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PERCEPTIONS OF MICHIGAN SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS REGARDING
THE ADMINISTRATIVE OPERATION AND ACTIVITIES OF THE MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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PERCEPTIONS OF MICHIGAN SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

REGARDING THE ADMINISTRATIVE OPERATION AND

ACTIVITIES OF THE MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT

OF EDUCATION

By

Gordon Wayne VanWieren

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of Education Administration

1979

ABSTRACT

PERCEPTIONS OF MICHIGAN SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS
REGARDING THE ADMINISTRATIVE OPERATION AND
ACTIVITIES OF THE MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT
OF EDUCATION

By

Gordon Wayne VanWieren

With the advent of additional mandated programs in the past few years, local school administrators seemed to be changing their attitude toward the Michigan Department of Education. Along with this apparent change in attitude, Michigan Department of Education activities often seemed to be questioned by local administrators. This study was an attempt to measure the attitudes of Michigan public school administrators toward the Michigan Department of Education and to determine the importance and amount of emphasis given to various activities of the Michigan Department of Education. Also, the amount of emphasis administrators feel the Michigan Department of Education places of these activities was measured. Both the attitudes and activities were classified by administrative position, school size, and geographical location.

A questionnaire was mailed to 303 administrators in public K-12 school systems in the state of Michigan. The questionnaire included demographic questions, an attitude scale, a list of present

and possible Michigan Department of Education activities, and two questions asking for answers in writing; an 84.8% return was gained.

The major findings indicated that administrators are most influenced in a positive manner most by having personal contact with Michigan Department of Education personnel and the strongest influence for a statistical negative attitude comes from listening to Michigan Department of Education speakers. Findings also indicated that attitudes of administrators toward the Michigan Department of Education did not vary significantly by administrative position, school size, or geographical location. However, the grand means of all groups indicated negative attitudes toward the Michigan Department of Education. Administrators in small schools and in the upper peninsula are the most negative toward Michigan Department of Education activities. Administrators feel that the Michigan Department of Education should provide services specifically designed to assist small school districts, cut red tape and paperwork, reduce staff, make more personal contacts with local administration, and adequately fund mandated programs.

In the final recommendations, the Michigan Department of Education was urged to make every reasonable attempt to make more personal contact with local administrators. One possibility mentioned was to have the decision makers of each service area dealing with K-12 schools hold mini-sessions throughout the state. This would allow local administrators to better understand MDE activities and would also allow them to have more input to the Michigan

Department of Education. It was also recommended that the Michigan Department of Education make every attempt to eliminate duplication of required information by making necessary internal corrections. In addition it was recommended that the Michigan Department of Education have representatives meet with administrators by school size occasionally; invite administrators to evaluate Michigan Department of Education activities; visit administrators to gain an appreciation of how much time is spent completing Michigan Department of Education forms; stay within the intent of the Headlee Amendment by not mandating additional programs; continue certain programs which are considered successful by administrators; and fund an in-depth study by an outside independent agency to expand on this study.

Dedicated to

Jean

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to determine the attitudes of
K-12 public school administrators toward the Michigan Department of
Education (MDE). Also, the study will evaluate the importance of
and the present amount of emphasis placed on certain activities by
the Michigan Department of Education.

Background

In order to understand the present role and status of the
Michigan Department of Education, the following background is
presented.

By omitting any wording regarding education in the United
States Constitution, the founding fathers delegated the responsi-
bility for education to the individual states.

> Education has, by default, been a responsibility of the states
> since the founding of our nation. After deliberating the
> appropriate roles of the levels of government in our federal
> system, the delegates to the Constitutional Convention, in
> their wisdom, left the maintenance of education to the states.
> This was accomplished by simply omitting specific mention of
> education in the final draft of the Constitution of 1787.
> This delegation of responsibility to the states became some-
> what more specific in 1791 with Article X of the Bill of
> Rights, which holds that "powers not delegated to the United

States by the Constitution nor prohibited by it to the
States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to
the people."[1]

The interpretation as to what their role might be in accept-
ing the responsibility for education varied from state to state, but
generally it was recognized to be rather insignificant. The finan-
cial burden, for the most part, was passed on to the local community
while the individual states retained a limited amount of regulatory
power.

Until the early 1800s the task of educating people in the
United States was rather simplistic, and, consequently, the role
originally assumed for carrying out this task by both the state and
local communities seemed to be quite proper. At that point in time,
however, the situation changed, and states began to recognize the
need for constitutional and legislative provisions regarding educa-
tion. Wirt and Kirst state, "By 1820, thirteen of the twenty states
had developed constitutional provisions for education. The position
of chief state school officer . . . had emerged in some states in
1836, and by 1870 most states provided for them; the state boards
of education appeared about the same time."[2]

The state of Michigan accepted its responsibility for educa-
tion by stating in the Constitution of 1835, "The Legislature shall

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[1]Mike M. Milstein, Impact and Response (Library of Congress
Cataloging in Publication Data) (Columbia University: Teachers
College, 1976), p. 3.

[2]Frederick M. Wirt and Michael W. Kirst, "The Policital
Web of American Schools: A Theoretical Perspective," paper read at
the American Political Science Association Annual Meeting, 1972.

encourage by all suitable means 'the promotion of intellectual,
scientific, and agricultural improvement,' and the proceeds of all
lands granted or to be granted shall be 'inviolably' appropriated
to the support of schools throughout the state."[3]

Many departments of education were established in the
nineteenth century, but it seems very few were given serious con-
sideration by the governors or the legislators.

> Even in those states where state education superintendents
> existed, long-range planning suffered because these men
> frequently had to hold a second position to earn an adequate
> living. Furthermore, they had to spend the vast majority
> of their time at activities such as direct supervision of
> teachers, which minimized their opportunities to play a
> leadership role in education.[4]

As was the case with most of the states, the Michigan Depart-
ment of Education began on a small scale with very few responsibil-
ities. The responsibilities were primarily with rural schools.
Prior to the turn of the century, state school systems enrolled in
elementary schools less than 70% of the youth who were of the appro-
priate age[5] and less than 10% of those in age 14 through 17 in high
schools.[6] In this day and age it is expected that all young people
will attend school both at the elementary and secondary levels.

Federal aid to education has been with us for almost two
hundred years, but only in the past two decades has it had a

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[3]Article X, Section 2 of the original (1835) Constitution of
the State of Michigan.

[4]Milstein, p. 5.

[5]Encyclopedia of Educational Research, 3rd ed., 1950, p. 442.

[6]Ibid., p. 1273.

significant effect upon state departments of education. The Survey Ordinance of 1785 was passed by Congress under the Articles of Confederation, prior to the enactment of the Constitution. The purpose of the Ordinance was to reserve lot number sixteen of each township for the maintenance of schools. Federal aid to schools continued with the Morrill Act of 1862, the Smith-Hughes Act of 1917 and numerous programs established during the 1930s as a result of the depression. During World War Two, federal legislation was passed to support schools affected by increased enrollment due to nearby military bases. Following the war federal funds were made available for veterans' education. These programs, important as they were, for the most part did not significantly affect the state departments of education.

In 1958, as a reaction to the Soviet Union's Space Program, the National Defense Education Act was passed by the U.S. Congress. This act was followed by the Vocational Education Act (1963), the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (1965), and the Education Professions Development Act (1968).

The development of long-term, specific federal programs for education in the past two decades has been a dramatic change from the short-term, general programs which had been in existence for almost two centuries in the United States.

In the process of making this dramatic change in funding programs, the federal government has relied upon the state departments of education to assume the responsibility of ascertaining that funds would be expended properly and efficiently. Consequently,

the SED's have found it necessary to make adjustments in personnel and budgets to meet this new responsibility.

Federal resources seem to have been the one single contributing factor which has allowed or required increases in staffing the SDE's. California is a typical example. The California SEA, which received 35% of its total operating funds from the federal government in 1970 (about 5% below the national average), drew special attention from the state's legislative analyst, who reported to the state legislature that in 1962 there were only 93 federally funded positions in the department but by 1968 this number had grown to 454 (representing an increase of almost 400%). During this same period positions supported by state dollars increased from 575 to 669 (representing an increase of only about 16%).[7]

The Michigan Department of Education has been affected similarly in the past decade. In the past ten years the budget of the MDE has increased from $95,656,600 to $354,265,000, an increase of $258,608,400 or 270%. The number of staff members has grown from 1,537 in 1968 to 2,586 in 1978, an increase of 1049 staff members for a percentage increase of 68%.[8]

Federal funding seems to have placed SDE's in a new role of increasing importance. Starting from a humble beginning, it appears

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[7]Analysis of the Budget Bill: 1970-71 Report of the Legislative Analyst (Sacramento: California Legislature, 1969), p. 234.

[8]Information received via telephone from State Representative Ralph Ostling's office and from a MDE report made on 2-14-79 (no title).

the MDE has grown to be a recognized force in the educational process of all citizens of the state.

Although the state of Michigan has had a state board of education since 1850, the power and duties of the board were quite limited until 1963, when the new state constitution was adopted. The present Michigan Constitution vests certain powers and duties in the state board of education. Included in these powers is "Appointment of a Superintendent of Public Instruction to be responsible for the execution of the state board policies."[9]

The executive organization act of 1965 established a Michigan Department of Education headed by the State Board of Education through which the State Board would exercise its constitutional duties of leadership and general supervision over public instruction.

The Michigan Department of Education is the administrative arm of the State Board of Education and accordingly is responsible for federal and state mandates affecting the education of all Michigan citizens. The state department of education has been assigned the task of coordinating and administering special education, vocational education and many other programs. In so doing, it has been necessary for the state department of education to develop guidelines, construct forms, hold workshops and produce publications for local K-12 administrators.

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[9]Constitution of the State of Michigan of 1963, Article VIII, Section 3.

Statement of the Problem

With the implementing of various new MDE programs over the past several years, local K-12 administrators seem to have changed their attitude toward state departments of education and have, in fact, questioned the effectiveness and the importance of the various activities carried out by the Michigan Department of Education.

In brief, this study attempted to (1) determine the attitudes of the local public K-12 administrators toward the Michigan Depart- of Education; (2) determine how the administrators rate the impor- tance of various activities carried out by the Michigan Department of Education; and (3) determine the emphasis the Michigan Department of Education has placed upon these various activities as seen by the administrators; and (4) to make the resultant empirical data available to the Michigan Department of Education.

Need for the Study

It is the author's perception that educational intervention by the state of Michigan has been much more frequent in the past ten years as compared to the previous twenty years. Dr. Porter commented on the situation in a speech to the Michigan Association of School Administrators on January 24, 1979, when he said:

> I have given some thought and reflection to the past 10 years, and an historian of Michigan education may well label the period 1969 to 1979 the "decade of state educational inter- vention." If we look at the 20 years 1949 to 1969 we note that there were only 4 major state educational interventions. First, Act 300 of the Public Acts of 1949 establishing driver education; second, Act 100 of the Public Acts of 1954 estab- lishing the fourth Friday count date and a constitutional amendment setting aside two cents of every three cents for

schools; third, a new constitution in 1963 establishing a
state board of education to superintend elementary and
secondary schools; and fourth, Act 379 of the Public Acts
of 1965 establishing the right of teachers to bargain col-
lectively. In a 20-year period, the state acted in only
four instances to alter the local decision-making process.

During the past 10 years, the state has intervened in more
than 20 different instances to alter the local decision-
making process. In the first 20 years, the state intervened
at the rate of once every five years. In the past 10 years
the state has intervened on the average of twice every year.
I did not include in this review non-binding decisions, such
as state guidelines, or state board policy statements of the
past 10 years, which number an additional 30 state educa-
tional interventions.[10]

The above mentioned intervention by the state of Michigan

in local education decision-making has led local administrators to

express themselves in a negative manner regarding the MDE. Dr.

