation directors and one director cited discord, low morale, a decline in leadership, and chaotic decision-making in the city's school board as reasons to withhold funding (p. 41).

Then City of Pittsburgh Mayor Tom Murphy responded to this action by appointing a 38-member commission on Public Education to evaluate city schools in terms of student performance, finance, and governance. The commission found "a school system plagued by student underachievement, unused funds, and an inability to serve the interests of children" (Mayor's Commission on Public Education, 2003).

Lyttle (2004) further studied the commission and its members themselves. The school board governing Pittsburgh Public Schools is composed of elected officials who, according to the Mayor's Commission, have based many of their decisions "on the narrow concerns of their constituents and loyalty to their specific neighborhoods, rather

than on sound educational policy and the interests of all children and taxpayers in the Pittsburgh Public School District” (Mayor’s Commission, 2003:44). Dickerson concluded that “if the school board can learn to govern, the students enrolled in the school system can learn to succeed” (Dickerson, 2003).

Despite the scarcity of research to identify direct linkages between school governance characteristics and school achievement, some research has suggested that incongruence of expectations of school board members may lead to dysfunction among school boards. Danzberger, Kirst, & Usdan (1992) found that expectations of board members going into office were not always clear or accurate. Howe (1995) stressed that school board members past and present repeatedly said they had no idea how big a job it was to serve on a board and admitted that they were somewhat disillusioned when they realized how little authority they had. This research further underscores the need for formalized training of school board members, which will be examined further in this chapter. Poston (1994) framed the problem of inconsistent expectations and stated the biggest problem new school board members face is lack of preparation. Danzberger et al. (1992) interviewed board members about how they learned their role and what impact that role may have on the district. They found that board members often develop their own set of understanding based upon what they hear from friends, other board members, family members who also may have served on boards, and from the superintendent. Ironically, despite the increasing demands being placed upon those governing schools, little empirical research exists to identify if there are any correlations between board member training and districts demonstrating AYP. Todras (1993) found that school

board members often feel compelled not to rock the boat and they often defer their final decisions to the educational professionals they employ. Todras (1993) found that board training is unsystematic, is an individual effort, and that an intact board usually doesn't go through training. This is in direct contradiction to research by the Institute of Educational Leadership that found that the entire school board should go through and complete a formal training after each election (Danzberger, Kirst & Usdan, 1993). Rallis and Criscoe (1993) found that the lack of formal training and socialization reinforces the observation that the school board is merely a body of individual decision makers. Recent education reform efforts, such as Pennsylvania's Education Empowerment Act of 2000, called for increased collaboration among school boards and all stakeholders to realize increases in student achievement.

To support the establishment of a rationale for this study, many dissertations have suggested further study into governance structures, particularly those relating to school boards and superintendents. This dissertation aimed to examine relevant literature on the governance characteristics of effective schools to conduct correlation research between school board and superintendent longevity, school board member training, and school district achievement as measured by District AYP status.

Borba (2002) identified several prominent studies on high achieving schools and arrived at the following general characteristics germane to effective schools: (a) set clear goals that are focused on student achievement; (b) set high expectations anchored in the belief that, provided with appropriate instruction, all students can achieve at high levels; (c) hire qualified teachers; (d) resist acceptance of excuses for low student achievement;

(e) provide for adequate resources, including materials, analysis of data, and professional development; and (f) strike a balance between accountability and flexibility in which goals are established by the school district, but schools are given the flexibility of deciding how to reach those goals (Murphy & Hallinger, 1988; Ragland et al., 1997; Ellerbee & Miller, 2000; Schmoker, 1999; Haycock, 1998; Pajak & Glickman, 1987; Coyle & Witcher, 1992; Johnston, 2000).

The standards movement is placing increasing demands on school districts to realize higher levels of achievement on standardized tests. While this puts increasing pressure on classroom teachers, ironically, the sanctions in NCLB speak to actions that will be taken upon those governing schools, particularly school board members, up to and including State takeover of school districts. So while the increasing demands of NCLB lay at the doorstep of school board members, the research base is scant on identifying specific characteristics of board service, such as longevity of service or board member participation in training, which can effectuate improvement in school district achievement. Schmoker (2001) noted that despite the depth and breadth of research on school district leadership, such research tended to comprise generalized theories that failed to underscore the need to make improvement in instruction a salient goal. Schmoker (2001) draws an eye opening parallel to that of the medical profession. He cited that in the year 1910, the medical world experienced a renaissance when Abraham Flexner called for doctors everywhere to organize, disseminate, and refine the best existent medical knowledge. Prior to 1910 the practice of medicine was considered to be primitive and provincial, in some rare instances characterized by medical techniques that

were largely known to have fatal consequences. Schmoker (2001) scorned that when viewing public education, he asserted that public education has not yet reached the year 1910, and demanded a shake up in school leadership. The ability is there for districts to realize increases in student achievement. What has not yet occurred is a mass collaboration among scholars to identify exactly what characteristics of board service can be found to have a direct correlation to school achievement. The research base has barely scratched the surface of studying specific characteristics of board service, such as longevity or board member training, to find out if any correlations exist among these variables. The enactment of NCLB offered a great deal of specificity on what actions will occur to school boards if increases in achievement are not realized. The time is now ripe for scholarly research to identify any correlations between school board characteristics and school achievement. As Schmoker (2001) demanded, its time for those governing schools to organize, disseminate, and refine the best existent knowledge to perpetuate increases in student achievement. The increasing demands of NCLB also demand new direction in the research surrounding school achievement and school boards.

Characteristics of Effective School Boards

Being a board member isn't easy. Flores (2001) chided that this statement is definitely more factual than facetious for school board members. Seitz, (1994) held that board members are representatives of the people, are often held to critical review, and are expected to perform their job with great wisdom, astute leadership, unrelenting devotion, and impeccable character. The expectations abound, with precious few "thanks" for the effort (Seitz, 1994, p. 1).

According to Campbell & Green (1994), “How a board governs is just as important as the decisions it makes.” Governance affects the boards ability to reach consensus regarding establishing direction and its ability to establish a positive climate. Effective boards understand that their power originates within the community. They recognize the importance of teamwork and that the board, not themselves as individuals, possess power. Effective boards exhibit support of programs and staff, and respect for all aspects of the community, and they establish trust within the board and the district. They engender a high level of fairness, honesty, and communication with everyone (p. 392).

Despite the sweeping reform movements brought about by the standards based education movement, locally elected lay school boards survived because of the value that Americans have placed on them. Local school boards are one of the most venerable public institutions in the United States (Flores, 2001). Given the demands of the standards movement, school boards are facing increasing challenges with little training and preparation to meet these challenges. Green (1992) offered that school boards simultaneously attempt to act as professional organizations, relying on the expertise of the superintendent, and as a representative body, responding to parent and community demands. Flinchbaugh (1993) maintained, in short, that the school board is responsible for everything. Exact roles and responsibilities for board members are found on the websites of virtually every State school board association as well as the National School Boards Association (NSBA). Goodman & Zimmerman (2000) contend that the key responsibility is to hire, support, and evaluate the superintendent. According to Dawson & Quinn (2000), “the school board has only one employee: the superintendent” (p. 13).

In attempting to analyze characteristics of effective school districts that demonstrated AYP in Pennsylvania during the 2004-2005 school year, it is prudent to identify characteristics of effective school board members. Richards (1997) defined an effective board as follows:

An effective board is a board that leverages diversity and teamwork to foster and propagate an empowered organization for optimum progress toward the vision by skillfully conducting undiluted good governance, through creating vision, writing policy, monitoring progress, and leading while upholding strong principles of consensus, cooperation, unity, trust, respect, teamwork, and communication. (p. 15)

Richards (1997) further identified 11 characteristics of an effective board as: having a clearly defined role, leadership, knowledge of the governance process, attention to policy matters, regard for people, understanding organizational provisions, governance task orientation, customer and quality focus, flexibility, high ethical standards, and success celebrations.

Campbell & Green (1994) determined that effective board members possessed the following eight characteristics:

- A clear understanding of their duties and of their central, powerful role of providing leadership to ensure the quality of education.
- Understanding the importance of teamwork. They realize that only the board as a whole can make progress and that no one individual board member has any authority outside the governance team.

- Adopt a positive attitude in the conduct of their business.
- Understand, appreciate, and respect the role of the superintendent, the district staff, and all other members of the community.
- Establish an environment of trust with the board and the district. They are confident in the district administration and staff in the fulfillment of their duties. They have an established accountability system that enables them to concentrate on outcomes, not methods or procedures.
- Understand the importance of open and honest communication with everyone. They recognize that clear communication about their expectations is more likely to result in attainment of the district's goal.
- Carry out their responsibilities with a high level of professionalism. They understand that their behavior sets a tone for the entire district.
- Operate with fairness, firmness, stability, and consistency. They understand that fairness promotes harmony and trust. (Campbell & Green, 1994)

Flores (2001) cited a study by Anderson (1992), which determined that there were certain behaviors exhibited from the most effective and least effective board members. The study involved the use of a survey questionnaire sent to school board presidents, superintendents, and high school principals. The most effective board members exhibited the following three major behaviors:

- Ability to distinguish between policy and administration.
- Willingness to ensure superintendent opportunities to recommend action on policy matters.

- Insistence on policies that are sensitive to broad public need.

The least effective board members exhibited the following three major behaviors:

- Do not seek knowledge of State and Federal laws affecting education.
- Do not distinguish between policymaking and administration.
- Display inconsistency in policy implementation.

The three major suggestions for improving ineffective school boards were the following:

- Clarify policy and administrative responsibilities.
- Require in-service training on effective board service.
- Increase longevity of service on the school board. (Flores, 2001, p. 40)

Characteristics of Effective Superintendents

The literature review previously examined characteristics of effective board members. There are parallels in the research base with regard to characteristics of effective superintendents. One of the most important jobs of the superintendent is to build a productive working relationship with a school board (Flores, 2001, p. 43).

Providing knowledge and assistance to school board members about their role is an essential responsibility for superintendents (Kowalski, 1995). Johnson (1996) noted that whether in their educational, political, or managerial roles, superintendents were actually teaching those whom they sought to influence. Because the majority of board members begin their service without any formal training for their duties, superintendents need to provide information, orientation, and training to assist their boards (Kowalski, 1995).

Shibles, Rallis, & Deck (2001) described superintendents as clarifiers, data bearers, and facilitators in order to team with their boards to respond to challenges thrust upon their districts. As clarifiers, superintendents work with the board as a team to surface beliefs, assumptions, and values about schooling that the group can agree on. The superintendents also provide data to their boards in order to provide necessary information upon which to make decisions. In addition, the superintendent then becomes a facilitator of the team with the board in ways that keep the focus on their shared vision, purpose, and the best interests of the district (Hernandez, 2004, p.100).

Vasu, Stewart, & Garson (1990) acknowledged that leadership, specifically superintendent leadership, is multidimensional, and is a combination of different components which result in a personal leadership style.

The AASA created a job description for the superintendency. Demetris Del Collo (2001) supported the AASA job description and cited research by Goodman & Zimmerman (2000):

A superintendent is the educational leader of the district, charged with establishing a level of excellence, empowering others, and creating a district vision. As a leader, the superintendent must be involved with policy and governance in working with the board to define expectations and develop policy that relates to Federal and district mandates. The superintendent must communicate with the community regularly, articulating the district's vision, and identifying political forces. He or she must be an organizational manager utilizing data for decision-making. The superintendent must be a leader in

curriculum planning and focus on delivery of instruction and assessment. He or she must manage human resources, understand adult learning theory, and assess staff needs. The superintendent must exemplify ethics and leadership, exhibit multicultural awareness, and identify the functions of school in a diverse society. (Goodman & Zimmerman, 2000; Demetris Del Collo, p. 50)

Flores (2001) supported Estes (1979) that superintendents should possess other outstanding qualities above those germane to effective management. The following essential qualities were expected of superintendents to meet the challenges of the position:

1. Possession of a sound conceptual and theoretical basis for educational programming.
2. Appreciation of the dynamics of local communities and the establishment of responsive management practices and structures to address the needs of local constituents.
3. Ability to engage in constructive dialogue with local boards of education and to assist boards in exercising leadership in their respective communities.
4. Political astuteness and ability to interact with Local, State, and Federal government structures in a constructive manner.
5. Ability to formulate and monitor effective regulatory policy and procedure which will facilitate efficient school operations.

6. Ability to direct management including an ability to assemble an effective management team, and to assure productivity and harmony in the school district.
7. Ability to provide the emotional and spiritual support and leadership for the school district.
8. Awareness of resources and knowledge necessary for doing the job of running public schools. (Flores, 2001, pp. 31-32)

Characteristics of Effective School Districts

The effective schools movement has been in existence for over fifteen years (Lezotte, 1989). Allen (1996) offered the work of Daniel U. Levine (1990), in summarizing the major findings of a study sponsored by the National Center for Effective Schools, and stated that the literature continued to justify the conclusion that effective schools generally exemplified a relatively limited number of correlations that were associated with students' superior achievements. He then listed the correlates that were best supported by the literature:

1. A productive school climate and culture.
2. A focus on student acquisition of central learning skills.
3. Appropriate monitoring of student progress.
4. Practice-oriented staff development at the school site.
5. Outstanding leadership.
6. Salient parental involvement.
7. Effective instructional arrangements and implementation.

8. High operational expectations and requirements for students. (Allen, 1996, p. 30)

Levine (1990) stated that these correlates constituted a set of characteristics, all or most of which must be present if a school was to be unusually effective in producing student achievement. These correlates should be viewed as prerequisites for attaining high and equitable levels of student achievement (pp. 580-582).

Linda M. Coyle & Ann E. Wischier (1992) delineated steps that districts could take that would result in an effective school improvement program. On a macro district level the authors advocated administrators to adopt policies and operating procedures that emphasize student achievement. They further offered that appropriate funds should be allocated and expended to provide teachers with the resources and tools necessary. Further, they concluded that empowering individual schools where practical as a means to effectuate further improvements in achievement (pp. 393-394).

Prince & Taylor (1995) studied twenty schools in North Carolina under State mandated improvement plans by implementing the correlates of effective schools research as an examination method. After two years, the study revealed that, of the twenty schools, twelve gained in achievement, while the other eight declined. The authors concluded that implementation of the correlates does not always lead to improvements in achievement and test results. The authors suggest examining a program over a period of longer than two years to determine if implementations of the correlates matter, further supporting the notion that longevity can have an impact on achievement (pp. 24-25).

Effective schools research is enjoying renewed attention given the increasing demands of the standards movement vis-à-vis NCLB. Taylor & Pressley (2002) summarized findings from five large-scale research studies on effective, high-poverty elementary schools, which were published between 1997 and 2000 (Charles A. Dana Center, 1999; Designs for Change, 1998; Lein, Johnson, & Ragland, 1997; Puma, Karweit, Price, Ricciuti, Thompson, & Vaden-Kiernan, 1997; Taylor, Clark, & Walpole, 2000). The research supported six themes that emerged from various studies which also are supported and extended from previous historical research on effective schools.

Specifically:

1. Putting the students first to improve student learning.
2. Strong building leadership.
3. Strong teacher collaboration.
4. Focus on professional development and innovation.
5. Consistent use of student performance data to improve learning.
6. Strong links to parents.

Goldschmidt & Eyermann (1999) revisited “America 2000” from the early 90’s (U.S. Department of Education, 1991) that emphasized international rankings as a basis for evaluating American educational success which stated the U.S. should be first in the World in mathematics and science. Clearly the United States remains embroiled in controversy over the effectiveness of its school systems.

A study by Murphy & Hallinger (1988) is often cited in more contemporary studies on effective school districts. Murphy & Hallinger (1988) detailed findings from

12 Instructionally Effective School Districts (IESD) in California. The criterion used was the districts ability to promote high levels of achievement on standardized tests. The findings concluded the following regarding IESD's:

- IESD's had positive labor relations.
- IESD's had school boards that were supportive of administration.
- IESD's had a harmonious relationship between the school district and the community at large.

Skrla et al. (2000) conducted a study of four school districts in Texas that were successful in raising student achievement for all students. The research produced procedures germane to all districts in the study. Specifically, they found the four school districts consistently utilized the following practices and beliefs:

1. A sincere belief in learning for all.
2. Individuals acted on their inherent beliefs.
3. Classroom teaching and learning were changed.
4. There were shared equity beliefs.
5. There were focused equity practices.
6. Curriculum was aligned and there were coherent practices of delivering instruction.
7. Those leaders governing schools built and supported the capacity of people to contribute and lead.
8. Data was used to monitor student performance.
9. Everyone involved in the instructional program was held accountable.

10. All districts made sure that the work of their teachers was producing increased student performance.
11. Those leaders governing schools created alliances with various organizations.

Skrla et al. (2000) concluded that a shift in the roles of personnel was necessary to realize gains in achievement. Specifically, the role of the board member needs to focus on setting goals and establishing policies that promote equitable and excellent learning.

Borba (2002) cited, in an extensive review of effective schools research, work done by Purky & Smith (1985) that suggested strategies and policies that would stimulate and facilitate school reform. The research concluded that school boards should focus on the following four key tasks: (a) determine guidelines that facilitate the process of school improvement; (b) specify goals for the district's schools after seeking input from school staffs, the labor union, and parent and community groups; (c) hold central office administrators and school staffs accountable for designing and implementing a school improvement plan; and (d) prescribe a timeline for improvement.

Superintendent Longevity

The impact of a superintendent turnover can be traumatic for a school district and the communities involved (Lere, 2004). Board members believe that the turnover “has a tendency to split or divide your community” and that “this negative impact filters down, in the form of morale, in the faculty, the staff, and into the students” (Capps, 1992, p. 92).

The U.S. Department of Education's Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI), participated in a panel presentation entitled “Turnover in the

Urban Superintendency: Implications and Ideas for Change” and cited data that revealed that the average brief tenure of urban superintendents is only 2.5 years and claims that districts need to have a superintendent in place longer to effect meaningful educational change (Gill, 2002, p. 91, Renchler, 1992).

Many studies have researched longevity, turnover, and the success and failure of superintendents (Johnson, 1996; Poyourow-Ripple, 1990; McAdams, 1995; Glass, 1992). Carter, Glass, & Hord (1993) identified superintendent failure as “tenure casualty” by contending that most superintendents “go in knowing that it is not forever.” Furthermore, they believed that the inability to lead board members through a process of developing a shared vision led to failure.

Authors over the last ten to 15 years, such as Murphy & Hallinger (1987), Glass (1992), & Norton, Webb, Dlugosh, & Sybouts (1996) have pointed to the length of time and effort necessary for a superintendent to establish a communications network about a school system’s operations, functions, and needs as a critical factor in superintendent effectiveness (Stipetic, 1992).

According to McAdams (1995), a “stability of tenure,” is worthy of further study. McAdams asserts that rapid turnover affects governance of a school system and such turmoil at the top represents a major obstacle to true reform.

A 1992 AASA study of the American Superintendency found that superintendents feel their lack of effectiveness is due to insufficient time to “get things done.” Further corroborating the concept of “stability of tenure,” Rist, (1991) felt that instability in

leadership in districts serving large proportions of at-risk students did nothing to advance reform and excellence (DiLeo, 1999, p. 27).

According to Yee & Cuban (1996):

Short tenures create a public perception of increased instability, lowered morale, a loss of organizational direction and ‘vision,’ and a general sense by the staff of ‘here we go again,’ that the district will undergo yet another round of short-lived programs and policies. (p. 615)

Carter, Glass & Hord (1993) felt longevity was the casualty when the board and superintendent held different expectations of the role of the superintendent. Insufficient time in a district greatly reduces a superintendent’s ability to learn the “ins and outs” of a community, thereby decreasing his/her ability to be an effective leader and to build a relationship congruent with the philosophy of the board and community (Carter, et al., 1993).

Carter & Cunningham (1997) noted:

The financial and organizational costs of such turnover weigh heavily on the school district and the staff who are trying to hold it together. One of the few coping techniques that seem to provide any level of protection from this rapid turnover is closing the doors and ignoring the craziness occurring at the top. Commitments to programs of ex-superintendents dry up and the programs are abandoned; staffs become disillusioned, and resist future change. At the same time, few aspire to ever want to be in the central office administration leadership, particularly the Superintendency. (p. 7)

DiLeo (1999) cited McAdams (1995) in agreeing that while a multitude of variables ultimately affect turnover, the research clearly supports the fact that committed leadership serving over an extended period of time achieves organizational stability. Chmara (1989) cited several primary disruptions to the educational process when a superintendent leaves. They are:

1. A loss of educational expertise.
2. A decrease in productivity during the replacement and assimilation period.
3. A loss of curriculum expertise.
4. An increased cost for recruitment.
5. A tendency to decentralize decision-making.
6. The demoralization of other employees.

Carter & Cunningham (1997) noted that the condition of the Superintendency is so turbulent that tenure for superintendents is at an all time low, ranging from two and one half years to six years depending on district size. Tenure, according to Carter & Cunningham (1997), “is on the decline (p. 6).”

DiLeo (1999) studied 12 superintendents with ten or more years experience in their current school district. DiLeo found a strong relationship between longevity and board/superintendent relations. All 12 superintendents in DiLeo’s sample believed board issues prevented others from serving more than ten years in one district and respondents suggested the need for a collegial atmosphere between board members and superintendents to be the most effective way to communicate and work with each other.

Some studies have suggested that a superintendent's failure to attain longevity in the Superintendency can be attributed to poor decision-making. Lere (2004) cited work by Blumberg (1985) who found that superintendents rarely fail because of budgetary or personnel mistakes. They usually fail because they make the wrong political decision, neglect a powerful faction in the community, or misjudge board support.

