

Succession Planning: A study of superintendent succession within the school districts of
the Warren-Saratoga-Washington-Hamilton-Essex County Board of Cooperative
Educational Services

A Doctoral Research Project
Presented to
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Doctoral Research Committee Chair
School of Education
The Sage Colleges

In Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the
Degree of Doctor of Education
In Educational Leadership

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July 2009

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Abstract

The intent of this study was to discover the methods utilized in planning for leadership succession within the school districts in the Warren-Saratoga-Washington-Hamilton-Essex (WSWHE) BOCES geographic region. The research informed us that 65% of boards of education believe the current superintendent will be leaving their respective districts within the next four years. Forty-five percent of superintendent's report that they will leave their current position within the same five years. A survey instrument was developed and sent to the school superintendents and board presidents in each of the 31 schools in the WSWHE BOCES region of New York State. The purpose of the survey was to determine if schools utilized succession planning or are they currently grooming prospective superintendent candidates. Based on the survey information interviews were conducted with superintendents and school board presidents who identified a form of succession planning or grooming process. Research revealed that none of the school districts had a written formalized succession plan approved by the board of education to replace the superintendent. However, three school districts engaged in an informal succession planning process and replaced the outgoing superintendent with an internal candidate who went through an extensive mentoring program.

Key Words: Succession Planning

Superintendent

Board of Education

Acknowledgements

This final product could not have been completed without the overwhelming love and support of my family; Nicole, Stratton, Owen, and Lukas. I am forever grateful to Nicole for her patience over the last two years. There were numerous times when she had to postpone commitments and juggle her schedule to make sure the boys got to all of their activities. Thank you for being there...we did it!

I would like to thank my parents, Sam and Derinda Sherman for always encouraging me to strive to be the best in any endeavor and instilling in me at an early age the importance and value of education. And a special thank you to the Argyle Central School Board of Education (2004-2009) for supporting my enrollment in the Sage Doctoral Program. I thoroughly enjoyed their friendship, sense of humor, and devotion to the students of the district.

This experience in Cohort I at Sage has been a positive life changing experience. The 18 members of Cohort I are a special group of people who I've come to know and respect. I will cherish the many wonderful memories that were created and I will leave the program with new friends and colleagues, and for that I'm extremely grateful.

Lastly, to Dr. Ann Myers, Dr. Jim Butterworth, and Dr. Ray O'Connell, I will never forget your guidance, direction, and enthusiasm over the last two years. Your vision of creating a doctoral program that meets the needs of the educational leader of the 21st century has been met. Congratulations!

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CHAPTER I

Introduction and Overview

The New York State Council of School Superintendents forecasted that 60% of the current superintendents in New York State will retire by 2011 (Rogers, Terranova, Volp, Cattaro, Fale, Fiore, Ike, Rice, Service, & Zseller, 2006). This comes on the heels of approximately 220 superintendents out of 741 in New York State retiring between the years 2003-2006. The need to replace experienced superintendents is becoming a common exercise for school districts across the state and country.

Garman and Glawe (2004) define succession planning as a “structured process involving the identification and preparation of a potential successor to assume a new role” (p. 120). The labor market in the superintendent profession has reached a critical point, as a shortage of qualified candidates continues to grow. A shortage coupled with an increasing turnover rate and an elevated starting age, has led to the average tenure of superintendents in New York State dropping to 5.0 years from 5.6 in 2003 (Rogers et al., 2006). The need for quality leaders is not isolated to education; it also plays a critical role in politics, health care, and the business world (Charan, 2005; Schmalzried & Fallon, 2007; Teegarden, 2004).

The difference is that other industries have made an effort to examine and implement leadership succession plans. The urgency of succession planning and its importance for maintaining stability, saving money, cultivating leadership, and stimulating economic growth in the business sector is a necessary priority (Greengard, 2001; Jacklevic, 2004; Pomeroy & Cunningham, 2000). This necessity of succession planning is just as vital in the non-profit sector since a lack of leadership planning

becomes an unnecessary risk factor (Schmalzried & Fallon, 2007). In education succession planning is a topic that is starting to gain more interest and attention from researchers as superintendent turnover and retirement become more frequent. To underscore the importance of this trend, Fullan (1992) stresses that effective leadership succession is a necessary element for sustainable improvement in schools.

A review of literature on succession planning as it relates to the school superintendency reveals few studies. Much of the literature on succession related to education is devoted to the principalship position both domestically and outside the continental United States (Barker, 2006; Brayman & Fink, 2006; Brooking, 2008; Dorman & D'Arbon, 2003; Darling-Hammond, 2007).

Callahan (1962) did some of the early research on the superintendency and found “due to the nature of the job it is very unlikely that a superintendent will stay in one position for a lifetime” (p.13). This is evident in the Warren-Saratoga-Washington-Hamilton-Essex (WSWHE) BOCES region in New York State where this research was based. The WSWHE Board of Cooperative Educational Services provides cost-effective shared educational programs and services that complement component school districts in strengthening the quality of living and learning in their communities. WSWHE BOCES provides educational services for students of all age levels and abilities.

In the 31 schools comprising the WSWHE BOCES there have been 59 superintendents from July 1, 2003- June 30, 2008. Across New York State, there were more superintendents in their 30's and 40's (26.7%) in 2003 than in 2006 (16.1%), (Rogers et al., 2006). Furthermore a study of school superintendents in Wisconsin confirms that the shortage and need for succession planning is not isolated to New York

State. The research of 1,528 superintendents over a thirty-two year period revealed the median years for a superintendent to serve in one location was four years. Glass and Franceshini (2007) conducted a nationwide survey of superintendents and estimated that the mean age of a superintendent was 54.6 years. This is only four months short of the minimum retirement age in New York State. Furthermore, they suggest that individuals are entering the superintendency later in life than previous studies and are selecting to stay in central administration longer than before.

A review of prior literature indicates there is little research that addresses superintendent succession planning. In this study the researcher examined whether succession plans exist in a region of New York State where turnover in leadership is relatively consistent with the rest of the state. Do school districts view succession planning as an important and necessary element for replacing superintendents? Are concrete plans in place to address it?

Succession planning in the private sector has proven to be a valuable resource in eliminating unnecessary personnel turnover and reducing financial waste. Moreover, it leads to greater support from employees and establishes a clear process that benefits the entire organization from bottom to top. That is why it's important to explore succession planning in the educational context.

This study investigated the methods utilized in planning for leadership succession within the school districts in the WSWHE BOCES geographic region. The researcher implemented qualitative methods of inquiry with all 31 schools in the WSWHE BOCES to determine similarities and differences in planned organizational leadership change.

Problem Statement and Research Questions

The intent of this study was to discover the methods utilized in planning for leadership succession as it relates to school districts in the WSWHE BOCES geographic region. The focus of the research centered upon four central questions:

1. How prevalent is succession planning in the replacement of public school superintendents?
2. How common is superintendent turnover (superintendent leaving a school district for any reason)?
3. How important is succession planning to the organization during leadership transition?
4. What are the benefits and liabilities of succession planning?

CHAPTER II

Review of Literature

As we embark on the completion of the first decade in the 21st century it is evident that many new challenges face educational institutions. Among them are meeting the demands of state and federal accountability measures, augmenting curriculum to align with state and local standards, developing budgets that meet the need of schools and taxpayers, and keeping up with ever changing technological advances. School districts have experienced shortages in superintendent applicants for a number of years. Approximately 77 million baby boomers make up half of the current labor force, with only 38 million post baby boomers in line to take their place (Teegarden, 2004). The need for leadership succession planning is paramount to the success and stability of school districts.

There is minimal literature available devoted to succession planning of school superintendents. Rhodes and Brundrett (2006) stress “little information concerning leadership succession planning within educational organizations is presently available in the literature (p. 271). The literature on succession planning still continues to be dominated by the business and health care industries in our society. Even though the turnover rate and demand in education is high there is little documented evidence for a comprehensive effort for planning. This literature review will be divided into four sections (state of succession planning, superintendent turnover, state of the organization during leadership transitions, and benefits and liabilities of succession planning).

Succession Planning

Myers (1988) states that “most of the literature in education discusses the issue of turnover...most of the literature provoked by an interest in turnover outside of education focuses on succession” (p. 19). Previous studies have explored succession planning in the business community and developed step by step action strategies that are essential to a comprehensive succession plan and dealing with change (Cooke, 1995; Kesner, 1989; McConnel, 1996; McElwain, 1991).

Many companies still ignore leadership succession all together; however it is much more prominent than in the educational realm. According to a survey by the National Association of Corporate Directors, 45% of boards at companies with sales of more than \$500 million have no meaningful plans for training potential Chief Executive Officer's (CEO) (Greengard, 2001). This was followed up with similar data in non-profit organizations. Teegarden (2004) surveyed over 9,000 non-profit organizations and received only a 25% (2,200) return rate, and found that 44% of those who completed the survey had succession plans in place for expected and unexpected departure by their CEO. Huang (1999) made similar discovery in his research of business firms in Taiwan. Thirty-five percent of the 166 firms sampled had no succession plans, with the main deterrent being a lack of personnel to handle succession related materials. Moreover, the results revealed that succession planning is more of an accepted practice in Western society as opposed to business operations in Asia, in particular Taiwan.

After reviewing several hundred articles on succession planning, Garman and Glawe (2004) found that there was little credible data on the prevalence of succession planning. Based on the literature they estimate that 40% to 65% of organizations

(business) have succession plans. Corporate America has begun to shift succession planning to developing leadership from within. McDonald's, NBC, Colgate are all companies that are focusing on leadership development on the few prospective leaders in the system already (Charan, 2005).

Studies of succession planning in Fortune 500 companies have revealed that succession planning is a top priority that inevitably needs to be linked with the company's business strategy (Curtis, 1993; Friedman, 1986; Gratton & Syrett, 1990). The involvement of the current leadership team and CEO play's an important role in making sure that the execution of the plan is efficient and destined for a smooth transition. Succession plans need support, nurturing, and active involvement from the exiting CEO or the plan is destined to fail (Friedman, 1986; Hall & Foulkes 1990; Lee, 1991; and Rothwell, 1994).

Succession planning literature in the private sector has shown a considerable amount of information on types of effective models of practice. The key themes that continually surface are organizational match, identifying key employees, determining their interest, and training or developing potential successor's skills (Beatty, Schneier, & McEvoy, 1987; Buckner & Slavenski, 1994; Butterill, 1990). Conversely, Gratton and Syrett (1990) did a comprehensive examination of the succession planning process at IBM, Amstrad, BAT, and Hanson. The research showed that companies should not utilize a one size fits all approach to planning for the future. Just because succession planning is successful at one company doesn't guarantee it will be advantageous or beneficial for another.

As succession planning becomes more of a mainstay in corporate America as well as other private and public sectors sufficient research has demonstrated that the linkage of the succession plan to business plans is paramount to success (Clark & Lyness, 1991; Fenwick-Magrath, 1988; Hansen & Wexler, 1988). Leibman and Bruer (1994) emphasize the role of developing a leader to facilitate change and initiative as opposed to placing someone in a position of management by “instead of identifying the right person for the right position at the right time, corporations are looking to continually develop strong leadership teams for strategic tasks” (p.29).

Gerald McManis and Michael Leibman (1988) from McManis and Associates indicate that a strong succession plan identifies the potential successors to match the best person for a particular job. In order to do this they stress that succession planning and business planning must be interlinked. Their research identified Exxon Mobil and the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey as exemplary organizations who have better prepared their respective organizations for the future by establishing a succession plan that is tied to their business and capital plans.

Fenwick-Magrath (1988) surveyed 12 companies that were ‘state of the art’ in regards to executive development and the research revealed five characteristics of sustainable executive development:

1. “In depth and visible involvement by the CEO;
2. a clear executive-development philosophy, which intertwines the company’s history, culture, and business needs;
3. executive-development policies that are linked to the companies business strategies;

4. a succession-planning process that comes from the bottom-up, which includes executive educational programs and on the job developmental assignments;
5. staff supports the plan. On the job development proved to be the most beneficial training tool, which includes; job rotations, overseas assignments, and temp assignments for short periods of time.”