Porter was keenly aware of the administrators' feeling. He com-

mented: "Even though some of you as local school officials have not

taken kindly to some of these interventions, I believe they have

positioned the nation for a major breakthrough in delivering public

education, and the past 10 years of developments in Michigan will be

recognized as the Genesis of that breakthrough."[11]

It would appear that if the SDE is to assume an effective

leadership role, it must have the support of local administrators.

The attitude of the local administrators toward the MDE becomes an

important factor in how supportive the local administrators will be

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[10]Remarks by John W. Porter, State Superintendent of MDE to
MASA, Grand Rapids, Michigan, January 24, 1979.

[11]Ibid.

of the MDE. Thus, it becomes imperative that the leadership of the MDE recognize the attitudes of local administrators.

Because of a lack of past studies in this area, it is not possible to conduct a study of attitudes of local administrators toward the MDE for the purpose of making comparisons with past attitudes. However, if these attitudes and the evaluation of the activities carried out by the MDE are not determined at some point in time, the possibility of making comparisons from different points in time and under different circumstances will not exist.

In a very subjective appraisal on the author's part, it seems that in the past several years local administrators have changed their statements from "Why doesn't the MDE do something about it?" to "Why does the MDE have to be involved in this? With empirical evidence regarding the attitudes of local administrators and how they see the department activities, it will be possible in the future to make a comparison.

Various factors such as the Headlee Tax Limitation Bill, reorganization within the MDE, and an anticipated change in the position of Superintendent of Public Instruction could change both the attitudes of local school administrators toward the MDE and how they perceive MDE activities.

Hypotheses

Having served as a school administrator in various size systems and in different geographical areas in the state of Michigan, the author has in a subjective manner observed a range of attitudes

on the part of school administrators toward the MDE. These atti-
tudes seem to vary by administrative position and the size of school
system in which the administrator serves and by the geographical
area in which the school system is located. These factors may
also affect how administrators perceive the importance and amount
of emphasis given to various activities by the MDE. For this reason
the hypotheses of this study, briefly stated, are: Attitudes of
local school administrators toward the SDE vary according to admin-
istrative position, the size of the school system in which they
serve as well as the geographical area in the state of Michigan in
which their school is located. In addition, the way that adminis-
trators perceive the importance and the amount of emphasis placed
on these activities varies depending upon the same factors (admin-
istrative position, size of school and geographical location).

Objectives of the Study

The major objectives of the study were: (1) to determine
the attitudes of local public K-12 school administrators toward the
MDE; (2) to determine the importance and amount of emphasis given
to the various activities of the MDE as seen by the local K-12
public school administrators; (3) to present the MDE with the data
in order for MDE personnel to understand how the MDE is perceived
by the local administrators; and (4) to make recommendations to the
MDE if there seems to be a need for improvement in the various
operations of MDE.

Assumptions

The major assumptions of the study were: (1) that the MDE had a desire and need for the data offered as a result of this research; (2) that the MDE would utilize data from the study to improve the effectiveness of their activities; (3) that a sample survey utilizing a structured questionnaire to be answered by school administrators in local schools represented an appropriate means of gathering the needed data; and (4) that respondents make a conscientious effort to answer the questionnaire in a manner which would represent their honest feelings and opinions.

Limitations of the Study

The major limitation of the study was the limitation normally associated with the sample survey method of research. From time to time the MDE, as the administrative arm of the state board of education, implements mandated programs causing a certain amount of controversy. Consequently, local administrators may feel differently toward the MDE during a period of time when mandated programs are being implemented. For this reason, a time during which a controversial and/or emotional issue existed was intentionally avoided for sending out questionnaires to administrators. However, it is impossible to determine if the attitude of any administrator involved in this study has been affected by a then current negative or positive situation with the MDE. This factor

could be considered a limitation. Also, being fellow administrators the respondents may have been inclined to answer questions in a manner to give the author what they thought was desired. Another limitation was the dearth of other similar studies.

Overview

The Michigan Department of Education has been faced with numerous changes and challenges in the two decades following Sputnik and the inception of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Decisions made by federal and state legislatures, the United States and Michigan Supreme Courts, and the state board of education have caused the MDE to implement programs which have been received with mixed emotions by local school administrators.

In order to establish and/or maintain a desirable working relationship with local administrators, it would seem the MDE should understand the attitude of these administrators and also understand how the administrators perceive the activities carried out by the MDE. This study was made in an attempt to gather data which would assist the MDE in this regard and is offered in the chapters which follow.

Definition of Terms

Activity: A specific action, activity, project or program carried out by the MDE.

Administrator: A full-time employee with administrative duties in a Michigan K-12 public school.

Attitude: State of mind as reflected by local school administrators.

Geographic locations: Area 1 or L.P. -75 - an area in the lower peninsula of Michigan within 75 miles of Lansing; Area 2 or L.P. +75 - an area in the lower peninsula of Michigan and more than 75 miles from Lansing; Area 3 or U.P. - the Upper Peninsula of Michigan.

Other administrator: A group of full-time employees with administrative duties in a Michigan K-12 public school, but not serving as a superintendent or high school principal.

School system, local school or school district: A public K-12 grade school system in the state of Michigan.

MDE: Michigan Department of Education.

SDE: Departments of education other than the Michigan Department of Education.

Various categories: Administrative position, school size, and geographical area.

Chapter Overview

In Chapter II a review of literature will be presented. Chapter III consists of a description of the methods and procedures used in the study. In Chapter IV an analysis of the data is given and Chapter V consists of a summary, conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In this chapter the following will be presented:

1. A brief review of the background and development
   of the Michigan Department of Education.

2. Services of the Michigan Department of Education.

3. A review of related literature and studies.

Development of the Michigan Department
of Education

Constitutional mandates, statutes, and case law have
repeatedly and clearly held over many years that education is the
province and the responsibility of the state government.

The Michigan State Constitution of 1850 created Michigan's
first State Board of Education. A three-member, elected board was
provided for by the Constutition. The first board was elected with
the general election of 1852. Members were elected to six-year
terms and the terms staggered on a two-year basis. The Superin-
tendent of Public Instruction was made an ex officio member and
secretary of the board.

For the next 58 years only minor changes took place affect-
ing the State Board of Education. In 1908, however, Michigan
adopted its third State Constitution. The Constitution stated that:

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The State Board of Education shall consist of four members. On the first Monday in April, nineteen hundred nine, and at each succeeding biennial spring election there shall be elected one member of such board who shall hold his office for six years from the first day of July following his election. The state board of education shall have general supervision of the state normal college and the state normal schools, and the duties of said board shall be prescribed by law.[1]

The second and third State Constitutions (1850 and 1908) created State Boards of Education which were devoted primarily to the area of teacher education. Over a period of years attempts were made to broaden the scope of the State Board of Education by adding responsibilities, but met with very limited success until 1935. At that point in time the board was given the power "to prescribe courses of study, issue licenses and certificates, and grant diplomas and degrees in connection with several educational institutions of the state."[2]

On April 3, 1961, a Constitutional Convention referendum was passed by the voters in Michigan. The delegates met in Lansing from October 1961 to August 1962, and on April 1, 1963, the 1963 Michigan Constitution was ratified by a vote of 810,860 yes to 803,436 no.

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[1]Public Acts of the Legislature of the State of Michigan, passed at the regular session of 1909, compiled by Frederick C. Martindale, Sec. of State, Wynkiip Hallenbeck Crawford Co., State Printers, 1909, Art. Xi, Sec. 6.

[2]Public and Local Acts of the Legislature of the State of Michigan, passed at the regular session of 1935, compiled by Orville E. Atwood, Sec. of State, Franklin DeKleine Co., Printers, Lansing, 1935, 7853: Sec. 1, p. 86.

Until the Constitution of 1963 was ratified, the State
Board of Education had limited duties. However, the new Constitu-
tion placed much more responsibility on the board.

The principal features of the 1963 Constitution, Education
Article, were:

A. It provided for the State Board of Education which was
   charged with the "leadership and general supervision
   over all public education, including adult education and
   instructional programs in state institutions, except as
   to institutions of higher education granting baccalaureate
   degrees. . . .

B. It provided for an eight member State Board of Education.
   Members are nominated by party conventions and elected at
   large for terms of eight years as detailed in statute. The
   Governor and the State Superintendent of Public Instruction,
   who is appointed by the State Board, are ex officio members
   of the Board. The Governor is authorized to fill vacancies
   by appointment for the unexpired term and is an ex officio
   member of the board.

C. It provided that the State Board of Education "shall serve
   as the general planning and coordinating body for all
   public education, including higher education, and shall
   advise the legislature as to the financial requirements in
   connection therewith." There was a proviso, however, which
   limited the powers of the board to the extent that the
   boards of higher education institutions were given powers
   to "supervise their respective institutions and control
   and direct the expenditure of the institutions' funds . . ."

D. It provided that the Legislature "shall maintain and support
   a system of free public elementary and secondary schools as
   defined by statute."

E. It provided for a State Board for Public and Community and
   Junior Colleges which shall "advise the State Board of Edu-
   cation concerning general supervision and planning for such
   colleges and requests for annual appropriations for their
   support.

F. It provided that the Legislature should continue to provide
   for, by law, a state-wide system of libraries. Fines

assessed and collected for breach of penal laws are to be dedicated to the support of public and county law libraries.[3]

In 1964 the Michigan Legislature defined the duties of the State Board of Education by law. The powers and duties of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction were specified by law in 1965.

> The Department of Education was created pursuant to the 1965 Executive Organization Act, which sets forth the powers, duties, and functions of the department as required by the Michigan Constitution. The executive order creating the department designates the State Board of Education as the head of the department and the Superintendent of Public Instruction as its principal executive officer. The Superintendent is chairman of the board without the right to vote, and is responsible for the execution of its policies.[4]

Services Offered by the Michigan Department of Education

The Michigan Department of Education is divided into thirteen service areas which, in some cases, are made up of two or more program areas: The service and program areas are:

1. General Education Services
   A. Instructional Specialists Program
   B. Experimental and Demonstration Centers Program
   C. Pupil Personnel

2. Compensatory Education Services
   A. Programs for the Educationally Disadvantaged-Title I ESEA
   B. Programs for Migrant Children
   C. State Aid for the Educationally Disadvantaged - Chapter 3
   D. Nonresidential Alternative Juvenile Rehabilitation Programs - Section 48

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[1]*Fact Sheet*, Michigan Department of Education, no date, p. 1.

[2]Sam P. Harris, <u>State Departments of Education, State Boards of Education, and Chief State School Officers</u>, DHEW Publication No. (OE) 73-07400, Table I, p. 6.

3. Vocational-technical Education Service
   A. Vocational Guidance
   B. Area Vocational Centers
   C. Specifics of Michigan Program

4. School Management Services
   A. School District Organization and School Plant
      Planning Program
   B. Food and Nutrition Program
   C. Safety and Traffic Education Program

5. Research, Evaluation, and Assessment Services
   A. Evaluation and Research Program
   B. Michigan Educational Assessment Program

6. Teacher Preparation and Professional Development Services
   A. Certification Services
   B. Teacher Education Services
   C. Federal Programs

7. Higher Education Management Services
   A. Cooperative and Continuous Discussion
   B. Equality of Access
   C. Manpower Requirements
   D. Effective and Efficient Use of Resources
   E. Continuing Education
   F. Community Colleges
   G. Private and Proprietary Institutions
   H. Regional Planning
   I. Long-range Projections

8. Adult Continuing Education Services
   A. Adult Basic Education
   B. Adult Vocational Education
   C. Continuing Education

9. Student Financial Assistance Services
   A. Scholarships, Tuition, Grants, and Guaranteed Loans
   B. Degree Reimbursement Programs
   C. Special Education Institutes
   D. Financial Aid Information Services

10. State Library Services

11. Special Education Services
    A. State Assistance for the Handicapped Program
    B. Physically Impaired
    C. Mentally Impaired
    D. Emotionally Impaired

     E. Michigan School for the Blind
     F. Michigan School for the Deaf
     G. Supplementary Services
     H. Diagnostic and Supportive Services
     I. Speech and Language Impaired Services
     J. Learning Disabled
     K. Directors and Supervisors of Special Education
     L. Curriculum Resource Consultants and Curriculum
        Resource Specialists
     M. Occupational Therapists and Physical Therapists

12. Rehabilitation Services
     A. Public Assistant Subprogram
     B. Mental Health Subprogram
     C. Youth Subprogram
     D. Public Offender Subprogram
     E. Substance Abuse Subprogram
     F. Social Security Subprogram
     G. Worker's Comp. Subprogram
     H. Craft Subprogram
     I. Deaf Program Subprogram
     J. State Technical Institute and Rehabilitation Center
        and Disability Determination Program

13. Department Services
     A. Budget
     B. Accounting
     C. Data Processing
     D. Office Services[5]

A Review of Related Literature and Studies

Other studies were reviewed for the purpose of determining effective means of measuring attitudes and perceptions of activities. In an attempt to review the literature for this study, three ERIC searches were made. No similar studies were located through the ERIC search. Consequently, all State Departments of Education, the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare and the Chief State School Officials Council were contacted.