Leitch (1997) reinforced the impact of superintendent decisions by stating:

The political decisions of the superintendent are as important as any decisions he or she may make, and they have an effect on the turnover of school superintendents. Superintendents have to learn to deal with public pressure, and those that do, experience longevity. (pp. 72-73)

Obtaining accurate data while researching in the area of superintendent turnover seems to remain a difficult task, especially in cases of superintendent turnover resulting in dismissal or forced resignation. There remains an obvious, natural reluctance on the part of any fired superintendent to document such a damaging career change.

School Board Member Longevity

In Pennsylvania, candidates for school board seek four-year terms and elections are held in odd numbered years that coincide with local municipal elections. Five of nine seats on the school board are up in one election cycle and the remaining four seats up for election in the subsequent election (Personal Communication, PSBA, 2001).

Turnover of school boards and its members has been an area of debate in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania for the last three decades. The length of Pennsylvania school director's terms was changed from six years to four via Act 105 of 1978. Prior to

1979, three of nine positions were up for re-election every two years as opposed to the current status whereby either four or five seats (a potential majority of the board) are up every two years. Poyourow-Ripple (1989) & Berrigan (1991) studied the effect of Pennsylvania Act 105, which reduced the length of Pennsylvania school directors terms from six-years to four-years to ascertain if passage of Act 105 lead to increases in superintendent and school board member turnover. Poyourow-Ripple found that school board turnover did not increase significantly in the four elections immediately following implementation of PA Act 105 (1981, 1983, 1985, 1987). Similarly, there was no statistical difference in the turnover rate of superintendent's six years prior and subsequent to the passage of PA Act 105.

Ronald Cowell, a former State Legislator and Chair of the State House Education Committee for over 20 years in Pennsylvania, in discussing turnover of Pennsylvania school board members and superintendents, indicated that, when he was a State Representative, he supported PA Act 105 of 1978. However, he noted that today's political landscape and circumstances surrounding public schools are far different from those circumstances of the 1970's, which ultimately gave rise to the passage of PA Act 105. While voters in the 1970's were demanding greater accountability of school board members, the PA General Assembly responded by mandating shorter terms of office for school board members thereby keeping voters closer to school directors by requiring more frequent elections. However, nearly thirty years later, Cowell cited factors such as the standards movement, school choice initiatives, the Federal No-Child Left Behind Act,

and many other societal upheavals have squeezed out every ounce of accountability possible from locally elected school officials.

Today, Cowell noted that reverting back to the six-year term for Pennsylvania school board members would be a prudent course of action given the knowledge acquired through modern advances that have proven continuity of service, on-going professional development, team building, and stability of administrative and governance structures are tenets of high achieving and high performing school boards. “Given the volume of reform movements making their way through school systems today, the seniority, experience, and longevity of the governance team may be qualities that are needed to generate improvements in student achievement” (Personal Communication, Cowell, 2002).

While the findings of Poyourow-Ripple (1989) & Berrigan (1991) proved that length of term is not a predictor of board member or superintendent turnover, the reduced length of Pennsylvania school director terms has the potential to further inhibit the learning curve of board members and reduces the learning economies that school directors can accumulate over time should they serve only one four-year term. Turnover of Pennsylvania school board members and turnover of Pennsylvania school superintendents is an area worthy of further study to ascertain if any cause and effect relationships can be found between turnover and term length.

McAdams (1997) identified the length of the school director’s term as a crucial variable to success in “A systems approach to school reform” where “short tenure both

erases institutional memory and undermines the consistency of mission needed to achieve substantive reform” (p. 139).

Hosman (1987) argued that drastic and frequent changes in either school board or superintendent tenure are counterproductive to the educational process. Hosman supported this assumption finding it highly appropriate that schools, as institutions entrusted with continuity of generations, should be buffered from drastic changes in the political process, and the disruptive results of that process, such as increasing board and superintendent turnover in a district. Hosman (1987) went on to note that students learn in small increments over many years and educational courses, once set, are not easily changed without serious loss of effectiveness. Turnover and change has become a familiar variable in many public schools throughout the nation. Episodes of serious conflict in school, including possibilities of superintendent dismissal, are difficult times at best, and catastrophically debilitating times at worst, as students and faculty must scurry to meet new demands leaving worthy projects undone. Tension and anxiety can permeate the organization; due attention cannot be paid to the task at hand and defensive behavior overrides rationality. As communities change, institutions such as schools must change to meet their needs, but change should come about thoughtfully and carefully to minimize discontinuities (Hosman, 1987).

Research has suggested training of school board members may bridge the experience gap between highly trained and educated administrators to the counterpart of the lay board member. Baldwin (1995) suggested that if superintendents wish to remain effective they must work to implement effective board orientation and training programs.

McCloud (1994) noted that even new superintendents quickly become aware of the unproductive nature of dysfunctional board relationships that are exacerbated by personality conflicts between rival board factions leaving the superintendent in the middle. Clearly, given the complexities and possibilities for role conflict, the working relationship between school board members and superintendents is worthy of further examination and research.

The Superintendent/School Board Relationship

To this point in the review of literature, the historical establishment of school governance and the characteristics of effective superintendents and effective board members have been addressed independent of each other. The relationship between a superintendent and school board is largely held as the most important relationship among key stakeholders in school districts. Many studies have identified this relationship to be the most essential relationship for any superintendent (Glass, et al., 2000; Spillane & Regnier, 1998; Carter & Cunningham, 1997; Norton, et al., 1996; Flinchbaugh, 1993). Eadie (1994) cited school board members as part-time volunteers requiring the support of the superintendent to develop a strong leadership team and productive relationship. McCurdy (1992) attributed the success of the superintendent/board relationship to joint efforts to seek good relationships and mutual understanding.

In evaluating school districts that are deemed “high-achieving” schools, through measures such as AYP, an examination of the school board and superintendent relationship is warranted. Lere (2004) identified the relationship between the superintendent and the school board to be one of employee and employer, working in

both personal and political contexts as partners sharing a common goal of success for the school system.

In the 2000 American Association of School Administrators (AASA) survey of school superintendents, 14.6% of the superintendents reported having left their last position due to conflicts with board members (Glass, Bjork & Brunner, 2000). The relationship between superintendents and school boards was described by Norton, Webb, Dlugosh, & Sybouts (1996), who stated:

From the day the office of the superintendent was created until today, there has been a strained relationship between the school board that makes policy and the superintendent who implements it. This tension appears to become accentuated during periods of reform and as problems faced by the district become more numerous and unsolvable, a description of the circumstances many school districts find themselves in today. (p. 34)

Ross & Kowal (1996) stressed that school boards and superintendents must collaborate in a climate of on-going change by involving families, community organizations, and other public and private agencies to improve conditions in schools for the betterment of children. When collaboration fails, according to Nichols (1996), both parties are equally at fault.

The research clearly supports relationship building as a fundamental tenet of successful board/superintendent relationships. According to Cuban (1998), superintendents must emulate a willingness to teach school boards, staff, and the supporting community regarding the complexities of value conflicts that they and their

districts embrace. Basom, Young, & Adams (1999) found four themes after studying superintendents' successful strategies of building and maintaining positive and trusting superintendent/board relationships: trust, focus, communications, and superintendent as teacher. Waggoner (1991) also found a strong need to provide effective training models for board members in the area of governance by studying relationships between effective school governance and training. A salient message in the literature review to this point supports training as a means to achieve more informed policy makers. An examination of standards based reform movements will be presented next.

C. Standards Based Reform: A Catalyst for Improving Schools

No Child Left Behind (NCLB):

The 2001 reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) created the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). Clearly, the intent of NCLB is to set an academic floor for America's student population (Sanders, 2003, p. 3). The goal of NCLB is for all students to be proficient in language arts and mathematics by 2014. The No Child Left Behind Act was signed into law in January 2002 and represents a dramatic expansion of the Federal role in education by requiring that schools and districts be held accountable for ALL student performance. Prior to NCLB, Federal accountability requirements focused mainly on students participating in the Federal Title I program, which targets funding based on district poverty levels and did not focus with the same level of intensity on student performance (Sanders, 2003).

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) Defined:

Adequate Yearly Progress, or (AYP), is a measure of yearly progress toward achieving State academic standards. "Adequate Yearly Progress" is the minimum level of improvement that States, school districts, and individual schools must achieve each year.

NCLB mandates that all students in all States will be tested annually in mathematics and reading for grades 3-8. Each of these tests is to be linked to curricular standards, along with an accompanying definition of a proficiency level attached for each grade and subject. Each district and school must make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) with all students collectively and with each identifiable subgroup of students (explicitly

defined by the U.S. Department of Education), or serious sanctions can occur. The Federal definition of AYP is not a value-added measure of progress for individual students, but rather it requires cross-cohort comparison of the percent of students meeting the proficiency standards this year compared to percent proficient last year. If this percentage of proficient students for a district or a school is not sufficiently greater than the previous years percentage, then this school or district will have failed to meet the AYP requirement (Sanders, 2003, p. 3).

Individual States were given guidelines in setting the beginning benchmark or baseline standard and are trusted to raise that target incrementally until it reaches 100% by 2014. These expectations apply not only to the school or district as a whole, but also to the performance of subgroups, including racial/ethnic categories, low-income students, students with disabilities, and English Language Learners (ELL). The targets reflect the need for constant improvement over time and will increase over time until the 100% threshold in 2014. Below is Pennsylvania's AYP target schedule:

- 2002-2004: 45% proficient in Reading, 35% proficient in Mathematics
- 2005-2007: 54% proficient in Reading, 45% proficient in Mathematics
- 2008-2010: 63% proficient in Reading, 54% proficient in Mathematics
- 2011: 72% proficient in Reading, 67% proficient in Mathematics
- 2012: 81% proficient in Reading, 78% proficient in Mathematics
- 2013: 91% proficient in Reading, 89% proficient in Mathematics
- 2014: 100% proficiency in Reading and Mathematics. (PDE website).

Under NCLB, a decision is made every year whether or not a school is making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) with established incremental achievement targets. To make the determination if AYP was met, States compare the percentage of students in each school who meet proficiency standards, as well as the percentage of students in each subgroup within each school, to the Statewide goals for the year in question. If the school as a whole and each individual subgroup within the school meet or exceed the statewide goal in mathematics and language arts, then the school has met AYP. An additional third measure of academic progress is required. For high schools, this measure is the graduation rate. For elementary and middle schools, attendance rates are used. (Education Trust, 2003).

District AYP Defined

Under the Pennsylvania Accountability System and the No Child Left Behind law (NCLB), school districts in Pennsylvania are expected to meet the Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) performance targets, just like individual schools and the State as a whole. Districts that do not meet their AYP targets receive designations that follow the same pattern as individual schools, namely:

- A district that did not meet its performance targets the first year receives a *Warning* designation. The Pennsylvania Department of Education does not require a formal response from the district; however, the district is encouraged to address the area(s) of concern in a deliberate manner to avoid slipping into the next category.

- A district that did not meet its performance targets for two or three consecutive years receives a *District Improvement* designation. Each district in this category is required to prepare a district strategic plan to address the underlying causes of poor performance.
- A district that did not meet its performance targets for four or more years receives a *Corrective Action* designation. Each district in this category falls within PDE's intensive intervention and assistance programs, tailored to address the barriers to achievement in each district. (PDE website)

Historical AYP Data in Pennsylvania

2003-2004 School Year: (second year of implementation of NCLB)

In 2003-2004, 284 school districts out of 500, or 56.8% of all Pennsylvania school districts had met District AYP.

In 2003-2004, one school district out of 500, or 0.2% of all Pennsylvania school districts had been designated as “making progress” but had not met District AYP.

In 2003-2004, 39 school districts out of 500, or 7.8% of all Pennsylvania school districts were categorized as “warning” status.

In 2003-2004, 171 school districts out of 500, or 34.2% of all Pennsylvania school districts were categorized in District Improvement I.

In 2003-2004, one school district out of 500, or 0.2% of all Pennsylvania school districts was categorized in District Improvement II.

In 2003-2004, four school districts out of 500, or 0.8% of all Pennsylvania school districts were in Corrective Action 2 (second year).

2002-2003 School Year: (first year of implementation of NCLB)

In 2002-2003, 121 school districts out of 500, or 24.2% of all Pennsylvania school districts had met AYP.

In 2002-2003, 373 school districts out of 500, or 74.6% of all Pennsylvania school districts had received a “warning” for not meeting AYP for the first time.

In 2002-2003, two school districts out of 500, or 0.4% of all Pennsylvania school districts were in District Improvement I.

In 2002-2003, four school districts out of 500, or 0.8% of all Pennsylvania school were categorized in Correction Action 2 (first year).

Table 1 shows historical (past years) District AYP determinations for school years 2002-2003 and 2003-2004.

Table 1

Historical PDE District AYP Classifications for 2003-2004 and 2002-2003 School Years.

| AYP OVERALL STATUS | 2003-2004 | | 2002-2003 | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------|---------|-----------|---------|
| | Frequency | Percent | Frequency | Percent |
| Met AYP | 284 | 56.8 | 121 | 24.2 |
| Making Progress | 1 | 0.2 | 0 | 0.0 |
| Warning | 39 | 7.8 | 373 | 74.6 |
| District Improvement 1 | 171 | 34.2 | 2 | 0.4 |
| District Improvement 2 | 1 | 0.2 | 0 | 0.0 |
| Corrective Action 1 | 0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0.0 |
| Corrective Action 2 (first year) | 0 | 0.0 | 4 | 0.8 |
| Corrective Action 2 (second year) | 4 | 0.8 | 0 | 0.0 |
| Total | 500* | 100.0 | 500* | 100.0 |

* Excludes Bryn Athyn S.D.

D. School Board In-Service Training

Training for School Board Members

Training of board members is a fragmented process left to chance in far too many States. Given that training of school directors remains a relatively voluntary activity in many States throughout the Nation, board training is notoriously fragmented, episodic, and shallow (Carver, 1991; Gibboney, 1991; IEL, 1986). If school board members are to be effective, they must learn of the laws that dictate their responsibilities and the behaviors that lead to effective service. The extent to which they learn their legal responsibilities and how they learn them is important (Dietrich, p. 39, 2000).

The existing research base on training activities for board members is well represented with studies focusing on improving the performance of the lay board member. Sharpe & Sharpe (1992) stressed the value of simulation training exercises as an effective training practice. As participants discuss problems, they are also training their creative listening skills, helping to develop confidence, and testing their knowledge of the board manual, district practices, school codes, and school law. Thomas (1993) found that school board members learn primarily from the district superintendent (34.1%) or on the job (22.9%).

McCurdy & Hymes (1992) identified indirect benefits to board member training when training activities are coordinated and delivered by the superintendent of schools. Such structures offer a mutual benefit in that consensus building, trust, understanding, and communication among board members and the superintendent have begun during the training sessions.

Davies (1989) suggested boards develop policy on training and in-service activities for its members so that the policy addresses specific activities, approval procedures, and acceptable reimbursement limitations with sufficient budgetary appropriations to support board development.

A discussion of the training activities that school directors engage in results in studying the nature of the adult learner. Tallerico (1991) identified school directors learning in both formal and informal ways, with varied methods ranging from observation to interaction with consultants. School board members view themselves as active learners, with the superintendent being one medium of training and information (DelCollo, 2001, p. 65).

Before local school board members can take a proactive role in making sure their districts do exhibit the characteristics of effective schools, the board members themselves must be very well versed in the characteristics of effective schools (Petronis, Hall & Pierson, 1996). Petronis, et al., further identified five correlates of effective schools for which they believe school board members should receive in-service training:

1. **Instructional Leadership:** The instructional leader is one who effectively communicates the mission of the school to the staff, parents, community, and students. All decisions should support the mission of the school that is based upon the correlates of effective schools.
2. **Instructional Focus:** Instructional focus is the attention to academic goals, objectives, and priorities. Effective schools maintain an instructional focus that supports academic achievement for all children.

3. High Expectations/Teacher Behavior: Behaviors in the school are characterized by high expectations for all students and teachers. The staff believes and demonstrates that all students can attain mastery of basic skills. The staff has the capability and responsibility to help all students achieve mastery.
4. School Climate: A positive school climate goes beyond safety and orderliness. School climate is an atmosphere where teaching and learning are emphasized and rewarded. A consistent system of norms, attitudes, and beliefs form the foundation for the policies and practices in the school.
5. Measurement: Measurement is feedback on student academic progress through the use of test instruments and other non-test related data such as attendance and drop out rates. The results of testing and other available data are used to improve individual student performance, curriculum, and instructional practices of the school. (p. 12)

Anderson (1990) offered the results of his study as a training guide for newly elected school board members. Ninety to ninety-eight percent of the school board presidents, superintendents, and high school principals who responded agreed that the most effective board member:

not only was able to distinguish between policy and administration but ensured the superintendent opportunities to recommend action on policy matters;

sought administrative input in the development of policy;

insisted on policies sensitive to broad public need and did not make or interpret policies solely on the basis of single-issue pressures;

insisted that objective selection criteria and open and objective selection procedures be used when hiring new employees;

provided for the empowerment of administrators;

channeled to administrators the complaints they received from special interest groups related to educational programs;

made decisions by involving the public and insisted on a clearly defined decision-making process;

insisted on clearly articulated procedures for receiving complaints;

placed a high value on appropriate board meeting decorum and on respect for other board members;

behaved in an organized and systemic manner at board meetings and respected the opinions of others;

supported innovation and excellence in their schools and placed support for educational needs ahead of personal or political gain;

supported adherence to a basic standard of character and discipline for the school district. (pp. 110-115)

Rosenberger (1997) stated that recurring new legislation aimed at reforming public schools requires a new and dynamic skill set for board members, thereby necessitating that board members be provided continuous information which is updated, evaluated, and continually monitored. Many external constituent and governmental forces that demand accountability from today's school boards have created a problem in identifying exactly what training school board members should receive. Hayden (1992) stressed that simply providing training sessions for board members does not go far enough in enhancing board members abilities to serve effectively. Hayden (1992) recommended that, prior to conducting any training, a thorough needs analysis and

planning outline be conducted to ascertain exactly what topics are most needed and necessary. Hayden offered:

School board members serve better when they have the chance to build on their knowledge and skills. Board training, if it's done effectively, gives them a better understanding of what they should and should not do, teaches them what they can expect from the superintendent and the central office staff, and generally helps them to learn about issues that will come before them. (p. 19)

Funk & Funk (1992) found that veteran board members and superintendents stressed that without orientation it takes between six and 12 months on the job before a new board member can function in an effective manner.

When planning and discussing the need for school board training, an analysis of school boards that function with a high degree of efficiency is warranted. Richards (1997) identified effective school boards by 11 performance oriented characteristics: a clearly defined role, leadership, knowledge of the governance process, attention to policy matters, regard for people, understanding organizational provisions, governance task orientation, customer and quality focus, flexibility, high ethical standards, and success collaborations.

School boards are called upon to use a sophisticated set of skills to fulfill their responsibility for long-range budget development, oversight of programs, and policies and policy-making (McGeough, 2000). Smoley (1999) asserted an ideal board development program is a salient and sustained activity involving the entire board so that all members can self-assess their progress.

Today, all 50 States have career professions whereby continuing education is mandated. In 1994, Pennsylvania required the following professions to participate in continuing education: certified public accountants, lawyers, nursing home administrators, optometrists, pharmacists, psychologists, real estate agents and brokers, veterinarians, teachers seeking permanent certification, and physicians under certain circumstances (Queeny & English, 1994). Board members, just as the aforementioned professionals, remain accountable to the public at large. While many professional occupations in Pennsylvania and in the United States mandate on-going professional development, the governance body of education in an alarming number of States requires only a majority vote of the electorate to participate.

The school budget document remains the most comprehensive document available to ascertain the priorities of the educational system. Tallerico (1991) suggested that boards can go further than just establishing a policy to train themselves on operational issues by suggesting that funding be established annually in the budget with expenditures devoted solely to board in-service activities.

Board members who possess an understanding of educational issues and of teaching and learning are more apt to spend their time on more relevant and substantial school board issues. Streshly & Frase (1993) asserted that:

Establishing requirements for elected officials is certainly not unprecedented. The legal machinery is in place to assure that elected Judges, for example, are qualified by training and experience.

Establishing training requirements for school board candidacy is certainly

reasonable. The idea is to acquaint school board candidates with educational issues, as well as to train them in the protocols and duties they will be expected to execute. (p. 142)

McNicol (1995) poignantly argued that singling out school board members for training may be a necessary evil. McNicol offered that:

Unlike other public officials, responsibility of a school director extends well beyond adopting policies, rules, and bylaws. Boards are responsible for setting the vision for education in an entire community by establishing a structure and creating an environment that will assure all students the opportunity to attain their maximum potential; continuously assessing performance progress; and being the preeminence advocated for the public schools and their students. (p. 19)

Evans (1991) questioned why few seem able “to state categorically, that a colonial-era approach to governance is no longer acceptable for our schools” (p. 2). Evans further questions laity as an operational model for public schools noting “the concept and practice of lay governance of public education is an ill-fitting anachronism that makes little sense in our complex society” (p. 1). Supporters of contemporary reform movements subtly perpetuate the notion that public education is operating in a state of crisis. Evans contends that if one believes that education is operating in crisis mode then “then it makes sense that a major share of the blame for that condition must be placed on the governance system that drives that institution” (p. 2).

The Education Policy and Leadership Center (EPLC), is a non-partisan, consulting and advocacy organization geared toward improving public education in Pennsylvania, headquartered in the State Capital of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. In 2003, the EPLC recruited 20 education experts and leaders from around the State to make recommendations on how to improve school board effectiveness and better prepare people to become school board members. The six month study of leadership functions in Pennsylvania's 501 school districts found that school board members terms should be increased to six years from the current four year terms, board members should remain unpaid for their service, and they should also continue to be locally elected without being subject to mayoral appointment. The group recommended a law to mandate orientation and professional development for board members and that boards be encouraged to adopt a "code of conduct" (EPLC, 2004).