In a 2003 survey of Fortune 1,000 companies, which was conducted by public affairs firm Burson-Marsteller, found that in North America, 55% of outside CEO's (hired from outside the organization), were forced to resign compared to only 34% of insiders (internal candidates). Ram Charan (2005) has been advising CEO's and boards of directors for three decades concludes that in order to find an executive who will serve for an extended period of time and serve well, companies must do the following: (1) have a deep pool of internal candidates in a leadership development process; (2) create then continually augment a succession plan; (3) if you're considering outside candidates, lead recruiters rather than being led by them.

Succession planning has been or is becoming an integral part of the culture of corporate America, non-profit industries, politics, the health care industry, but lacks any distinct role in the nature of public school institutions. This invaluable approach to systematically replacing a new leader has been left primarily in the hands of elected board members who rely on search consultants for guidance and advice on potential candidates, approach and timeline of the search process. The literature clearly shows that superintendent turnover is increasing and a number of qualified candidates to fill those

positions is declining. Schools in transition often become chaotic and lack a general purpose or mission and have been shown to be counterproductive.

William Bridges (1991) did extensive work on change and its effect on the environment. A leader who implements change must first understand the process or transition people are susceptible to during change. A “transition” is a mental process people endure during change. Bridges (1991) outline three phases that a person goes through when making a transition: (1) ending, (2) neutral zone, and (3) moving forward. The key point to this phase is that it begins with an ending. People must be first willing to change their practice or let go of their old ways. Stage 1 is the most critical for a leader as they must adhere and support the psychological needs of the individual. True change takes place when the leader adapts and utilizes these transitions in the change process.

Succession planning in the private sector has proven to be a valuable resource in eliminating unnecessary personnel turnover and reducing financial waste of frivolous searches for potential candidates. Moreover, it leads to greater buy-in from employees and establishes a clear process that benefits the entire organization from bottom to top.

Superintendent Turnover

According to Ortiz & Kalbus (1998), studies relating to superintendent succession have focused on three areas: (1) the vulnerability of the superintendent related to his/her relationship with the board of education; (2) the superintendent’s ability to answer constituents; and (3) the superintendent’s mobility (Callahan 1962; Ziegler et al. 1985). Moreover, the authors examine leadership succession by identifying factors which trigger

succession and organizational elements affected by the nature of succession. Their analysis of pre and post arrival factors with elected county superintendents determined that succession is a process with indefinite starting and ending points. Elected county superintendents share many of the same responsibilities as New York State superintendents; the obvious difference is that New York State superintendents are hired by a board of education with a contract for a set number of years. Moreover, pre arrival factors help shape and dictate the succession process as they determine the reason for succession and detail the selection and orientation process which is critical to the success or failure of the new superintendent.

Studies have shown that retirements play a crucial part in superintendents exiting from school districts (Eaton & Sharp, 1996; Parker 1996; Sharp, 1995). Sharp's (1995) furthered this research by examining factors associated with superintendent exodus including retirements and financial instability of the district. In the study of 177 selected superintendents it was revealed that retirement and relationship with the board of education were the two primary reasons that superintendents left their respective districts. This confirms his early work on the overwhelming effects of retirements on the pool of qualified candidates, but also reveals that relationship with boards of education is critical to superintendent length of stay in a district. Callahan's (1962) research on the tenure of superintendents concludes that "due to the nature of the job it is very unlikely that a superintendent will stay in one position for a lifetime."

Eaton and Sharp (1996) studied the involuntary turnover of superintendents in small towns in the state of Illinois. They explored 117 school districts from the end of 1992-1993 school year and the beginning of the 1993-1994 school year after

superintendent successors were named. The schools were made up of nine regions and represented 12.6% of the state total schools districts. They concluded that the turnover rate for the 117 superintendents was 30% (35). Of the 35, 25 were voluntary (mostly retirements) and 10 were identified as involuntary. The study also concluded that a correlation exists between superintendent turnover and superintendent and school board relationship.

Parker (1996) did extensive research in Texas from 1985 and 1990 studying the vulnerability and mobility of school superintendents. The population for the research included any superintendent from Texas who experienced mobility at least once from 1985-1990. Of the 793 superintendents who met this criterion, 260 were chosen from random sampling. One hundred ninety-three superintendents responded, which resulted in a 74.2% return rate. The study summarized superintendents perceptions of moving to a “better superintendency” or perceived better situation, and retirement were the leading factors leading to turnover rates in Texas during this period of time.

In a study commissioned by the American Association of School Administrators (AASA); the state of the American School Superintendency: a mid-decade study, Glass and Franceschini (2007) approximate that 10,000 to 11,000 superintendent positions across the country will turn over in the next five years. Citing the work of Market Data Retrieval, Glass and Franceshini (2007) found that in the 2006 school year there were 2,244 new superintendents hired in the 13,251 school districts, denoting a turnover rate of 16.9%. Eighty percent of the superintendents completing the survey attested that no programs exist in their districts to identify individuals aspiring to the position. The survey was completed by 2,204 superintendents or 29% of AASA members.

Transitions

In almost any organization changing leadership, in particular, the executive officer has effects on the entire institution. Studies have indicated that succession causes disruption, which has an adverse effect on organizational performance (Allen, Panian, & Loty, 1979; Geisel, 2002)

Grusky (1960) found that succession can have an adverse effect in organizations as staff morale decreases and conflict ensues, which leads to a lack of cohesion and effectiveness overall in the institution. Grusky examined many aspects of leadership and how it affects succession (structural factors, succession and instability, authority structure, position and role of successor effectiveness of the organization, and bureaucracy). This was followed by the work of Gordon and Rosen (1981) who considered the nature of selecting a leader and its implications on the effectiveness of the organization. The authors reviewed relevant literature and attempted to specify a model of leadership succession, based on prior research and logical analysis. Their work focused on “leadership succession being conceptualized in terms of situational favorableness for the new leader on his way in” (p.251). From this they developed a set of guidelines and issued questions that would benefit the successor on his/her way into the district. “Situational favorableness,” which is the linkage of leadership and group dynamics, may help to alleviate the trepidation and fragmentation that occurs during the transition stages.

At least one researcher from England reported that the importance of school leadership on the institution is undervalued by researchers and active educators. Barker (2006) pointed out that a “leader’s life cycle, departure and replacement influence the conditions for improvement” (p.289). The qualitative, historical case study of the Felix

Holt School located in the South of England analyzes and evaluates the transition and leadership of three different heads of Felix Holt from 1992 to the early 2000's. Barker concluded that "leadership succession at all levels is, therefore, an underestimated dimension in school improvement that provides an opportunity to refresh an established culture and mission. Although, a potentially valuable source of energy and renewal, however, the process of changing the head is hazardous and can be disruptive" (p.290).

Miskel and Cosgrove (1985) maintain that replacing a superintendent can be a disruptive event because it overhauls communication schemes, affects decision making, and disturbs the flow of normal activities. The following list is a summary of the generalizations formed by a meta-analysis of related literature by Miskel and Cosgrove on leadership succession and its effects in the school environment:

1. "The reasons for administrator succession create different levels of instability in school organizations;
2. The composition of the administrator selection committees and the methods they use relate to the amounts of change that accompany succession events;
3. Administrators chosen from outside the school or district produce more change and instability in schools than those selected from inside;
4. Superintendent successions have greater educational effects than principal successions;
5. A curvilinear relationship exists between the length of administrator tenure and school effectiveness;

6. Rates of succession influence the leadership styles of school administrators;
7. When the perceptions of leader behavior are widely shared, successions in schools occur with fewer negative disruptions;
8. Inside and outside successors pose different orientations toward their careers, professional personnel, educational programs, and needed changes;
9. Outsiders and insiders are given different mandates for changing schools;
10. Organizational demography of school affects the rate of administrative succession;
11. Administrator successions are associated with modifications in organizational configurations and processes of schools;
12. Successions by outsiders spread technical innovation across school settings;
13. Community factors limit the amount of influence that new leaders have in initiating school changes;
14. Administrative successions have differential effects on school performance criteria.”

Hall (2008) maintains that “schools and districts that do not adopt formal succession planning processes and structures expose themselves to external change agents who could dismantle current practice” (p.34). To avoid this pitfall, Hall advocates strategies that facilitate leadership enhancement when implemented in the context of

professional learning communities which include creating a formal leadership development plan and succession plan which focus on “who” will fill the vacancy as opposed to “how” you will fill the vacancy.

Additionally, this issue goes beyond the traditional K-12 public schools programs, in an article in the journal, *The Presidency*, (2006) a panel of college and university presidents advocated for current administrators to help prepare the next generation of leaders to succeed them in the profession. This support came out of a dire necessity as “in higher education, the practice of selecting one’s successor is almost unheard of” (p.38). According to the American Council on Education (*American College President: 2002 edition*), 75% of new college and university presidents come from outside the institution. Managing transitions and reducing the amount of anxiety associated with leadership turnover in higher education can be maintained by a systematic succession plan which is not isolated to only internal candidates.

Strategic planning has become a valuable tool in assisting school districts in planning long term goals. It concentrates its efforts on formulating goals from the input of all school and community stakeholder groups. According to Cliff Moses, consultant for Advisory Solutions, superintendent of the Galway Central School District, and governing board member for the American Association of School Administrators, it also serves as an entry plan for the next superintendent of schools. “School boards can use the strategic plan, which establishes goals, a mission statement, and vision for the district, during the search for a new superintendent. It’s invaluable in determining the right match (candidate) for your school district. You have a clearly defined blueprint on where the district is heading, you don’t want to stray from this during the interview process. “Using

a strategic planning is a natural progression and segway into succession planning” (C.M. Moses interview communication, October 31, 2008).

The effect of leadership succession is not isolated to business and education. Studies have been performed on the effects of leadership succession on organizational performance in athletics (Allen, Panian, & Loty, 1979, Brown, 1982; Eitzen & Yetman, 1972; Grusky, 1963). Grusky (1963) conducted a study on the relationship between the number of manager changes and the average team standings among 16 professional baseball teams. He found that the number of administrative (managerial) changes and the degree of organizational effectiveness are negatively correlated. The teams with the poorest won-loss record had the highest rates of succession. Allen, Panian, & Loty (1979) utilized a multivariate analysis of time series data on all major league baseball teams from 1920 until 1973 to assess three theories of managerial succession and organizational performance. The study revealed that the frequency of managerial succession is negatively related to team performance. Insider succession is less likely to interfere with team performance than outside succession. Moreover, it verified Grusky’s (1963) work that there is a negative correlation between team performance and the frequency of managerial succession.

Benefits and Liabilities of Succession Planning

Succession planning in corporate America is far more prevalent than in education as the literature reinforces (Curtis & Russell, 1993; Gratton & Syrett, 1990; Greengard, 2001; Teegarden, 2004). Succession planning is seen as an extension of the responsibilities of big business. The private sector is better prepared for replacing a

leader because of the potential negative impact on the company when a succession plan is not in place. After the tragic events of September 11, 2001, Greengrad (2001) cautions many organizations about the chaos that could happen if a succession plan is not in place and provides practical applications as a start up point. However, the percentage of Fortune 500 companies with succession plans still hovers below 50%. Moreover, succession planning in other industries seems to be emerging, but are not yet the norm. The Schmalzried and Fallon (2007) study on the local health department sector revealed that local boards of health in Ohio were not concerned with succession plans as evident by 72.4% of the respondents indicating they had no plan in place. This is especially concerning due to the national debate about health care.

Bynander and Hart (2008) did a comprehensive case study of political party succession in Holland using succession events by the Dutch Christian Democratic Party in 1994 and the Social Democratic Party in 2002. Bynander and Hart (2008) concluded that “a new party leader entering office through a managed transition arrangement must strike a balance between projecting innovation and not putting off the proponents of the “old regime” (p. 403). This tactic has been reinforced in the educational spectrum by the works of Grusky (1960) and Gordon and Rosen (1981) who used pre and post arrival factors as a means of managing transitions.