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[1]Michigan Department of Education Annual Report, 1974-75.

The following agencies and states replied and forwarded studies relating to the proposed study:

Department of Health, Education, and Welfare	Louisiana
	Massachusetts
Alabama	Michigan
Alaska	Nevada
Colorado	Oklahoma
Florida	Oregon
Georgia	Rhode Island
Illinois	South Dakota
Iowa	

Although North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee did not send a study, they were included in a study made by the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare in six southern states.

Some of the other states reported they had not made a study, but offered other sources or suggestions. These states included:

Idaho
Missouri
New Jersey
North Dakota
Ohio
South Carolina
West Virginia

The following states sent unrelated studies:

Hawaii
Wisconsin

The following agency and states reported they had made no study or that they were not aware of any other studies being made:

Chief State School Officials Council	Kentucky
	Maine
Arizona	Pennsylvania
California	Texas
Kansas	Washington

Results of this survey indicated that in 19 states there have been studies which incorporate at least one component included

in this study. Most of these studies were limited in scope in regard to how they would relate to this study. A case study in Michigan entitled State Policy Making for the Public Schools of Michigan is an example. The study was "designed to determine the structures, actions, processes, and relationships that are involved when state government in Michigan determines policy for the public schools."[6]

In the study, many quotes are made from respondents regarding how Dr. John W. Porter became State Superintendent of Public Instruction, why he was appointed, how he was appointed and how he has performed in that position. The Michigan legislators were also given the opportunity to offer their perceptions as to how Dr. Porter and his staff related to the leglislature by indicating how successful the legislators thought Dr. Porter and his staff were in getting proposals enacted by the legislature. Because only 14 legislators were included in this part of the study, it would appear that the results could be statistically questionable. It is not known if a random selection was made to determine which 14 legislators would be included, who responded, and if the legislators represented a particular geographical area or political party. The relationship between the Governor and Dr. Porter was also mentioned. The legislators were also asked for their perceptions as to the importance

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[6]State Policy Making for the Public Schools of Michigan, Hines, Aufderheide, Siegel, Moffatt and Smith with assistance of Horton, Prepared for the Educational Governance Project, The Ohio State University, Colombus, Ohio, Intro.

of the State Board of Education in formulating and working for the educational legislation. Again, the small number (14) of respondents and other factors make the statistical validity of this section of the study questionable.

In some cases the individual state departments of education have conducted surveys in an attempt to identify areas for improvement or to determine what services should be offered and how best to provide them. In April 1976, the Alaska State Department of Education, through its Planning and Research Division, carried out a survey in which 2,370 questionnaires "were mailed to teachers, administrators, and specialists in all regions of the state. Slightly more than 860 were returned (36%). Of those returned, 77.7% were from teachers, 14.3% from principals and principal-teachers, 4.7% from superintendents, and less than 3.5% from specialists."[7] Evidently, it was felt by the staff of the Alaska State Department of Education that the 36% return was adequate, when under the title of "Survey Validity" they stated, "Do the results represent the educators of Alaska? Yes. This short, affirmative answer is based on the following facts. Over 36% of the questionnaires were returned with no follow-up procedures. (It might be noted that the Montana State Education Agency received about the same amount in a similar survey and the Iowa SEA received

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[7] Results of Department of Education Planning and Evaluation Survey, Planning and Research Department of Education, Pouch F. Juneau, Alaska, August 1976, p. 1.

less than 10%, using a follow-up procedure)."[8] It was also pointed

out that the percentage of total return from the geographical area,

from district size and occupational groups was in proportion to the

total numbers. The general results of the study indicated that the

Alaskan Department of Education should:

provide leadership in establishing and maintaining statewide
goals needs and priorities;

identify and disseminate educational information, media
resources and promising practices;

examine and improve certification procedures;

provide inservice training, especially through regional
sessions;

investigate alternate means of funding schools;

improve communications (with local schools, both formal and
informal);

maintain support and emphasis on the basic skill areas,
especially reading;

develop new programs and curriculum and disseminate informa-
tion about them (especially programs in careers, thinking
skills and special education for the gifted).[9]

In the search for studies that would relate to this study,

two were found which were devoted totally to attitude toward state

departments of education or how people perceived state department of

education activities. The first study to be described was part of

the Regional Curriculum Project conducted in six southern states,

including Alabama, Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina,

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[8]Ibid., p. 2.

[9]Ibid., p. 7.

and Tennessee. This was a project funded under Title V, Section 505, Public Law 89-10, Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965.

Part of the total study was the regional attitude survey. A policy committee was formed to carry out the regional study. The committee was made up of members appointed by state school super-intendents of the six participating states and by local school superintendents. It also included members from local school per-sonnel. The committee felt that there were many benefits that would result from an attitudinal survey resulting in forthright information regarding the state department of education image at the local level. The purpose of the survey was stated as follows:

> In formulating the Attitude Survey and in administering it to representative personnel at the local level, it was intended that the findings constitute a firm basis on which further improvements in state departments might be effected. Data available through this instrument, it was felt, might properly be useful in bringing about desirable changes in persons, activities, services, and relationships. It was anticipated that the same instrument would be administered toward the conclusion of the projected five-year study, hoping that any positive changes in attitudes would reflect positive changes in departments.[10]

Through the cooperative efforts of state department staff members, local school personnel, college and university consultants, and personnel involved in the curriculum project, 200 possible statements were established. Later the list of items was reduced to 176 in a trial instrument. A 5-point response scale, ranging

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[10]Final Project Report, Regional Curriculum Project, Funded under Title V, Sec. 505, P.L. 89-10, ESEA of 1965, p. 35.

from agree to disagree was used. Eventually, 96 items were used in the final survey, 70 of which were for the purpose of measuring attitude. The survey instrument was mailed to each state, and responses were returned to the central office in Atlanta.

One hundred percent of the superintendents in all six states were included in the sampling. Twelve percent of the central office personnel, 10% of the principals, and 3% of the teachers and other local professionals, such as librarians and counselors, were also included. A total of 9,557 questionnaires were sent out with a return of 5,759 or 60%.

A reliability check was made by having 100 of the personnel in the project's 24 experimental localunits respond and later be retested. The results of the analysis were confirmed by a highly satisfactory reliability coefficient.

The attitudinal items were grouped into four basic areas which included: (1) the person, (2) the department, (3) department activities and services, and (4) relations with two types of educational agencies. Some of the basic areas were broken down into two or more clusters.

The arithmetic mean for each of the 70 attitudinal items in the instrument was part of the statistical treatment. The means of the ten clusters or related groups of items for each category of personnel reaction to the items were also determined. It was determined that a difference of .50 among the ratings would warrant attention. Anything lower than 2.5 of the 3.0 median scale was considered negative and those above 3.5 considered positive.

Descriptive analysis was made for each individual state and results were returned to the individual states. Visual aids were used as a means of presenting the results in workshops in the various states.

The findings were summarized as follows:

Attitudes of local school personnel toward state departments of education were more favorable than otherwise.

Among the five respondent groups, favorable attitudes showed a slight downward trend from superintendents to teachers, in the following rank order:
    --superintendents
    --central office personnel
    --principals
    --other local school personnel and teachers

Superintendents and central office personnel tended to have the same attitudes. Likewise, the attitudes of other local school personnel and teachers were somewhat similar. For the most part, principals tended to agree with other local school personnel and teachers in their overall attitudes.

Wider divergences of attitudes existed within individual states than among the six states. There was a consistency of attitude among each respondent group region wide.

Almost every attitude item recorded a per cent of negative attitudes from all respondent groups except superintendents. It ranged from approximately 5 to more than 30 but typically was 10 to 12 per cent.

Only slight differences in attitudes were apparent among the four basic areas: The Person, The Department, Department Services, Department Relationships.

All of the respondents held more favorable attitudes toward state department personnel as a person (their personal attributes) than they did of his work habits or philosophy. This was, in fact, the area of most favorable attitude.[11]

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[11] Ibid., p. 39.

It is interesting to note that although specific improvements in the programs, policies, or persons could not be pinpointed, it was generally felt by the personnel of the state departments of education in the six states that the study did increase an awareness of the need for improvements within the state departments. It was observed that individual staff members were more eager for change and state superintendents of public instruction and their closest associates were ready to "assume more enthusiasm and initiative in bringing about effective changes in their respective central educational agencies."[12]

Other positive outcomes pertaining to the attitude study were: (1) SDE personnel in the six states shared the findings in workshops and conferences. Communications among the SDE's were improved and renewed determination for improvement seemed to be evident. (2) A new understanding and appreciation of the potentialities of SDE's was recognized by all involved. (3) The fact that the policy committee made the decision to make an attitudinal instrument to measure the attitude of educators toward the state department of education in itself indicated that the state departments must realize the perceptions and attitudes of their constituents if indeed they are to bring about effective educational changes.

It is interesting to note that the study mentions that no other instrument similar to the one used could be found through a

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[12]Ibid., p. 43.

literature search. In an evaluation of the study, it was mentioned
that one of the weaknesses was that certain activities and services
were not included in the 70 items. This resulted in complete
absence of information which could have been significant. It was
also mentioned that many people who are knowledgeable about state
department activities and services were not involved in establishing
the attitudinal statements. The preface of the Regional Data Report
would indicate that the study was completed in 1968.

As was mentioned earlier, the six-state regional study was
adequately funded and, consequently, was carried out by several
persons. Also, due to adequate federal funding, workshops and
seminars could be held to both organize the survey and disseminate
the resulting data.

Another study found to be significant was the <u>Iowa State
Department of Instruction Role Perception Study</u>. The study was
forwarded by Robert D. Denton, Ed.D., State Superintendent, State
of Iowa, Department of Public Instruction. The study was made
during the 1972-73 school year for the purpose of continued improve-
ment of the Department's leadership potential.

Included in the sample populations were SDE personnel,
county units, area schools, and public schools. Specifically, the
stated purpose for the study was: "For self-assessment directed to
the continued improvement of its leadership potential, the Iowa
State Department of Public Instruction (DPI) recognizes its need for
facts, empirical evidence, feedback and other forms of information.

The purpose of this study is to provide for the DPI administration's consideration:

1. an attitude profile of how, in general, a variety of groups of educators feel toward the DPI as a whole;

2. an attitude profile of how, in general, a variety of groups of educators feel about specific DPI activities;

3. a desire profile of what specific activities a variety of groups of educators, on the average, want the DPI to undertake;

4. a profile of how, in general, a variety of groups of educators perceive the extent to which the DPI is currently engaged in specific activities.[13]

Employees of Iowa SDE were asked to suggest items to be included in the study. Civic groups, legislators and professioal groups were also asked for suggestions. A total of 640 items were submitted for consideration for the study. Eventually, the number of items was reduced to 42 attitude items and 52 activity items.