Given increasing public and media scrutiny of the Pittsburgh Board of Education throughout most of 2001, in the winter of 2002, then Pittsburgh Mayor Tom Murphy appointed a 37-member commission during the summer of 2002. This move came after prominent Pittsburgh area foundations—the Heinz Endowments and the Pittsburgh and Grable foundations—suspended nearly \$4 million in funding to the City district. Such an action had profound programmatic impact on the Pittsburgh district given that many of the grant-funded programs already had acquired materials and personnel. Suspension of the grant dollars forced Pittsburgh school leaders to either supplant the lost grant monies or in some cases completely eliminate the grant-funded programs. The foundation officials said discord among school board officials had caused them to lose faith in how

the district was run. The commission was divided into three subcommittees, one to study the district's leadership structure, another its finances, and the third student performance. The report was critical in all three areas and contained lists of recommended changes for each. Among its many findings, the commission recommended that the Mayor appoint Pittsburgh board members, and that board members should be required to complete an orientation program for new members, and continuing education for all board members must be required throughout their respective terms.

Voluntary In-Service Board Member Training in Pennsylvania

Pennsylvania does not mandate any formal training for school directors (PSBA, personal communication). In-service training is a voluntary activity left to the decision of the elected board member. PSBA regularly conducts surveys of Pennsylvania school directors to compile a "profile of Pennsylvania school directors." The survey results identified that nearly 49% of school directors serve no more than two full-terms. Perhaps the demands of time and the frequency of meetings lead to increased turnover of school board members. The results of a 2004 June-July mini-poll by PSBA indicated that Pennsylvania school board members spent, on average, nearly 43.4 hours formulating and adopting the school district budget alone (PSBA, ILS, Vol. I, No. 17, p. 10, 2004). Clearly, given the rapid turnover rate of policy-makers, the time frame for in-service training activities is limited at best. PSBA has long opposed efforts to mandate school director training in Pennsylvania. The association, in its 2005 PSBA legislative platform, "supports voluntary in-service education for school directors and opposes efforts to mandate training" (PSBA, ILS, Vol. 1, No. 19, p. 14, 2004). The association strongly

encourages voluntary school board training and delivers this through its “school board academy,” an intensive eight-session program completed over two years. PSBA’s school board academy is an eight-session program offered in evening workshops throughout the Commonwealth. The sessions are sequenced and established in advance, with four sessions offered in the winter of each year. “Fast-track weekends” are also offered in November after municipal elections for school directors to complete and these weekend training sessions occur immediately prior to school board members taking office during the first week of December. Normal completion of the “school board academy” involves completing all eight courses over two calendar years or over the course of an entire condensed weekend in the “fast-track” format. The specific course sequence is as follows: roles, responsibilities and relationships of board members; educational programs; finance and budget; effective meetings; employee relations; planning; school and community relations; and school law. PSBA supports a voluntary school board academy rather than mandated required programming because the association believes its school board academy:

- Provides one of the most comprehensive, consistent training activities among State school boards associations, building upon PSBA’s 25 years of experience in board member education and training programs.
- Assists members in making the transition from citizen to school board member.
- Delivers important concepts needed to be an effective board member – the big picture and some detailed snapshots.

- Enhances the quality of the policy decision-making process.
- Demonstrates to the public the willingness of board members to engage in a systematic approach to become familiar with fundamental areas of Boardsmanship.
- Provides the experience of veteran board members who remember what it was like to be a rookie and realized that the need to learn is continuous, even if you're a veteran. (PSBA, School Board Academy, 1994)

PSBA believes that through the achievement of these goals, board members should be able to provide the best possible learning environment and opportunities for students (PSBA, School Board Academy, 1994).

Snyder (2001) surveyed current school board members in Allegheny County, Pennsylvania about their perceptions of the effectiveness of their school board. Snyder's questionnaire was adapted from the board effectiveness inventory developed by the Institute for Educational Leadership (IEL) with specific modifications made by the researcher with permission from IEL. Out of a total of 387 school board members in Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, 110 (28.4%) returned completed surveys representing 38 out of 43 (88.4%) school districts in the County. Question 30 of the instrument asked "Our board has a comprehensive orientation program for new members." Rating from a Likert scale of 1-6, this question ranked 30th (last) with a mean score of 3.45, with a majority of respondents indicated "slightly disagree" for question 20 regarding orientation training activities for new board members (p. 16).

PSBA, a longstanding opponent to mandated in-service training for school board members in Pennsylvania, recently enacted a new form of voluntary training for school board members that shows its resolve and commitment to creating voluntary in-service programming for school board members. In December 2003, PSBA unveiled the “Online Learning Center (OLC)” that created on-line virtual training classrooms that association members could participate in from home. School directors that are members of PSBA create online login accounts to the OLC and enroll in the desired course and follow instructions to complete the class. Courses are divided into modules so the material covered is logically organized into “bite-sized chunks.” Some unique features of the OLC are the participants never complete an OLC course without receiving printed materials and are able to revisit the course online for six months after completion for repeated reference. Courses available as the OLC was launched were “NSBA’s Key Work of School Boards” and “Introduction to Parliamentary Procedure” (PSBA, ILS, Vol. 1, No. 1, 2004, p. 3).

Mandates for Board Member In-Service Training

The literature review to this point has discussed the merits and need for board member in-service training as a vehicle to make more informed board members. Long before NCLB demanded accountability of individual States educational performance, many individual States, specifically 19 out of 50 States, found school board member in-service training important enough to be a mandated activity. If the underlying belief of standards based reform is that improved teaching will bring about improvements in student achievement, then a logical examination of the training requirements of those that

govern schools is warranted. Supporters of mandated training, as identified by Shannon (1994), offer the following rationale as support for mandated training:

All that mandated training is intended to do, they say, is to inform school board members about pedagogical approaches; legal constrictions; budgetary realities; procedural matters in governance, such as Robert's Rules of Order; conflict resolution; and other aspects of education policy and practical boardsmanship. Far from undermining representative governance, proponents claim, they want to improve it by ensuring that board members are informed and skilled. This is necessary, they say, so that wiser governance will come forth to place the public schools in the best position possible to prepare our children for a vastly different future.

(p. 15)

Opponents of mandated training assert that singling out school directors for training would be disparate treatment to one group of elected officials. However, the citizens of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania overwhelmingly disagree. Yackera (1998) found that only 16.3% of respondents whom were citizens in Pennsylvania agreed that local public school board members should not be required to participate in mandatory continuing education because other elected officials in Pennsylvania are not required to. "One reason for this result could be that almost 60% of participants in this study support the notion that public school boards hold the most important elected office a Pennsylvania citizen can hold at the local level. Only 17.2% disagreed" (p. 155).

A comprehensive National study on mandated training activities was conducted in 1996 by the National School Boards Association (NSBA). Thirteen responding States as of 1996 (26%) had passed laws mandating school board training: Arkansas, Georgia, Kentucky, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, New Jersey, North Carolina, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia. Grady & Krumm (1998), examined the NSBA 1996 study and examined the 13 States that had laws requiring training for school board members. They found similarities in each of the State mandates, however, they cautioned that the research offers no clearly defined delivery system or clearly defined curriculum best suited for school board member training.

McReynolds (1997) also examined in depth the 1996 NSBA study on mandated training while studying the training and development needs of school board members in Northwest Illinois as perceived by superintendents and school board members. McReynolds found that Illinois superintendents and board members supported a funded training mandate and that the superintendent should be the primary contributor to school board member training, as superintendents were deemed most effective. Kentucky became the first State to mandate training in 1985 after the State Chamber of Commerce lobbied the notion of mandated training along with various special interest groups interested in reform of school governance structures (McReynolds, 1997, p. 26).

An analysis of current States that mandate training for school board members shows an emphasis on required hours, time frame for completion, and activities to be presented. The National School Boards Association (NSBA), after its 1996 study on mandated training, again surveyed all State school board associations in, 2000 and 2004

to ascertain which States had in-service training mandates for school board members. The NSBA (1996) concluded that: “States without mandated training strongly support board development, but most felt school board members should not be singled out for training when other officials are not. They also tended to feel that mandated training should be funded” (p. 2).

The NSBA (2004) identified that a total of 19 out the 50 States (38%) now mandate in-service training for school board members. Specifically: Arkansas, Delaware, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, New Jersey, New Mexico, North Carolina, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and West Virginia.

State Training Mandates Directly Related to School Achievement

Of the 19 States that have enacted training mandates for school board members, some States have specific training provisions within each State mandate which relate to school achievement, curriculum, or analysis of standardized testing data. Specifically, 7 of the 19, or 37% of the States that mandate training have some correlation between training and school achievement. Delineated below are those seven States that have a training mandate that is somehow linked, directly or indirectly, to academics and student achievement. The list includes mandated topics, mandated hours, and enforcement provisions identified in the 2004 NSBA study and are as follows:

Missouri: In-service training on board governance and operations, school law, school finance, student achievement, board relations, and goal setting is required of school board members in Missouri. Sixteen hours of

training are required for new board members within the first 12 months of service, with no enforcement provision and nearly all costs of training (85%) are covered by State grant allocations to the Missouri School Boards Association (MSBA).

New Mexico: Beginning in 2003 as a result of HB212, new and veteran board members in New Mexico are subject to mandated training on policies and procedures; legal concepts, finance, and budget. The costs of the training are paid for by the local school district. The law contains an indirect enforcement provision which provides that school report cards show which school board members are not meeting minimum training requirements. Five hours of training are mandated per year, to be completed from September 01 to August 30 of each year.

A unique component in the New Mexico training mandate is the wide array of ways that board members can fulfill the mandated training hours. The option available to New Mexico school directors is constructed in similar fashion as PA Act 48 of 1999 is for certificated professionals in Pennsylvania, giving them an opportunity to fulfill mandated training hours with a myriad of options individually or combined. Board members in New Mexico can receive instruction by attending the New Mexico School Boards Association (NMSBA)/Public Education Department (PED) conferences. Also, hours can be attained by attending region meetings, celebrating education opportunities for

Hispanic students, on-line learning, or up to two hours of individual instruction that must be approved by the NMSBA and PED.

Oklahoma: A graduated scale system of training is required for board of education members in Oklahoma with years of experience as the deciding variable for the required number of training hours to be completed. There are also different enforcement provisions for both new and incumbent members. New board members must complete 12 hours within 15 months of election. Failure of new board members to complete the mandated hours will result in the board seat being declared vacant. For incumbent members, they must complete the following in-service training hours or they are prohibited from running for re-election. The continuing education provision for incumbent board members is based on the length of the school board term. 15 hours are required for five-year term members, 12 hours for members elected to a four-year term, and 9 hours for members serving a three-year term. A unique enforcement provision applies to veteran board members in that they are prohibited from seeking reelection if they fail to adhere to the training mandate. The costs related to providing mandated training are the responsibility of the school districts. The topics mandated to be covered in board member in-service training are school finance and education, and IDEA regulations relating to standardized testing.

Tennessee: In-service training is required for both new and experienced board members on the following topics: board policy and operations, advocacy for all children and their achievement, vision for excellence, board/superintendent relations, and new board member orientation. An interesting component of the Tennessee mandate is that board members receive a \$75.00 per diem for attending training sessions. The Tennessee mandate boasts a strong enforcement provision allowing the Commissioner of Education to withhold funds from the school district for failure of board members to comply with the law. Similarly, with regard to costs of training, the State of Tennessee is responsible for the costs associated with training with the legislature appropriating the money and the State Department of Education administering the training program for board members. Currently the Tennessee State Department of Education contracts with the Tennessee school boards association to conduct all board member training. Experienced board members must complete at least seven hours (one module) of training each year. New school board members must attend a two-day orientation and one seven hour module their first year of service.

Texas: Topics involved in mandated training in Texas for first-year new board members involve a minimum of a 3-hour orientation to the Texas Education Code, and a minimum of a 3-hour orientation to the local district. At least 10 hours of additional continuing education, based on

assessed needs, is required. All incumbent (experienced) board members are required to attend an annual team building session of at least 3-hours in length, as a group, with the superintendent. Experienced board members must also receive an update on the Texas Education Code and at least five hours of additional continuing education based on assessed needs. The Texas mandate has an enforcement mechanism that puts the onus of enforcement for non-compliance on the voting electorate.

Each year, when the board calls for its election, the board president must announce to the public and provide to the media the names of board members who have met the requirement or failed to do so. The theory behind this is that the public, armed with this information, will decide if it wants to return the member to the board or vote the member out of office (NSBA, 2004, p. 8).

Virginia: Each local board shall require its members to participate annually with in-service programs on personnel, curriculum, and current issues in education as part of their service on the local board (22 1-253.13 15D, Code of Virginia). School districts pay for the cost of mandated training in Virginia and there are no enforcement provisions identified.

West Virginia: New board members are required to complete an orientation program prior to taking office. New and veteran West Virginia school board members are required to complete seven hours of in-service

training per year. The West Virginia training mandate requires instruction on governance and policy effectiveness and boardsmanship and school achievement. An external committee of 17 members governs the program for the State Board and the West Virginia School Boards Association is responsible for programs. The law contains an enforcement provision with sanctions including removal from office for not accumulating the necessary hours of training specified in the mandate.

Critics and opponents of a mandated training program for Pennsylvania school directors have expressed fear that mandating training will create a bureaucratic approach to training activities. The prevailing concern is that mandated training might likely negate the liberties board members currently enjoy in selecting programs of interest to them under the umbrella of voluntary training program offered by PSBA.

Best Practices from Existing School Director Training Mandates

Research on the success of a mandated board member in-service training program was compiled by Huston (1989). After four years of mandated training in Kentucky Huston found that the majority of referent groups (superintendents, school board members, heads of teacher organizations, legislative committee members, Kentucky School Boards Association, and State Superintendent of Public Instruction) believed that the mandate had improved board member effectiveness and respondents preferred the original law because it required more training hours annually (15 hours instead of 12). “Kentucky has a graduated scale with new members having to obtain 12 hours annually. New members must also receive hours in 11 identified areas during their first term” (p.

ii). Huston's research aimed to judge the success of the mandate and identified the following: the desirability of the original and amended training mandate; quality of the in-service activities; accomplishment of intended results; and accessibility of training sessions. In particular, 11 areas of training were identified in the Kentucky mandate: school law, school finance, community relations, policy development, personnel relations, instructional programs, superintendent/board relations, goals and decisions, superintendent evaluation, special populations, and substance abuse. Nearly 93% of superintendents responding identified the mandated in-service training as "desirable" or "highly desirable."

Howley (1992) studied the five States that had mandated training programs at that time (Arkansas, Georgia, Kentucky, Oklahoma, and Texas) to determine if the training mandates were effective and concluded that "the in-service training needs of board members in the five States which mandate training are being met in an adequate manner" (p. 221). Howley found "knowledge of content is crucial to the success of school board service. Results have indicated that when school board members use their training, they will make appropriate decisions regarding the education of the Nation's students" (p. 180).

Morrison (1996) investigated why Illinois unit school district board members voluntarily chose not to seek re-election in 1995. The decision by a sitting Illinois school director in 1995 to not seek re-election that year voluntarily ended their board service upon commencement of their elected term. Morrison attempted to identify satisfactions and dissatisfactions that may have played a role in the decision to not seek re-election.

Morrison identified 289 members from 214 unit districts that voluntarily had chosen not to seek re-election to their boards of education in 1995. A telephone interview method was utilized to ask the five research questions investigated. Specifically, research question four asked “what in-service activities helped with the problems faced by board members...and what problems might future board members face during their term in office?” Over 95% of board members who were interviewed by Morrison stated that the in-service school board convention made their board service much more productive and stated that the program content helped them better understand their role as a board member. Most said that the longer they served the better they understood the process, but that for many months they were very much in the dark about their responsibilities (p. 155).

Reynolds (1997) & Roland (1990) discussed successful in-service training programs for board members and highlighted the successes of The Indiana Leadership Education Project, which was a pilot training program offered to 25 school boards in the late 1980's. Roland (1990) investigated the impact of The Indiana Leadership Education Project in his own research by surveying superintendents to find that the training program was a significant factor in the enhanced performance of school board members whereby superintendents found 19 out of 20 training topics important. The 19 topics deemed important were: collective bargaining, superintendent selection, board self-evaluation, leadership, communications, accountability, school finance, policy development, student achievement, curriculum development, personnel management, long-range planning,

short-range planning, legal seminars, goal setting, ethics, conflicts, legislative updates, and new board member orientation (McReynolds, 1997, p. 30).

Council (1994) recommended dual responsibility for board training shared between the board president and the superintendent; board presidents would ensure the training and development for fellow board members with superintendents serving to cultivate an ethos that enables teaching and leadership. “Exemplary leaders encourage and enlist the support of everyone needed to make the system work. All who have a stake in the vision of a successful school district must be involved in some way” (Carter, 1997, p. 239).

Illinois enacted a sweeping reform act in 1985 which required the participation and attendance of principals to attend an “Administrators Academy” for relevant training. There was a penalty clause for non-attendance which resulted in forfeiture of certification. This increased accountability of school administrators led to questioning the absence of similar accountability for school board members. A three-part study was conducted in the spring of 1990 by Janis Petronis, Robert Hall & Max Pierson of the Western Illinois University to investigate whether a need existed for mandatory school board training. The study also aimed to determine if a training mandate would reduce the number of citizens willing to run for the school board. Finally, the study was to determine if mandatory training would reduce the conflict among superintendents and board members given the fact that board members would have formal training somewhat parallel to that of administrators. Of the 967 Illinois superintendents that were mailed a survey, 497 usable questionnaires 51.3% were tabulated. 61.5% of all respondents

supported the need for a training mandate with a near equal amount 57.3% agreeing that such a mandate would reduce the number of citizens willing to run for the school board. Nearly half of the respondents 47.6% agreed that mandatory training would reduce administrator/board member conflict with 35% disagreeing and 17.4% rendering no opinion.

Hess (2002) worked with NSBA and compiled a report “School Boards at the Dawn of the 21st Century” which surveyed board members in 2,000 school districts throughout the Nation. He utilized a stratified random sampling method to identify the 2000 districts of varying sizes and achieved a response rate of 41%. Hess (2002), in realizing that a preponderance of school board members lack skill and expertise by virtue of not having professional training in education, addressed three questions critics have of board member training and preparation: 1) In which areas do board members actually receive training? 2) Does the extent of training vary with district size? 3) How much additional training, if any, do board members desire?

Regardless of district size, over 90% of respondents indicated receiving some form of training on board member roles and responsibilities with close to 80% receiving training on board and superintendent relations. The percentage of board members trained in a given skill area does not indicate whether districts are providing too much, too little, or just the right amount of preparation. One in five respondents indicated student achievement as the greatest concern and desired more training in this area (p. 19).

Scholarly debate on what constitutes a “qualified” or “effective” school board member will likely continue for decades to come, as public education remains a

centerpiece issue in the lives of many Americans. If laity is to continue as the primary governance structure for Pennsylvania's school boards, the lay member must be competent, qualified, and able to discharge the awesome duties for which he or she has been charged. If school boards are to demand excellence of others; they must also demand the highest standards for themselves, recognize the need for on the job growth, and participate in continuing education (Carpenter, 1989).

Challenges to Mandating Board Training in Pennsylvania

The growing number of States adopting training mandates for school board members might be related to the growing number of reform movements that continue to demand improvement from public school systems. Given that additional States have continued to mandate training since NSBA first studied the issue in 1996, momentum appears to be building in recognizing the awesome responsibilities America's school board members face. The resultant effect is establishing a rationale to mandate training for school board members. How long this momentum takes to make its way through Pennsylvania remains an area of scholarly conjecture. Given that elected officials in the Pennsylvania Legislature are not subject to mandated training after taking office, Legislators in Harrisburg remain reluctant to single out school directors or any other elected group solely for mandated training. Doing so may invariably lead to a logical question about the absence of training requirements for Elected State Senators and Representatives (Personal Communication, Cowell, 2002).

An attempt to mandate training for school board members in Pennsylvania failed in 1993 as two versions of a mandated training program for school directors were

defeated (General Assembly of Pennsylvania, 1993). Neither bill came up for a vote and the Pennsylvania School Boards Association lobbied against the measure in part because the Association believes school director training should remain a voluntary activity (Personal Communication, Cowell, 2002). However, if training were mandated in Pennsylvania, school directors would not be the only elected officials mandated to participate in a training program. Yackera (1998) pointed out that all Pennsylvania Elected District Justices are required to complete a continuing education program “that allows a District Justice to remain current in a variety of legal topics and management techniques required to fairly adjudicate cases and effectively run a District Justice Office” (Pottsville Republican, 1996, p. 15). Cowell asserted that the Judicial Branch mandates training for a District Justice candidate and said training is not mandated or promulgated by the Pennsylvania Legislature (Personal Communication, Cowell, 2002).

Del Collo (2001) supported Fissel (2000) and took an alarming look at the conflicting roles school board members have when compared to the certificated employees for which they employ. In-service education and training became a mandated activity for Pennsylvania public school teachers and administrators with the passage of PA Act 48 of 1999. PA Act 48 requires professional certificate holders to complete 180 hours of professional development activities within a five-year period to maintain active certification status. Professionals failing to attain the necessary hours face having their certification placed on inactive status making them ineligible for employment. While the Pennsylvania Legislature has an established precedent of passing legislation that would mandate in-service training, PA Act 48 of 1999 did not mandate in-service training hours

be completed by Pennsylvania school board members. Training for Pennsylvania school board members remains a voluntary activity provided largely through the Pennsylvania School Boards Association (PSBA) and local Intermediate Units.

Del Collo (2001) noted that school boards are legally responsible for approving the mandated professional-education training program for certificated employees in their districts (the Act 48 plan) yet no such mandate exists for school board members to be trained.

The NSBA (1996) found that States without in-service training mandates for school directors traditionally “support board development, but feel school board members should not be singled out for training when other officials are not. Those same States also tend to feel that mandated training should be funded” (p. 3).