Leibman, Bruer, & Makei, (1996) provide an illustration of the changing process of leadership succession planning in General Electric, one in 1980 the other in 1992. The comparative study demonstrates the need for succession planning to be an on-going process that is ever evolving which is crucial to the vitality of the company. This was reiterated in the works of Garman and Glawe (2004) who did extensive work reviewing

recent research and articles on succession planning. They reported that the research shows that flexibility is the key to successful succession planning as it needs to meet the needs of the organization both in the present and future. Leibman et al (1996) concluded that succession management allows leadership to create a cohesive process that is consistent with the strategic goals and vision of the company.

There is literature that involves examining the benefits and liabilities of leadership succession in schools as it relates to the principalship (Barker, 2006; Brayman & Fink, 2006; Brooking, 2008; Dorman and D'Arbon, 2003). Brayman and Fink (2006) provide a case study analysis of three different schools in Ontario who share different philosophies in leadership succession. The authors' research revealed that leadership succession has turned faculty members cynical to leadership and the leadership succession process. However, in one school it was evident that thoughtful leadership succession planning helped to sustain school improvement over an extended period of time.

Similarly, in the United States, in order to be proactive and address the shortage of qualified applicants for principal positions the Division of Leadership Development for the Maryland State Department of Education in 2006 created an outline for principal succession in Maryland schools. The model incorporates several areas that take into account staff morale.

Identifying and grooming the next successful leader in large corporations can be difficult if one does not factor in the changing dynamics of the American economy and market. Companies focus their succession plans on replacing the executive often by trying to clone him/her. Allison (1993) claims that the need of the organization as well as

the need of the manager must be met in order to secure a positive transition of leaders. Providing an opportunity for a potential replacement to work in several capacities, each for a few years could prove beneficial to the intended outcome. The traditional approach to succession planning focuses on matching people with specific positions, however this conflicts with the needs of today's organizations (Borwick, 1991; Rhodes, 1988; Hansen & Wexler 1988; Leibman & Bruer 1994). Trying to align a succession model from forty years ago into a business structure of today is destined for failure. Rhodes (1988) stressed the central focus of succession planning is "to help meet strategic staffing and development needs that will enable companies to keep pace with fundamental organizational and environmental changes" (p.62).

Carnazza (1982) did a study of fifteen companies that centered on succession/replacement planning. The study revealed that the larger the organization the more likely it is have a succession plan. Moreover, companies report that the support of the present CEO is the most important factor in the success or failure of the transition. He found that companies tended to use one of the following four strategies in selecting a successor:

1. Crown prince- identify and mold a single heir;
2. Slate- choosing a small number of qualified candidates;
3. Pool- develop a large number of managers who can perform multiple tasks;
4. Wave- blending (a) and (b) by picking a successor from a small number of qualified candidates.

Advantages and disadvantages accompany each of these options; the key is for a company to institute the best procedure/method for their existing beliefs and practices.

Studies on succession planning have revealed that merely replacing a CEO without determining the needs of the position or organization are counterproductive (Hall and Seibert, 1991; & Hansen & Wexler, 1988). Clearly defining the objectives of succession planning which coincides with the vision of the organization allows for a replacement model which benefits the individual and the system. Succession planning entails focus on both executive positions and potential candidates (Hall & Seibert, 1991). Wallum (1993) deduced similar findings from his research which surveyed senior executives from 19 major international companies. The results showed that companies are beginning to merge career planning and succession planning as it blends possible successors for executive positions while meeting the career goals and desires of the individual. Furthermore, the study indicated that succession planning was deemed more successful when endorsed and led by line management.

Within the confines of Fortune 500 companies, success of firms can be attributed to the influence of leadership (Stogdill, 1974). A study conducted into executive succession, stockholder wealth and the influence of the successor's origin, age, and position by Davidson, Worrell, & Cheng, (1990) investigated 367 executive appointments in Fortune 500 companies from 1963 until the 1980's. The study indicated that investors seem to react favorably to announcements of key executive successions. Also, an announcement of insider key executive succession reveals an elevation in corporate stock prices. Moreover, this concluded that the transition of leadership, if done in an organized and systematic way can be beneficial to the organization.

However, the literature is very scarce when it comes exploring superintendent succession plans/process as it relates to the position of superintendent of schools in public schools across the country. Therefore this study will add to the literature on educational succession planning by conducting research on superintendent succession planning in the 31 school districts in the Warren-Saratoga-Washington-Hamilton-Essex County BOCES.

CHAPTER III

Methodology

The intent of this study was to discover the methods utilized in planning for leadership succession within the school districts in the WSWHE BOCES geographic region.

Design

A qualitative methods approach was utilized in this research to determine similarities and differences in planned organizational leadership change. Qualitative research is defined by Creswell (2009) as a means for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. The process of research involves emerging questions, procedures, data analysis building from particulars to general themes, and making interpretations of the meaning of the data. Strauss and Corbin (1990) assert that a qualitative approach can be used to better understand any phenomenon about which little is yet known. Qualitative research allowed this researcher to delve deeper into documentation and the thought processes of board members and current superintendents relative to succession planning. A qualitative research approach relies on personal experiences and solicits first hand accounts of those involved in a phenomenon. A qualitative approach is suitable for this study because it helped to solicit experiences of research participants in succession planning through interviews and reviewing documentation.

This qualitative phenomenological research study used a survey to identify interview participants and then semi-structured interviews with superintendents and board presidents who have engaged in some form of succession planning and who can

provide details of the event. Phenomenological research, describes the subjective version of an event, it is the study of a phenomenon. This first hand account provided valuable insight as to the thought process of board members and superintendents in the succession planning structure and activity.

The focus of the research centered upon four central questions:

1. How prevalent is succession planning in the replacement of public school superintendents?
2. How common is superintendent turnover (superintendent leaving a school district for any reason)?
3. How important is succession planning to the organization during leadership transition?
4. What are the benefits and liabilities of succession planning?

Population

The population of this study was the 31 school boards and school superintendents that compose the WSWHE BOCES in New York State. The Washington-Saratoga-Warren-Hamilton-Essex (WSWHE) Board of Cooperative Educational Services serves 31 school districts in a five-county region. The BOCES Board of Education, a governing board made up of representatives from component school districts, is responsible for the oversight of curricular, financial and other policy decisions. The chief executive officer of a BOCES is the District Superintendent who works closely with local school districts as a liaison/agent of the New York State Commissioner of Education. A responsibility of the District Superintendent is to coordinate and conduct superintendent searches for

component districts. The WSWHE Board of Cooperative Educational Services provides cost-effective shared educational programs and services that complement component school districts in strengthening the quality of living and learning in their communities. WSWHE BOCES provides educational services for students of all age levels and abilities.

The list of schools, superintendents, and board presidents was obtained from the 2008-2009 WSWHE component schools directory. The schools that are in this geographic region are diverse in terms of school size (student population) and socio economic make-up, which, for this study, was determined by free and reduced lunch percentage rates. The total number of students (2007-2008 school year) and number of superintendents from each district since July 1, 2003 was provided by Dr. John Stoothoff, District Superintendent of the WSWHE BOCES. The free and reduced percentage for each school was obtained from the New York State Department of Education website.

The results of this research can be isolated to this particular region of New York State; however generalizations can be made for all school districts in the state. The 31 schools comprising the WSWHE BOCES were chosen for this study as they represent almost 5% of the public schools in New York State. There are 43,266 students enrolled (2007-2008 school year) in the region, with a student population ranging from 60 students in the lowest enrollment district to 6,909 in the highest. There has been regular turnover in the superintendent position since July 1, 2003, including the district superintendent of the region. In the 31 schools comprising the WSWHE BOCES there have been 59 superintendents from July 1, 2003 through June 30, 2008. Across New York State, there were more superintendents in their 30's and 40's (26.7%) in 2003 than

in 2006 (16.1%), (Rogers et al., 2006). This has provided a wealth of information and opportunity for research and analysis.

The researcher is a superintendent in the WSWHE BOCES region. In order to eliminate any bias the researcher maintained an open mind to what was read or exposed to during the study. As a sitting superintendent access to research participants was enhanced and it was easier to identify with the cultural, historical and socioeconomic issues facing the region and topic.

Sample

The sample of this study was also the 31 school board members and school superintendents that compose the WSWHE BOCES in New York State. All participants volunteered to be in the study and no monetary compensation was provided for their efforts. All of the schools are governed by a board of education who contract with a Superintendent of Schools who oversees the operations of the school district. The total number of board members on each individual school board ranges from 3 to 9 (9= 10 districts, 7= 11 districts, 5= 9 districts, 3= 1 district).

There are 209 school board seats within the 31 component school districts. As of November 8, 2008, 208 seats were filled with one school district having a vacancy. The 208 board members are made up of 126 males (61%) and 82 (39%) females. There are two boards of education that are comprised of only one gender; one three member board which is comprised of all males and a five member board which is also all male. All information was retrieved from the 2008-2009 WSWHE BOCES School component directory. The following is a breakdown of boards of education by total membership and gender:

School Boards with Nine Members- 10 Total

90% (n=9) had a majority of male members which included:

- 4 boards with 7 males and 2 females
- 2 boards with 6 males and 3 females
- 2 boards with 5 males and 4 females
- 1 board with 5 females and 4 males
- 1 board with 4 males and 4 females and 1 vacant position

School Boards with Seven Members- 11 Total

63% (n=7) had a majority of male members which included:

- 2 boards with 6 males and 1 female
- 2 boards with 5 females and 2 males
- 5 boards with 4 males and 3 females
- 2 boards with 4 females and 3 males

School Boards with Five Members- 9 Total

78% (n=7) had a majority of male members which included:

- 1 board with 5 males and 0 female
- 1 board with 4 males and 1 female
- 1 board with 4 females and 1 male
- 5 boards with 3 male and 2 female
- 1 board with 3 females and 2 males

There are 31 superintendents leading the 31 schools in the WSWHE BOCES region of which 27 (87%) are male and four (13%) are female, as of June 30, 2008. There is a range of years of service as a superintendent from 1 year (minimum) to 23 years. The following graph shows the experience (number of years of service) and gender of superintendents within the WSWHE BOCES which includes the 2008-2009 school year as one year of service:

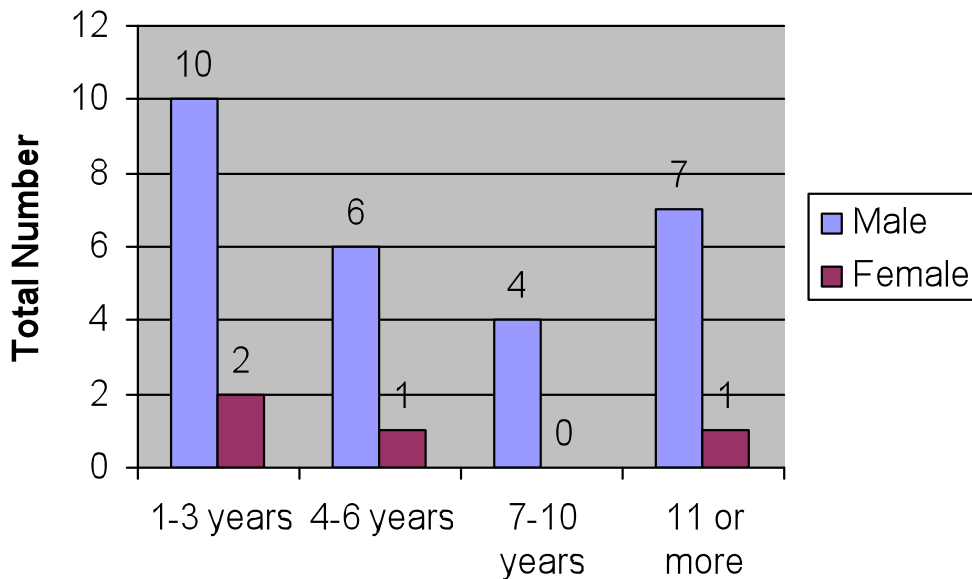


Figure 1. Superintendent Experience

Instrumentation

Prior to the research component, permission to conduct this study was obtained from The Sage Colleges Institutional Review Board (IRB). After receiving written permission to conduct the research in the WSWHE BOCES region from Dr. John Stoothoff, District Superintendent, a short survey (appendix A), one per board, was administered to all school boards (via the president) and superintendents from all 31

school districts. The survey, which was taken in large part from Schmalzried and Fallon (2007), was used to gather information which will identify the school districts that have used or are currently using succession planning and those districts that have not used any form of succession planning. The researcher did receive permission to use parts of the survey from the authors for the purpose of this study. The intended desire of the survey method was: Are districts preparing for leadership succession? Is succession planning relevant or important? Is it a formal or informal? Does the district have potential internal candidates being groomed for the superintendent position?