A pre-test was given, and because of the reliability factor, no changes were made in the items. Because of a very low return rate on the pre-test from board members and teachers, it was decided to exclude these groups in the final sampling.

The final survey instrument was sent to superintendents, principals, area school administrators, intermediate unit administrators and service personnel. Also, SDE administrative and consultive staff members were included in the study. Schools were

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[13]Barbara Brittingham and Joseph Wolvek, The Iowa State Department of Public Instruction Role Perception Study (Des Moines: Iowa State Dept. of Public Instruction, Div. of Planning, Research and Evaluation, Sept., 1973, Instrument Development), p. 1.

broken down into size categories, those over 2,000 and those under 2,000. A total of 996 questionnaires were sent with the return of 681 for an overall return rate of 68%.

The survey instrument consisted of two parts. The attitudinal part consisted of 42 items and was designed to measure attitudes toward the SDE. The second part consisted of 52 items. Two scales were offered to the respondent under the activities section. The left hand scale recorded the opinion of the importance for the SDE activity and the right hand scale gave the response perception as to how involved the SDE was in the activity.

Findings of the Iowa study showed that:

1. the overall attitudes displayed by respondents for the function of the DPI were found to be positive even though slightly so, and

2. in general, teachers and board members do not know enough about the DPI to feel that they could comment about their attitudes toward it, perceptions of functions in which the DPI is engaged, or desires for activities in which the DPI should engage. An analysis of sample returns would indicate DPI leadership for those target populations is presently lacking.[14]

Unlike the previously mentioned study done in six southern states, the Iowa study was funded through the Iowa State Department of Public Instruction funds. (At least there was no mention of federal funding for the project.) Both of these studies, however, did have ample funding and had the advantage of having sufficient staff to carry out the studies by making personal contact through workshops, interviews and telephone calls.

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[14]Ibid., p. 74.

It appears that a significant factor common to both of these studies was that they were initiated by their state department of education's sincere desire to improve their services. It is interesting to note that Dr. James Phelps of the Michigan Department of Education had suggested a format for the activity section of the study which was almost identical to the one used in the State of Iowa. At the point in time in which Dr. Phelps made his suggestion, neither the author nor Dr. Phelps was aware of the Iowa study.

Similar attitude surveys have been used in business and industry for many years. One such study was made by the Detroit Edison Company in 1950. Attitudes and opinions of supervisors and employees were collected (May 1950) as part of a long term research project investigating change in employee's attitudes.[15]

In 1953 The Survey Feedback Experiment was published by Baumgartel "to test the effectiveness of an intensive program for the utilization of attitude survey information."[16] This experiment indicated that attitude surveys inprove the effectiveness of the operation of the system.

Attitude surveys have been used in the U.S. for some time, but are not limited to this country. "The attitude survey is not a new management technique. Surveys have been conducted in the

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[15]Floyd Mann and James Dent, Appraisals of Supervisors (Detroit: Detroit Edison Company, May 1950).

[16]Howard Baumgartel, The Survey Feedback Experiment (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, August 1953).

United States and to a lesser extent in this country for a number of years but there is every indication that British companies are becoming increasingly interested in the attitude survey and aware of its usefulness."[17]

Justification for attitude surveys are, according to Davey, Gill, and McDonnell:

1. Managements often make decisions which are based on their hunches about what will motivate or provide satisfaction to employees, or on what they have heard from a vocal minority of employees. A much sounder basis for decisions is provided by the attitude survey, which is a systematic investigation of people's attitudes and feelings.[18]

2. General surveys and special purpose surveys can also be used to provide some measure of how organizational and other changes have been received.[17]

3. An additional benefit of attitude surveys is that they can provide an opportunity for people to make suggestions, thereby tapping the wealth of ideas which experience has shown to exist in all organizations at all levels.[20]

Summary

The MDE has evolved from a meager beginning to what seems to be a huge bureaucracy comprised of thirteen service areas.

A review of literature revealed that very few similar studies have been made of other state departments of education.

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[17]Davey, Gill and McDonnell, Attitude Surveys in Industry (London: Institute of Personnel Management, 1970), p. 7.

[18]Ibid.

[19]Ibid., p. 8.

[20]Ibid., p. 9.

Two similar federal and state funded studies were made, one in six southern states, the other in Iowa.

Attitude surveys have been used in business and industry for many years. Only recently have studies been made of SDE's by using this technique.

CHAPTER III

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

In this chapter an outline of the methods and procedures for conducting the study will be presented.

In an attempt to locate and identify all similar studies, the SDE of each state was contacted and requested to forward any information which might be of assistance in planning the procedure and methods of conducting this study. Also, the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare and the Chief State School Officials Council were contacted.

Following an evaluation of studies received from various SDE's, several interviews were held with members of the Michigan Department of Education staff in an effort to gain insight regarding methods and procedures to be used in conducting this study.

A review of literature, including three Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) searches, was also made. As mentioned in Chapter II, only two studies were found that were similar in many ways to this study.

Design and Method

Various methods of collecting the data were considered, such as a telephone survey, personal interviews, and group meetings surveys,

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but because of the time and expense involved were dropped.
A sample survey seemed to be the practical way of gathering data
for the study. In the following section, a detailed description of
the sample will be given and the sample selection procedure will be
explained.

Population and Sample

Initially, board of education members and teachers were to
be sampled along with school administrators. However, after dis-
cussing the possibilities of the study with teachers and board
members, it appeared that they were not knowledgeable in many phases
of the SDE operation and, therefore, only administrators were con-
sidered. This was supported by the Iowa study as mentioned in
Chapter II.

For sampling purposes, the state of Michigan was divided
into three geographical areas. The three areas included: (1)
schools within a 75-mile radius of Lansing; (2) schools in the lower
peninsula but a distance of more than 75 miles from Lansing; and
(3) schools in the upper peninsula.

School districts were also divided by size. Because of
similarities in administrative structures within schools of similar
enrollment in grades K-12, it was decided to divide the schools into
three categories as determined by school population. The three
groups included: (1) schools with the student population up to 1499
students; (2) schools with 1500 students to 4999 students; and (3)
schools with an enrollment of 5000 and more students.

Local K-12 public school administrators were divided into three groups for sampling. In some instances it was found that certain schools, because of low enrollment, had a limited number of administrators. These administrators usually included a superintendent, a high school principal and an elementary principal. Because of these variations in administrative staff, it was decided to include three categories of administrators for the selected schools in the sample. The three categories of administrators included: (1) superintendents of schools, (2) high school principals, and (3) "other administrators." "Other administrators" were selected by random sampling of administrators other than the superintendent and high school principals. This group included elementary principals, business managers, curriculum directors, and others. In systems in which there was more than one secondary principal, one principal to be represented in the survey was selected by random sampling.

A list of all the 540 public K-12 school systems in the state of Michigan was compiled from MDE publications. The names of all the school systems were divided into the three geographical areas specified. According to its size, each school system was placed in one of the sub-groups. The name of each school district was written on a separate but identical piece of paper and placed in a container according to the geographical location and school size. As each piece of paper was removed from the container, the name of the school system was placed on a list. To assure that each school system within each category had the same chance of

being selected for the sample, a list of random numbers was used to identify the school to be sampled.

A cover letter (Appendix A) and a questionnaire (Appendix B) were sent by first class mail to the three administrators of each selected school system. A self-addressed, stamped envelope was included in each mailing. All questionnaires were mailed on the same day. Appendix A also includes other self explanatory written communications.

Within ten days, a 40% return had been received. After three weeks following the mailing, a return of 78% had been received. At that time a reminder card was forwarded to the non-respondents and within two more weeks the total return had reached 84.8%.

Code numbers had been placed on each questionnaire, and upon their return, individual questionnaires were placed in the appropriate category. The results were placed on punch cards and computer printouts were made.

Instrumentation

Section One of the questionnaire asked for demographic information regarding the respondents and included twelve questions.

Section Two contained the attitudinal section of the questionnaire and was designed with the aid of other similar studies, consultation with MDE personnel, advice from the author's committee, personnel from the Institute for Research on Teaching at Michigan State University, and 30 practicing administrators within the state of Michigan who had been requested to reply to a suggestion sheet

for attitudinal statements. Initially, a list of 312 attitudinal
statements was compiled. Again, 30 practicing administrators in
the state of Michigan were asked to rank the statements as to how
they saw them in rank of importance. After the statements were
reviewed with Dr. James Phelps of the MDE, Dr. Stanley Hecker of
Michigan State University and Dr. Norman Weinheimer of the Michigan
School Board Association, the list was reduced to 36 statements.
This document is presented in Appendix B.

Fifty percent of the items were worded so that an _agree_
response showed a positive attitude toward the MDE. The other
fifty percent were worded in such a way that a _disagree_ response
indicated a positive attitude toward the MDE. To correct this
difference, the computer program was written to "flip" responses
to items in which a negative response elicited a positive attitude.
Thus, all reported means would have similar values on the attitude
scale. According to Oppenheim, the attitudinal statements should
be "meaningful and interesting, even exciting to the respondent."[1]

Finally, the statements were reviewed by research personnel
at Michigan State University, and it was concluded that they would
be appropriate and testable. The Thornton type scale, "Attitude
toward any institution" (Shaw and Wright, 1967), and the 7-point
Likert scale were considered, but because of various problems,

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[1]A. N. Oppenheim, _Questionnaire Design and Attitude Measurement_ (New York: Basic Books, Inc., Publishers, 1966), p. 113.

representatives of the Institute for Research on Teaching at

Michigan State University recommended a five-point Likert scale.

The five-point Likert scale uses the following response

choices:

> 1 - I <u>almost always</u> disagree with this statements; or,
> in <u>almost all instances</u>, this statement is false.
>
> 2 - I <u>frequently</u> am in disagreement with this statement;
> or, <u>more often than not</u>, this statement is false.
>
> 3 - This statement is neither <u>true or false</u>; or the
> evidence indicates that the statement is true about
> half the time and false about half the time.
>
> 4 - I frequently am in agreement with this <u>statement</u>;
> or, <u>more often than not</u>, this statement is true.
>
> 5 - I <u>almost always</u> agree with this statement; or, in
> <u>almost all instances</u>, this statement is true.

Section Three of the questionnaire contained existing or

possible activities of the MDE. Procedures for preparing activity

statements were similar to procedures followed in forming the atti-

tudinal statements. Activities were representative of the various

service areas as presented in the Michigan Department of Education

Annual Report of 1975. The service areas which the activities

represented were as follows: general education services, compensa-

tory education services, vocational-technical services, school

management services, research evaluation and assessment services,

teacher preparation and professional development services, adult

continuing education services, student financial assistance services,

special education services, and department services. Certain activ-

ities listed in the Michigan Department of Education Annual Report

of 1975 did not directly apply to K-12 administrators and,

consequently, were not included. Excluded were activities in the service areas of higher education management services, state library services, and rehabilitation services.

For each activity the administrator included in the sample was asked to respond in two ways. First, he was asked to respond as to the importance of the stated activities by how strongly he felt the MDE should be performing that activity. The rating scale for the "importance" of each activity was as follows:

1 = no importance
2 = little importance
3 = moderate importance
4 = important
5 = extreme importance

Following completion of rating the importance of the activities the MDE should be performing, the administrators were asked to rate the same activities by how they appraised the amount of emphasis the MDE is presently placing on the activity. The "present amount of emphasis" was given the following rating scale:

1 = very low emphasis
2 = low emphasis
3 = moderate emphasis
4 = much emphasis
5 = extreme emphasis

Lastly, two open-ended questions were included to give the respondents an opportunity to give an opinion beyond those indicated in the rating scales. The two questions were: What are some of the aspects of the MDE that seem to be effective or good? and What suggestions do you have for improving the MDE?

A copy of the complete printed questionnaire is presented in Appendix B.