Substantial public support for a mandated training program for PA school directors was found among registered voters in Pennsylvania. Yackera (1998) found that citizens in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania overwhelmingly agree or strongly agree (89%) that newly elected or appointed school board members should be required to participate in some form of in-service training relevant to their new responsibilities prior to taking office. Further, 79% percent agreed or strongly agreed that public school board members should be required to participate in some form of continuing education relevant to their school board responsibilities during their term in office (pp. 154-155).

Lynn Mannion, assistant executive director for communications and managing editor of the PSBA Bulletin, says school board training is not an ‘either or’ question. Mannion asserted that the question should be shifted from “should there be in-service

orientation to how can school board training be done most effectively?” (PSBA Bulletin, 2001)

Helton (1991) surveyed board presidents and superintendents in Indiana to determine their perceptions relative to the in-service training needs for newly elected/selected board members. Respondents answered questions on the desirability and benefit of a mandated in-service training program for new board members and respondents were asked to indicate whether or not in-service training should become a mandated activity in that State. Both superintendents and board presidents were asked what they perceived to be important content areas for an in-service training program. Finally, Helton’s respondents were asked their perceptions of how and by whom the delivery of board member in-service training should be conducted (p. 41).

Helton (1991) found that both superintendents and board presidents in Indiana agreed with the benefit of in-service activity with both agreeing that in-service training for new board members should become a mandated activity. Respondents both preferred locally generated training activities and also indicated that mandated training should be completed within one year of taking office with a range between five and 20 hours being required.

Clearly, across the Nation, the reform movement pressuring public education increases in intensity as recently underscored with the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) commonly referred to as the “No Child Left Behind Act” (Olson, Education Week, 2002). The necessity for school director in-

service training may be driven by the changing role of board members and the increasing number of National reform movements working their way through school systems.

McReynolds (1997) asserted that the role of a school board member is much more complex today, and if these individuals do not have a thorough understanding of their role, there will be negative effects on the education of children and in the public confidence of public education.

Bringing about systemic change to school governance, especially in a State as large and diverse as the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, will prove a difficult but worthy task. The time is right for the Pennsylvania Legislature to begin the prudent course of preliminary discussions on mandated training for school board members. Dr. Richard C. Wallace (1996), retired superintendent from the Pittsburgh Public Schools discussed his experiences and noted it takes three to five years to effectuate a major philosophical change. Fullan (1991) stated that change requires three to five years, with a major restructuring demanding five to ten years. Given the complexities of enacting legislation, the sooner the concept of mandated training is reintroduced in the Pennsylvania legislature, the sooner mandated training could become a reality.

While critics of mandated training warn that a training mandate would reduce those willing to serve as school board members, the status quo may be having the same effect on school boards. Doyle (1992) believed an additional aspect of school board member training should address the short-term nature of school board member's service. Many board members, upon becoming effective, relinquish their position due to the stress and time commitments of the job. Training is vital to reduce the stress brought about

with learning-by-doing approaches to school governance. McAdams & Cressman (1997) indicated that school board members possess minimal knowledge of board operations and do not distinguish the difference between policy and administration.

Existing research examined in this chapter strongly suggests that the time may be right for the Pennsylvania Legislature to revisit the issue of mandated training for elected school board members. Research, access to information, and analysis of data, rather than storage of facts, will be skills of the future (Reflecting On Our Past, 1995). We cannot ensure nor can we deliver the quality schools that today's reform movement is demanding if we do not first ensure that quality is demanded from those that govern public school systems. Ultimately, it is the quality of the schools that will determine eminence of America in the world economy and the endurance of our democratic society (Joint AASA-NSBA committee, 1994).

E. Review of Relevant Literature: Conclusions and Implications

Summary of Research

This review of relevant literature in Chapter II revealed several on-going themes regarding effective schools research. Flores (2001) defined, “a collaboration on behalf of children” as a key descriptor of the working relationship between effective superintendents and boards (p. 70). The research base concluded that superintendent and school board relationships were built over time, and the more time to build said relationships resulted in the governance team working together on behalf of all students. This review of literature identified past, present, and possibly future models for which schools are governed. Clearly, the increasing demands of the standards movement, vis-à-vis NCLB, will require new and different scholarly studies on the relationships between school governance structures and behaviors and what effect they may have on student achievement. Haycock (1998) decried a longstanding belief among educators who feel that little can be done to help improve achievement among students coming from disadvantaged socioeconomic backgrounds. However, the review of literature offered that there are increasing numbers of high-poverty, high-performing schools that are showing increased student achievement (Haycock, 1998; Haycock, et al., 2001; Ali & Jerald, 2001).

More importantly, as Borba (2002) presented, although the number of high achieving schools has increased with the past two decades, there is still limited empirical research on what effect school districts leadership ultimately has on student achievement. Numerous authors have pointed to an obvious void in the research base on empirical

study of the impact school leadership has on overall student achievement (Bjork, 1993; Bredeson, 1996; Wissler & Ortiz, 1988).

Fleetham (1998) held that an effective school board contributes to the quality of education in the community and that board members, like the staff, need and deserve to participate in continuing education. Fleetham, supported by a review of literature, found eleven general standards that should be considered when reviewing effective board orientation and training practices:

1. Providing appropriate board orientation for new board members.
2. Continuing board training for all members from the superintendent.
3. Board and superintendent cultivate personal relationships.
4. Board members should attend professional conferences.
5. Board members should make visits to other schools.
6. Staff “briefings” on educational programs and activities.
7. Evaluation of board development programs.
8. School board policy supports the practice of board orientation.
9. “Outside” consultants are used to help with board orientation.
10. Educational journals and materials are used to supplement training.
11. Budget support for board orientation and training activities. (pp. 35-36)

Lere (2004) utilized a vast array of literature on school governance structures and arrived at the following conclusions based upon an extensive review of literature:

The research and the literature describing the research indicates that there is a higher than normal turnover of superintendents in large urban school districts and small rural school districts and that two important factors contributing to this are the relationship between the superintendent and the school board and the relationship between the superintendent and the community. The literature also indicates the importance of the superintendent/school board relationship and the positive impact of the extended tenure of the superintendent, and to a lesser degree that of the school board members, on the stability and progress of the school system, and to some extent, the community. (pp. 54-55)

Illustrative Summary of Review of Literature

Chapter II provided a framework to support the research questions and for the questions on the survey instrument. Some of the key research findings that supported and contributed toward construction of the survey instrument are delineated below.

| Author/Researcher | Summary of Key Findings for Survey Instrument | | |
|-----------------------------|--|--|---|
| Gursky (1992) & NSBA (1992) | 100 board members & 72 superintendent respondents. | Board members lack understanding of role. | Lack of understanding causes unstable relationships. |
| Danzberger et al. (1992) | Interviewed board members about how they learned their roles and function. | Found board members learn about their role based on what they are told from friends or family. | Other respondents relied on learning about roles and responsibilities from members. |

| Author/Researcher | Summary of Key Findings for Survey Instrument | | |
|--|---|---|--|
| Flores (2001) & Anderson (1992) | Surveyed board presidents, superintendents, and high school principals on behaviors of effective board members. | Board members were able to clearly distinguish between policy and on policies that are sensitive to a broad public need. | Demonstrated a willingness to ensure superintendents opportunities to recommend action on policy formulation. |
| AASA (1992) | Study of American Superintendency. | Superintendents felt lack of effectiveness was due to insufficient time on the job. | Not enough time on the job limited amount of work that could be completed. |
| DiLeo (1999) | Studied 12 superintendents with 10 or more years of experience in one district. | All 12 respondents believed board member conflicts and issues prevented many of their colleague superintendents from achieving longevity. | Respondents felt a collegial atmosphere and relationship between the board and superintendent and sound communication helped achieve longevity of superintendents. |
| Berrigan (1991) & Poyourow-Ripple (1989) | Both studied the impact of PA Act 105 changing school director term length from six to four years. | Both studies aimed to determine if Act 105 caused differences in turnover of superintendents or board members. | Neither study found statistical significances in turnover six years prior or subsequent to the passage of Act 105. |
| Basom, Young & Adams (1999) | Studied successful strategies of effective superintendent/board relationships | Found four themes necessary to maintain positive and trusting board/superintendent relationships: | Trust, Focus, Communication, and Superintendent as teacher. |

CHAPTER III METHODOLOGY

Restatement of the Problem

An abundance of research exists on effective schools, effective instructional methodologies, and effective leadership practices for school administrators. Similarly, research does exist on tenets of effective school board members; however, this research is rarely empirical and is largely derived from personal experiences of practitioners. The sweeping changes of NCLB demand increased accountability and performance out of schools. Ironically, these demands almost exclusively place heavy emphasis on those that govern schools, particularly school board members. However, the research base gives little attention to specific characteristics or actions that school board members can take to foster improvements in school achievement. This study aimed to identify potential relationships between specific variables of school governance (longevity and training) as means to identify correlations or relationships to increases in school achievement such as a school districts ability to demonstrate AYP.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the methodology and procedures that were utilized in the completion of this study. The primary purpose of this study was to investigate if any correlations existed between superintendent and board member longevity, board member participation in voluntary in-service training, and Pennsylvania school districts demonstrating AYP for the 2004-2005 school year. Superintendents were chosen as the focus of this study because “superintendents occupy one of the most unique and important positions within the formal organizational structure of school systems”

(DiLeo, 1999, p. 1). According to Stipetic (1994), the role of the superintendent is unique because there is no parallel position within a school district. The Pennsylvania School Boards Association (PSBA), in many of its training programs, refer to the Superintendent of Schools as the crucial “tenth, non-voting member of the Board of School Directors poised to provide dynamic leadership for the board and the school district” (Personal Communication, 2002). The Superintendent of Schools is the key leader involving leadership and governance of public school systems (Sergiovanni, Burlingame, Cooms, & Thruston, 1987; Konnert & Augenstein, 1990).

This study investigated the relationship between (a) superintendent longevity and District AYP, (b) school board member longevity and District AYP and (c) school board member participation in voluntary in-service training and District AYP. District AYP was utilized as a barometer of school district effectiveness by analyzing those Pennsylvania school districts that demonstrated District AYP and those school districts that did not demonstrate District AYP in accordance with PDE District AYP determinations for the 2004-2005 school year.

This study employed the use of survey research to collect data from superintendents in Pennsylvania. It also used the 2005 District AYP data obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE). The research questions posed in this study were investigated utilizing a quantitative research methodology. Krathwohl (1998) describes quantitative research as a process that describes phenomena in numbers and measures instead of words with a focus of the research predetermined and drawn from

prior research. Since AYP is a dichotomous variable, Point-Biserial correlation was utilized in data analysis.

Research Questions

This study investigated the following research questions:

1. What is the relationship between the tenure of the school district superintendent and districts demonstrating AYP?
2. What is the relationship between years of experience of school board members and districts demonstrating AYP?
3. What is the relationship between school board member participation in voluntary in-service training programs and districts demonstrating AYP?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested to meet the primary purpose of this study and were supported by the review of relevant literature in Chapter 2.

H₁: There is no significant relationship between the tenure of the school district superintendent and districts demonstrating AYP.

H₂: There is no significant relationship between years of experience of school board members and districts demonstrating AYP.

H₃: There is no significant relationship between school board member participation in voluntary in-service training programs and districts demonstrating AYP.

Research Design

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), as part of the Federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), makes schools accountable to students, their parents, teachers, and the community. The purpose of AYP is to ensure that all students have reading and math skills that prepare them for the future. This law states that all students must reach the Proficient level or higher in Reading or Language Arts and Mathematics by 2014. School districts and schools must show Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) on several measurable indicators: Attendance or Graduation Rate, Test Performance, and Test Participation.

AYP targets measure whether a school or district is making sufficient annual progress toward the goal of 100% proficiency.

District AYP is determined by PDE and district targets are assessed in three grade spans: Grades 3–5, 6–8, and 9–12. To meet District AYP goals in Academic Performance or Test Participation, the district needs to achieve all targets for both subjects in one grade span only.

The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) published the 2005 District AYP data which shows how each school district in Pennsylvania performed relative to attaining District AYP. The data are presented in table 2 which shows the number of Pennsylvania school districts in each category of meeting District AYP.

The Population Data

Table 2

District AYP Population Data

| AYP Status | Number of school districts |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Districts Demonstrating AYP | 308 |
| Districts Not Demonstrating AYP* | 192 |
| Total | 500 |

* See Appendix D

Variables Used in the Study

The dependent variable in this study is AYP, and for the purpose of this study, school districts are divided into two categories, the ‘Demonstrating AYP’ category coded as 1 and the ‘Not Demonstrating AYP’ was coded as 0. This results in the dependent variable of “AYP Status” being measured on a categorical scale as 0 and 1. Using the scale “0” for districts not demonstrating AYP and “1” for districts demonstrating AYP aids in Point-Biserial correlation as the dichotomous variable “AYP Status” increases from 0 to 1, this results in increases from districts not demonstrating AYP (0) to districts demonstrating AYP (1). The Point-Biserial correlation was used to observe relationships between quantifiable variables (longevity, training hours) and District AYP status.

The independent variables are:

- (1) Tenure of school district superintendent as measured in years of service in current district.
- (2) Experience of board members and is measured in years served on the school board.
- (3) Board member participation in voluntary in-service training measured by number of voluntary in-service training hours completed over the last two years.

Population and Sample

The population comprised superintendents in all 501 public school districts in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The sample comprised all Pennsylvania school district superintendents responding to the survey (n=295). School district superintendents were selected as participants because they serve as the Chief Executive Officer of the school district with the primary responsibility of discharging policies promulgated by the board of school directors.

Procedure

This study employed Point-Biserial correlation analysis research to determine whether a relationship existed between superintendent longevity, school board member longevity, school board member training, and Pennsylvania school districts that demonstrated Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) during the 2004-2005 school year. AYP was selected as a barometer of school effectiveness by analyzing school districts that have demonstrated AYP and school districts that have not demonstrated AYP. This research did not attempt to establish causal relationships between variables; rather, the research questions aimed to measure the degree and the direction of the relationship between the variables.

The independent variables were superintendent longevity in the school district, board member longevity, and board member participation in voluntary in-service training. The dependent variable was the most recent District AYP data (available as of November, 2005 during survey research) supplied by PDE for the 2004-2005 school year.

Superintendents were selected as the sole participants for this study as they serve in the capacity of CEO of a school district working in concert with locally elected lay school directors to formulate and implement policy for Pennsylvania's public schools. The superintendent of schools is referred to as the tenth, non-voting member of the board serving the "team of ten" (PSBA, 1993). Stipetic (1994) identified the superintendent as someone with tremendous influence over the operational direction of the school system.

The names and addresses of all 501 Pennsylvania school districts were obtained from PDE on the EDNA website, which identified the survey population. Once the school districts were identified for the population, they were listed alphabetically by school district name in ascending order to assist the researcher in identifying which school districts have failed to respond to the initial and second mailings. Given the volume of turnover experienced Statewide by chief school administrators, no agency or individual at any given time has completely accurate up-to-date demographic data on all of Pennsylvania's 501 superintendents as movement among superintendents occurs on a monthly basis. Given this reality of frequent movement by superintendents across the Commonwealth, the researcher, in an attempt to avoid incorrectly addressing survey instruments to superintendents that may have retired or left the district, addressed each cover letter accompanying the survey instrument only to the "Superintendent of Schools." Incorrectly addressing (using an incorrect name) and sending a cover letter and survey instrument to a would-be research participant may have a negative effect on the response rate. The researcher used more stable, constant, and reliable school district names to identify completed research instruments as opposed to using surnames of specific school

superintendents. Respondents were required to utilize the addressed envelope provided by the researcher for returning completed survey instruments for an instrument to be deemed usable and valid. The addressed return envelope provided by the researcher had the school district name on the envelope so that the researcher could track and identify respondents. Given that the results of this study had the potential to speak to inherent deficiencies in the functionality of school boards, and given that superintendents serve at the pleasure of elected school boards, confidentiality was maintained for the respondents at all times as all completed survey instruments remained with the researcher at all times. The researcher did not divulge any completed survey instrument so that the opinions of the superintendent of any particular school district were protected at all times.

Data Collection

The researcher used the Pennsylvania Department of Education's website and database for District AYP data for the 2004-2005 school year. This data was available on the Internet on the Pennsylvania Department of Education's website at: http://www.paayp.com/state_report.html#. Data collection occurred during the winter of 2006. The survey instrument was mailed to all current members of the population along with a cover letter explaining the need and purpose of the study and included a postage paid envelope for them to utilize in returning the completed instrument. Population members were given two weeks from the date on the cover letter to complete and return the questionnaire.

After two weeks passed, non-respondents from the initial mailing were sent another survey instrument and second cover letter urging their participation in the study.

This second and final contact gave non-respondents an additional two weeks to complete and return the second mailed survey. The second mailing yielded an additional 86 completed survey instruments and boosted the response rate to 59% of the population.

After waiting the additional two weeks for the second reminder mailing, the researcher tabulated the response rate from those instruments received as representation of the population members. The researcher anticipated, and subsequently realized, an above average response rate given that many practicing school superintendents likely completed similar research in their Doctoral and Licensure preparation programs and may have been more inclined to complete a survey that had the potential to add to the research base on an important topic related to public school governance.

Instrumentation

A comprehensive review of literature on in-service training activities and public school governance structures was conducted prior to development of the survey instrument including interviews of experts in the field. Existing State mandates requiring school director training were analyzed through a study conducted by the National School Boards Association (NSBA). A questionnaire was constructed for the purpose of collecting data that was developed from a review of relevant literature, from similar studies completed in the past, and with the assistance of school administrators that have worked with elected school board members. Gay & Arisian (2000) stated that survey instruments should gather data on questions specifically identified in the problem statement.

Further, this section also collected data on the years of experience of each board member in the school district. Section I of the survey instrument collected information on the length of service of the current superintendent of schools and asked superintendents to identify the number of training hours school board members completed with regard to voluntary in-service training activities. Section II of the survey instrument asked superintendents to identify their level of agreement to 24 statements on a five-point Likert scale. The 24 statements related to superintendent and board member longevity, board member in-service training, and characteristics of District AYP determinations from PDE.

Coding of School District Types

To facilitate data analysis, survey instruments were coded for school districts that demonstrated AYP during 2004-2005 with a box notation in the upper right corner of the survey instrument.

Data Treatment

The research findings are delineated in Chapter Four in the same order as they are presented in the survey instrument. Descriptive statistics and appropriate comments to the responses are provided in the data analysis section. Results were tabulated using SPSS student version 13.0 statistical software.

Statistical Methods

Descriptive statistics, including mean and standard deviation were utilized to produce an outlook of the variable and to gain an appreciation for the data received. A Point-Biserial correlation analysis was employed because data were binary.

CHAPTER IV RESULTS

This chapter analyzes the collected survey data for each of the research questions. Tables are presented to represent descriptive statistics. The purpose of this study was to utilize correlation research to determine whether a relationship existed between superintendent longevity, school board member longevity, school board member training, and Pennsylvania school districts that demonstrated Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) during the 2004-2005 school year.

This chapter presents the data analysis results from superintendent responses to the survey instrument. A presentation of descriptive statistics is provided for each research question. The three research questions asked were:

1. What is the relationship between the tenure of the school district superintendent and districts demonstrating AYP?
2. What is the relationship between years of experience of school board members and districts demonstrating AYP?
3. What is the relationship between school board member participation in voluntary in-service training programs and districts demonstrating AYP?

Superintendents in 295 school districts out of 500 returned completed valid survey instruments from two separate mailings, with 194 districts demonstrating AYP responding and 101 districts not demonstrating AYP responding. In 2004-2005, 308 school districts demonstrated AYP and 192 districts did not demonstrate AYP. (See Appendix D). Statistical findings relating to the research questions are presented separately for each research question investigated. Point-Biserial correlation coefficients

were computed among the variables. Research data findings are delineated in table format.

Results of Descriptive Data

Frequency of Pennsylvania School Districts with Regard to District AYP Status

The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) determines District AYP status annually after PSSA testing data from each school district is validated. The District AYP status for the 2004-2005 school year is shown in Table 3. While Pennsylvania does have 501 school districts, only 500 school districts are subject to annual AYP determinations. The Bryn-Athyn school district in Pennsylvania is not subject to AYP provisions of NCLB (Personal Communication, PDE).

Table 3

Frequency of Pennsylvania School Districts with Regard to District AYP Status

| District AYP Status 2004-2005 school year | Number of School Districts | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|--|-------------------------------|---------|------------------|-----------------------|
| Demonstrating AYP | 308 | 61.6 | 61.6 | 61.6 |
| Not Demonstrating AYP | 192* | 38.4 | 38.4 | 100.0 |
| Total | 500 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

* See Appendix D

Frequency of Respondent School Districts with Regard to District AYP Status

Table 4 shows the frequency distribution for survey respondents (n=295). The same survey instrument was mailed to all population members. Survey instruments for districts demonstrating AYP were coded in the upper right corner of the instrument as “Met District AYP for 2004-2005 SY” to aid in classification.

Table 4

Frequency of Respondent School Districts with Regard to District AYP Status

| District AYP Status | Frequency of Valid Respondents | Percent of Valid Respondents |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Demonstrating AYP | 194 | 65.8 |
| Not Demonstrating AYP | 101 | 34.2 |
| Total | 295 | 100.0 |

Frequency of Respondent Districts vs. Population with Regard to District AYP Status

The total percentage of superintendents responding to the survey is compared to the total Pennsylvania school district population in Table 5. A combined response rate (n=295) of 59.0% of the population was achieved from two survey mailings.

Table 5

Frequency of Respondent Districts vs. Population with Regard to District AYP Status

| District AYP Status | Frequency of Valid Respondents | Total School District Population | Percent of Respondents versus Population |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| Demonstrating AYP | 194 | 308 | 62.9 |
| Not Demonstrating AYP | 101 | 192 | 52.6 |
| Totals | 295 | 500 | (Combined response rate) 59.0 |

Research Question One

What is the relationship between the tenure of the school district superintendent and districts demonstrating AYP?