Procedure

A five item questionnaire asked school boards and school leaders about leadership succession efforts and its importance or relevance to each individual school district. The survey was mailed to all research participants (superintendent and one per board via the board president) and an addressed return envelope was included. The researcher utilized a four-phase administration process taken in part from Salant and Dillman (1994). A short advance e-mail was sent to all superintendents a week prior to the mailing of the survey. The survey was then mailed to each school district for the superintendent and to the home address and school address for each board president. An e-mail to superintendents was sent 4 to 8 days after the questionnaire was mailed out reminding them to return the survey. A second mailing was sent to all non-respondents with a personalized cover letter, the survey, and another self-addressed stamp envelope included. The survey responses were confidential but not anonymous. The entire administration process encompassed four weeks. Responses were entered into an Excel spreadsheet for analysis.

The survey instrument played an integral part of the research as 94% of superintendents and 65% of board presidents completed the survey. The survey responses provided the researcher with insight and information from each of the 31 school districts on succession planning, superintendent turnover, potential grooming, and superintendents who were promoted from within. As a result of the survey information, follow-up face-to-face, one-on-one, in person interviews were conducted with districts engaged in some sort of grooming process, a superintendent who was promoted from within, and those who identified a documented or verbalized succession plan. All face-to-face, one-on-one interviews were taped (audio) with prior written approval given by the research participant. Hand written notes were also taken. This allowed the researcher to capture the key pieces of information garnered from the interview and the hand written notes served as a guide for interview questioning. Research participants were asked to sign and date the consent and confidentiality agreement form. On average each interview lasted 45 minutes.

Respondents were more than willing to participate in the study, but for a variety of reasons were not always available for an in person interview. I utilized three methods of interview settings, with a face-to-face interview as the preferred starting point, followed by a telephone interview and, if participants were not accessible for the first two, an e-mail interview was offered. The advantage of a face to face interview is that it produced the opportunity to gauge the respondent's willingness to cooperate and observe body language associated with specific questions. This was a useful tool and instrument to determine if follow-up questions were appropriate or not. All interviews took place over a 90 day period with all of them taking place at a location convenient to the

interviewee. Table 1 provides the interview method by which data were collected for this study.

Table 1

Interview Method

<u>Interview Method</u>	<u>Participants</u>	<u>Percentage of total interview method</u>
Face to Face	11	69%
E-Mail	4	25%
Telephone	1	6%

An interview protocol was instituted during all interviews to maintain a consistent approach to the qualitative research. The protocol used the following components: use of a heading (date, place, interviewer, and interviewee), instructions for the interviewee to follow, and standard procedures throughout the interview process. The following pattern was used for all interview sessions to maintain consistency and validity in the research process: brief introduction and background from the candidate, questions on succession planning, questions on superintendent turnover, questions on leadership succession and transition, questions on benefits and liabilities of succession planning, and questions on future searches and the use of a consultant.

Throughout the research the definition of succession planning was left open-ended and not defined by the researcher to participants purposefully. This allowed the participants to engage in open discussion on succession planning based on their perceptions. Opportunities were afforded to diverge from the general interview structure if there were questions that needed to be asked for follow-up or clarification which

allowed for pace, continuity, and probing. The interview sessions took place at locations chosen by the interviewee, which was done purposefully to allow the participant to be in a location of comfort and ease.

Throughout the research, reliability was maintained through use of measures suggested by Gibbs (2007). Those steps included checking transcripts to make sure they did not contain mistakes during transcription and making sure there is not a drift in the definition and meaning of codes. Moreover, the researcher documented the procedures of research, a strategy suggested by Yin (2003) to help make sure approaches utilized were consistent and reliable. Data were checked when inputted into the Excel spreadsheet as to eliminate any transcription errors. Highlights of the interviews notes were transcribed onto 3"x5" index cards. This provided the researcher with an opportunity to discover any themes that may have developed during the multiple interviews. The information was reviewed periodically as to assist with validating themes and trends and to review information that may have been overlooked that could be utilized.

All research information collected was kept in a locked secure location. Electronic data were coded to protect confidentiality and entered into an excel spreadsheet which was protected by user name and password security. All research data were destroyed after the completion of this research study.

In order to maintain qualitative validity the researcher incorporated several strategies endorsed by Creswell (2009) including: member checking to determine accuracy of the data, peer debriefing which assisted in enhancing the accuracy of the data, triangulation of data which helped to build a sound justification for themes,

clarification of any bias the researcher brings to the study, and an external auditor who reviewed the entire project.

A limitation of this study is what role school climate and culture play in succession planning. The research focused on determining if succession planning existed and if so, the methods utilized. Culture and climate were not discussed as a factor in this study. Secondly, the population was limited to the 31 component school districts in the WSWHE BOCES. Moreover, with a lack of documented written formal succession plans in the districts, the use of paper documents did not play a significant role as first intended.

CHAPTER IV

Results and Findings

Data analysis involves seeking and documenting information, based on asking questions, and formulating an analysis from the answers given by the research participants. This study incorporated a qualitative approach to identify key themes in succession planning in the WSWHE BOCES region. From the organization, preparation and reading of all data the researcher used a coding process to categorize all information and materials. The coding process allowed the researcher to look at data which addresses the following: codes on topics that readers would expect to find based on the past literature, codes that are surprising and that were not anticipated at the beginning of the study, codes that are unusual, and that are, in and of themselves, of conceptual interest to readers; and codes that address a larger theoretical perspective in the research (Creswell, 2009).

Codes were established based only on emerging information collected from the research participants, not pre determined codes. The researcher chose to use the SPSS Text Analysis for Surveys software product to code and analyze the research data. The SPSS software used linguistic technologies to identify and classify key concepts from open-ended questions. Open-ended questions were utilized in the research study because they provided varied information and provided insight as to what the participant was thinking and what they know about the subject. This first-hand knowledge is invaluable in understanding the process of succession planning and its importance to the educational field.

Approval from the Sage Institutional Review Board (IRB) was garnered before any data collection was performed for this research project. The intent of this study was to discover the methods utilized in planning for leadership succession as it relates to school districts in the WSWHE BOCES geographic region. The researcher implemented qualitative methods of inquiry with numerous schools and school leaders groups to determine similarities and differences in planned organizational leadership change.

The population for this study consisted of all 31 school districts in the Warren-Saratoga-Washington-Hamilton-Essex County Board of Cooperative Educational Services. A letter of invitation and survey were sent to all 31 individual school boards and superintendents of the 31 component districts. The districts were categorized into one of three groups: schools with 0-499 students, 500-1499, and 1500 and above. The same survey was administrated to school boards and superintendents. Table 2 provides an overview of the total number of respondents who completed the survey.

Table 2

Survey Respondents

<u>Completed Surveys</u>	<u># of Responses</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>of</u>	<u>Total Responses</u>
Superintendents	29	94%		
Board Presidents	20	65%		

The survey (Appendix A) served as a starting point to gain knowledge and insight into the superintendent and board of education perception of succession planning and if it existed within their institution. The survey was also valuable in that it helped to identify

the average length of stay of the current superintendent and what plans may or may not exist to replace the individual. Moreover, with a lack of documented succession planning in each school district, the research relied on the survey responses more than originally planned. The survey answers were designed using a likert scale format for answers to the first three questions:

1. My district has a written succession plan in place.
2. My district has an unwritten plan in place.
3. Succession planning for the next superintendent is important for your board of education.

A five point likert scale was used in order to permit the calculation of mean scores for the responses to each question with 1 indicating strongly disagree and 5 strongly agree.

Specific time frames were developed for question 4 to gauge the expected length of stay for the current superintendent. This question was critical in determining whether boards of education and superintendents were on the same page as far expectations for staying in the current position and for identifying the percentage of superintendents who intend to leave the district in a given set time frame: Less than 2 years, 3-5 years, 6-9 years, 10 or more years, and unsure.

Survey Information

Question 1-My District has a written succession plan in place.

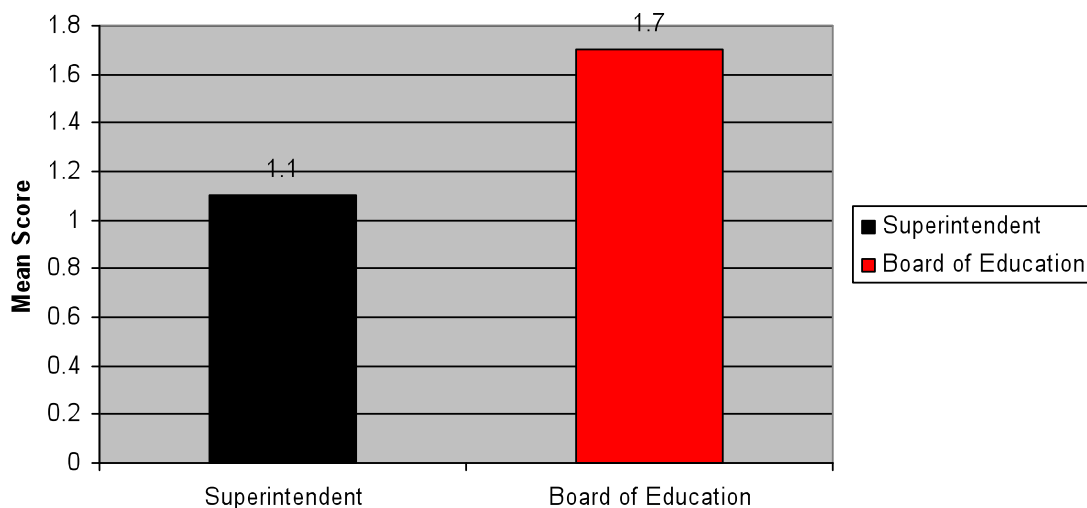


Figure 2. Written Succession Plan-Mean Scores for superintendents and board members

The vertical (y-axis) represents the mean score on the likert scale. As Figure 2 portrays superintendents and school boards were aligned in their responses in regards to having a written succession plan in place. The mean of superintendents' (1.1) indicates that they strongly disagree that a succession plan is established and documented within the district. In tallying the results, no superintendent indicated a 3 on the likert scale in response to a written succession plan. Moreover, only two superintendents responded with a 2 on the scale for this question. The modal response for this question was "1" (strongly disagree). One superintendent survey indicated a 5 (strongly agree) and one a 4, but neither could provide the documentation for the written succession plan.

The board of education results were similar in nature as compared to the superintendent with a slightly higher mean score (1.7), which indicated a trend more to disagreement. Bias could have come in to play in this section. Succession planning for some board officials could have been interpreted as a superintendent search process, not a systematic succession plan with an internal candidate. One board respondent indicated a 3 on the scale, and four other board respondents chose 2.

There was clearly a parallel in terms of overall findings between superintendents and boards of education as they overwhelmingly indicated that a written succession plan does not exist in their respective districts.

Question 2

My district has an unwritten plan in place.