Pilot Study

To test the effect of the questionnaire before it was sent to the school administrators selected for the study, it was presented in final form to 20 practicing school administrators throughout the state of Michigan. All 20 administrators responded and no significant changes were made because of the pilot study. Three of the respondents commented that the questionnaire seemed to be rather lengthy.

After reviewing the results of the pilot study, consultants from Michigan State University felt that it should not be changed and that it should be printed as presented in the pilot study and sent to the administrators to be included in the sampling.

Data and Analysis

Questionnaires to be mailed to the sampling group were coded prior to mailing. The data from the returned questionnaires were placed on cards by key punching and transferred to computers for a complete printout.

The statistics were computed for each of the groups according to geographical location, school size, and administrative group.

Summary

Similar studies were reviewed, MDE personnel interviewed and ERIC searches conducted. Advice was sought and given by the author's committee, the Institute for Research on teaching located at M.S.U., and 30 practicing school administrators in Michigan.

Following a pilot study, a random sample survey was made by questionnaire. Data were placed on punch cards and transferred to computers for printouts.

In Chapter IV the data will be described, analyzed and interpreted.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

In this chapter the data received from the K-12 public
school administrators involved in the study will be described,
analyzed and interpreted. The order followed in reporting the
data will be similar to that of the questionnaire format (demo-
graphic data is presented in Appendix C).

Attitude Survey

The attitude survey included 4 questions and 36 attitude
statements. The first 2 questions asked the respondents to select
the single activity which had most influenced their attitude toward
the MDE in a positive manner. The other 2 questions asked the
respondents to select the single activity which had most influenced
their attitude toward the MDE in a negative manner.

The 36 attitude statements were presented to be rated on
a scale from 1 (agree) to 5 (disagree). Instructions given for
rating the attitude statements were as follows:

> In general, follow these definitions of response
> alternatives:
>
> 1 - I <u>almost always</u> agree with this statement; or in
>   <u>almost all</u> instances, this statement is <u>true</u>.
>
> 2 - I <u>frequently</u> am in agreement with this statement;
>   or, <u>more</u> often than not this statement is true.

3 - This statement is <u>neither true nor false</u>; or, the evidence indicates that the statement is true about half the time and false about half the time.

4 - I frequently am in <u>disagreement</u> with this statement; or, <u>more often than not</u> this statement is false.

5 - I <u>almost always</u> disagree with this statement; or, in <u>almost all instances</u>, this statement is false.

Questions Regarding Positive and Negative Influences

The results of the 2 questions asking for the activity influencing a positive attitude toward the MDE were combined and a percentage of response was established for each activity. The same procedure was followed in determining the results of the 2 negative questions.

Personal contact with MDE personnel seemed to be a significant factor in establishing a positive attitude on the part of administrators (Table 1). However, personal contact with MDE personnel had an insignificant effect in establishing a negative attitude on the part of administrators (Table 2).

It seems noteworthy that personal contact activities such as personal consultation with MDE personnel, correspondence with MDE personnel and information conversations with MDE personnel were among the most significant factors in forming positive attitudes toward the MDE and were among the lowest in forming negative attitudes.

TABLE 1.--Activities Influencing a Positive Attitude.

Percent of Response	Activity Influencing a Positive Attitude
24.0	Personal consultation with MDE personnel
19.0	Correspondence with MDE personnel
13.6	Programs sponsored by the MDE
10.5	Informal conversations with MDE personnel
7.4	MDE publications
6.8	Listening to MDE speakers
4.8	Opinions of other administrators
3.5	MDE visitors to my school system
3.3	Discussion groups led by MDE personnel
2.6	News media information
4.5	Blank response
100.0	

TABLE 2.--Activities Influencing a Negative Attitude.

Percent of Response	Activity Influencing a Negative Attitude
24.5	Listening to MDE speakers
17.3	Opinions of other administrators
16.5	Programs sponsored by the MDE
11.3	Discussion groups led by MDE personnel
6.4	MDE publications
4.4	MDE visitors to my school system
4.1	Correspondence with MDE personnel
3.5	News media information
2.6	Informal conversations with MDE personnel
2.5	Personal consultation with MDE personnel
6.9	Blank response
100.0	

Attitude Statements

For the purpose of establishing a criteria for determining positive and negative response, the number 2.75 or less was used as a positive response and 3.25 or higher as a negative response. An overall mean was determined for each item by using the response from all administrators (Table 3). A positive response resulted in 2 statements, 11 statements fell in the "neutral" zone between 2.75 and 3.25, and 23 statements were in the negative section of 3.25 or higher.

Information taken from rank order in Table 3 would indicate that, generally, school administrators feel that MDE personnel are not in regular contact with public school personnel (1, 5), that required paperwork is a real problem (2, 3, 4, 9), that MDE publications could be improved (10, 13), and that regulating and recommending by MDE personnel is not helpful (6, 7).

On the positive note, administrators feel that staff members are well informed on current issues and developments in education (34), that most MDE personnel are reasonable in informing school district personnel of state and federal laws (35), and that the MDE usually responds quickly to requests for assistance.

There was very little difference shown in attitudes of administrators by position. The greatest difference was between superintendents with a mean of 3.555 and other administrators with a mean of 3.341, a difference of .214 (Table 4).

Geographical area made little difference in attitude. Administrators in the lower peninsula, within 75 miles of Lansing,

TABLE 3.--Ranking of Attitude Statements from Positive to Negative.

Rank Order	Item Number	Attitude Statement	Mean	S.D.
1	13	The MDE usually responds quickly to requests for assistance	2.341	1.011
2	15	Most MDE personnel are reasonable in informing school district personnel of state and federal laws.	2.368	1.020
3	21	MDE staff are well informed on current issues and developments in education.	2.757	.970
4	41	Group presentations made by MDE staff members generally provide useful information.	2.773	.937
5	39	Most meetings sponsored by MDE are well planned.	2.874	1.007
6	14	Most MDE personnel respect the judgment of local administrators.	2.891	.988
7	27	Most MDE personnel are practical.	2.965	.999
8	22	The MDE gives valuable help in solving school district problems.	2.978	.997
9	34	There is a free exchange of information between the school districts and the MDE.	2.987	1.076
10	45	The MDE is a good source of information about innovative programs in local school districts.	3.007	1.066
11	23	MDE interest in instructional innovation has improved the climate for school district educational change.	3.104	.999
12	30	The MDE does an effective job of promoting state legislation beneficial to education.	3.114	1.015
13	33	Most MDE staff speak out about controversial issues.	3.245	.891

TABLE 3.--Continued.

Rank Order	Item Number	Attitude Statement	Mean	S.D.
14	26	Most reports requested by the MDE are necessary.	3.351	1.033
15	31	Most MDE personnel do not attempt to improve through self examination.	3.351	.753
16	35.	Significant curriculum developments originate at the MDE level.	3.406	1.006
17	18	When initiating new state-wide programs, the MDE allots sufficient time for the local school districts to plan and organize.	3.470	1.167
18	36	School district and MDE personnel work as a team in solving educational problems.	3.476	.935
19	47	Most MDE personnel are unreasonably influenced by pressure groups.	3.647	.892
20	44	In seeking solutions to educational problems, most educators naturally turn to the MDE.	3.668	1.001
21	24	There is a conflict between the MDE role to enforce the laws and the role of providing consulting services.	3.707	.918
22	25	Presentations by most MDE personnel do not reflect many original ideas.	3.710	.935
23	32	Most MDE programs do not reflect areas of genuine concern to educators.	3.724	.996
24	48	Most materials and publications from the MDE are not very helpful.	3.729	.990
25	28	The MDE has had little effect on the improvement of instruction.	3.778	1.030
26	16	The MDE tends to give certain schools special consideration.	3.796	1.046

TABLE 3.--Continued.

Rank Order	Item Number	Attitude Statement	Mean	S.D.
27	29	Many of the MDE publications could be eliminated.	3.831	1.027
38	42	Most MDE reports require too much work.	3.930	.941
29	38	Most educators are not aware of the kinds of services offered by the MDE.	3.949	.864
30	46	Most MDE personnel making recommendations to local school districts have inadequate understanding of conditions in those districts.	3.964	.963
31	43	Most MDE personnel seem more concerned with regulating schools than with providing leadership.	3.987	.981
32	40	Most of the MDE staff spends too little of its time working with people in school districts.	4.009	.960
33	20	One does not always know what information and reports the MDE requires.	4.018	1.145
34	17	Most MDE officials have made little effort to eliminate red tape.	4.044	1.057
35	37	There is too much duplication in the information requested by various MDE departments.	4.075	.916
36	19	Most of the MDE staff are not in regular contact with public school personnel.	4.119	.994

TABLE 4.--Means for Attitude Statements by Administrative Position and Grand Mean for Individual Statement and Administrative Position.

Statement Number	Administrative Position			
	Superintendent	High School Principal	Other Administrator	Grand Mean
13	2.375	2.611	2.036	2.341
14	3.023	3.097	2.554	2.891
15	2.330	2.619	2.156	2.368
16	3.886	3.788	3.714	3.796
17	4.080	4.088	3.964	4.044
18	3.716	3.407	3.286	3.470
19	4.045	4.257	5.065	4.119
20	4.000	4.035	4.018	4.018
21	3.000	2.752	2.518	2.757
22	3.159	3.097	2.679	2.978
23	3.409	2.973	2.929	3.104
24	3.841	3.584	3.696	3.707
25	3.750	3.593	3.786	3.710
26	3.432	3.549	3.071	3.351
27	3.136	3.097	2.661	2.965
28	3.875	3.726	3.732	3.778
29	4.000	3.673	3.821	3.831
30	3.307	3.000	3.036	3.114
31	3.386	3.274	3.393	3.351
32	3.784	3.726	3.661	3.724
33	3.409	3.115	3.214	3.246
34	3.159	3.142	2.661	2.987
35	3.568	3.345	3.304	3.406
36	3.648	3.513	3.268	3.476
37	4.216	3.956	4.054	4.075
38	3.830	4.035	3.982	3.949
39	3.057	2.796	2.768	2.874
40	4.045	4.124	3.857	4.009
41	2.995	2.752	2.571	2.773
42	3.977	3.956	3.857	3.930
43	4.080	3.929	3.946	3.985
44	4.000	3.575	3.429	3.668
45	3.011	2.885	3.125	3.007
46	4,034	3.929	3.929	3.964
47	3.659	3.513	3.768	3.647
48	3.773	3.646	3.768	3.729
Grand Means by Position	3.555	3.449	3.341	3.448

had a mean of 3.498. The greatest extreme was found in the upper peninsula administrators with a mean of 3.388, a difference of .11 (Table 5).

Neither did school size make any significant difference in means. The greatest extreme was between large schools (3.410) and medium size schools (3.505), representing a difference of .095 (Table 6).

In fact, the highest and lowest extremes from the above mentioned means in any combination are found between superintendents and other administrators. This was previously reported as .214.

Two significant findings resulted from this phase of the study: (1) administrator's attitudes toward the MDE do not vary significantly by size of school, administrative position, or geographical location; and (2) the means of the individual groups by school size, administrative position, and geographical location indicate a negative response.

Importance of and Emphasis Given to Various Activities as Perceived by Local Administrators

In this section, the response to the 35 activities of the MDE included in the study will be presented.

The respondents rated each activity first by importance and then by the amount of emphasis being placed on the activity by the MDE. Directions were as follows:

TABLE 5.--Attitude Means by Geographical Area.

Geographical Area	Mean
Upper Peninsula	3.388
Lower Peninsula more than 75 miles from Lansing	3.442
Lower Peninsula within 75 miles of Lansing	3.498

TABLE 6.--Attitude Means by School Size.

School Size	Mean
Large	3.410
Medium	3.505
Small	3.420

Left hand scale instructions

To the left of each statement is a scale to indicate how
strongly you feel the MDE should be performing the activity.
Circle the appropriate number. If you are neutral or cannot
decide, circle "3."