Descriptive Statistics

Table 6

Descriptive Statistics for Research Question One

| Demonstrating District AYP | N | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|--------------------------------|-----|---------|---------|--------|----------------|
| AYPstatus (MET AYP) | 194 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.0000 | .00000 |
| SuptLongvt | 194 | .00 | 2.00 | .5258 | .71393 |
| Not Demonstrating District AYP | N | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviation |
| AYPstatus (NOT MET) | 101 | .00 | .00 | .0000 | .00000 |
| SuptLongvt | 101 | .00 | 2.00 | .4257 | .66853 |

Table 6 shows descriptive statistics on the responses of superintendents in districts demonstrating AYP and districts not demonstrating AYP defining superintendent length of service in their current school district on the following scale: “0” (indicating 0-5 years of service in current district), “1” (indicating 6-10 years of service in current district), “2” (indicating 11 or more years of service in current district).

Superintendents in districts demonstrating AYP have attained slightly longer years of experience in their current school district (combined mean score of .5258) than their counterpart superintendents in districts not demonstrating AYP (combined mean score of .4257). Although the mean score difference is not substantial, the findings indicate that districts demonstrating AYP statistically, on average, have longer serving school district superintendents.

Table 7 shows the results of the Point-Biserial correlation analysis for the degree of the relationship between District AYP status and the longevity of the school district

superintendent. No significant correlations were found comparing District AYP status and superintendent longevity.

Correlations

Table 7

Point-Biserial Correlation for Research Question One

| | | AYPstatus | SuptLongvt |
|------------|----------------------------|-----------|------------|
| AYPstatus | Point-Biserial Correlation | 1 | .068 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | .244 |
| | N | 295 | 295 |
| SuptLongvt | Point-Biserial Correlation | .068 | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .244 | |
| | N | 295 | 295 |

Research Question Two

What is the relationship between years of experience of school board members and districts demonstrating AYP?

Descriptive Statistics

Table 8

Descriptive Statistics for Research Question Two

| Demonstrating District AYP | N | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|--------------------------------|-----|---------|---------|--------|----------------|
| AYPstatus | 194 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.0000 | .00000 |
| EntireBoardExperience | 194 | .00 | 1.56 | .8368 | .32902 |
| Not Demonstrating District AYP | N | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviation |
| AYPstatus | 101 | .00 | .00 | .0000 | .00000 |
| EntireBoardExperience | 101 | .00 | 1.67 | .7294 | .39454 |

Table 8 shows descriptive statistics on the responses of superintendents in districts demonstrating AYP and districts not demonstrating AYP defining the length of service of all board members in their district. "0" (indicates 0-4 years of service on the

school board), “1” (indicates 5-8 years of service on the school board), “2” (indicates more than 8 years of service on the school board).

Districts demonstrating AYP have slightly longer years of experience of school board members (mean of .8368) than their counterparts not demonstrating AYP (mean of .7294).

Districts demonstrating AYP are realizing increased longevity of school board members over districts not demonstrating AYP.

Correlations

Table 9 shows the results of the Point-Biserial correlation analysis for the degree of the relationship between the combined longevity of all school board members and districts demonstrating AYP. A positive correlation was found between the combined experience of school board members and district demonstrating AYP. This correlation was found to be significant at the 0.05 level.

Table 9

Point-Biserial Correlation for Research Question Two

| | | AYPstatus | EntireBoardExperience |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|-----------|-----------------------|
| AYPstatus | Point-Biserial Correlation | 1 | .143(*) |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | .014 |
| | N | 295 | 295 |
| EntireBoardExperience | Point-Biserial Correlation | .143(*) | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .014 | |
| | N | 295 | 295 |

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Research Question Three

What is the relationship between school board member participation in voluntary in-service training programs and districts demonstrating AYP?

Descriptive Statistics

Table 10

Descriptive Statistics for Research Question Three

| Demonstrating District AYP | N | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|--------------------------------|-----|---------|---------|---------|----------------|
| AYPstatus | 194 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.0000 | .00000 |
| TotalHrsBrdTrng | 194 | 18.00 | 197.50 | 75.5541 | 48.84480 |
| Not Demonstrating District AYP | N | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviation |
| AYPstatus | 101 | .00 | .00 | .0000 | .00000 |
| TotalHrsBrdTrng | 101 | 18.00 | 225.00 | 82.6980 | 57.12710 |

Table 10 shows descriptive statistics on responses from superintendents in districts demonstrating AYP and districts not demonstrating AYP regarding board member participation in voluntary in-service training in their district. Board member participation with voluntary in-service training was measured in hours by having superintendents estimate how many training hours each of the 9 school board members completed. The ranges were as follows: 0-4 hours, 5-14 hours, 15-24 hours, and 25 or more hours. Regarding any potential vacancies on the school board, superintendents were instructed to select the “0-4 hours” category for any vacant board seats in their district. Superintendent responses to this question (see survey instrument in Appendix C) were then multiplied against the median for each span of training hours. The resultant variable for total training hours for the entire board was calculated for each individual district. The minimum number of total board training hours was 18.00 (for all nine members) and the maximum number of board training hours was 225.00.

School board members in districts demonstrating AYP completed slightly less training hours (mean of 75.5541 hours) than their counterparts not demonstrating AYP (mean of 82.6980 hours).

Correlations

Table 11

Point-Biserial Correlation for Research Question Three

| | | AYPstatus | TotalHrsBrdTrng |
|-----------------|----------------------------|-----------|-----------------|
| AYPstatus | Point-Biserial Correlation | 1 | -.065 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | .262 |
| | N | 295 | 295 |
| TotalHrsBrdTrng | Point-Biserial Correlation | -.065 | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .262 | |
| | N | 295 | 295 |

Table 11 shows the results of the Point-Biserial correlation analysis for the degree of the relationship between board member completion of in voluntary in-service training (measured in hours) and districts demonstrating AYP. A low negative correlation existed between board member participation in voluntary in-service training programs and districts demonstrating AYP. Specifically, results indicated that there was not a statistically significant relationship between board member completion of voluntary in-service training and districts demonstrating Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP.)

Results by Hypotheses

Hypothesis One

There was not a significant relationship between the tenure of the school district superintendent and districts demonstrating AYP.

A Point-Biserial correlation was computed for this hypothesis (See Table 2). The correlation between the tenure of the school district superintendent and districts demonstrating AYP was not significant at the $p = .05$ level. Therefore, the statistical decision was made to fail to reject the null hypothesis.

Hypothesis Two

There was not a significant relationship between years of experience of school board members and districts demonstrating AYP.

A Point-Biserial correlation was computed for this hypothesis (See Table 4). The correlation between years of experience of school board members and districts demonstrating AYP was significant at the $p = .05$ level. Therefore, the statistical decision was made to reject the null hypothesis.

Hypothesis Three

There was not a significant relationship between school board member participation in voluntary in-service training programs and districts demonstrating AYP.

A Point-Biserial correlation was computed for this hypothesis (See Table 6). The correlation between school board member participation in voluntary in-service training programs and districts demonstrating AYP was not significant at the $p = .05$ level. Therefore, the statistical decision was made to fail to reject the null hypothesis.

Description of Likert-Response Results

Section II of the research instrument completed by superintendents (n=295) from across the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania consisted of twenty-four statements related to the three research questions. Eight questions each were asked of the following three areas related to the research questions: superintendent and board member longevity, board member voluntary in-service training, and district AYP questions.

Responses to these statements were given in the form of selections along a five-point Likert scale ranging from *Strongly Agree* to *Strongly Disagree*. The responses were quantified by assigning point values to the selections, with one point being assigned to *Strongly Agree*, two points assigned to *Agree*, three points assigned to *Neutral*, four points assigned to *Slightly Disagree*, and five points assigned to *Strongly Disagree*.

A mean test of central tendency was conducted to determine if the responses for each statement are representative of the entire population. Frequency distributions for each of the questions are delineated in table format. As the reader will see on the following tables, there is variability among superintendent responses in districts demonstrating AYP and districts not demonstrating AYP. The implications of these results will be discussed in Chapter V. Likert question responses relating to the three research questions are presented next.

Likert Survey Findings

Section II of the survey instrument presented 24 statements soliciting responses along a five-point Likert Scale. Likert survey statements were specifically related to the three research questions and were constructed based on a review of relevant literature on superintendent and board member longevity and board member participation in voluntary in-service training.

Section II of the survey instrument listed Likert survey statements one through eight that were related to superintendent and board member longevity. Likert survey statements nine through 16 were related to board member voluntary in-service training. Finally, Likert survey statements 17 through 24 were related to attributes of District AYP determinations from PDE.

Likert Survey Findings for Survey Questions 1-24

Likert Survey Statement #1

Board members generally improve their effectiveness after serving one full term.

Table 12

Descriptive Statistics for Likert Survey Statement #1

| AYPstatus | Mean | N | Std. Deviation |
|--------------------------------|--------|-----|----------------|
| Demonstrating District AYP | 1.8093 | 194 | .69768 |
| NOT Demonstrating District AYP | 1.7624 | 101 | .61885 |

Table 13

Frequency of Responses for Likert Survey Statement #1

| Demonstrating District AYP | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|----------------------------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Strongly Agree | 65 | 33.5 | 33.5 | 33.5 |
| 2 | Agree | 105 | 54.1 | 54.1 | 87.6 |
| 3 | Neutral | 20 | 10.3 | 10.3 | 97.9 |
| 4 | Disagree | 4 | 2.1 | 2.1 | 100.0 |
| 5 | Strongly Disagree | 0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 100.0 |
| Total | | 194 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

| NOT Demonstrating District AYP | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Strongly Agree | 33 | 32.7 | 32.7 | 32.7 |
| 2 | Agree | 60 | 59.4 | 59.4 | 92.1 |
| 3 | Neutral | 7 | 6.9 | 6.9 | 99.0 |
| 4 | Disagree | 1 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 100.0 |
| 5 | Strongly Disagree | 0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 100.0 |
| Total | | 101 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

Tables 12 and 13 show the mean, standard deviation, and frequency of responses for Likert survey statement #1 among superintendents in districts demonstrating AYP and districts not demonstrating AYP. The sample population in districts demonstrating AYP (n=194) had 87.6% of superintendents selecting either Strongly Agree or Agree for Statement #1. 92.1% of superintendents in districts not demonstrating AYP (n=101) selected either Strongly Agree or Agree to Likert survey statement #1.

Likert Survey Statement #2

New board members are generally more effective and supportive of superintendent recommendations.

Table 14

Descriptive Statistics for Likert Survey Statement #2

| AYPstatus | Mean | N | Std. Deviation |
|--------------------------------|--------|-----|----------------|
| Demonstrating District AYP | 3.0206 | 194 | .83919 |
| NOT Demonstrating District AYP | 3.0396 | 101 | .88228 |

Table 15

Frequency of Responses for Likert Survey Statement #2

| Demonstrating District AYP | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|----------------------------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Strongly Agree | 6 | 3.1 | 3.1 | 3.1 |
| 2 | Agree | 47 | 24.2 | 24.2 | 27.3 |
| 3 | Neutral | 79 | 40.7 | 40.7 | 68.0 |
| 4 | Disagree | 61 | 31.4 | 31.4 | 99.5 |
| 5 | Strongly Disagree | 1 | .5 | .5 | 100.0 |
| Total | | 194 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

| NOT Demonstrating District AYP | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Strongly Agree | 4 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 |
| 2 | Agree | 23 | 22.8 | 22.8 | 26.7 |
| 3 | Neutral | 41 | 40.6 | 40.6 | 67.3 |
| 4 | Disagree | 31 | 30.7 | 30.7 | 98.0 |
| 5 | Strongly Disagree | 2 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 100.0 |
| Total | | 101 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

Tables 14 and 15 show the mean, standard deviation, and frequency of responses for Likert survey statement #2 among superintendents in districts demonstrating AYP and districts not demonstrating AYP. Respondents in both sample groups indicate a high degree of neutrality to the notion of new board members being generally more effective and supportive of superintendent recommendations. 40.7% of superintendents in districts

demonstrating AYP (n=194) selected a Neutral response to statement #2. Similarly, 40.6% of superintendents in districts not demonstrating AYP selected a neutral response to statement #2.

Moreover, Table 15 shows that there was consistency of disagreement among superintendents with regard to the notion of new board members being generally more effective and supportive of superintendent recommendations. 31.4% of superintendents in districts demonstrating AYP (n=194) disagreed with statement #2 compared to 30.7% of superintendents in districts not demonstrating AYP (n=101).

Likert Survey Statement #3

Turnover of more than three board members in any election year is disruptive to district operations.

Table 16

Descriptive Statistics for Likert Survey Statement #3

| AYPstatus | Mean | N | Std. Deviation |
|--------------------------------|--------|-----|----------------|
| Demonstrating District AYP | 2.1134 | 194 | .98039 |
| NOT Demonstrating District AYP | 2.2178 | 101 | .92308 |

Table 17

Frequency of Responses for Likert Survey Statement #3

| Demonstrating District AYP | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|----------------------------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Strongly Agree | 55 | 28.4 | 28.4 | 28.4 |
| 2 | Agree | 87 | 44.8 | 44.8 | 73.2 |
| 3 | Neutral | 30 | 15.5 | 15.5 | 88.7 |
| 4 | Disagree | 19 | 9.8 | 9.8 | 98.5 |
| 5 | Strongly Disagree | 3 | 1.5 | 1.5 | 100.0 |
| Total | | 194 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

| NOT Demonstrating District AYP | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Strongly Agree | 21 | 20.8 | 20.8 | 20.8 |
| 2 | Agree | 50 | 49.5 | 49.5 | 70.3 |
| 3 | Neutral | 17 | 16.8 | 16.8 | 87.1 |
| 4 | Disagree | 13 | 12.9 | 12.9 | 100.0 |
| 5 | Strongly Disagree | 0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 100.0 |
| Total | | 101 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

Tables 16 and 17 show the mean, standard deviation, and frequency of responses for Likert survey statement #3 among superintendents in districts demonstrating AYP and districts not demonstrating AYP. Strong levels of agreement among superintendents found that turnover of more than three board members in any election year is disruptive to district operations. Among school districts demonstrating AYP (n=194) 73.2% of superintendents Strongly Agreed or Agreed to Likert survey statement #3 with 70.3% of superintendents in districts not demonstrating AYP (n=101) selecting Strongly Agree or Agree.

Likert Survey Statement #4

When a new member joins the school board, experienced board members mentor the new member.

Table 18

Descriptive Statistics for Likert Survey Statement #4

| AYPstatus | Mean | N | Std. Deviation |
|--------------------------------|--------|-----|----------------|
| Demonstrating District AYP | 2.2113 | 194 | .81544 |
| NOT Demonstrating District AYP | 2.0990 | 101 | .81860 |

Table 19

Frequency of Responses for Likert Survey Statement #4

| Demonstrating District AYP | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|----------------------------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Strongly Agree | 26 | 13.4 | 13.4 | 13.4 |
| 2 | Agree | 123 | 63.4 | 63.4 | 76.8 |
| 3 | Neutral | 23 | 11.9 | 11.9 | 88.7 |
| 4 | Disagree | 22 | 11.3 | 11.3 | 100.0 |
| 5 | Strongly Disagree | 0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 100.0 |
| Total | | 194 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

| NOT Demonstrating District AYP | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Strongly Agree | 19 | 18.8 | 18.8 | 18.8 |
| 2 | Agree | 62 | 61.4 | 61.4 | 80.2 |
| 3 | Neutral | 12 | 11.9 | 11.9 | 92.1 |
| 4 | Disagree | 7 | 6.9 | 6.9 | 99.0 |
| 5 | Strongly Disagree | 1 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 100.0 |
| Total | | 101 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

Tables 18 and 19 show the mean, standard deviation, and frequency of responses for Likert survey statement #4 among superintendents in districts demonstrating AYP and districts not demonstrating AYP. Strong agreement was found in both samples with 76.8% of superintendents in districts demonstrating AYP selecting Strongly Agree or

Agree compared to 80.2% of superintendents in districts not demonstrating AYP selecting Strongly Agree or Agree to statement #4.

Likert Survey Statement #5

The school board has adopted explicit goals for itself and its performance as a governing body.

Table 20

Descriptive Statistics for Likert Survey Statement #5

| AYPstatus | Mean | N | Std. Deviation |
|--------------------------------|--------|-----|----------------|
| Demonstrating District AYP | 2.5722 | 194 | 1.11395 |
| NOT Demonstrating District AYP | 2.8119 | 101 | 1.19760 |

Table 21

Frequency of Responses for Likert Survey Statement #5

| Demonstrating District AYP | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|----------------------------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Strongly Agree | 31 | 16.0 | 16.0 | 16.0 |
| 2 | Agree | 79 | 40.7 | 40.7 | 56.7 |
| 3 | Neutral | 33 | 17.0 | 17.0 | 73.7 |
| 4 | Disagree | 44 | 22.7 | 22.7 | 96.4 |
| 5 | Strongly Disagree | 7 | 3.6 | 3.6 | 100.0 |
| Total | | 194 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

| NOT Demonstrating District AYP | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Strongly Agree | 13 | 12.9 | 12.9 | 12.9 |
| 2 | Agree | 37 | 36.6 | 36.6 | 49.5 |
| 3 | Neutral | 14 | 13.9 | 13.9 | 63.4 |
| 4 | Disagree | 30 | 29.7 | 29.7 | 93.1 |
| 5 | Strongly Disagree | 7 | 6.9 | 6.9 | 100.0 |
| Total | | 101 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

Tables 20 and 21 show the mean, standard deviation, and frequency of responses for Likert survey statement #5 among superintendents in districts demonstrating AYP and districts not demonstrating AYP. Approximately half of superintendent responses in both

samples were in agreement to statement #5. 56.7% of superintendents in districts demonstrating AYP (n=194) selected Strongly Agree or Agree to Likert survey statement. Similarly, 49.5% of superintendents in districts not demonstrating AYP (n=101) selecting Agree to statement #5.

Likert Survey Statement #6

Superintendents serving in the same district for more than five years are more effective and productive.

Table 22

Descriptive Statistics for Likert Survey Statement #6

| AYPstatus | Mean | N | Std. Deviation |
|--------------------------------|--------|-----|----------------|
| Demonstrating District AYP | 2.0515 | 194 | .88594 |
| NOT Demonstrating District AYP | 2.1188 | 101 | .95171 |

Table 23

Frequency of Responses for Likert Survey Statement #6

| Demonstrating District AYP | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|----------------------------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Strongly Agree | 59 | 30.4 | 30.4 | 30.4 |
| 2 | Agree | 78 | 40.2 | 40.2 | 70.6 |
| 3 | Neutral | 45 | 23.2 | 23.2 | 93.8 |
| 4 | Disagree | 12 | 6.2 | 6.2 | 100.0 |
| 5 | Strongly Disagree | 0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 100.0 |
| Total | | 194 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

| NOT Demonstrating District AYP | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Strongly Agree | 28 | 27.7 | 27.7 | 27.7 |
| 2 | Agree | 43 | 42.6 | 42.6 | 70.3 |
| 3 | Neutral | 22 | 21.8 | 21.8 | 92.1 |
| 4 | Disagree | 6 | 5.9 | 5.9 | 98.0 |
| 5 | Strongly Disagree | 2 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 100.0 |
| Total | | 101 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

Tables 22 and 23 show the mean, standard deviation, and frequency of responses for Likert survey statement #6 among superintendents in districts demonstrating AYP and districts not demonstrating AYP. High levels of agreement to Likert survey instrument statement #6 were found between both samples of superintendents. The sample population in districts demonstrating AYP (n=194) had 70.6% of superintendents selecting Strongly Agree or Agree compared with 70.3% of superintendents in districts not demonstrating AYP (n=101) selecting Strongly Agree or Agree to statement #6.

Likert Survey Statement #7

Superintendents serving in the same district for less than five years are more likely to effectuate change.

Table 24

Descriptive Statistics for Likert Survey Statement #7

| <u>AYPstatus</u> | <u>Mean</u> | <u>N</u> | <u>Std. Deviation</u> |
|--------------------------------|-------------|----------|-----------------------|
| Demonstrating District AYP | 2.8247 | 194 | .98707 |
| NOT Demonstrating District AYP | 2.7624 | 101 | .90718 |

Table 25

Frequency of Responses for Likert Survey Statement #7

| Demonstrating District AYP | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|----------------------------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Strongly Agree | 12 | 6.2 | 6.2 | 6.2 |
| 2 | Agree | 75 | 38.7 | 38.7 | 44.8 |
| 3 | Neutral | 45 | 23.2 | 23.2 | 68.0 |
| 4 | Disagree | 59 | 30.4 | 30.4 | 98.5 |
| 5 | Strongly Disagree | 3 | 1.5 | 1.5 | 100.0 |
| Total | | 194 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

| NOT Demonstrating District AYP | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Strongly Agree | 5 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 |
| 2 | Agree | 40 | 39.6 | 39.6 | 44.6 |
| 3 | Neutral | 31 | 30.7 | 30.7 | 75.2 |
| 4 | Disagree | 24 | 23.8 | 23.8 | 99.0 |
| 5 | Strongly Disagree | 1 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 100.0 |
| Total | | 101 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

Tables 24 and 25 show the mean, standard deviation, and frequency of responses for Likert survey statement #7 among superintendents in districts demonstrating AYP and districts not demonstrating AYP. The mean score measure of central tendency in Table 24 among districts demonstrating AYP (n=194) was 2.8247 compared to a mean score of 2.7624 for districts not demonstrating AYP (n=101).

Likert Survey Statement #8

Superintendents are largely responsible for building and maintaining board/superintendent relationships.