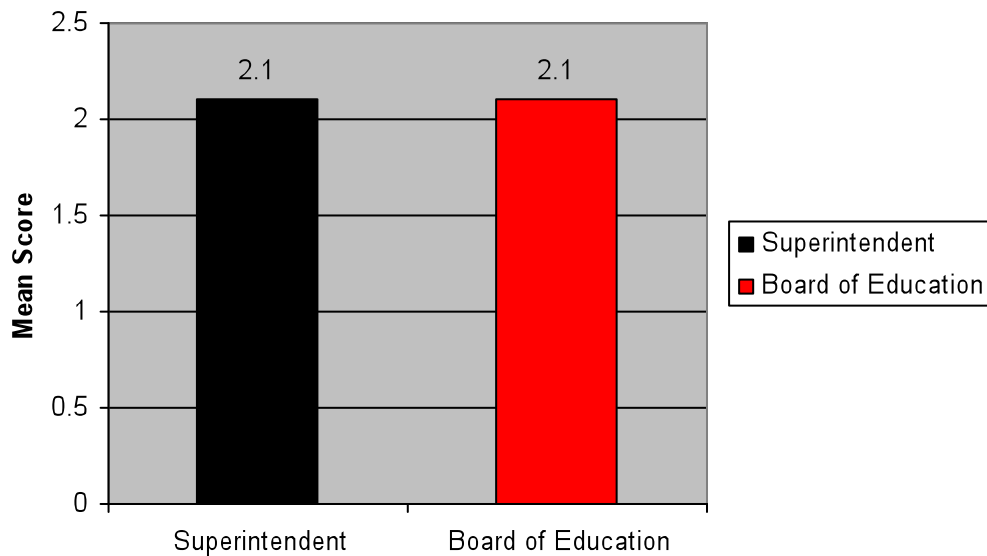


Figure 3. Unwritten Succession Plan-Mean Scores for superintendents and board members

Superintendent and board of education members had the exact same mean score (2.1) on the likert scale for districts having an unwritten plan.

Two superintendents and three board members answered a 4 or higher which indicates an agreement on the question. When follow-up phone calls and interviews were conducted with the research participants on planning, they acknowledged that they do not have a succession plan per say, but rather a replacement plan for the superintendent in case he/she leaves the district. It is interesting to note, that two of the superintendents and two of the board members were from the same district. The other board who indicated an unwritten plan existed did not answer or acknowledge any of the overtures to be interviewed.

Question 3

Succession planning for the next superintendent is important for your board of education.

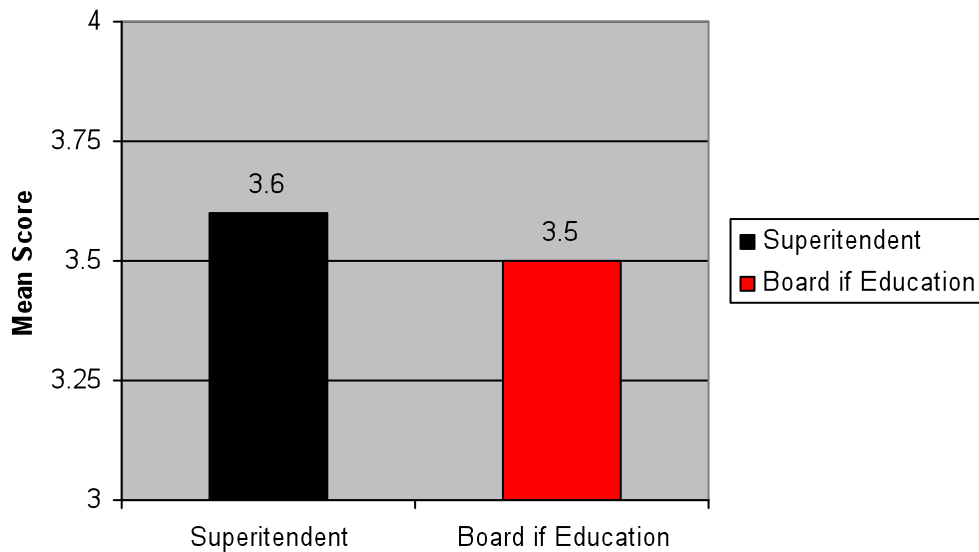


Figure 4. Importance of succession planning-Mean score for superintendents and board members

As Figure 3 indicates there is an agreement by superintendents and boards of education in their opinions of the importance of succession planning. The mean (3.6 – 3.5) indicates a response which is in between neutral and agreement. The data identify a modest agreement with planning for succession, but is in stark contrast to schools having a written plan (1.1 – 1.7) or an unwritten plan (2.1 – 2.1). Moreover, it tends to be more important than what is actually occurring in school districts. Eleven out of 29 superintendents (38%) responded with a 5 (strongly agree) on their surveys, in addition 6 out of 20 board presidents (30%) gave the same rating.

There was also relative consistency with superintendents and school boards in devaluing the importance of succession planning as 25% of school boards and 24% of school superintendents answered 2 or lower on their survey, thus generally disagreeing with the need for succession planning or indicating that the superintendent was fairly new to the system.

Question 4

About how long do you expect your superintendent to serve in the present position?

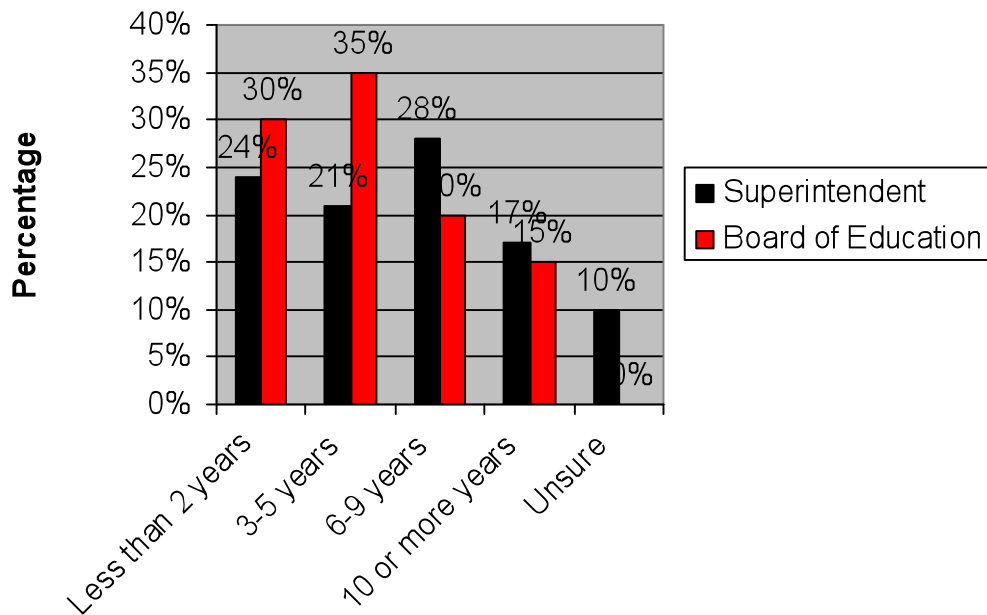


Figure 5. Expectation of current superintendent length of stay—percentage response for superintendents and board members.

In regards to superintendents staying less than two years in a district superintendents (24%) and board members (30%) had similar results. However, as the time frame for superintendent expected tenure (in years) was lengthened discrepancies began to arise. In the likert scale category of expecting the superintendent to stay between “3-5 years”, more school boards expected the superintendent to stay this length of time. Superintendents were more inclined to push their responses to the expected length of stay in the “6-9 years” category. This could be directly attributed to perception of school board members understanding the average superintendent tenure or it could be an indication of a lack of dialogue between superintendents and districts in regards to when the superintendent was going to retire. However, 49% of superintendents and 55% of school boards established that the superintendent was going to stay a minimum of

three years to a maximum of nine years in their responses. Moreover, superintendent and school boards were in concert in the “10 years or more category,” with five superintendents and three school board members marking this part of the scale.

The New York State Council of School Superintendents forecasts that 60% of the current superintendents in New York State will retire by 2011 (Rogers, Terranova, Volp, Cattaro, Fale, Fiore, Ike, Rice, Service, & Zseller, 2006). In the WSWHE BOCES region, the turnover rate (retirement and or resignation) does not mirror those results. Superintendents and school boards identified less than 30% of superintendents leaving their districts by 2011.

Based on the survey data, it was possible to identify interview participants who reported some form (written or unwritten) of succession planning, superintendents who were promoted from within, and any school district who was internally grooming potential candidates for the superintendency (table 3). A total of seventeen research participants (school board presidents and superintendents) were identified to be interviewed in the study and 16 actually participated. This was valuable in that it gave the researcher the opportunity to interview a larger pool of participants as they identified succession planning. No superintendents chose the unsure category in their survey response.

Table 3

Survey Results-Succession Planning

<u>Category</u>	<u># of districts</u>	<u>% of WSWHE BOCES</u>
Identified a plan for succession	3	10%
Promoted from within	9	29%
Currently Grooming	3	10%

Research Question 1- How prevalent is succession planning in the replacement of public school superintendents? To answer research question 1, three questions were asked of the research participants.

Question 1

What procedures are established for succession planning in your school district?

All districts lacked a formalized plan developed by the board of education or superintendent. The majority of respondents, 52.9%, had some form of informal succession plan or grooming process with internal candidates to replace the current superintendent. The initial discussion with perspective candidates was spearheaded by the superintendent in most cases. The informal process was “designed” by the superintendent and boards were sporadically apprised of the potential candidates (work).

The following are excerpts from interviews with superintendents and board presidents who reported succession planning, promotion from within, or are currently grooming potential superintendent replacements:

“No Formal plans exist; however, frequent informal discussions occur with individual board members; specifically long standing board members.”

“The organizational chart had a position of Deputy Superintendent. This role was designed to be broad based, with oversight of K-12 instruction as well as running administrative council, membership on board of education committees. In this role, the major tasks of the superintendency were observable.”

“No one on the board had been through a superintendent search. We (board) had a year advance notice of the superintendent's wishes to retire. Informally we knew the superintendent was grooming the deputy superintendent for the position.”

“No written plan. Informal discussion with the superintendent and board of education. Superintendent approached the Principal three years prior to retirement about the potential of taking over the position.”

“No actual formal plans. The district has a history of informal succession planning as principal and superintendent positions are generally filled from within. It is an expectation that the superintendent would be informally grooming the principal as there is flat management structure.”

Question 2

What is the role of the board of education and superintendent in the district’s leadership succession planning?

Five districts indicated that they had some form of a succession planning process and in all cases the superintendent played a very active role in identifying potential candidates and served as the liaison between the candidate and the board. The board of education played a very minimal role in the proceedings and in some cases, (2 out of 5), the board president was the only member apprised of the situation. In those two particular cases, the current superintendent was informally grooming a principal(s) to

take over as superintendent. Board Presidents indicated that there was a general assumption that the superintendent was mentoring administrators within the district, but no formal discussion took place, except during discussions about that administrator's annual evaluations. In one district, the superintendent utilized the evaluation process to gauge professional aspirations of administrators to determine potential replacements. If an administrator indicated that he/she were considering the position they were given more central office responsibilities in areas he/she preferred. The board was then made aware of the informal grooming mechanisms.

The following are excerpts from interviews with superintendents and board presidents who reported the role of the superintendent and board of education in leadership succession planning:

“Superintendent recommends and begins to groom principal or potential candidates. The board listens to the evaluation of administrators and keeps a watchful eye for potential replacements and provides resources for them to be successful.”

“The board of education had a fair and open discussion with the internal candidate prior to the superintendent search. The board was committed to an inclusive (all school stakeholders are part of the process) superintendent search. Once the decision was made the board was supportive of the internal candidate choice and the interim working together to help make it a smooth transition. The interim didn't have a part in the search process, but was a mentor over the next months in training the internal candidate.”

“The board of education has been apprised of my informal grooming of multiple candidates. Superintendent is giving both candidates more central administration responsibilities.”

Question 3

Who are involved in leadership succession process/discussion in the district?

Of those who identified a form of succession planning, 75% identified the superintendent as being involved and only 25% declared that the board was part of the process. When the board of education was involved in succession planning it was done informally, in large part the board was kept abreast by the superintendent. There was no direct communication with the board and a potential successor until a vacancy was announced.