Right hand scale instructions

After you have responded to the left hand scale for each
item, return to the first item and respond to the right
hand scale as follows: to the right of each statement is
a scale to indicate how you appraise the amount of emphasis
the MDE is presently placing on this activity. Circle "3"
if neutral or cannot decide.

The rating scale for the importance (left hand scale) was:

1. no importance
2. little importance
3. moderate importance
4. important
5. extreme importance

The rating scale for the amount of emphasis given by the

MDE (right hand scale) was:

1. very low emphasis
2. low emphasis
3. moderate emphasis
4. much emphasis
5. extreme emphasis

Correlations were calculated for each activity. If a person
or a group rated the importance of an activity at 1 and the emphasis
also at 1, a high positive correlation would result. Likewise, if
they felt the activity had no importance and that the MDE was placing
very low emphasis on the activity, there would also be a high posi-
tive correlation. In fact, a high positive correlation would result
whenever the importance and the emphasis received similar numerical
ratings. A high positive correlation indicates that the person or

group feels the MDE is placing the proper amount of emphasis on the activity.

Conversely, a negative correlation would result from an extreme difference in ratings between importance and emphasis. For example, if the importance of an activity was rated 5 (extreme importance) and the emphasis rated 1 (very low emphasis), a negative correlation would result. In this case, the respondent would be indicating that the MDE was not placing the proper amount of emphasis on the activity.

In order to be considered a meaningful correlation, an activity had to have a coefficient of .1000 or higher and a significance of .100 or lower.

Of the 35 items, 13 qualified as significant correlations when all respondents were combined as a group (Table 7). Two of the 13 activities received a negative correlation when all respondents were grouped. In all cases when a negative correlation was found, it was because the activity was rated between moderate and extreme importance while the emphasis was rated between moderate and very low.

As a group, administrators felt that only 2 of the 35 activities deserved a significant negative correlation, i.e., they felt only 2 activities were important, but were given very little emphasis by the MDE. As shown in Table 7, it was felt that more emphasis should be given to utilizing advisory committees to evaluate MDE activities and to provide services specifically designed

TABLE 7.--Correlation of Importance to Emphasis by All Respondents (ranked from highest positive to lowest negative correlation).

Rank	Item No.	Correlation Coefficient	Significance	Activity
1	61	.4452	.001	Resolve conflicts between school districts developing from land transfers, annexations and consolidations.
2	73	.4159	.001	Coordinate services between public and school district libraries
3	72	.3192	.001	Provide high school students with information regarding student financial assistance services.
4	68	.2682	.001	Encourage educational experimental demonstration centers.
5	71	.2452	.001	Develop state-wide data processing services for financial accounting for school districts.
6	81	.2073	.001	Assist school districts in negotiating contracts with employees.
7	74	.1728	.006	Encourage cooperation among school districts in conducting adult continuing education services.
8	58	.1663	.009	Assist school districts in reporting student progress to the community.
9	53	.1595	.012	Exchange MDE personnel with personnel from school districts on a short-term basis.
10	49	.330	.036	Provide proposal writing assistance to school districts.
11	69	.1180	.063	Initiate a program to coordinate purchasing for all school districts in Michigan.
12	82	-.1520	.016	Utilize advieory committees to evaluate MDE activities.
13	55	-.1980	.002	Provide services specifically designed to assist small school districts.

to assist small school districts. (Appendix Tables C-2 through
C-10 give a breakdown of significant correlations by the various
categories, i.e., school size, location, administrative position
and combinations thereof.)

Administrators in the U.P. gave a positive correlation to
only 3 activities while those in area two had 13 positive correla-
tions, and those in area one had 9 positive correlations (Table 8).
The U.P. gave negative correlations to 2 activities while area two
yielded 1 and area one yielded 3.

By administrative position, high school principals had both
the most positive (8) and negative (3) correlations. Superinten-
dents had 7 positive and 2 negative, while other administrators
had 7 positive and only 1 negative correlation (Table 9).

Superintendents in small schools rated more negative (3)
than positive (2) correlations. Superintendents in medium size
schools had only 1 negative with 6 positive correlations. Large
school superintendents had 11 positive and not one negative cor-
relation (Table 10).

Other administrators in small schools had 4 out of 5 cor-
relations rated as negative (Table 11). All 12 correlations for
other administrators in medium size schools were positive, and in
large schools they had 4 positive and 4 negative.

High school principals in different size schools had the
following correlations: small schools 8 positive and 1 negative;
medium size schools 6 positive and 3 negative; large schools 7
positive (Table 12).

TABLE 8.--Correlation of Importance and Emphasis by Geographical Area.

Item No.	L.P. -75 Coefficient	L.P. -75 Significance	L.P. +75 Coefficient	L.P. +75 Significance	U.P. Coefficient	U.P. Significance
40			.1812	.061		
52	-.1727	.067				
54	.1621	.088	.2185	.023		
55	-.2179	.022	-.2807	.003		
57	.1889	.045			-.3473	.070
58	.1846	.050	.2483	.010		
60			.1725	.073		
61	.5140	.001	.3708	.001	.5093	.005
62					-.3394	.083
64			.1785	.063		
68			.4337	.001		
69	.1678	.076				
71	.2545	.007	.3030	.001		
72	.3137	.001	.3501	.001		
73	.4019	.001	.4709	.001		
74			.2195	.025	.3653	.056
77					.4192	.024
80			.2455	.010		
81	.2260	.018	.2495	.009		
82	-.2245	.017				

TABLE 9.--Correlation of Importance and Emphasis by Administrative Position.

Item No.	Superintendent		H.S. Principal		Other Administrators	
	Coefficient	Significance	Coefficient	Significance	Coefficient	Significance
49					.2992	.030
52			-.2238	.019		
54					.2584	.054
55			-.2153	.024		
56	.2605	.015			-.2295	.089
58			.2028	.036	.2875	.032
61	.3782	.001	.5793	.001	.2879	.031
65						
68	.2375	.028	.2503	.009	.5734	.001
69			.3920	.001		
70	-.1854	.085				
71	.1773	.100			.5202	.001
72	.2818	.009	.3136	.001		
73	.4564	.001	.3761	.001	.4385	.001
74			.2861	.003		
77	.2051	.057				
81			.2383	.013		
82	-.1822	.095	-.2325	.015		

TABLE 10.--Correlation of Importance and Emphasis by Superintendents in Different Size Schools.

Item No.	Large Schools		Medium Schools		Small Schools	
	Coeffi-cient	Signifi-cance	Coeffi-cient	Signifi-cance	Coeffi-cient	Signifi-cance
49	.4743	.047				
53	.4046	.096				
55					-.3336	.096
56	.5657	.014	.2835	.069		
57	.4772	.045	.3458	.025	-.4533	.018
58	.4899	.046				
61	.5262	.025			.4036	.037
68			.3703	.017		
70			-.2741	.079		
71	.4582	.056				
72	.4326	.073	.2754	.078		
73	.4723	.048	.3253	.036	.5829	.002
74	.4929	.038				
77			.3383	.028		
80	.4093	.092				
83					-.4299	.025

TABLE 11.--Correlation of Importance and Emphasis by Other
Administrators in Different Size Schools.

Item No.	Large Schools		Medium Schools		Small Schools	
	Coefficient	Significance	Coefficient	Significance	Coefficient	Significance
40			.3924	.026		
50			.3580	.041	-.8686	.056
51			.3645	.037	-.8452	.071
53	.5296	.051				
56	-.6002	.018				
58			.4303	.010		
59					-.8018	.103
60	-.4848	.067	.4329	.009		
61	.6371	.011				
62	-.4271	.102				
64			.2832	.105		
68			.6641	.001		
71	.5038	.056	.5807	.001		
72			.3694	.029		
73			.4667	.005		
76	.4588	.085				
79	-.4748	.086	.3782	.025	-1.000	.001
81			.3169	.064	.9186	.028
82						

TABLE 12.--Correlation of Importance and Emphasis by High School Principals in Different Size Schools.

Item No.	Large Schools		Medium Schools		Small Schools	
	Coeffi-cient	Signifi-cance	Coeffi-cient	Signifi-cance	Coeffi-cient	Signifi-cance
52			-.5115	.001		
53			-.3206	.020	.3020	.049
54					.3573	.020
55	.5050	.066				
58					.3171	.043
60	.5439	.044				
61	.5977	.024	.5701	.001	.5934	.001
65	.5508	.041				
66					.2621	.082
67	.5276	.053				
68					.3829	.011
69			.3076	.028	.4489	.002
72	.7099	.007	.3933	.005		
73	.5537	.040	.2735	.055	.4756	.001
74			.3649	.009		
79			-.3206	.026	-.4549	.002
82			.2427	.083		

Superintendents in various geographical areas had the
following correlations: U.P. 5 positive and 2 negative; area two
5 positive and 2 negative; area one 4 positive and 2 negative
(Table 13).

Other administrators in the various geographical areas had
the following correlations: U.P. 1 positive and 2 negative; area
two 11 positive and 1 negative; and area one 5 positive (Table 14).

High school principals in the various geographical areas
had the following correlations: U.P. 1 positive and 3 negative;
area two 10 positive and 2 negative; and area one 8 positive and
3 negative (Table 15).

When all administrators were grouped by school size, those
in small schools had 5 positive and 3 negative correlations, medium
size schools 7 positive and 2 negative, and large schools 9 positive
and 1 negative (Table 16).

The greatest differential seems to exist in the category of
other administrators by school size (Table 11). These administra-
tors in both large and small schools had 4 negative correlations
each while those in medium size schools had none. Table 17 lists
all activities which received at least one negative correlation by
any of the various groups.

The foregoing information indicates that administrators
located the furthest from Lansing and/or in small school districts
are more prone to feel many activities are important, but are not
given much emphasis by the MDE.

TABLE 13.--Correlation of Importance and Emphasis by Superintendents in Different Geographical Areas.

Item No.	L.P. -75		L.P. +75		U.P.	
	Coefficient	Significance	Coefficient	Significance	Coefficient	Significance
55			-.2598	.101		
56			.3122	.044		
57	.4359	.008			-.6100	.081
59	.3427	.041				
61	.6811	.001			.7267	.027
64					.6019	.086
65	-.2834	.094			-.5774	.104
68			.2735	.084		
70			-.4147	.006		
72			.3896	.011		
73	.6876	.001	.2650	.090		
74					.8370	.005
75					.5754	.105
77					.7351	.024
80			.3714	.015		
82	-.4123	.015				

TABLE 14.--Correlation of Importance and Emphasis by Other
Administrators in Different Geographical Areas.

Item No.	L.P. -75		L.P. +75		U.P.	
	Coeffi-cient	Signifi-cance	Coeffi-cient	Signifi-cance	Coeffi-cient	Signifi-cance
56			-.6003	.002		
58			.3831	.065		
61	.3565	.068	.3975	.054		
64			.5820	.004		
66			.		-1.0000	.001
67			.3796	.074	-1.0000	.001
68	.4557	.017	.8124	.001		
70					1.0000	.001
71	.5070	.007	.6990	.001		
72	.3424	.080	.4097	.047		
73	.3789	.051	.4853	.016		
79			.3465	.105		
81			.4230	.039	1.0000	.001
83			.4890	.018		

TABLE 15.--Correlation of Importance and Emphasis by High School
Principals in Different Geographical Areas.

Item No.	L.P. -75		L.P. +75		U.P.	
	Coeffi-cient	Signifi-cance	Coeffi-cient	Signifi-cance	Coeffi-cient	Signifi-cance
52	-.5100	.001				
54			.2710	.075		
55	-.2471	.084	-.4231	.004		
56			-.2576	.091		
58	.2774	.051	.3183	.040		
60			.2707	.079		
61	.4938	.001	.6861	.001	.5123	.042
67	.2767	.052				
68			.4884	.001		
69	.5086	.001	.3662	.015		
70			.3841	.011	-.5675	.027
72	.4257	.002	.2542	.104		
73	.2588	.073	.6567	.001		
74	.3031	.034	.3125	.041		
77	-.2504	.079				
81	.3859	.006			-.5605	.024
83					-.4378	.103

TABLE 16.--Correlation of Importance and Emphasis by School Size.