Table 26

Descriptive Statistics for Likert Survey Statement #8

| AYPstatus | Mean | N | Std. Deviation |
|--------------------------------|--------|-----|----------------|
| Demonstrating District AYP | 1.6598 | 194 | .72536 |
| NOT Demonstrating District AYP | 1.6931 | 101 | .78412 |

Table 27

Frequency of Responses for Likert Survey Statement #8

| Demonstrating District AYP | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|----------------------------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Strongly Agree | 87 | 44.8 | 44.8 | 44.8 |
| 2 | Agree | 93 | 47.9 | 47.9 | 92.8 |
| 3 | Neutral | 8 | 4.1 | 4.1 | 96.9 |
| 4 | Disagree | 5 | 2.6 | 2.6 | 99.5 |
| 5 | Strongly Disagree | 1 | .5 | .5 | 100.0 |
| Total | | 194 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

| NOT Demonstrating District AYP | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Strongly Agree | 45 | 44.6 | 44.6 | 44.6 |
| 2 | Agree | 47 | 46.5 | 46.5 | 91.1 |
| 3 | Neutral | 5 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 96.0 |
| 4 | Disagree | 3 | 3.0 | 3.0 | 99.0 |
| 5 | Strongly Disagree | 1 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 100.0 |
| Total | | 101 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

Tables 26 and 27 show the mean, standard deviation, and frequency of responses for Likert survey statement #8 among superintendents in districts demonstrating AYP and districts not demonstrating AYP. Substantial agreement between both samples was found to the statement that superintendents are largely responsible for building and maintaining board/superintendent relationships. 92.8% of superintendents in districts demonstrating AYP (n=194) selected strongly agree or agree compared to 91.1% of superintendents in districts not demonstrating AYP (n=101) selecting strongly agree or agree to statement #8.

Likert Survey Statement #9

At least once every year the school board has a retreat or special session to examine their performance.

Table 28

Descriptive Statistics for Likert Survey Statement #9

| AYPstatus | Mean | N | Std. Deviation |
|--------------------------------|--------|-----|----------------|
| Demonstrating District AYP | 2.8608 | 194 | 1.32188 |
| NOT Demonstrating District AYP | 2.7723 | 101 | 1.35559 |

Table 29

Frequency of Responses for Likert Survey Statement #9

| Demonstrating District AYP | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|----------------------------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Strongly Agree | 36 | 18.6 | 18.6 | 18.6 |
| 2 | Agree | 55 | 28.4 | 28.4 | 46.9 |
| 3 | Neutral | 24 | 12.4 | 12.4 | 59.3 |
| 4 | Disagree | 58 | 29.9 | 29.9 | 89.2 |
| 5 | Strongly Disagree | 21 | 10.8 | 10.8 | 100.0 |
| Total | | 194 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

| NOT Demonstrating District AYP | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Strongly Agree | 21 | 20.8 | 20.8 | 20.8 |
| 2 | Agree | 32 | 31.7 | 31.7 | 52.5 |
| 3 | Neutral | 8 | 7.9 | 7.9 | 60.4 |
| 4 | Disagree | 29 | 28.7 | 28.7 | 89.1 |
| 5 | Strongly Disagree | 11 | 10.9 | 10.9 | 100.0 |
| Total | | 101 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

Tables 28 and 29 show the mean, standard deviation, and frequency of responses for Likert survey statement #9 among superintendents in districts demonstrating AYP and districts not demonstrating AYP. The mean score measure of central tendency in Table 28 among districts demonstrating AYP (n=194) was 2.8608 compared to a mean score of 2.7723 for districts not demonstrating AYP (n=101).

Likert Survey Statement #10

Board members will consistently seek outside training on new mandates and programs affecting the district.

Table 30

Descriptive Statistics for Likert Survey Statement #10

| AYPstatus | Mean | N | Std. Deviation |
|--------------------------------|--------|-----|----------------|
| Demonstrating District AYP | 3.1031 | 194 | 1.11033 |
| NOT Demonstrating District AYP | 2.9802 | 101 | 1.09526 |

Table 31

Frequency of Responses for Likert Survey Statement #10

| Demonstrating District AYP | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|----------------------------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Strongly Agree | 10 | 5.2 | 5.2 | 5.2 |
| 2 | Agree | 64 | 33.0 | 33.0 | 38.1 |
| 3 | Neutral | 32 | 16.5 | 16.5 | 54.6 |
| 4 | Disagree | 72 | 37.1 | 37.1 | 91.8 |
| 5 | Strongly Disagree | 16 | 8.2 | 8.2 | 100.0 |
| Total | | 194 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

| NOT Demonstrating District AYP | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Strongly Agree | 6 | 5.9 | 5.9 | 5.9 |
| 2 | Agree | 37 | 36.6 | 36.6 | 42.6 |
| 3 | Neutral | 17 | 16.8 | 16.8 | 59.4 |
| 4 | Disagree | 35 | 34.7 | 34.7 | 94.1 |
| 5 | Strongly Disagree | 6 | 5.9 | 5.9 | 100.0 |
| Total | | 101 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

Tables 30 and 31 show the mean, standard deviation, and frequency of responses for Likert survey statement #10 among superintendents in districts demonstrating AYP and districts not demonstrating AYP. Responses were varied between both samples. The mean score measure of central tendency in Table 28 among districts demonstrating AYP (n=194) was 3.1031 compared to a mean score of 2.9802 for districts not demonstrating

AYP (n=101). Over one-third of superintendents in both samples selected Disagree to Likert survey statement #10, with 37.1% and 34.7% respectively. On the other hand, approximately one-third in both samples also selected Agree to statement #10.

Likert Survey Statement #11

The board periodically sets aside time to learn about important external issues facing school districts.

Table 32

Descriptive Statistics for Likert Survey Statement #11

| AYPstatus | Mean | N | Std. Deviation |
|--------------------------------|--------|-----|----------------|
| Demonstrating District AYP | 2.4381 | 194 | 1.07674 |
| NOT Demonstrating District AYP | 2.4059 | 101 | .98161 |

Table 33

Frequency of Responses for Likert Survey Statement #11

| Demonstrating District AYP | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|----------------------------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Strongly Agree | 26 | 13.4 | 13.4 | 13.4 |
| 2 | Agree | 109 | 56.2 | 56.2 | 69.6 |
| 3 | Neutral | 17 | 8.8 | 8.8 | 78.4 |
| 4 | Disagree | 32 | 16.5 | 16.5 | 94.8 |
| 5 | Strongly Disagree | 10 | 5.2 | 5.2 | 100.0 |
| Total | | 194 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

| NOT Demonstrating District AYP | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Strongly Agree | 12 | 11.9 | 11.9 | 11.9 |
| 2 | Agree | 58 | 57.4 | 57.4 | 69.3 |
| 3 | Neutral | 11 | 10.9 | 10.9 | 80.2 |
| 4 | Disagree | 18 | 17.8 | 17.8 | 98.0 |
| 5 | Strongly Disagree | 2 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 100.0 |
| Total | | 101 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

Tables 32 and 33 show the mean, standard deviation, and frequency of responses for Likert survey statement #11 among superintendents in districts demonstrating AYP

and districts not demonstrating AYP. The sample population among districts demonstrating AYP (n=194) had 69.6% of superintendents selecting Strongly Agree or Agree. Statement #11 found 69.3% of superintendents in districts not demonstrating AYP (n=101) selecting Strongly Agree or Agree.

Likert Survey Statement #12

The school board allocates funds in the budget for board education and in-service training programs.

Table 34

Descriptive Statistics for Likert Survey Statement #12

| AYPstatus | Mean | N | Std. Deviation |
|--------------------------------|--------|-----|----------------|
| Demonstrating District AYP | 2.1443 | 194 | .86963 |
| NOT Demonstrating District AYP | 2.0099 | 101 | .89994 |

Table 35

Frequency of Responses for Likert Survey Statement #12

| Demonstrating District AYP | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|----------------------------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Strongly Agree | 34 | 17.5 | 17.5 | 17.5 |
| 2 | Agree | 123 | 63.4 | 63.4 | 80.9 |
| 3 | Neutral | 14 | 7.2 | 7.2 | 88.1 |
| 4 | Disagree | 21 | 10.8 | 10.8 | 99.0 |
| 5 | Strongly Disagree | 2 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 100.0 |
| Total | | 194 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

| NOT Demonstrating District AYP | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Strongly Agree | 26 | 25.7 | 25.7 | 25.7 |
| 2 | Agree | 60 | 59.4 | 59.4 | 85.1 |
| 3 | Neutral | 5 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 90.1 |
| 4 | Disagree | 8 | 7.9 | 7.9 | 98.0 |
| 5 | Strongly Disagree | 2 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 100.0 |
| Total | | 101 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

Tables 34 and 35 show the mean, standard deviation, and frequency of responses for Likert survey statement #12 among superintendents in districts demonstrating AYP and districts not demonstrating AYP. The sample population for districts demonstrating AYP (n=194) had 80.9% of superintendents selecting Strongly Agree or Agree. 85.1% of superintendents in districts not demonstrating AYP (n=101) selecting Strongly Agree or Agree to Likert survey statement #12.

Likert Survey Statement #13

Board members prefer to participate in training that involves evening sessions with a meal provided.

Table 36

Descriptive Statistics for Likert Survey Statement #13

| AYPstatus | Mean | N | Std. Deviation |
|--------------------------------|--------|-----|----------------|
| Demonstrating District AYP | 2.4485 | 194 | .93294 |
| NOT Demonstrating District AYP | 2.2871 | 101 | .98323 |

Table 37

Frequency of Responses for Likert Survey Statement #13

| Demonstrating District AYP | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|----------------------------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Strongly Agree | 22 | 11.3 | 11.3 | 11.3 |
| 2 | Agree | 95 | 49.0 | 49.0 | 60.3 |
| 3 | Neutral | 51 | 26.3 | 26.3 | 86.6 |
| 4 | Disagree | 20 | 10.3 | 10.3 | 96.9 |
| 5 | Strongly Disagree | 6 | 3.1 | 3.1 | 100.0 |
| Total | | 194 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

| NOT Demonstrating District AYP | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Strongly Agree | 23 | 22.8 | 22.8 | 22.8 |
| 2 | Agree | 40 | 39.6 | 39.6 | 62.4 |
| 3 | Neutral | 25 | 24.8 | 24.8 | 87.1 |
| 4 | Disagree | 12 | 11.9 | 11.9 | 99.0 |
| 5 | Strongly Disagree | 1 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 100.0 |
| Total | | 101 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

Tables 36 and 37 show the mean, standard deviation, and frequency of responses for Likert survey statement #13 among superintendents in districts demonstrating AYP and districts not demonstrating AYP. 60.3% of superintendents in districts demonstrating AYP (n=194) selected either Strongly Agree or Agree compared to 62.4% of superintendents in districts not demonstrating AYP (n=101) selecting Strongly Agree or Agree.

Likert Survey Statement #14

Board members only participate in training provided by school district administrators.

Table 38

Descriptive Statistics for Likert Survey Statement #14

| AYPstatus | Mean | N | Std. Deviation |
|--------------------------------|--------|-----|----------------|
| Demonstrating District AYP | 3.6237 | 194 | .84415 |
| NOT Demonstrating District AYP | 3.7525 | 101 | .93173 |

Table 39

Frequency of Responses for Likert Survey Statement #14

| Demonstrating District AYP | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|----------------------------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Strongly Agree | 3 | 1.5 | 1.5 | 1.5 |
| 2 | Agree | 25 | 12.9 | 12.9 | 14.4 |
| 3 | Neutral | 26 | 13.4 | 13.4 | 27.8 |
| 4 | Disagree | 128 | 66.0 | 66.0 | 93.8 |
| 5 | Strongly Disagree | 12 | 6.2 | 6.2 | 100.0 |
| Total | | 194 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

| NOT Demonstrating District AYP | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Strongly Agree | 2 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 2.0 |
| 2 | Agree | 12 | 11.9 | 11.9 | 13.9 |
| 3 | Neutral | 11 | 10.9 | 10.9 | 24.8 |
| 4 | Disagree | 60 | 59.4 | 59.4 | 84.2 |
| 5 | Strongly Disagree | 16 | 15.8 | 15.8 | 100.0 |
| Total | | 101 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

Tables 38 and 39 show the mean, standard deviation, and frequency of responses for Likert survey statement #14 among superintendents in districts demonstrating AYP and districts not demonstrating AYP. Substantial disagreement between both samples was observed. 72.2% of superintendents in districts demonstrating AYP (n=194) selected

Disagree or Strongly Disagree compared with 75.2% of superintendents in districts not demonstrating AYP (n=101) selecting Disagree or Strongly Disagree to statement 14.

Likert Survey Statement #15

Board members only participate in training that involves district paid out of state travel.

Table 40

Descriptive Statistics for Likert Survey Statement #15

| AYPstatus | Mean | N | Std. Deviation |
|--------------------------------|--------|-----|----------------|
| Demonstrating District AYP | 4.1649 | 194 | .82926 |
| NOT Demonstrating District AYP | 4.2475 | 101 | .77982 |

Table 41

Frequency of Responses for Likert Survey Statement #15

| Demonstrating District AYP | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|----------------------------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Strongly Agree | 3 | 1.5 | 1.5 | 1.5 |
| 2 | Agree | 8 | 4.1 | 4.1 | 5.7 |
| 3 | Neutral | 11 | 5.7 | 5.7 | 11.3 |
| 4 | Disagree | 104 | 53.6 | 53.6 | 64.9 |
| 5 | Strongly Disagree | 68 | 35.1 | 35.1 | 100.0 |
| Total | | 194 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

| NOT Demonstrating District AYP | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Strongly Agree | 0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| 2 | Agree | 4 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 |
| 3 | Neutral | 9 | 8.9 | 8.9 | 12.9 |
| 4 | Disagree | 46 | 45.5 | 45.5 | 58.4 |
| 5 | Strongly Disagree | 42 | 41.6 | 41.6 | 100.0 |
| Total | | 101 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

Tables 40 and 41 show the mean, standard deviation, and frequency of responses for Likert survey statement #15 among superintendents in districts demonstrating AYP

and districts not demonstrating AYP. Extensive disagreement was evident in both samples. The population sample of superintendents in districts demonstrating AYP (n=194) had 88.7% of respondents selecting Disagree or Strongly Disagree. The population sample of superintendents in districts not demonstrating AYP (n=101) had 87.1% of respondents selecting Disagree or Strongly Disagree.

Likert Survey Statement #16

Board members only participate in training that involves district paid local or in-state training.

Table 42

Descriptive Statistics for Likert Survey Statement #16

| AYPstatus | Mean | N | Std. Deviation |
|--------------------------------|--------|-----|----------------|
| Demonstrating District AYP | 3.4948 | 194 | 1.14379 |
| NOT Demonstrating District AYP | 3.5248 | 101 | 1.12778 |

Table 43

Frequency of Responses for Likert Survey Statement #16

| Demonstrating District AYP | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|----------------------------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Strongly Agree | 7 | 3.6 | 3.6 | 3.6 |
| 2 | Agree | 46 | 23.7 | 23.7 | 27.3 |
| 3 | Neutral | 20 | 10.3 | 10.3 | 37.6 |
| 4 | Disagree | 86 | 44.3 | 44.3 | 82.0 |
| 5 | Strongly Disagree | 35 | 18.0 | 18.0 | 100.0 |
| Total | | 194 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

| NOT Demonstrating District AYP | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Strongly Agree | 2 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 2.0 |
| 2 | Agree | 25 | 24.8 | 24.8 | 26.7 |
| 3 | Neutral | 12 | 11.9 | 11.9 | 38.6 |
| 4 | Disagree | 42 | 41.6 | 41.6 | 80.2 |
| 5 | Strongly Disagree | 20 | 19.8 | 19.8 | 100.0 |
| Total | | 101 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

Tables 42 and 43 show the mean, standard deviation, and frequency of responses for Likert survey statement #16 among superintendents in districts demonstrating AYP and districts not demonstrating AYP. The population sample of districts demonstrating AYP (n=194) had 62.3% of superintendents selecting Disagree or Strongly Disagree to statement #16. The population sample of districts not demonstrating AYP (n=101) had 61.4% of superintendents selecting Disagree or Strongly Disagree to statement #16.

Likert Survey Statement #17

District AYP as determined by PDE is a reliable measure of achievement in your school district.

Table 44

Descriptive Statistics for Likert Survey Statement #17

| AYPstatus | Mean | N | Std. Deviation |
|--------------------------------|--------|-----|----------------|
| Demonstrating District AYP | 3.4227 | 194 | 1.09483 |
| NOT Demonstrating District AYP | 3.7525 | 101 | 1.05267 |

Table 45

Frequency of Responses for Likert Survey Statement #17

| Demonstrating District AYP | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|----------------------------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Strongly Agree | 3 | 1.5 | 1.5 | 1.5 |
| 2 | Agree | 52 | 26.8 | 26.8 | 28.4 |
| 3 | Neutral | 30 | 15.5 | 15.5 | 43.8 |
| 4 | Disagree | 78 | 40.2 | 40.2 | 84.0 |
| 5 | Strongly Disagree | 31 | 16.0 | 16.0 | 100.0 |
| Total | | 194 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

| NOT Demonstrating District AYP | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Strongly Agree | 0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| 2 | Agree | 21 | 20.8 | 20.8 | 20.8 |
| 3 | Neutral | 8 | 7.9 | 7.9 | 28.7 |
| 4 | Disagree | 47 | 46.5 | 46.5 | 75.2 |
| 5 | Strongly Disagree | 25 | 24.8 | 24.8 | 100.0 |
| Total | | 101 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

Tables 44 and 45 show the mean, standard deviation, and frequency of responses for Likert survey statement #17 among superintendents in districts demonstrating AYP and districts not demonstrating AYP. Well over half of respondents in both samples disagreed that District AYP is a reliable measure of achievement. 56.2% of superintendents in districts demonstrating AYP (n=194) selected Disagree or Strongly Disagree compared to 71.3% of superintendents in districts not demonstrating AYP (n=101).

Likert Survey Statement #18

District AYP as determined by PDE is a valid measure of achievement in your school district.

Table 46

Descriptive Statistics for Likert Survey Statement #18

| AYPstatus | Mean | N | Std. Deviation |
|--------------------------------|--------|-----|----------------|
| Demonstrating District AYP | 3.4794 | 194 | 1.04910 |
| NOT Demonstrating District AYP | 3.6436 | 101 | 1.10981 |

Table 47

Frequency of Responses for Likert Survey Statement #18

| Demonstrating District AYP | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|----------------------------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Strongly Agree | 3 | 1.5 | 1.5 | 1.5 |
| 2 | Agree | 45 | 23.2 | 23.2 | 24.7 |
| 3 | Neutral | 30 | 15.5 | 15.5 | 40.2 |
| 4 | Disagree | 88 | 45.4 | 45.4 | 85.6 |
| 5 | Strongly Disagree | 28 | 14.4 | 14.4 | 100.0 |
| Total | | 194 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

| NOT Demonstrating District AYP | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Strongly Agree | 0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| 2 | Agree | 25 | 24.8 | 24.8 | 24.8 |
| 3 | Neutral | 11 | 10.9 | 10.9 | 35.6 |
| 4 | Disagree | 40 | 39.6 | 39.6 | 75.2 |
| 5 | Strongly Disagree | 25 | 24.8 | 24.8 | 100.0 |
| Total | | 101 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

Tables 46 and 47 show the mean, standard deviation, and frequency of responses for Likert survey statement #18 among superintendents in districts demonstrating AYP and districts not demonstrating AYP. 59.8% of superintendents in districts demonstrating AYP (n=194) selected Disagree or Strongly Disagree to the notion of District AYP being

a valid measure of achievement. 64.4% of superintendents in districts not demonstrating AYP (n=101) selected Disagree or Strongly Disagree to Likert survey statement #18.

Likert Survey Statement #19

District AYP as determined by PDE is part of your superintendent evaluation conducted by your board.

Table 48

Descriptive Statistics for Likert Survey Statement #19

| AYPstatus | Mean | N | Std. Deviation |
|--------------------------------|--------|-----|----------------|
| Demonstrating District AYP | 3.6082 | 194 | 1.01855 |
| NOT Demonstrating District AYP | 3.6535 | 101 | 1.07178 |

Table 49

Frequency of Responses for Likert Survey Statement #19

| Demonstrating District AYP | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|----------------------------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Strongly Agree | 2 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 1.0 |
| 2 | Agree | 38 | 19.6 | 19.6 | 20.6 |
| 3 | Neutral | 27 | 13.9 | 13.9 | 34.5 |
| 4 | Disagree | 94 | 48.5 | 48.5 | 83.0 |
| 5 | Strongly Disagree | 33 | 17.0 | 17.0 | 100.0 |
| Total | | 194 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

| NOT Demonstrating District AYP | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Strongly Agree | 2 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 2.0 |
| 2 | Agree | 19 | 18.8 | 18.8 | 20.8 |
| 3 | Neutral | 12 | 11.9 | 11.9 | 32.7 |
| 4 | Disagree | 47 | 46.5 | 46.5 | 79.2 |
| 5 | Strongly Disagree | 21 | 20.8 | 20.8 | 100.0 |
| Total | | 101 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

Tables 48 and 49 show the mean, standard deviation, and frequency of responses for Likert survey statement #19 among superintendents in districts demonstrating AYP and districts not demonstrating AYP. The population sample for districts demonstrating

AYP (n=194) had 65.5% of superintendents selecting Disagree or Strongly Disagree to Likert survey statement #19. The population sample for districts not demonstrating AYP (n=101) had 67.3% of superintendents selecting Disagree or Strongly Disagree to Likert survey statement #19.

Likert Survey Statement #20

District AYP as determined by PDE should be part of any superintendent's performance evaluation.