Research Question 2- How common is superintendent turnover (superintendent leaving a school district for any reason)? To answer research question 2, two questions were asked of the research participants.

Question 1

Have you identified any potential leaders who would be suitable to assume the responsibilities of the superintendent position? If so, what led you to this conclusion?

Of the respondents who indicated a succession plan or internal grooming, 100% identified an internal candidate as the candidate of choice. No participants referenced an external candidate as a potential person for succession planning. Table 4 details schools who promoted from within to replace the superintendent, the size of the school district, what position the superintendent occupied before taking over, and gender. Moreover, Table 5 provides those schools currently grooming replacements, size of the district, what position they currently hold, and gender of the individual.

Table 4

Superintendents Promoted From Within

Promoted From Within	Size of District	Prior Position	Gender
School 1	1500+	Deputy Superintendent	Female
School 2	1500+	High School Principal	Male
School 4	500-1499	Elementary Principal	Male
School 5	500-1499	High School Principal	Male
School 6	500-1499	7-12 Principal	Male
School 7	500-1499	7-12 Principal	Male
School 8	500-1499	High School Principal	Male
School 9	0-499	K-12 Principal	Male
School 10	0-499	K-12 Principal	Male

Table 5

Potential candidates currently being groomed

Grooming	Size of District	Current Position	Gender
School 11	500-1499	High School Principal	Male
School 12	500-1499	7-12 Principal	Male
School 13	500-1499	K-6 Principal	Female
		7-12 Principal	Male

In 12 of 13 situations (92%) where someone was promoted from within or is currently being groomed for promotion, they came directly from the Principalship, while the other came from the Deputy Superintendent position. Moreover, in 10 of 13 school districts the person promoted from within or who is currently being groomed came from or has high school principalship experience. Only one person who was promoted from within came from the elementary principal position. However, due to the size of the

school (0-499), two principals had some form of combined elementary, middle, and high school principal experience (K-12 principals).

Of the superintendents who were promoted from within, only 1 female was promoted. Ninety percent of superintendents promoted from within were males who came directly from the principal position. The only female who ascended to the position came from a central administration position. Within the districts which are currently grooming perspective candidates, 2 of the districts are grooming males and the other district is mentoring two principals, one female and one male.

In the districts (three) which utilized an informal succession plan with the acknowledgment of the superintendent and board of education, two selected a male for the superintendent position and one district promoted a female.

The following are excerpts from interviews with superintendents and board presidents who have identified potential leaders who would be suitable to assume the responsibilities of the superintendent position and the conclusions which led them to that belief.

“Over the years a number of middle management candidates have been identified as potential administrators or future superintendents. Consideration has been based on the individual's ongoing longevity within the district and long-range career goals.”

“No formal or informal process to determine if someone is qualified, we try to look at long term goals or if they desire or want to pursue the superintendency. People are given responsibilities or aspects they would like to get involved that is more district level responsibility than building level.”

“Only one internal candidate applied for the position. We went through an extensive internal search and interview process to determine if this was the right person, if not external search would begin.”

“Yes, the principal. We knew he had strong leadership skills as a teacher and principal in the district.”

“I have identified two principals within the district.”

Question 2

In your next superintendent search, will the attributes of a potential replacement mirror the current superintendent or will they be different?

Only 2 of the 16 interviewees expressed that the board of education would be seeking a replacement that has different attributes than the current superintendent. The two respondents happened to be current superintendents and not board members. All of the respondents felt that the make-up of the board (longevity and personalities) would be a key factor in determining if the attributes would mirror the current superintendent.

The following are attributes that were cited by at least 60% of the respondents during the interview process:

- Commitment to the community
- Length of Service
- Calmness
- Sense of Humor
- Fiscal Responsibility
- Visionary
- Excellent Communicator
- Energetic/Positive

The following are excerpts from interviews with current superintendents and board presidents when asked about the attributes of a potential replacement mirror the current superintendent or will they be different?

“The longevity of the members of the board of education coupled with little turnover lead me to believe that the next superintendent will have similar attributes to the current. However, circumstances may direct that into a different manner. Biggest attributes are calmness and understanding the community you work in.”

“I believe if the board configuration remains stable in their common focus they will be looking for someone to continue the path toward excellence in achievement and fiscal responsibility. My strengths are in goal setting, data based decision making, developing positive relationships, communication skills, and community outreach.”

“That answer would depend upon who you would ask as different constituent groups would certainly have different answers to that question, based on their own vision, with specific knowledge in the areas of finance, law, communication, union focus would be on strong leadership qualities and good communication and interpersonal skills

Research Question 3- How important is succession planning to the organization during leadership transition? To answer research question 3, three questions were asked of the research participants.

Question 1

How important is leadership succession planning to the success (student achievement) of your students?

Over three-fourths (77%) of the respondents classified succession planning for the superintendent position as “important” for success (student achievement) of students. The respondents indicated that continuity and stability of programming was crucial for student achievement. There was a concern over the change of direction in midstream effecting teachers and students. Conversely, one superintendent indicated the importance of allowing a fresh and new perspective to dictate a direction helps to reduce complacency and stagnation within the district.

The following are excerpts from interviews with superintendents and board presidents in determining how important is leadership succession planning to the success (student achievement) of your students?

“It's everything. That's were in the business of doing. Direction, policies, procedures all impacts the direction and philosophy of the district.”

“Vitaly important programs implemented over the last several years are having a positive impact on student achievement and would be detrimental to go off course.”

“Incredibly important. Understanding the faculty, student programs that already exist, especially when you transition from a principal position to the superintendency.”

“This succession process established that the educational programs, data driven decision making, curriculum mapping would be the focal point thus keeping our programs and continuity in place.”

“Leadership succession is crucial for stability. Board leadership and support is important during the succession process. The school district intertwines role of superintendent and principal particularly with curriculum development.”

“In a small school is not easy because of the candidate pool of potential systems leaders. School can function better and run easier when you have someone in the culture. A superintendent from the outside will spend a great deal of time learning the school process.”

“Absolutely important. It maintains the instructional gains and integrity of programming. All administrators are in sync with current structure and knowledgeable of leadership style of one another.”

“Critically important as leadership at the top sets the tone of the district and it ricochets down the line. Continuity of strong building leadership as important as the superintendent is more symbolic by setting the tone and vision of the district, but not implementing programming.”

Question 2

How important is leadership succession to the financial stability of your district?

The importance of succession planning to the financial stability of the district was not as definitive as student achievement. Two of the respondents indicated that it was “not as important” and “less than” student achievement. Five of the respondents believed it was critical or essential to the financial stability of the district, with the remaining respondents identifying the business department as the element that is critical to the financial stability of the district.

The following are excerpts from interviews with superintendents and board presidents in determining how important leadership succession is to the financial stability of your district

“Financial aspect is becoming more complicated and it's prudent to develop short term and long term budget goals for the district and adhere to them as much as possible.”

“Excellent business department. This would be the challenge for the new superintendent as special interest as to who would influence the budget. Financial stability was more predicated on understanding programs and why they exist.”

“Less than student achievement. Financial planning primarily takes places in the business department. In small schools understanding and executing

individual roles is vital to the success of the district. Our positions take on multiple tasks.”

“The advantage of an in-house candidate is that they’re familiar with the budgeting process, which looks at staffing and programs, as well as having a deep understanding of the historical trend of budget success/failure. They also understand the tax growth and tax base of the district.”

“Leadership succession is extremely important to the financial stability of a district as school finance is a consistently changing and fluctuating area of responsibility for the Chief School Officer and one of the main focuses of leadership transition.”

Question 3

Is there on-going communication between the superintendent and the board of education in regards to leadership succession planning? What type of communication?

Interviews revealed that nearly 2/3 (64%) of respondents had informal discussion or no communication between superintendents and school board members. The remaining 1/3 (35%) identified more formal communication methods undertaken by the district which included: frequent on-going updates in executive session, the interim superintendent communicating with the board about a potential candidate, and yearly evaluations on the status and capabilities of the potential successor. However, there was no formal communication between the board of education and a potential successor.

Research Question 4- What are the benefits and liabilities of succession planning? To answer research question 4, ten questions were asked of the research participants.

Question 1

Will a search consultant be used for the next superintendent search? Will it be a BOCES District Superintendent, outside consultant, or present superintendent?

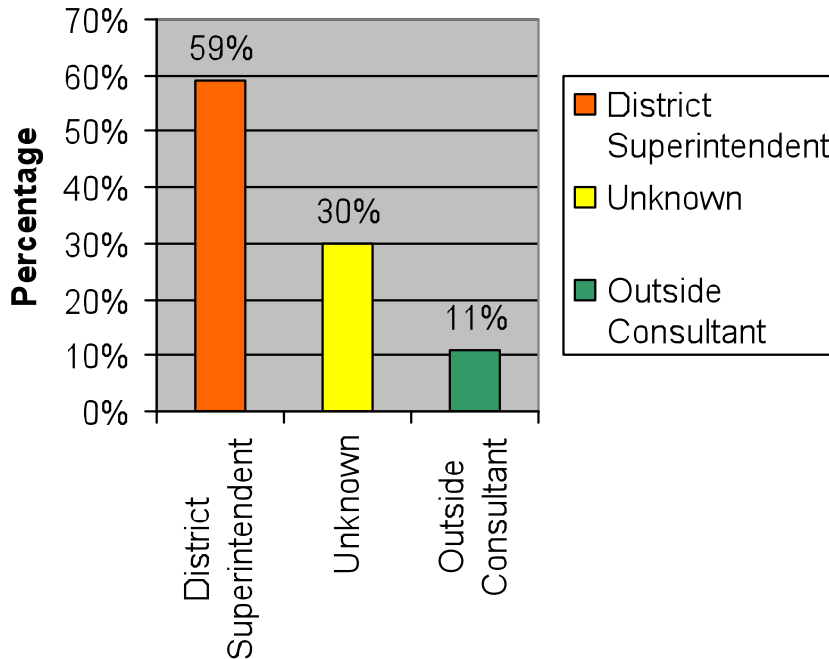


Figure 6. Expectation of next superintendent search coordinator-percentage of superintendents and board members

Eleven percent of the population, which is 2 respondents, who identified an outside consultant have a long history of using an outside consultant or have recommended to their board that they use an outside consultant. The WSWHE BOCES region is a region that historically relies on the District Superintendent to perform searches. It is not surprising that 59% of the respondents indicated that the District Superintendent would lead the next superintendent search. However, there were many respondents who referenced the make-up of the board as a determining factor and also

whether or not an internal candidate would surface and if so, a search consultant would be not used at all. Hence, the 30% unknown response.

Question 2

What role will the search consultant play in the process? (see appendix B)

Question 3

Do you believe a search consultant has an effect on the search process? If so, in what specific areas?

The data for question 2 and 3 is indicated in Appendix B. Question 2 responses are under the role column, and the answers to question 3 are located under effect. Please note under effect, negative and positive responses are indicated in accordance by the interviewee's perception. The results were not consistent from the research participant, even for those who were exposed to the same search consultant. Individual experiences had an effect on their responses and it was evident that the better the experience the more positive the response and vice versa.

Question 4

What do you perceive to be the benefits of succession planning?

Almost half (47%) of respondents identified “consistency” and “continuity” as the primary benefits of succession planning. An additional 35% believed the main benefit was seamless transition and stability during change of leadership. An internal candidate had a familiarity with the district and board of education.

The following are excerpts from interviews with superintendents and board presidents on their perceived benefits of succession planning.

“The benefits are continuity of programming and stable leadership.”

“The board is responsible to the public to make a thoughtful decision on the next superintendent. Succession planning is a defense to that. The district has to identify the needs of the district, the vision, and identify and train someone to fill those needs.”

“You understand who you have, which reflects their good and bad points. You know what you're working with and comfortable. Great process for continuity.”

“The benefits are: knowledge of the individual, traits, and qualities. You also understand the level of productivity and personality which will give you a good sense of those traits carrying over to the superintendency.”

Question 5

What do you perceive to be the liabilities of succession planning?