Item No.	Large Schools Coefficient	Significance	Medium Schools Coefficient	Significance	Small Schools Coefficient	Significance
49						
50						
52			-.1953	.028		
53	.3668	.013			.2452	.035
54	.3339	.022				
55			-.2177	.014	0.2625	.023
57	.3234	.027				
58			.1538	.082		
61	.5443	.001	.3615	.001	.4952	.001
68			.3233	.001	.1964	.091
71	.3940	.006	.2786	.001		
72	.4950	.001	.3395	.001		
73	.4831	.001	.3304	.001	.5235	.001
74	.3745	.009			.2124	.067
79	-.3130	.034				
81	.3156	.033	.2436	.005		
82					-.2647	.021
83					-.2046	.080

TABLE 17.--Total Negative Correlations by All Categories.

Item No.	Number of Negative Correlations	Activity
55	8	Provide services specifically designed to assist small school districts
52	4	Establish criteria for the evaluation of educational materials on the market.
57	4	Conduct public meetings throughout the state to explain recent educational legislation
70	4	Work with school districts in establishing short and long range energy conservation plans.
79	4	Publish MDE position papers on current educational issues..
82	4	Utilize advisory committees to evaluate MDE activities
56	3	Provide research assistance to school districts.
62	2	Bring personnel together from school districts with similar problems to work on solutions.
65	2	Provide assistance to school districts in conducting total needs assessments.
83	2	Recommend alternative state financial models for consideration by the legislature.
50	1	Assign MDE personnel in intermediate school districts to work closely with school districts in that area.
51	1	Make consultant-type visits to school districts on a regular basis.
53	1	Sponsor annual teacher conferences in subject matter areas.
59	1	Carry out an in-depth study of building replacements and the construction of new facilities.
60	1	Assist school districts in developing competency testing for high school graduation.
66	1	Develop teacher cadres for planning in-service on a geographical basis.
67	1	Assist school districts in developing meaningful goals and translating the goals into measurable objectives.
77	1	Inform school district personnel of outstanding programs in other schools.
81	1	Assist school districts in negotiation contracts with employees.

As a group, administrators rated 22 of the 35 activities as having insignificant correlations. This means that importance and emphasis are unrelated. In other words, the emphasis placed on these activities by the MDE has nothing to do with the importance of the activity. Conversely, the importance of these activities has nothing to do with the emphasis the MDE places on them. If emphasis and importance went hand in hand, a positive correlation would result. This was not the case in the majority of the activities listed.

Questions Answered in Narrative Form

Two questions were asked at the end of the questionnaire. They were:

1. What are some of the aspects of the MDE that seem to be effective or good?

2. What suggestions do you have for improving the MDE?

For the first question, 147 comments were made. The second question yielded 260 comments and suggestions. The comments and suggestions derived from the two questions can be found in Appendix D.

The various comments seemed to group themselves into categories. In most cases the comments within a category are not identical, but express a general concern or opinion about a general area. Table 18 gives a breakdown of these rather general categories along with the number of suggestions or comments made in each category. The remaining suggestions and comments did not seem to fit into any particular pattern, but are all listed in Appendix D.

TABLE 18.--Some of the Aspects of the MDE that Seem to be
Effective or Good by General Category.

General Category	Number of Respondents
1. MDE personnel are friendly, cooperative, knowledgeable, and provide assistance to local schools	51
2. The state assessment test	13
3. Compensatory education programs, Title I,	9
4. Consultants	6
5. Needs assessment, statewide goals, objectives	6
6. MDE meetings	6

TABLE 19.--Suggestions and Comments from Respondents for Improving
the MDE by General Category.

General Category	Number of Respondents
1. MDE personnel should get out in the field, visit schools, make more personal contacts	46
2. MDE should cut red tape, reduce forms and paperwork	46
3. MDE is over regulating local schools	12
4. Fund mandated programs	9
5. Improve MDE organization structure	6
6. Hold regional meetings	6
7. Reduce staff	5
8. MDE should be evaluated	3
9. MDE influenced too much by teachers	3

Summary

The rate of questionnaires returned was high among all groups included in the study. The demographic information revealed numerous facts which may have been suspected by most administrators, such as: younger administrators are in smaller schools, superintendents are older, have higher degrees and visit the MDE more frequently than other administrators. Administrators in the U.P. visit the MDE less, but phone more often than their L.P. counterparts.

Personal contact with MDE personnel seems to be the greatest factor influencing a positive attitude with administrators while listening to MDE speakers seems to be the most negative influence.

Administrators felt the MDE staff is cooperative, willing to help, knowledgeable. They also indicated there is not enough personal contact by the MDE.

Results from the attitude scale indicated little difference in attitude existed between the various groups when broken down by administrative position, school size, or geographical location. However, the grand means for all these groups revealed negative attitudes.

On the other hand, the next section in which they rated the activities the respondents did show a difference in how the activities were perceived. The respondents from the U.P. and/or in small schools were more negative than others when rating the activities of the MDE.

State assessment testing and comprehensive education were mentioned often when respondents were asked what aspects of the MDE seemed to be effective or good.

When asked what suggestions they had for improving the MDE respondents said to cut red tape and forms, reduce staff, get out in the field for closer contact with schools, and adequately fund mandated programs.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter is comprised of three major parts: summary, conclusions and recommendations. The summary section describes the objectives of the study, answers questions explored, explains population and sample, presents instrumentation, tells procedures for analysis, and discusses major findings of the study. In the conclusion section, inferences and generalizations are presented as to how they relate to the questions asked. The last section is made up of recommendations to the Michigan Department of Education.

Summary

In the two decades following Sputnik, the Michigan Department of Education was faced with many challenges. The MDE has met these challenges by adding programs, increasing staff, making organization changes, and expanding the budget. The day to day operations of local schools, and consequently, school administrators' duties and responsibilities have been affected by changes that have taken place in the MDE. This study was an attempt to measure administrators' feelings toward the MDE at one point in time.

Objectives

The major objectives of the study were: (1) to determine the attitudes of local public K-12 school administrators toward the MDE; (2) to determine the importance and how much emphasis is placed on certain activities by the MDE as seen by local K-12 public school administrators; (3) to present the MDE with the data in order for MDE personnel to understand how the MDE is perceived by the local administrators; and (4) to make recommendations to the MDE if there seems to be a need for improvement in the various operations of MDE.

Questions Explored

Questions explored in this study included: (1) What are some of the general demographic factors relating to the respondents? (2) What are the attitudes of school administrators toward the MDE? (3) Do these attitudes vary by administrative position, school size, or geographical location? (4) How do school administrators perceive the importance and the amount of emphasis placed on certain activities by the MDE? (5) Do these perceptions vary by administrative position, school size, or geographical location?

Population and Sample

The population for the study included all administrators in K-12 public schools in the state of Michigan.

For sampling purposes, the state of Michigan was divided into three geographical areas. The three areas included: (1) schools within a 75 mile radius of Lansing; (2) schools in the

lower peninsula but a distance of more than 75 miles from Lansing; and (3) schools in the upper peninsula.

The three school size groups included: (1) schools with the student population up to 1499 students; (2) schools with 1500 students to 4999 students; and (3) schools with an enrollment of 5000 and more students.

Local K-12 public school administrators were divided into three groups for sampling. The three categories of administrators included: (1) superintendents of schools; (2) high school principals; and (3) other administrators.

A list of all of the 540 public K-12 school systems in the state of Michigan was compiled from MDE publications. The names of all the school systems were divided into the three geographical areas specified. Random selection procedures were used to select schools and administrators from the various geographical areas and by different school sizes.

The collected data from the sample consisted of information taken from the 257 returned useable questionnaires. This represented an 84.8% return from the 303 questionnaires mailed. The total return represented 87 superintendents, 84 high school school principals, and 86 other administrators.

Instrumentation

A questionnaire, consisting of 4 main sections (demographic information, attitude, MDE activities, and narrative response to two questions) was prepared with the assistance of school administrators,

MDE personnel, the author's committee, and personnel from the
Institute for Research on Teaching at Michigan State University.
Other similar studies were also reviewed. A pilot study was con-
ducted prior to the final printing of the questionnaire. Question-
naires, with cover letters, were mailed April 30, 1978.

Analysis

Data from the returned questionnaires were placed on punch
cards and transferred to computers for a printout. Statistics were
compiled by administrative position, school size, geographical loca-
tion, and demographic factors.

Appropriate computer programs were used to determine means,
medians, modes, standard deviations, frequently counts, percentages,
coefficients, and levels of significance.

In the first section, demographic factors were compared by
use of percentages. The second section, dealing with attitudes,
was described by use of percentages, means, and standard deviations.
The results of section three pertained to activities and were
reported by correlation, coefficients, and level of significance.
The last section, which consisted of answers in narrative form,
was reported in an appendix. Answers were listed in order of
return.

Findings

Demographic Data

Demographic data (see Appendix C) revealed the following
about the respondents:

1. the age group 40 to 49 included a larger percent of administrators than any other ten year age group;

2. the male administrators were younger than the female administrators;

3. about 90% of the respondents were male;

4. none of the superintendents were female;

5. the younger administrators were in the smaller schools;

6. as a group, superintendents were older than other groups of administrators;

7. the upper peninsula had a higher percent of females than other areas;

8. the M.A. degree was the most common;

9. superintendents had a higher percentage of Ph.D.'s than other administrators;

10. superintendents had been in a similar position in the state of Michigan longer than any of the high school principals or other administrators;

11. well over one half (56%) of the respondents had served more than 10 years as an administrator in Michigan;

12. over one third of the respondents never visit the MDE;

13. administrators, who are furthest away from Lansing or in small schools, made fewer visits to the MDE but made more phone calls than administrators in other schools;

14. as a group, superintendents visit the MDE more than other administrators;

15. about 90% of the respondents call the MDE at least once a year.

Attitudes

When asked which of the listed activities influenced them the most in a positive manner toward the MDE, the respondents chose the following as the top three:

1. personal consultation with MDE personnel;

2. correspondence with MDE personnel;

3. Programs sponsored by the MDE.

When asked which of the listed activities influenced them the most in a negative manner toward the MDE, the respondents chose the following as the top three:

1. listening to MDE speakers;

2. opinions of other administrators;

3. programs sponsored by the MDE.

The respondents were asked to respond to 36 attitude statements by circling a number on a five-point Likert scale. Fifty percent of the attitude statements were worded positively and 50 percent were worded negatively, as is the practice in attitude surveys. Number 1 would indicate the most positive attitude, the number 5 the most negative and the number 3 a neutral attitude. If the mean for a statement fell in a range of 2.75 to 3.25, it was considered to be neutral. Any mean lower than 2.75 would indicate a positive attitude and any mean above 3.25 would indicate a definite negative attitude. Of the 36 statements, only 2 were definitely positive while 23 were negative and 11 neutral.

Of the 36 attitude statements, the respondents ranked the 5 most positive in order as follows:

1. The MDE usually responds quickly to requests for assistance;

2. Most MDE personnel are reasonable in informing school district personnel of state and federal laws;

3. MDE staff members are well informed on current issues and developments in education;

4. Group presentations made by MDE staff members generally provide useful information;

5. Most meetings sponsored by MDE are well planned.

The respondents ranked the five most negative statements in order as follows:

1. Most of the MDE staff are not in regular contact with public school personnel;

2. There is too much duplication in the information requested by various MDE departments;

3. Most MDE officials have made little effort to eliminate red tape;

4. One does not always know what information and reports the MDE requires;

5. Most of the MDE staff spends too little of its time working with people in school districts.

Part of the hypotheses of the study was that attitudes of administrators toward the MDE varied by administrative position, school size, and geographical location. The results clearly indicated that attitudes do not vary by administrative position, school size or geographical location. Although the attitudes do not vary by any of the above mentioned variables, they do share one common factor--the grand means for all the groups indicate a negative attitude.