Table 50

Descriptive Statistics for Likert Survey Statement #20

| AYPstatus | Mean | N | Std. Deviation |
|--------------------------------|--------|-----|----------------|
| Demonstrating District AYP | 3.6082 | 194 | 1.04863 |
| NOT Demonstrating District AYP | 3.6337 | 101 | 1.12892 |

Table 51

Frequency of Responses for Likert Survey Statement #20

| Demonstrating District AYP | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|----------------------------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Strongly Agree | 2 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 1.0 |
| 2 | Agree | 37 | 19.1 | 19.1 | 20.1 |
| 3 | Neutral | 36 | 18.6 | 18.6 | 38.7 |
| 4 | Disagree | 79 | 40.7 | 40.7 | 79.4 |
| 5 | Strongly Disagree | 40 | 20.6 | 20.6 | 100.0 |
| Total | | 194 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

| NOT Demonstrating District AYP | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Strongly Agree | 0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| 2 | Agree | 25 | 24.8 | 24.8 | 24.8 |
| 3 | Neutral | 14 | 13.9 | 13.9 | 38.6 |
| 4 | Disagree | 35 | 34.7 | 34.7 | 73.3 |
| 5 | Strongly Disagree | 27 | 26.7 | 26.7 | 100.0 |
| Total | | 101 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

Tables 50 and 51 show the mean, standard deviation, and frequency of responses for Likert survey statement #20 among superintendents in districts demonstrating AYP and districts not demonstrating AYP. Over half of all respondents in both samples disagree that District AYP calculations should be part of any superintendent's evaluation. 61.3% of superintendents in districts demonstrating AYP (n=194) selected Disagree or Strongly Disagree. 61.4% of superintendents in districts not demonstrating AYP (n=101) similarly selected Disagree or Strongly Disagree to Likert survey statement #21.

Likert Survey Statement #21

Board members in your school district set aside meeting time to review District AYP data from PDE.

Table 52

Descriptive Statistics for Likert Survey Statement #21

| <u>AYPstatus</u> | <u>Mean</u> | <u>N</u> | <u>Std. Deviation</u> |
|--------------------------------|-------------|----------|-----------------------|
| Demonstrating District AYP | 2.2165 | 194 | .99976 |
| NOT Demonstrating District AYP | 2.1485 | 101 | .88754 |

Table 53

Frequency of Responses for Likert Survey Statement #21

| Demonstrating District AYP | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|----------------------------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Strongly Agree | 36 | 18.6 | 18.6 | 18.6 |
| 2 | Agree | 116 | 59.8 | 59.8 | 78.4 |
| 3 | Neutral | 14 | 7.2 | 7.2 | 85.6 |
| 4 | Disagree | 20 | 10.3 | 10.3 | 95.9 |
| 5 | Strongly Disagree | 8 | 4.1 | 4.1 | 100.0 |
| Total | | 194 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

| NOT Demonstrating District AYP | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Strongly Agree | 17 | 16.8 | 16.8 | 16.8 |
| 2 | Agree | 66 | 65.3 | 65.3 | 82.2 |
| 3 | Neutral | 6 | 5.9 | 5.9 | 88.1 |
| 4 | Disagree | 10 | 9.9 | 9.9 | 98.0 |
| 5 | Strongly Disagree | 2 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 100.0 |
| Total | | 101 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

Tables 52 and 53 show the mean, standard deviation, and frequency of responses for Likert survey statement #21 among superintendents in districts demonstrating AYP and districts not demonstrating AYP. The mean score measure of central tendency shows high levels of agreement between both samples that board members set aside time to review AYP data. Likert survey statement #21 had a mean score of 2.2165 among superintendent respondents in districts demonstrating AYP (n=194). Among districts not demonstrating AYP (n=101) the mean score among superintendent respondents was 2.1485.

Likert Survey Statement #22

Board members in your school district request training on district achievement and matters regarding AYP.

Table 54

Descriptive Statistics for Likert Survey Statement #22

| AYPstatus | Mean | N | Std. Deviation |
|--------------------------------|--------|-----|----------------|
| Demonstrating District AYP | 3.2268 | 194 | 1.05796 |
| NOT Demonstrating District AYP | 3.1782 | 101 | 1.15235 |

Table 55

Frequency of Responses for Likert Survey Statement #22

| Demonstrating District AYP | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|----------------------------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Strongly Agree | 9 | 4.6 | 4.6 | 4.6 |
| 2 | Agree | 52 | 26.8 | 26.8 | 31.4 |
| 3 | Neutral | 31 | 16.0 | 16.0 | 47.4 |
| 4 | Disagree | 90 | 46.4 | 46.4 | 93.8 |
| 5 | Strongly Disagree | 12 | 6.2 | 6.2 | 100.0 |
| Total | | 194 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

| NOT Demonstrating District AYP | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Strongly Agree | 5 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 |
| 2 | Agree | 33 | 32.7 | 32.7 | 37.6 |
| 3 | Neutral | 13 | 12.9 | 12.9 | 50.5 |
| 4 | Disagree | 39 | 38.6 | 38.6 | 89.1 |
| 5 | Strongly Disagree | 11 | 10.9 | 10.9 | 100.0 |
| Total | | 101 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

Tables 54 and 55 show the mean, standard deviation, and frequency of responses for Likert survey statement #22 among superintendents in districts demonstrating AYP and districts not demonstrating AYP. Superintendent responses in both samples were varied. Slightly above one-quarter (26.8%) of superintendents in districts demonstrating

AYP (n=194) selected Agree to Likert survey statement #22. Alternatively, nearly one-half (46.4%) of superintendents in the same sample selected disagree.

32.7% of superintendents in districts not demonstrating AYP (n=101) selected Agree to statement #22 with 38.6% also selecting Disagree to the statement #22.

Likert Survey Statement #23

Board members in your school district formulate action plans in advance to attain District AYP.

Table 56

Descriptive Statistics for Likert Survey Statement #23

| AYPstatus | Mean | N | Std. Deviation |
|--------------------------------|--------|-----|----------------|
| Demonstrating District AYP | 3.3557 | 194 | 1.07361 |
| NOT Demonstrating District AYP | 3.4653 | 101 | 1.02532 |

Table 57

Frequency of Responses for Likert Survey Statement #23

| Demonstrating District AYP | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|----------------------------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Strongly Agree | 11 | 5.7 | 5.7 | 5.7 |
| 2 | Agree | 40 | 20.6 | 20.6 | 26.3 |
| 3 | Neutral | 28 | 14.4 | 14.4 | 40.7 |
| 4 | Disagree | 99 | 51.0 | 51.0 | 91.8 |
| 5 | Strongly Disagree | 16 | 8.2 | 8.2 | 100.0 |
| Total | | 194 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

| NOT Demonstrating District AYP | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Strongly Agree | 1 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 1.0 |
| 2 | Agree | 25 | 24.8 | 24.8 | 25.7 |
| 3 | Neutral | 13 | 12.9 | 12.9 | 38.6 |
| 4 | Disagree | 50 | 49.5 | 49.5 | 88.1 |
| 5 | Strongly Disagree | 12 | 11.9 | 11.9 | 100.0 |
| Total | | 101 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

Tables 56 and 57 show the mean, standard deviation, and frequency of responses for Likert survey statement #23 among superintendents in districts demonstrating AYP and districts not demonstrating AYP. Consistent disagreement among respondents in both samples was evident regarding board members formulation of action plans in advance to attain District AYP. 59.2% of superintendents in districts demonstrating AYP (n=194) selected Disagree or Strongly Disagree, while 61.4% of superintendents in districts not demonstrating AYP selected Disagree or Strongly Disagree to Likert survey statement #23 that asked if board members formulated action plans in advance to attain District AYP.

Likert Survey Statement #24

The superintendent and board should set annual goals together to ensure District AYP is attained.

Table 58

Descriptive Statistics for Likert Survey Statement #24

| <u>AYPstatus</u> | <u>Mean</u> | <u>N</u> | <u>Std. Deviation</u> |
|--------------------------------|-------------|----------|-----------------------|
| Demonstrating District AYP | 2.1598 | 194 | .97121 |
| NOT Demonstrating District AYP | 1.8911 | 101 | .69139 |

Table 59

Frequency of Responses for Likert Survey Statement #24

| Demonstrating District AYP | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|----------------------------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Strongly Agree | 42 | 21.6 | 21.6 | 21.6 |
| 2 | Agree | 110 | 56.7 | 56.7 | 78.4 |
| 3 | Neutral | 16 | 8.2 | 8.2 | 86.6 |
| 4 | Disagree | 21 | 10.8 | 10.8 | 97.4 |
| 5 | Strongly Disagree | 5 | 2.6 | 2.6 | 100.0 |
| Total | | 194 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

| NOT Demonstrating District AYP | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Strongly Agree | 26 | 25.7 | 25.7 | 25.7 |
| 2 | Agree | 64 | 63.4 | 63.4 | 89.1 |
| 3 | Neutral | 7 | 6.9 | 6.9 | 96.0 |
| 4 | Disagree | 4 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 100.0 |
| 5 | Strongly Disagree | 0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 100.0 |
| Total | | 101 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

Tables 58 and 59 show the mean, standard deviation, and frequency of responses for Likert survey statement #24 among superintendents in districts demonstrating AYP and districts not demonstrating AYP. High levels of agreement were consistent between both samples to the concept that the superintendent and board should set annual goals together to ensure District AYP is attained. 78.4% of superintendents in districts demonstrating AYP (n=194) selected Strongly Agree or Agree to Likert survey statement #24.

Similarly, 89.1% of superintendents in districts not demonstrating AYP (n=101) selected Strongly Agree or Agree to Likert survey statement #24.

Summary of Major Findings from Likert Survey Questions 1-24

Major Findings of Superintendent/Board Member Longevity Likert Statements

- Nearly 90% of superintendents in all districts agreed that board members generally improve their effectiveness after serving one full term.
- Over 70% of superintendents in all districts agreed that turnover of more than three board members in any election year is disruptive to district operations.
- Nearly 80% of superintendents in all districts indicated agreement that when new board members join the board experienced board members mentor them.
- Over 70% of superintendents in all districts agreed that superintendents serving in the same district for more than five years are more effective and productive.
- Substantial agreement exceeding 90% was found in all districts that superintendents were largely responsible for building and maintaining board/superintendent relationships.

Major Findings of Board Member Voluntary In-Service Training Likert Statements

- Fewer than 70% of superintendents in all districts agreed that their school boards periodically set aside time to learn about important external issues facing the district.
- Over 80% of superintendents in all districts agreed that funds are allocated in the district budget for board education and in-service training.
- Over 60% of superintendents in all districts agreed that board members prefer to participate in training that involves evening sessions with a meal provided.
- Over 70% of superintendents in all districts disagreed to the notion that board members only participate in training provided by school administrators.
- Slightly below 90% of superintendents in all districts disagreed that board members only participate in training that involves district paid out of state travel.
- Greater than 60% of superintendents in all districts disagree that board members only participate in training that involves district paid local or in-state training.

Major Findings of District AYP Likert Statements

- Just over 55% of superintendents in districts demonstrating AYP disagreed that AYP calculations by PDE are reliable measures of achievement in their schools compared to more than 70% disagreement of superintendents in districts not demonstrating AYP.
- 60% of superintendents in all school districts disagreed that District AYP calculations by PDE are valid measures of achievement in their schools.
- More than 60% of superintendents in all school districts disagreed that PDE's determination of District AYP is part of their superintendent evaluation conducted by the school board.
- 60% of superintendents in all school districts also disagreed that PDE's determination of District AYP should be part of any superintendent's performance evaluation.
- An average of 80% of superintendents in all school districts agreed that board members in their district set aside meeting time to review District AYP data from PDE.
- 78% of superintendents in districts demonstrating AYP agreed that the superintendent and board should set annual goals together to ensure District AYP is attained compared to 89% agreement of superintendents in districts not demonstrating AYP.
- An average of 60% of superintendents in all school districts disagreed that board members in their district formulate action plans in advance to attain District AYP.

CHAPTER V SUMMARY, INTERPRETATIONS, CONCLUSIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS

Introductory Statement

This chapter presents a discussion of the data analysis offered in Chapter Four. The discussion begins with a summary of the major findings. This study was designed to investigate if any correlations existed between superintendent longevity, school board member longevity, and school board member participation in voluntary in-service training among Pennsylvania school districts demonstrating Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) during the 2004-2005 school year.

In previous chapters, an introduction, review of relevant literature, research methods, and data collection findings were presented. The purpose of this chapter is to summarize the findings of the research questions, present interpretations, draw conclusions, and propose possible implications for further research related to distinguishable characteristics of districts demonstrating AYP.

The correlations examined among Pennsylvania school districts demonstrating AYP were uncovered in the following research questions:

1. What is the relationship between the tenure of the school district superintendent and districts demonstrating AYP?
2. What is the relationship between years of experience of school board members and districts demonstrating AYP?
3. What is the relationship between school board member participation in voluntary in-service training programs and districts demonstrating AYP?

Results

- There is not a statistically significant relationship between the tenure of the school district superintendent and districts demonstrating AYP.
- There is a positive correlation between the years of experience of school board members and districts demonstrating AYP.
- There is not a statistically significant relationship between school board member participation in voluntary in-service training programs and districts demonstrating AYP.

Summary of Major Findings

Findings and Discussion of Research Question One

Research question one investigated the relationship between the tenure of the school district superintendent and districts demonstrating AYP. Superintendent responses among districts demonstrating AYP and districts not demonstrating AYP were somewhat similar. Mean scores for superintendent longevity among districts demonstrating AYP was .5258 compared to a mean score for superintendent longevity of .4257 in districts not demonstrating AYP. The findings in this study indicated slightly longer terms of service for school district superintendents in districts demonstrating AYP. This finding is consistent with Chmara's (1989) finding that disruptions in the educational process occur when a superintendent leaves early, particularly a loss of curriculum expertise, a loss of educational expertise, and a decrease in productivity during the replacement and assimilation period. Further, consistency exists with the findings of AASA (1992) that superintendents felt a lack of effectiveness when

constrained by a limited number of years to complete the work required to effectuate improvements in achievement. While a significant Point-Biserial correlation did not exist between superintendent longevity and districts demonstrating district AYP, higher mean scores for superintendent longevity among districts demonstrating district AYP suggest those districts are enjoying longer years of service of their superintendents than their counterpart districts not demonstrating District AYP. It is, therefore, practical to suggest that, despite the absence of a significant statistical correlation, superintendents serving longer in their school districts are afforded more opportunities to implement academic and curricular decisions. These additional opportunities would enable a school district a greater chance to demonstrate Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), as supported from the review of relevant literature in Chapter Two.

Findings and Discussion of Research Question Two

Research question two investigated the relationship between years of experience of school board members and districts demonstrating AYP. This study found that the longevity of school board members was positively correlated among districts demonstrating AYP. This correlation was statistically significant at the .05 level of significance indicating a positive relationship. Table 60 shows the mean scores for combined longevity of school board members was higher in districts demonstrating AYP (.8368) than those districts not demonstrating AYP (.7294). The findings to this research question reveal that districts demonstrating AYP have board members with greater longevity than those districts not demonstrating AYP. The mean scores, combined with the finding of a positive correlation, suggest that school districts that have longer serving

members on the board of education have greater likelihood to attain and demonstrate Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). By virtue of the fact that the board of education of a school district is the legislative body with sole decision-making autonomy, it is logical that these variables would be correlated because longevity of board members enables the board to better function as a cohesive team. Having the benefit of time to formulate team-building strategies affords school board members the opportunity to prepare academic achievement goals for the district. Once these goals are established, the board is further enabled, by time, to evaluate progress toward those goals and can make necessary adjustments as needed to ensure academic achievement goals are met.

Table 60

Descriptive Statistics for Combined Board Experience

| Demonstrating District AYP | N | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|--------------------------------|-----|---------|---------|--------|----------------|
| AYPstatus | 194 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.0000 | .00000 |
| EntireBoardExperience | 194 | .00 | 1.56 | .8368 | .32902 |
| NOT Demonstrating District AYP | N | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviation |
| AYPstatus | 101 | .00 | .00 | .0000 | .00000 |
| EntireBoardExperience | 101 | .00 | 1.67 | .7294 | .39454 |

Findings and Discussion of Research Question Three

Research question three examined the relationship between school board member participation in voluntary in-service training programs and districts demonstrating AYP. Interestingly, despite the volume of empirical evidence on the merits of board member training, no significant correlation was found between board member completion of voluntary in-service training hours and districts demonstrating AYP. The previous research question found a positive correlation between longevity of service of school

board members and districts demonstrating AYP. However, this research question found no relationship exists between attainment of District AYP and any in-service training hours board members may have completed during the most recent two years of their term of office. This finding differs from the findings of Petronis, Hall & Pierson, (1996) who found that board members themselves could not take a proactive role in making sure their district was achieving effectiveness without first themselves receiving in-service training on five correlates of effective schools. The five correlates of effective schools that Petronis, et al., found that board members should receive in-service training on were: Instructional Leadership, Instructional Focus, High Expectations/Teacher Behavior, School Climate, and Measurement.

Description of Likert-Response Results

The research instrument was distributed to 500 superintendents throughout the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. 295 valid surveys were utilized, representing a 59% of the entire population Pennsylvania school district superintendents.

The research instrument consisted of two sections: 1) Three questions regarding superintendent longevity, board member longevity, and total hours of voluntary in-service training completed by board members over the last two years and 2) Twenty-four statements derived from a review of relevant literature related to the three research questions with a response selection along a five-point Likert Scale.

Specifically, these items requested superintendents respond to 24 statements concerning their perceptions in the following three areas: superintendent longevity and board member longevity (statements one to eight); board member voluntary in-service

training (statements nine to 16); and perceptions of District AYP calculations as determined by PDE (statements 17-24).

Responses to these statements were given in the form of selections along a five-point Likert Scale ranging from *Strongly Agree* to *Strongly Disagree*. The responses were quantified by assigning point values to the selections, with one point assigned to *Strongly Agree*, two points assigned to *Agree*, three points assigned to *Neutral*, four points assigned to *Disagree* and five points assigned to *Strongly Disagree*.

Frequency distributions, a mean test of central tendency, and calculation of the standard deviation were conducted on all twenty-four statements to determine if the responses for each statement were representative of the entire population.

Discussion of Likert-Response Results

Several significant messages can be garnered from the data. The findings indicate substantial agreement among superintendents in all districts that board members improve their effectiveness after serving one full term. This finding is consistent with the findings of McAdams (1997) identifying the length of the school director's term as "a crucial variable to success in that short tenure both erases institutional memory and undermines the consistency of mission needed to achieve substantive reform" (p. 139).

The findings revealed considerable agreement among superintendents in all districts that superintendents are largely responsible for building and maintaining board/superintendent relationships. This finding parallels the research by Flores (2001) which found that one of the most important jobs of the superintendent is to build a productive working relationship with a school board.

When considering whether or not the superintendent and board should set annual goals together to ensure attainment of District AYP, differences in perceptions were found between superintendents in districts demonstrating AYP and districts not demonstrating AYP. 89% of superintendents in districts not demonstrating AYP agreed to the notion of joint board/superintendent goal setting to attain District AYP while only 78% of superintendents in districts demonstrating AYP agreed to the need for combined board/superintendent goal setting to attain District AYP. This finding is logical in that those superintendents in districts not demonstrating AYP would place a higher priority on taking measures to attain District AYP than those superintendents in Districts already demonstrating AYP. Differences in perceptions also exist between superintendents in districts demonstrating AYP and districts not demonstrating AYP with regard to the reliability of District AYP calculations provided from PDE. While just over 55% of superintendents in districts demonstrating AYP disagreed that AYP is a reliable measure of school district achievement more than 70% of superintendents in districts not demonstrating AYP disagreed to the reliability of District AYP calculations by PDE. These findings indicate that superintendents in districts not demonstrating AYP substantially question the reliability of PDE's calculation of Adequate Yearly Progress as a measure of academic achievement in their school district.

Regarding the perceived validity of PDE's District AYP determinations, 60% of superintendents in all districts disagreed that District AYP is a valid measure of achievement in their school districts.

These two findings regarding the reliability and validity of District AYP calculations are important as they indicate that more than half of all superintendents responding to the survey mailing (n=295) felt that District AYP is neither a reliable nor a valid measure of achievement in their school districts. The population of superintendents that completed and returned survey instruments was just under 60% of all school district superintendents in Pennsylvania. Given this, these findings revealed that well over half of all school district superintendents in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania do not feel District AYP calculations by PDE are valid or reliable measures of school district achievement.

A significant message can be garnered from these findings that should be of concern to State and Federal policy makers responsible for the implementation of the Federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). This research chose to survey school district superintendents because “superintendents occupy one of the most unique and important positions within the formal organizational structure of school systems” (DiLeo, 1999, p. 1). The goal of NCLB is for all students to be proficient in language arts and mathematics by the year 2014. Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) is the measure Pennsylvania (and other States) use to identify school districts progression toward achievement of State Academic Standards. Under NCLB, a decision is made every year as to whether a school district is making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) within established incremental achievement targets. The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) makes an annual determination regarding District AYP and typically publishes the results in August of each year. Given the importance, magnitude, and far-reaching

consequences of District AYP calculations by PDE, it would be prudent for State and Federal policy makers to investigate why over 50% of all Pennsylvania school district superintendents question the reliability and the validity of District AYP calculations as a measure of school district academic achievement.

The findings in this study indicate substantial disagreement among Superintendents with regard to the reliability and validity of the annual PDE District AYP determinations. This finding may have had a bearing on their responses to other questions in the survey regarding superintendent performance evaluations. More than 60% of superintendents in all districts disagreed that PDE's determination of District AYP was part of their superintendent evaluation conducted by their school board. Similarly, more than 60% of superintendents in all districts disagreed that PDE's determination of District AYP should be part of any superintendents evaluation. These findings indicate reluctance on the part of superintendents to be held accountable, by means of a performance evaluation, for attainment of District AYP. This reluctance may be related to superintendent concerns regarding the reliability and validity of District AYP calculations as a measure of school district academic achievement.