There were two main issues identified as liabilities of succession planning. Almost one-quarter of the respondents felt that elevating an internal candidate may lead to stagnation in the school district. It would limit potential of innovation and continue the same direction and vision. Another 24% felt that you eliminate any chance of outside competition for the position and may miss the best candidate. Seventeen percent of the respondents didn't feel there were any liabilities of succession planning.

The following are excerpts from interviews with superintendents and board presidents on their perceived benefits of succession planning

“Blinding you from what you already know. You close out the opportunity to explore the interest level and qualifications of outside candidates.”

“The liability is that is could create stagnancy within the district over the course of time.”

“Elimination of potential candidates that may be exceptional.”

“Having a firm understanding of the internal candidate may shy you away from an external search which could lead to not getting the best person for the job, but getting the person you're most comfortable with.”

“The liabilities are that it may "hamstring" the board into a less desirable candidate. The formality of the structure eliminates potential candidates.”

Question 6

Define succession planning? Define replacement planning? The respondents reported their understanding of these terms as follows (see appendix C). I found that the definitions for each category were relatively consistent across superintendents and board members, especially succession planning. While responding to the question, almost every research participant expressed a clear cut difference in the two superintendent planning/replacement processes, with a preference to succession planning as more of a structured process and replacement as a reaction. As noted earlier, very few districts engage or are engaged in any sort of succession planning.

Question 7

Was the present situation a succession plan or replacement plan? The graph below provides data on superintendent and school board responses to the present situation being a succession plan, replacement plan, or other. Note that “Other” means transition planning or unsure.

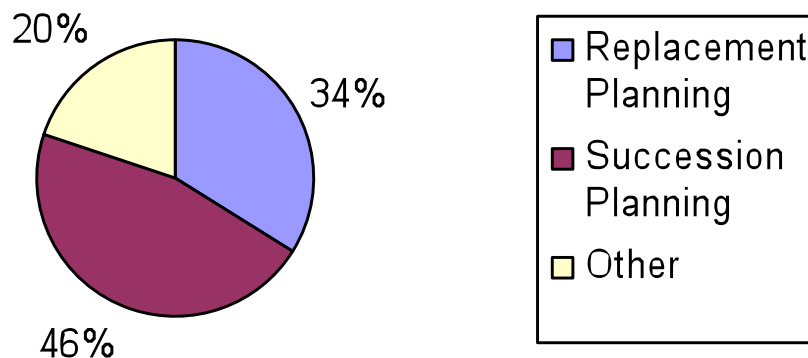


Figure 7. Current situation succession planning vs. replacement planning—percentage of superintendent and board member.

Question 8- In the future, do you see district's more apt to utilize succession planning or replacement planning? The graph below provides data on superintendent and board president's responses to the question asking if districts are more apt to utilize succession planning or replacement planning. Note that "Unknown" means transition planning, unsure, or utilized a different method.

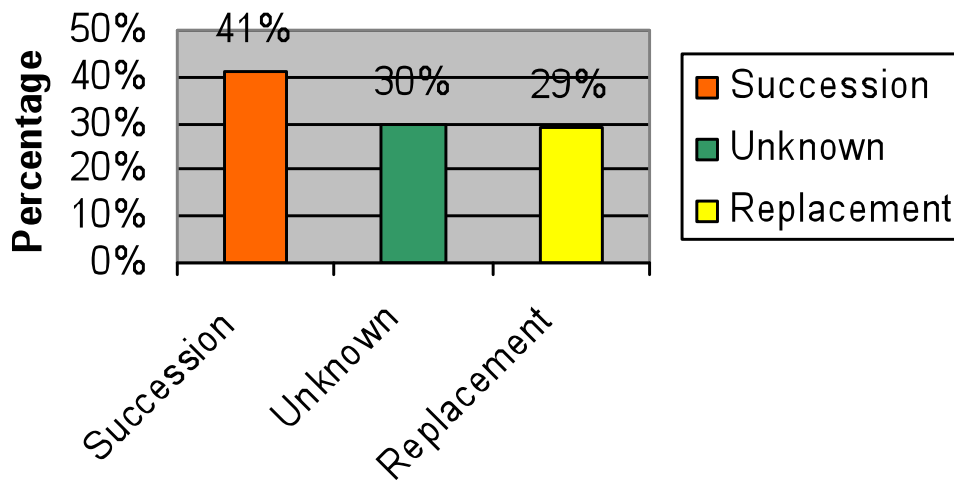


Figure 8- Future Superintendent Search-Succession planning or Replacement Planning

Question 9

Do you think succession planning is more utilized in urban, suburban, or rural districts?

Ten of the sixteen interviews responded to this question, with 3 choosing rural, 3 choosing suburban, 2 choosing larger or size of the district, one identifying district prerogative, and one determining that board-superintendent relationship is the key.

The following are excerpts from interviews with superintendents and board presidents who think succession planning is more utilized in urban, suburban, or rural districts?

“Rural environments because the size and comfort level of the district. The larger the school the more removed the existing superintendent is from students, faculty, and other administrators. In order to have a succession plan availability of the superintendent is important.”

“Suburban populous expects succession planning as to keep giving us the best education. Forces drive us to succession planning. Suburban does not have the same issues as rural and urban.”

“The size of the school doesn't matter it's dependent upon the board-superintendent relationship. The law of supply and demand takes effect with potential succession planning, the larger the district the more potential candidates. A rural may limit the number of potential successors.”

Question 10

Was the superintendency a position you desired prior to being approached?

Nine superintendents responded to the question with 5 indicating the superintendency was a position they desired, 3 were not interested prior to being approached, and 1 was considering it, but not committed in that direction.

Question 11

What experiences or opportunities were afforded to you in the succession planning process? This question was answered by 6 respondents who indicated their present position was garnered via a “succession plan” (see appendix D).

CHAPTER V

Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

The intent of this study was to discover the methods utilized in planning for leadership succession as it relates to school districts in the WSWHE BOCES geographic region. The focus of the research centered upon four central questions:

1. How prevalent is succession planning in the replacement of public school superintendents?
2. How common is superintendent turnover (superintendent leaving a school district for any reason)?
3. How important is succession planning to the organization during leadership transition?
4. What are the benefits and liabilities of succession planning?

This qualitative phenomenological research study used a survey to identify interview participants with superintendents and board presidents who have engaged in some form of succession planning who provided detail of the event. This first hand account provided valuable insight as to the thought process of board members and superintendents in the succession planning structure and activity. A qualitative methods approach was utilized in this research phase to determine similarities and differences in planned organizational leadership change. Qualitative research is defined by Creswell (2009) as a means for exploring and understanding the meaning of individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. The process of research involves emerging

questions and procedures, data analysis building from particulars to general themes, and making interpretations of the meaning of the data. Qualitative research allowed me to delve deeper into documentation and thought process of board members and current superintendents into succession planning. A qualitative research approach relies on personal experiences and solicits first hand accounts of those involved in a phenomenon.

Summary of Findings

1. How prevalent is succession planning to replace superintendents in public schools?

Survey results and follow-up methods, which included: phone conversations and interviews (face to face, e-mail, and via phone) revealed none of the school districts had a written formalized succession plan to replace the superintendent that was drafted and approved by the board of education. One district had an administrative hiring practice, which was board approved that details the procedure to replace administrators within the district. However, the focus was on shared decision making process not succession planning.

Since July 1, 2003 three school districts out of 31 in the WSWHE BOCES region engaged in an informal unwritten succession plan to replace the existing superintendent. In two of the situations, the principals were elevated to the superintendency without a search process. The other relied on an extensive internal search process. In all three cases the board of education was aware of the informal grooming and mentoring of the

perspective candidates, but did not engage the candidate in formal or official dialogue about potential accentuation until a vacancy was announced.

Currently, there are two school districts who are engaged in informal succession planning. In both cases, the initiative and informal activities were spearheaded by the current superintendent. One superintendent has shared their thoughts and opinions about the qualifications about potential successor candidates with the board of education during the annual evaluation period. In the other situation, the superintendent has not shared the informal succession plan with the board of education. A third school district indicated a potential grooming plan, the superintendent was working with a successor with full knowledge of the board president, but the individual left for a central administration position in a different district. The district is now left with an external open search process in the coming months.

There was less agreement about the importance of succession planning and in what type of districts it is best designed for. Ten superintendent and/or board members responded to this question with 3 choosing rural, 3 choosing suburban, 2 choosing larger or size of the district, one identifying district prerogative, and one determining that board-superintendent relationship is the key.

2. How common is superintendent turnover?

Between July 1, 2003 through June 30, 2008 there have been 59 superintendents in the WSWHE BOCES component school districts. Moving forward, the research has informed us that 65% of board of education believe there superintendent will be leaving

their respective districts and that 45% of superintendents identify that they will leave their current position within the next five years.

3. How important is succession planning to the organization during leadership transition?

Over three-fourths (77%) of the respondents classified succession planning for the superintendent position as “important” for success (student achievement) of students. The respondents indicated that continuity and stability of programming was crucial for student achievement. There was a concern over the change of direction in mid stream effecting teachers and students. Findings indicated that the school was more concerned about the change in leadership effecting change in programming and disrupt continuity of the district.

The importance of succession planning to the financial stability of the district was not as clear cut as student achievement as some felt it was important, others felt “not as important as student achievement,” and finally some felt the financial stability of the district was a direct result of a firm and competent business office.

The research also identified three types of planning to replace a superintendent position: Replacement planning, transition planning, and succession planning. Replacement planning is conducting a full external search to fill a superintendent vacancy within the district. Transition planning is hiring an internal or external candidate months before taking over and having the individual work with the current superintendent or interim superintendent whatever the case maybe.

4. What are the benefits and liabilities of succession planning?

Almost half (47%) of respondents identified “consistency” and “continuity” as the primary benefits of succession planning. Another 35% believed the main benefit was seamless transition and stability during change of leadership. An internal candidate had a familiarity with the district and board of education.

Eleven out of 29 superintendents (38%) strongly agreed on their surveys for succession planning for the next superintendent is important, in addition 6 out of 20 board presidents (30%) gave the same rating.

There was also relative consistency with superintendents and school boards in devaluing the importance of succession planning. As 25% of school boards and 24% of school superintendents answered 2 or lower on their survey, thus generally disagreeing with the succession planning or indicating that the superintendent was fairly new to the system.

Conclusions

1- Even though leadership succession planning is taking place in an informal manner with three school districts, the WSWHE BOCES region validates the work of Rhodes and Brundrett which stress “little information concerning leadership succession planning within educational organizations is presently available...”(p. 271).

2- Barker (2006) pointed out that a “leader’s life cycle, departure and replacement influence the conditions for improvement” (p.289). The research established that succession planning was a valuable asset for school districts. However, there was little

consensus from superintendents and board presidents on who is responsible for the development and execution of a succession plan in school districts. 77% of the respondents classified succession planning for the superintendent position as “important” for success (student achievement) of students. Almost half of the respondents indicated that continuity and consistency were the main benefits of succession planning. Moreover, 38% of superintendents and 30% of board members felt that succession planning was important for replacing the next superintendent. However, almost a quarter of superintendents and board members disagreed that succession planning for the next superintendent was important. Hall (2008) maintains that “schools and districts that do not adopt formal succession planning processes and structures expose themselves to external change agents who could dismantle current practice” (p.34).

3- Leibman et al (1996) concluded that “succession management” allows leadership to create a cohesive process that is consistent with the strategic goals and vision of the company. Almost half (47%) of respondents identified “consistency” and “continuity” as the primary benefits of succession planning. Another 35% believed the main benefit was seamless transition and stability during change of leadership. An internal candidate had a familiarity with the district and board of education. Greengrad (2001) cautions many organizations about the chaos that could happen if a succession plan is not in place and provides practical applications as a start up point.

Superintendents alone played an integral role in administrator leadership development and selection of a potential replacement. This coupled with a lack of

communication between the board of education and superintendent on succession planning and potential grooming is not conducive to formalized succession planning.