Implications and Recommendations

This study had three primary findings related to the research questions:

- There was not a statistically significant relationship between the tenure of the school district superintendent and districts demonstrating AYP.
- There was a positive correlation between the years of experience of school board members and districts demonstrating AYP.

- There was not a statistically significant relationship between school board member participation in voluntary in-service training programs and districts demonstrating AYP.

Many elements that are academically related have been shown to influence student achievement. Increased student diligence, increased student engagement, and increased parental support have been positively linked with greater academic achievement (Arthur, 2002). Few studies have explored the relationship between attributes of school governance such as longevity, training, and school achievement. This study found that there is a statistically significant positive correlation between the longevity of school board members and Pennsylvania school districts demonstrating AYP. However, it also found that there is an absence of a statistically significant relationship between superintendent longevity and board member participation in voluntary in-service training among those districts demonstrating AYP. The implication is that superintendent longevity and board member training may not have any effect on a school districts capacity to demonstrate District AYP.

Notwithstanding the lack of a statistically significant relationship between superintendent longevity and districts demonstrating AYP in this study, there is research literature that indicates the tenure of the superintendent may have an impact on school district achievement. Chmara (1989) cited superintendent turnover as a primary disruption to the educational process as a result of lost educational and curricular expertise due to the early exit of the superintendent.

Further, the research findings did not uncover a statistically significant relationship between school board member participation in voluntary in-service training and districts demonstrating AYP. However, an average of 51% of all responding superintendents reported disagreement to the statement that their school board members request training on district achievement matters regarding AYP. With only half of all school board members seeking training on achievement matters such as AYP, this finding contradicts the finding of Petronis, Hall, & Pierson (1996) who asserted that before local school board members can take a proactive role in making sure their districts do exhibit the characteristics of effective schools, the board members themselves must be very well versed in the characteristics of effective schools. Clearly the findings in this study indicate that a void exists, according to respondents, on the desire of board members to complete training on district achievement matters that may relate to attainment of District AYP.

Recommendations for Further Research

Based on the findings presented in this study, the following are recommendations for further research for one who may be interested in studying relationships between select variables of school district governance and school district achievement vis-à-vis Districts demonstrating AYP.

1. Replication of this research is warranted and would be a meaningful extension of this study. This study should be conducted annually as District AYP calculations are published by PDE. Such repetition would provide a research base of data that may be used to describe causes, effects, and trends that may explain present or future circumstances surrounding those districts that demonstrate AYP.
2. This study found that board member longevity was positively correlated to districts demonstrating AYP. However, the research base remains scant on studies linking longevity of either superintendents or board members to success or school improvement. Yee & Cuban (1996) state:

Some have succeeded in institutionalizing reforms and others have failed. No clear pattern emerges that demonstrates that those superintendents serving five or more years are more successful than short-tenured ones in introducing and sustaining reform-oriented programs, especially in big cities. (p. 634)

Another study could be beneficial to examine if long term superintendents are more adept at managing school improvement because of knowledge about the district and/or because of connections established over time.

3. The analysis of the data indicated that superintendents have substantial concern regarding the reliability and validity of District AYP as a measure of academic achievement. Further research is suggested to determine the substance and nature of superintendent's disagreement regarding reliability and validity of District AYP calculations by PDE. Such research may lead to improvements and enhancements in the variables that PDE uses to determine District AYP status.
4. This study found a positive correlation between the longevity of school board members among those districts demonstrating Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). Further research regarding relationships between board member longevity and other variables germane to school district achievement would provide data on attributes of school district achievement that may be related to the longevity of the school board.
5. Since the survey instrument used in this study was quantitative in nature, it would also be beneficial to conduct a qualitative study on the same research questions. A qualitative study could explore how variables such as longevity and training impact attainment of District AYP. Since the relationships found in this study do not explain cause and effect, a

qualitative study could ascertain the underlying reasons regarding superintendent responses to the survey questions.

6. Findings in this study indicated that board members in districts not demonstrating AYP were completing more training hours (82.6980 hours) than their counterparts demonstrating AYP (75.5541 hours). Further research is warranted to determine the nature, content, and context of the additional training board members in districts not demonstrating AYP are completing. Further research in this area may determine if the additional training hours are being spent on matters related to academic achievement.
7. Findings in this study indicated strong disagreement among all superintendents responding that their school board members formulate action plans in advance to attain District AYP with nearly 60% of all respondents indicating their board does not formulate such plans (Likert Survey Question 23). However, toward a similar end, superintendents responding indicated strong levels of agreement that the superintendent and board *should* set annual goals together to ensure District AYP is attained with over 80% indicating boards and superintendents should sit down and meet to set goals regarding AYP. (Likert Survey Question 24). Such incongruence among these responses warrants further study to determine why the practice of formulating action plans in advance (Likert Survey Question 24), is ultimately not being followed by school board members as found in (Likert Survey Question 23).

Recommendations for Practice

Based on the findings presented in this study, the following are recommendations for practical use of the findings in a broader spectrum of practical applications of the findings in this study.

1. This study was conducted in a State where participation in board member in-service training is voluntary. This study found that there was not a statistically significant relationship between board member completion of voluntary in-service training and districts demonstrating AYP. A study comparing the knowledge levels of school board members in States where training is mandatory to States where training remains voluntary would add to the research base regarding the impact, if any, board member training has on school district achievement.
2. Given that this study found the length of school board service to be positively correlated to districts demonstrating AYP, Pennsylvania Legislators should consider the merits of repealing Act 105 of 1978. Prior to implementation of Act 105 of 1978, the length of school board member terms was six years as opposed to the current four-year term length.
3. Given that the length of school board service was found to be positively correlated to districts demonstrating AYP, superintendents and school board members should work together to investigate attributes of school board service that tend to relate to longevity of service for board members. For instance, what characteristics of service on the board do members find

most satisfying? Such investigation may increase the longevity of existing board members service and subsequent knowledge level acquired through extended board tenure.

4. The Pennsylvania School Boards Association (PSBA) could use the finding in this study regarding a positive correlation between board member longevity and districts demonstrating AYP to determine if longer serving board members improve their efficiency through participation in training or through connections made over time.
5. A qualitative study of school districts that have attained the greatest longevity of both superintendents and school board members combined should be conducted. The sample population for this study could comprise a single school district demonstrating AYP and a single school district not demonstrating AYP that both have the most senior superintendent and school board. PDE could assist in identifying the research sample. Such a qualitative study could allow for deeper examination of the relationship between long-term tenure of superintendents and board members and achievement among single school districts in each AYP category. Such a study could identify relationships longevity has on student achievement, employee job satisfaction, or other variables germane to student achievement.

Limitations of the Study

The findings of this study are descriptive and are not intended to be explanatory. Further, the researcher did not attempt to determine a causal relation between variables. Generalizations of the findings are limited only to the population utilized in this study. Finally, the data findings are limited to the perceptions of the respondents themselves.

Reliability and Validity of the Survey Instrument.

The researcher, based upon a review of relevant literature, constructed the survey instrument utilized in this study. Upon conclusion of this study, reliability of the survey instrument was indeterminate, as the survey instrument was not subjected to a test / retest since the survey was administered to the entire population of PA school district superintendents with assurances of anonymity. Establishing validity of constructed research instruments is not as straightforward a process as reliability. Construct validity indicates that whatever the survey is supposed to measure, the resultant findings should actually make sense in that they should relate to other things one would expect the findings to be associated with. Similarly, internal validity asks the question, "Is the connection between the independent variable and dependent variable clear and unambiguous to make a causal inference?" Internal validity is, therefore, concerned with correctly concluding that an independent variable is, in fact, responsible for variation in the dependent variable. The findings of this study are broad-based and contribute to the research base while offering areas worthy of similar further study. Regarding the 500 population members, a total of 311 responses were received from two different survey mailings. Only 16 of the 311 completed survey instruments received (.05%) had errors in

the completion of the survey instruments. Such errors observed were related to ignoring or skipping certain questions or parts of the survey instrument on behalf of the respondents. The researcher concluded that only fully completed survey instruments would be utilized for valid data analysis (n=295). Validity and reliability of the survey instrument was attained given that 95% of all respondents completed survey instruments correctly and in their entirety.

In the event a future researcher may desire to replicate this study or choose to utilize the survey instrument from this study in further research, it is suggested that an absolute zero category be added regarding the data collection for board member training hours. A categorical designation of an absolute zero regarding data collection of board member training hours would allow a future researcher to statistically determine exactly how many board members do not complete any voluntary in-service training hours. The survey instrument utilized in this study provided a span of “0 to 4 training hours” for respondents to choose from. As such, the survey instrument used in this study made it statistically impossible to determine how many board members completed absolutely no in-service training hours.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Informed Consent Letter / IRB Approval



DUQUESNE UNIVERSITY

600 FORBES AVENUE ♦ PITTSBURGH, PA 15282

Duquesne University
Institutional Review Board

Approval Date: 11-09-05
Expiration Date: 11-09-06

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH STUDY

- TITLE:** A study of the relationships between superintendent longevity, school board member longevity, school board member training, and school districts demonstrating adequate yearly progress (AYP) during the 2004-2005 school year.
- INVESTIGATOR:** Edward Maritz, Jr., MS (412) 771-1313
- ADVISOR:** Dr. Jean Higgins
Lead Learning Facilitator, IDPEL
(412) 396-5577
- SOURCE OF SUPPORT:** This study is being performed as partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Doctoral degree in Educational Administration (IDPEL) at Duquesne University.
- PURPOSE:** You are being asked to participate in a research project that seeks to investigate if any correlation relationships exist between superintendent longevity, board member longevity, board member participation in voluntary in-service training and districts that demonstrated AYP during the 2004-2005 school year. These are the only requests that will be made of you.
- RISKS AND BENEFITS:** Given that the survey instrument responses will remain confidential and that individual respondents will not be identified, there is no risk to participation. The benefits of participation will add to the knowledge and research base about school districts in Pennsylvania that demonstrated AYP during the 2004-2005 school year.

- COMPENSATION:** There will be no compensation provided to survey respondents. Conversely, participation in the project will require no monetary cost to you. An addressed envelope is provided for return of your completed survey instrument to the investigator.
- CONFIDENTIALITY:** Your name will never appear on any survey or research instruments. No identity will be made in the data analysis. All written materials and consent forms will be stored in a locked file in the researcher's home. Your response(s) will only appear in statistical data summaries. All materials will be destroyed at the completion of the research.
- RIGHT TO WITHDRAW:** You are under no obligation to participate in this study. You are free to withdraw your consent to participate at any time.
- SUMMARY OF RESULTS:** A summary of the results of this research will be supplied to you, at no cost, upon request.
- VOLUNTARY CONSENT:** I have read the above statements and understand what is being requested of me. I also understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw my consent at any time, for any reason. On these terms, I certify that I am willing to participate in this research project.
- I understand that should I have any further questions about my participation in this study, I may call Dr. Paul Richer, Chair of the Duquesne University Institutional Review Board (412-396-6326).

 Participant's Signature

 Date



11-30-05

 Researcher's Signature

 Date

Appendix B

Cover Letter and Follow-up Letter for Survey Instrument

Mr. Edward Maritz, Jr.
1004 Lake Street
McKees Rocks, PA 15136
(412) 771-1313
maritz625@duq.edu

November 29, 2005

All Superintendents of Schools in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

Dear School District Superintendent:

This is a request for your participation in a study to identify potential correlations between superintendent longevity, school board member longevity and school board member participation in voluntary in-service training programs among those districts that demonstrated AYP during the 2004-2005 school year and those districts that did not demonstrate AYP during 04-05.

My name is Edward Maritz and I'm an ABD Doctoral Student in the IDPEL program at Duquesne University actively engaged in dissertation research. Dr. Jean Higgins, a retired Pennsylvania school superintendent, currently serving as Adjunct Professor in the School of Education at Duquesne University, is directing my research.

This research is of interest to me personally because I serve public education in dual capacities. First, I've served as an elected school board member in the Sto-Rox School District since 1993. Second, professionally, I've worked in public schools as a secondary business teacher since 1995.

The enclosed survey instrument is being sent to *all* public school superintendents in Pennsylvania. The survey focuses on DISTRICT AYP and not individual school building AYP. The survey instrument has been coded by the researcher among those school districts that demonstrated district AYP as determined by PDE for the 2004-2005 school year. **The entire survey should take no longer than ten minutes to complete. Please be assured your responses are confidential and individual responses will not be released.** You or your district will not be traceable or identifiable on completed survey instruments. Your opinions and responses are valued pieces of information; thus, your participation is very important to the outcomes of this study.

Please complete and return your survey instrument no later than December 16, 2005. A pre-addressed return envelope has been provided for your convenience.

Thank you for taking the time to assist me in this study. Again, your responses are very important relative to the completion of this research project.

Sincerely,



Edward Maritz, Jr., MS
Secondary Business Teacher, Pine-Richland School District
Elected School Director, Sto-Rox School District



Dr. Jean R. Higgins
Committee Chair
Duquesne University

Mr. Edward Maritz, Jr.
1004 Lake Street
McKees Rocks, PA 15136
(412) 771-1313
maritz625@duq.edu

January 09, 2006

All Superintendents of Schools in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

Dear School District Superintendent:

This is a second, follow-up request for your participation in a study to identify potential correlations between superintendent longevity, school board member longevity and school board member participation in voluntary in-service training programs among those districts that demonstrated AYP during the 2004-2005 school year and those districts that did not demonstrate AYP during 04-05. Your district has been identified as a non-respondent to a previous survey mailing. Your responses are very important and your participation will help add to the research base regarding District AYP.

My name is Edward Maritz and I'm an ABD Doctoral Student in the IDPEL program at Duquesne University actively engaged in dissertation research. Dr. Jean Higgins, a retired Pennsylvania school superintendent, currently serving as Adjunct Professor in the School of Education at Duquesne University, is directing my research.

This research is of interest to me personally because I serve public education in dual capacities. First, I've served as an elected school board member in the Sto-Rox School District since 1993. Second, professionally, I've worked in public schools as a secondary business teacher since 1995.

The enclosed survey instrument is being sent to all public school superintendents in Pennsylvania. The survey focuses on DISTRICT AYP and not individual school building AYP. The survey instrument has been coded among districts demonstrating AYP and those districts that did not demonstrate AYP as determined by PDE for the 2004-2005 school year. The entire survey should take no longer than ten minutes to complete. Please be assured that your responses are confidential and individual responses will not be released. You or your district will not be traceable or identifiable on completed survey instruments. Your opinions and responses are valued pieces of information; thus, your participation is very important to the outcomes of this study.

Please complete and return your survey instrument **no later than January 20, 2006.**

A POSTAGE PAID pre-addressed return envelope has been provided for your convenience. Thank you for taking the time to assist me in this study. Again, your responses are very important relative to the completion of this research project. I thank you in advance for your time.

Sincerely,



Edward Maritz, Jr., MS
Secondary Business Teacher, Pine-Richland School District
Elected School Director, Sto-Rox School District



Dr. Jean R. Higgins
Committee Chair
Duquesne University

Appendix C

Two-Section Survey Instrument

SECTION I

Thank you for participating in this study. The purpose of this study is to determine if any correlations exist between superintendent longevity, board member longevity and board member in-service training compared to those districts that demonstrated district AYP for 2004-2005. This study aims to identify correlations and relationships among the variables and does not aim to establish causality.

There are 2 sections in the survey instrument. Section I will gather factual data on superintendent and board member tenure in your district and the participation (if any) of your board members with in-service training.

Section II asks you to rate your level of agreement regarding statements about board member and superintendent experience and board member training drawn from a review of the literature. In Section II there are no “right” or “wrong” answers; your personal views are what is important. All responses are confidential. Please do not place your name on the survey instrument.

After you have completed all items please return the instrument in the self-addressed stamped envelope provided. Thank you.

THE SURVEY BEGINS BELOW.

Superintendent Longevity Data Collection:

1. I have been superintendent of my current school district for:

(Circle one) 0-5 years 6-10 years 11 or more years

Please go to the next page

Board Member Longevity Data Collection:

2. For this next question, please think of each member of your board when answering. On the chart below, please give your best estimation of the years of experience for each of your 9 individual board members. Your board members need not be personally identified. If you have a vacant board seat please mark the “0 to 4 years” category for that vacant board seat.

| Place a check mark beside the appropriate category for each board member | | | |
|---|------------------|------------------|--------------------------|
| Years of Service: | 0-4 years | 5-8 years | More than 8 years |
| Board Member 1 has served on the school board for: | | | |
| Board Member 2 has served on the school board for: | | | |
| Board Member 3 has served on the school board for: | | | |
| Board Member 4 has served on the school board for: | | | |
| Board Member 5 has served on the school board for: | | | |
| Board Member 6 has served on the school board for: | | | |
| Board Member 7 has served on the school board for: | | | |
| Board Member 8 has served on the school board for: | | | |
| Board Member 9 has served on the school board for: | | | |

Board member in-service participation Data Collection:

3. Identify below how many of your school board members (if any) have completed voluntary school board member in-service training through PSBA or other providers over the last two school years. Please base your estimation of their completed in-service training hours over the last two school years ONLY and NOT over the board member’s entire years of service. Please group all 9 of your members appropriately given the categories below.

| Training hours completed over the last two school years | Number of board members completing the training Your Response: | |
|--|--|--|
| TOTAL NUMBER of board members that have completed more than 25 training hours over the last two school years. | | <i>SAMPLE RESPONSE:</i> <i>0 members</i> |
| TOTAL NUMBER of board members that have completed between 15 and 24 training hours over the last two school years. | | <i>1 member</i> |
| TOTAL NUMBER of board members that have completed between 5 and 14 training hours over the last two school years. | | <i>3 members</i> |
| TOTAL NUMBER of board members that have completed between 0 and 4 training hours over the last two school years. | | <i>5 members</i> |

Total members: 9
(Your written numeric total above in one or more categories should equal 9 board members total.)

SECTION II

Directions: For the section below, respond to what extent you agree with the following statements regarding school board training and board member experience.

| SUPERINTENDENT / BOARD MEMBER LONGEVITY QUESTIONS: | | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|--|---|---------------------------|--------------|----------------|-----------------|------------------------------|
| 1 | Board members generally improve their effectiveness after serving one full term. | | | | | |
| 2 | New board members are generally more effective and supportive of superintendent recommendations. | | | | | |
| 3 | Turnover of more than three board members in any election year is disruptive to district operations. | | | | | |
| 4 | When new a member join the school board, experienced board members mentor the new member. | | | | | |
| 5 | The school board has adopted explicit goals for itself and its performance as a governing body. | | | | | |
| 6 | Superintendents serving in the same district for more than five years are more effective and productive. | | | | | |
| 7 | Superintendents serving in the same district for less than five years are more likely to effectuate change. | | | | | |
| 8 | Superintendents are largely responsible for building and maintaining board/superintendent relationships. | | | | | |
| BOARD MEMBER VOLUNTARY IN-SERVICE TRAINING QUESTIONS: | | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
| 9 | At least once every year the school board has a retreat or special session to examine their performance. | | | | | |
| 10 | Board members will consistently seek outside training on new mandates and programs affecting the district. | | | | | |
| 11 | The board periodically sets aside time to learn about important external issues facing school districts. | | | | | |
| 12 | The school board allocates funds in the budget for board education and in-service training programs. | | | | | |
| 13 | Board members prefer to participate in training that involves evening sessions with a meal provided. | | | | | |
| 14 | Board members only participate in training provided by school district administrators. | | | | | |
| 15 | Board members only participate in training that involves district paid out of state travel. | | | | | |
| 16 | Board members only participate in training that involves district paid local or in-state training. | | | | | |

| | DISTRICT AYP QUESTIONS: | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|-----------|---|-----------------------|--------------|----------------|-----------------|--------------------------|
| 17 | District AYP as determined by PDE is a reliable measure of achievement in your school district. | | | | | |
| 18 | District AYP as determined by PDE is a valid measure of achievement in your school district. | | | | | |
| 19 | District AYP as determined by PDE is part of your superintendent evaluation conducted by your board. | | | | | |
| 20 | District AYP as determined by PDE should be part of any Superintendents performance evaluation. | | | | | |
| 21 | Board members in your school district set aside meeting time to review District AYP data from PDE. | | | | | |
| 22 | Board members in your school district request training on district achievement and matters regarding AYP. | | | | | |
| 23 | Board members in your school district formulate action plans in advance to attain District AYP. | | | | | |
| 24 | The superintendent and board should set annual goals together to ensure District AYP is attained. | | | | | |

Appendix D

School Districts Not Demonstrating AYP Categories

Categories of School Districts Not Demonstrating District AYP 2004-2005

AYP, or Adequate Yearly Progress, is a key measure of school performance established by the Federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. The Pennsylvania Accountability System evaluates all Pennsylvania public schools and districts annually for Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) based on the results of the spring PSSA testing cycle and indicators of participation, attendance, and graduation.

For the 2004-2005 school year, district targets measured to meet AYP are assessed in three grade spans: Grades 3–5, 6–8, and 9–12. To meet District AYP goals in Academic Performance or Test Participation, the district needs to achieve all targets for both subjects in one grade span only. This is different from previous years and current school AYP requirements whereby all grades are assessed as a whole and all targets must be met. (Pennsylvania Department of Education, 2006a).

2004-2005 School Districts Not Demonstrating AYP

| PDE Classification of Districts NOT Demonstrating AYP | Number of Districts |
|---|---------------------|
| Districts Making Progress but not demonstrating AYP | 141 |
| Districts in Warning Status (Year 1) | 18 |
| Districts in Improvement I (Year 2) | 6 |
| Districts in Improvement II (Year 3) | 22 |
| Corrective Action I (Year 4) | 1 |
| Corrective Action II – First Year (Year 5) | 0 |
| Corrective Action II – Second Year (Year 6) | 1 |
| Corrective Action II – Third Year (Year 7) | 3 |
| Totals | 192 |

Source: Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE 2006b)