4- Carnazza (1982) did a study of fifteen companies that centered on succession/replacement planning. The study revealed that the larger the organization the more likely it is have a succession plan. Moreover, companies report that the support of the present CEO is the most important factor in the success or failure of the transition. He found that companies tended to use one of the following four strategies in selecting a successor:

- a. Crown prince- identify and mold a single heir;
- b. Slate- choosing a small number of qualified candidates;
- c. Pool- develop a large number of managers who can perform multiple tasks;
- d. Wave- blending (1) and (2) by picking a successor from a small number of qualified individuals. There are advantages and disadvantages ingrained in any of these options; the key is for a company to institute the best procedure/method for their existing beliefs and practices.

In the district's that identified succession planning, the "crown prince" approach as defined by Carnazza was utilized. The district's did not utilize the slate, pool, or wave, approaches which could take more time, effort, and planning by the institutions.

Ram Charan (2005) has been advising CEO's and boards of directors for three decades concludes that in order to find an executive who will serve for an extended period of time and serve well, companies must do the following: (1) have a deep pool of

internal candidates in a leadership development process; (2) create then continually augment a succession plan; (3) if considering outside candidates, lead recruiters rather than being led by them.

5- Succession planning is not always an ideal method of replacing a superintendent. The research found that there are three key factors in determining if succession planning is appropriate for the existing school:

- a. Current Superintendent and board of education relationship.
- b. State of the organization (healthy culture).
- c. Potential successor pool (ability and initiative of individual(s)).

6- The research also identified three types of planning to replace a superintendent position: Replacement planning, transition planning, and succession planning.

Replacement planning is conducting a full external search to fill a superintendent vacancy within the district. Transition planning is hiring an internal or external candidate months before taking over and having the individual work with the current superintendent or interim superintendent whatever the case maybe. Succession planning as defined by Garman and Glawe (2004) is a “structured process involving the identification and preparation of a potential successor to assume a new role” (p. 120).

Recommendations

The information gathered was used to offer insightful recommendations to the following groups on superintendent succession planning:

- a. New York State Council of School Superintendents
- b. New York State School Boards Association

- c. American Association of School Administrators
- d. Colleges and Universities with administrative preparation programs

1. Succession planning cannot be addressed in public schools unless we define what succession planning is. The research also identified three types of planning to replace a superintendent position: Replacement planning, transition planning, and succession planning. Replacement planning is conducting a full external search to fill a superintendent vacancy within the district. Transition planning is hiring an internal or external candidate months before taking over and having the individual work with the current superintendent or interim superintendent whatever the case may be. Formal succession planning as defined by Garman and Glawe (2004) “as a structured process involving the identification and preparation of a potential successor to assume a new role” (p.120).

2. In order to help deal with the high percentage rate of superintendent turnover, individual school districts should develop comprehensive written succession plans. This would include a pool of candidate(s), activities that would coincide with central administration functions, formal mentoring by the superintendent, community awareness, expanded responsibilities, and increased training via the New York State Council of School Superintendents, American Association of School Administrators, and New York State School Board’s Association.

3. There needs to be formal on-going communication and commitment from the board of education and present superintendent to the mentoring/grooming process. The number one factor in successful succession planning is that the superintendent and board of education understand the program design, structure, time line, and are consistently supportive of the process.

4. When hiring potential building level administrators, district officials should be cognizant of the professional aspirations and level of commitment to the district by prospective candidates. In two of the informal succession plans, the district hired building level principals that held the attributes they were looking for in a potential superintendent. Continuity of leadership was an important factor in student achievement for most districts.

5. In other job sectors, primarily private industry, the CEO plays an integral part of the succession plan. The CEO and Board develop a strategic succession plan which fosters open communication between the current CEO and board, Moreover; this plan is well recognized by employees and the general structure. This method is rarely used in the educational field. It would be beneficial to the entire organization from the standpoint of continuity of leadership and inevitably student achievement for public schools to initiate the same type of process. A process that relies on the current superintendent with the full understanding and blessing of the board to help work with a potential successor(s) and making the process as transparent as possible.

Further Study

More comprehensive study could be done on the implications of succession planning on gender and race. This study raises questions about potential gender bias in that only one female candidate was promoted from within to the superintendent position, while nine males were appointed. A formal process of succession planning may only compound the issue as a larger percentage of administrators in the region are males. This level of disparity suggests that further study is needed. Are there fewer female administrators interested in the superintendency or is some form of gender bias operating in the informal succession processes.

More research should be devoted to succession planning and its responsibility to grow future leaders. The state inevitably has legislative oversight of school districts, but are local school boards responsible for grooming our next generation of leaders. Is there a responsibility to schools across the state to have succession plans in place, even if it means the district is grooming someone for another district? Does a district have a long history of succession planning and is it widely accepted. What makes the circumstances right for succession planning for individual districts? The research clearly shows that succession planning is important for student achievement, but does not allow the researcher to conclude why aren't districts engaged in succession planning? Moreover, the study population could be expanded to the entire state of New York.

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APPENDICIES

Appendix A

WSWHE BOCES Superintendent Succession Planning Survey

A local school board has options concerning succession plans to face the eventual task of replacing its Superintendent. Please complete the survey by circling the response that best reflects your knowledge or opinion:

- | | | | | | |
|--|---------------------------|--------------|--------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. My district has a written succession plan in place. | 1
Strongly
Disagree | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5
Strongly
Agree |
| 2. My district has an unwritten plan in place. | 1
Strongly
Disagree | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5
Strongly
Agree |
| 3. Succession planning for the next superintendent is important for your board of education. | 1
Strongly
Disagree | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5
Strongly
Agree |
| 4. About how long do you expect your superintendent to serve in the present position? | Less
than 2
years | 3-5
years | 6-9
years | 10 or
more
years | Unsure |
| 5. Is an internal administrator being groomed to take over as superintendent? | Yes | Unsure | No | | |
| 6. Was the present Superintendent promoted from within? | Yes | No | | | |

Name: _____

District:

Thank you for your time and opinions. Please place your completed survey in the pre-addressed envelope and mail today. No postage needed. Your response will be kept confidential by the researcher.

Appendix B
Superintendent Search Consultant Role and Effect(s)

Direction/Guidance in the search process	(-) The search consultant will put in front of the board who he and she want to put in front of the board.
Provide a list of candidates	(+) Trust level by the board that the District Superintendent will assist and recommend candidates for board review and give parameters with salary and benefits.
Facilitating the board to develop characteristics/attributes of the next superintendent	(-) Effect on the process in that I would be worried that the board would lose their own thoughts as the consultant could tell us what we need to look for instead of helping lead us to our own outcome.
Advertising	(+) The BOCES District Superintendent understand the process and establishes with the board the characteristics of the incoming superintendent and the type of leader who may fit that position
Process Applications	(-) Eliminating applications based on qualifications, essentially eliminating people before we have an opportunity to review.
Background Check	(-) The search consultant has an opportunity to influence the board on personal connections with prospective candidates which takes place knowingly or unknowingly which sometimes leads the district not getting the best person for the job.
Certification and other credential checking	(-) The consultant is running the process so naturally affect the outcome. He dictates the pool of candidates, can make the board lean to certain individuals. The board is vulnerable to the consultant for suggestions, former superintendent becomes lame duck.
Organize community segment and focus forums, etc.	(+) Depending on whom it is, yes, as they are the first line of recruitment. The consultant can be instrumental in locating individuals and confirming their interest in the position.
Set up interviews	(+) The search consultant would act as a facilitator and someone who knows of interested candidates.

Narrow field from initial candidate pool for the board of education	(-) Not always positive may have a stable of candidates.
	(+) Very minimal. The search consultant helps the board reflect on characteristics of the next superintendent and uses that as a guiding force.

Appendix C

Succession Planning	Replacement Planning
Succession planning is looking internal and developing potential candidates over a period of time.	Replacement planning is filling a position, not a structured planning process.
Succession planning (long term) is grooming a person to take a particular role.	Replacement planning (short term) is a spur of the moment need; it is essentially putting someone in a position.
Succession planning means that you have a plan in place (written or unwritten) and identified a person to fulfill a position based on your goals and objectives	Replacement planning is the selection process among several candidates.
Is a long term planned event to replace a person with someone from within.	Just filling a slot, the superintendent does this for this amount of money.
Succession is a concerted effort to get someone long term in the district to provide stability through a controlled process.	Absent of a plan, a reactionary decision.
Succession planning understands the structure, vision, function, and what you want in the next superintendent and then finding someone that fits those ideals.	Replacement planning is doing a search to get a person to fill a vacancy.
Is a thorough process for training someone for the characteristics of the position.	Replacement planning is hoping that the person you pick does a good job.
You are training someone around an established set of district goals and culture to take over a position.	Finding an applicant who fits the mold sets forth by the BOE.
Succession is having a person identified for the position.	Fill the position by a candidate to lead the district.

Appendix D

Job Shadowing	In-House Role	Outside Responsibilities	Expanded Role	Other	Type of Plan Identified
None	None	None	None	None	Replacement
I had time to meet with the outgoing Superintendent and spend time with him reviewing and going over pertinent information vital to the Superintendency.		I attended a few conferences the first year. It was more trial by fire.	During the transition between HS Principal to Superintendent position. I had to find an interim Principal.	I was given a mentor the first year to help assist with the transition.	Replacement
Daily schedule was developed to meet with Superintendent to go over meeting schedule and daily activities.	I was an active participant during contract negotiations when I was principal.	I went to administrative workshops provided by NYSCOSS and BOCES, I was afforded the opportunity to finish my SDA certification.	I assumed district level responsibilities like the EETT Grant and its oversight and implementation. Building project planning was also a key element.	I was able to attend monthly superintendent meetings and develop a rapport and contacts with other superintendents.	Succession
I was privy to the board operation, had many conversations during the official transition from February to June about things to be aware of.	When the superintendent was away, I had the total responsibility for the operation of the district, including calling snow days.	I attended the Superintendent development programs sponsored by NYSCOSS.	I had a budget oversight and instructional oversight for several years.	Community connections were provided and I had a strong network in the community for the six previous years. I did many PTA/community meetings about the budget.	Succession
Worked side by side with the superintendent for a long period of time. I was involved in all district initiatives except for contract negotiations.		I had to complete my SDA Certification. I also attended the Superintendent's development program offered by SUNY Oswego.	I was involved in the budget process (development and marketing).	The nature and small size of our district allowed me the opportunity to have a firm grasp of all district operations over the years.	Succession

<p>I had release time to work with the superintendent over a five month period. We had weekly scheduling meetings to determine the type of work.</p>		<p>I was afforded the opportunity to attend many conferences, i.e. capital projects, legal updates, board and superintendent relationship.</p>	<p>I was involved in the budget development process, goal setting for the next school year, working with the administrative cabinet.</p>		<p>Replacement</p>
<p>I was appointed interim superintendent in the middle of the year and "learned on the fly."</p>				<p>I utilized other superintendent to serve as mentors and to run things by. I worked a few days with other superintendents to help understand nuances of the position. I leaned on the BOCES District Superintendent for advice and guidance.</p>	<p>Replacement</p>
<p>I worked collaboratively with the interim superintendent for three months on all aspects of the superintendence including: management, contractual issues, budgeting, etc.</p>		<p>The board was supportive of my involvement in numerous professional development activities which included: NYSCOSS new superintendent training,</p>		<p>The board was supportive of my involvement in numerous professional development activities which included: negotiations training, new superintendent orientation and board work sessions on role of superintendent and board of education.</p>	<p>Succession</p>
	<p>In May, prior to taking over on July 1st, I took on the responsibility of the Superintendent three days a week and the district hired an interim two days a week.</p>				<p>Replacement</p>

			The candidates have led the district wide shared decision making plan, help to oversee building project, special education programs, curriculum, and budgeting hiring.		Grooming
Involvement in the budget process.	Is responsible for the district when I'm away.	I am encouraging the person to attend the superintendent's development program through SUNY Oswego.	Is involved in central administration responsibilities that he is interested in.		Grooming
		Principal enrolled in Superintendent's Academy Program through Oswego University and went to aspiring Superintendent workshops put on by NYSCOSS.			Grooming