Activities

In an attempt to determine the MDE's effectiveness in various areas as perceived by local administrators, a list of

activities was presented to the respondents. These activities included activities presently being carried out by the MDE as well as possible activities. Each activity was given two rating scales. One scale was used to rate the importance of the activity, the other to determine the amount of emphasis being placed on the activity by the MDE. The importance scale ranged from the number 1, no importance, to the number 5, extreme importance; while the emphasis scale ranged from the number 1, very low emphasis, to number 5, extreme emphasis. A correlation coefficient was determined by comparing the number from the importance scale to the number on the emphasis scale. A high positive correlation would exist if numbers from both scales were closely matched. If an activity were rated as no importance and very low emphasis, a high positive correlation would result. If an activity were rated extreme importance and extreme emphasis, it also would result in a positive correlation. A negative correlation would exist when there was a great difference in the number from one scale to the other. In order to be considered a meaningful correlation, an activity had to have a coefficient of .1000 or higher and a signif-significance of .100 or lower.

Administrators in the upper peninsula and in smaller schools tended to rate more activities with a negative correlation. As a group, however, administrators rated 22 of the 35 activities as having insignificant correlations. This meant that the emphasis placed on these activities by the MDE has nothing to do with the

importance of the activity. As a group, the administrators had
two definite negative correlations which were:

1. provide services specifically designed to assist
   small school districts;

2. utilize advisory committees to evaluate MDE activities.

All negative correlations resulted from the respondent
rating the activity as being high in importance and low in emphasis
being placed upon it by the MDE.

Questions Answered in
Narrative Form

The last phase of the questionnaire included two questions
which were:

1. What are some of the aspects of the MDE that seem to
   be effective or good?

2. What suggestions do you have for improving the MDE?

There were 147 comments made to the first question and 260
to the second question. Because the answers were subjective, it
was most difficult to place them into categories. However, in
reviewing answers to the first question, it would appear the
respondents felt:

1. the MDE has many knowledgeable, friendly, and coopera-
   tive people who are willing to assist local adminis-
   trators.

2. the state assessment test and compensatory education
   programs are well received at the local level.

3. MDE consultants are helpful.

4. needs assessment and statewide goals have been of value.

5. MDE meetings are thought to be helpful by some.

Answers to the second question indicate that the respondents felt:

1. there is a need for more personal contact from the MDE.

2. the MDE should make every effort to cut red tape and forms.

3. the MDE is over regulating schools.

4. mandated programs should be funded.

5. the MDE organization structure could be improved.

Conclusions

In this section, inferences and generalizations will be made regarding the questions asked. Questions and conclusions are as follows:

1. <u>What are the attitudes of school administrators toward the MDE?</u>

a. For various reasons such as very little personal contact with MDE personnel, paperwork, and mandated programs without funding, administrators seemed to have formed statistically negative attitudes toward the MDE.

2. <u>Do these attitudes vary by administrative position, school size or geographical location?</u>

a. All administrators are affected by increased paperwork and mandated programs. They also share the feeling that they do not have personal contact with the MDE. Therefore, they have negative attitudes toward the MDE. These attitudes do not vary by administrative position, school size or geographic location.

3. <u>How do school administrators feel about the importance and the amount of emphasis placed on certain activities by the MDE?</u>

    a. In most cases, administrators do not think there is a relationship between the importance of activities and the emphasis placed on these activities by the MDE. This may be the effect of administrators not understanding how much emphasis the MDE is placing on the various activities, or maybe because they do understand and think the emphasis is not appropriate in relationship to the importance. Again, administrators indicated a need for the MDE to provide more services to assist small school districts. Respondents also felt that advisory committees should be utilized to evaluate MDE activities. This may be because administrators do not fully understand the purpose of the activity or the amount of emphasis being placed upon the activity by the MDE.

4. <u>Do these feelings vary by administrative position, school size, or geographical location?</u>

    a. There was a difference in how activities were rated by administrative position, school size and geographical location. There was a slight variation by administrative position, but percentage wise high school principals indicated more negative correlations. This could be due to high school principals having less contact with the MDE as compared with superintendents and many other administrators such as business managers, curriculum directors and vocational directors.

    b. Overall, administrators in small schools had more negative correlations than other schools. Administrations in small

schools are hard-pressed for time and do not visit the MDE as often as others. This results in less personal contact with the MDE and a more negative attitude.

c. Administrators in the upper peninsula were by far the most prone to giving negative correlations. Administrators in the U.P. have difficulty visiting Lansing because of the distance and do not make personal contacts. This results in the development of negative attitudes.

Other conclusions beyond those pertaining to the questions asked are as follows:

1. In comparing the results of the attitude phase of this study to the attitude survey made in the six southern states and previously mentioned there is a significant difference.[1] The six state study was made in 1968 when circumstances could have been significantly different for school administrators. Also, the role that the state department of education plays in the six southern states may not compare with the MDE's role. Nevertheless, there is a tremendous difference in the results of that attitude study and this study. The results of the six states study would indicate that on a five point scale, administrators were only a point short of having complete, positive attitudes toward the SDE. In this study, administrators as a group were about 1.5 points from having a completely negative attitude. This would indicate that

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[1] Final Project Report, Regional Curriculum Project. Funded under Title V, Sec. 505, P.L. 89-10, ESEA of 1965.

administrators in Michigan in 1978 were very negative toward the MDE, while 10 years earlier administrators in six southern states were very positive toward their SDE's. Factors such as the teacher tenure laws, bargaining laws, bilingual programs, career education and various federal programs, to mention a few, may have created a climate in Michigan that is different from that which existed in 1968 in the southern states.

2. The questionnaire used in this study was rather lengthy and took 30 to 35 minutes to complete. Nevertheless, the return rate was 84.8% which is much higher than the return gained in similar studies. Administrators must have had a high interest in the subject and were eager to express their views.

3. It is questionable if administrators have a clear understanding of how the legislative process and state board of education policies affect the operation of the SDE. Their comments would indicate they feel the MDE is passing the laws and establishing state board of education policies.

4. The MDE staff members are sincerely interested in assisting public schools. They are cooperative, friendly and quick in responding to requests for assistance.

Recommendations

In light of the information gained from this study, the following recommendations are offered to the Michigan Department of Education.

1. Regional mini-sessions

The MDE should investigate every possibility of making more personal contact with K-12 school administrators. One approach may be to have the decision makers of each service area hold regional mini-sessions throughout the state. This approach may prove to be more efficient for both the administrators and MDE personnel. It would seem that answering questions and receiving input from large groups would eliminate many of the time-consuming individual telephone calls and/or visits to the MDE. These meetings could be held on an experimental basis until they are evaluated.

2. Eliminate duplication of required information

The MDE should make every reasonable effort to eliminate duplication of required information on various forms. In this regard an effort should also be made by the MDE to inform local administrators of the need and justification for all required information with examples of how it is used. There seemed to be a general feeling that slight nuances or differences in information were sought from various groups within the MDE.

3. Meet with administrators by school size

The MDE should meet with administrators by school size. This would enable the administrators with common problems to communicate with the MDE and each other.

4. Evaluate MDE activities

The MDE should ask for assistance and cooperation from local school administrators in evaluating their present activities as well as possible activities.

5. <u>Time study of administrators in various size schools</u>

The MDE should do a time study of administrators in various
size schools in order to understand how time on the job is actually
spent by these people. Having served as an administrator in school
systems with a wide range of enrollments, the author would make a
prediction: a time study would show that the smaller the school
system, the more time the administrators spend on paperwork for
the MDE.

6. <u>Implement the Headlee Amendment</u>

The MDE should make every attempt to live within the meaning
and intent of the Headlee Amendment. Additional programs, or for
that matter, additional paperwork means that someone at the local
level must spend additional time in carrying out the program or com-
pleting the forms. If additional work is required through mandated
programs and paperwork, then it should be fully funded by the state.

7. <u>State Assessment and Compensatory Education</u>

State Assessment and Compensatory Education programs are
well accepted and should be continued. Initiation of these two
particular programs was preceded by many informational meetings held
in various regions of the state. Administrators had the opportunity
to not only gain insight into the laws, regulations, and procedures,
but were welcome to offer input. Perhaps these regional meetings
had an effect on their acceptance.

8. <u>Conduct an in-depth study</u>

In an effort to improve communication and improve the atti-
tude toward the MDE, consideration should be given to contracting

with an outside, independent consulting firm which specializes in research. An in-depth study could be conducted offering much more data than gathered in this study. The results of this study seem to justify a continuation of research in this area. If the MDE does not desire to sponsor additional research in this area, perhaps it could be pursued by another doctoral candidate.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

COMMUNICATIONS

APPENDIX A

COMMUNICATIONS

CHARLEVOIX *the Beautiful*

CHARLEVOIX PUBLIC SCHOOLS

CHARLEVOIX, MICHIGAN 49720

Dear

First, let me thank you for "volunteering" your services in assisting me with establishing attitude statements and MDE activities for my question- naire.

Some suggestions for writing attitude statements are:

1. Avoid statements that refer to the past rather than to the present.

2. Avoid statements that are factual or capable of being interpreted as factual.

3. Avoid statements that may be interpreted in more than one way.

4. Avoid statements that are likely to be endorsed by almost everyone or by almost no one.

5. Keep the language of the statements simple, clear, and direct.

6. Statements should be short, rarely exceeding 20 words.

7. Statements containing universals such as <u>all</u>, <u>always</u>, <u>none</u>, and <u>never</u> often introduce ambiguity and should be avoided.

8. Whenever possible, statements should be in the form of simple sentences rather than in the form of compound or complex sentences.

As far as MDE activities are concerned, simply list some of the ones you feel are important. They do not necessarily have to be existing activi- ties, but perhaps what you feel would be a good activity to be conducted by the MDE.

Again, thanks for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Gordon VanWieren
Superintendent

CVW:lc

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Requests for Suggested Statements

The proposed attitude survey will be divided into nine categories. An example of an attitude statement is made for each of the categories.

Please add <u>at least one</u> additional statement for each category. Of course, three or more would be preferred, but I'll settle for one.

1. <u>Personal Qualities</u>

   <u>Example</u>: "State Department personnel do not keep abreast of the latest educational developments and innovations."

   <u>Suggested Statements</u>:

   1.

   2.

   3.

2. <u>Work Characteristics</u>

   <u>Example</u>: "State Department personnel seem to get things done fast."

   <u>Suggested Statements</u>:

   1.

   2.

   3.

3. <u>Communications</u>

   <u>Example</u>: "There is a free exchange of information between local K-12 schools and the State Department."

   <u>Suggested Statements</u>:

   1.

   2.

   3.

Request for Suggested Statements - page 2

4. Relations with Local K-12 Districts

   Example: "When initiating new state-wide programs, the State Department allots sufficient time for the local schools to plan and organize."

   Suggested Statements:

   1.

   2.

   3.

5. Staff Work Concepts

   Example: "State Department personnel respect the judgment of the local superintendent."

   Suggested Statements:

   1.

   2.

   3.

6. New Programs and Research

   Example: "State Department interest in instructional innovation has improved the climate for local educational change."

   Suggested Statements:

   1.

   2.

   3.

Request for Suggested Statements - page 3

7. Date Collection, Input, and Reporting

    Example: "Data collected by the State Department is used to improve instruction."

    Suggested Statements:

    1.

    2.

    3.

8. Practices and Services

    Example: "Meetings sponsored by the State Department are well planned and make valuable contributions to education."

    Suggested Statements:

    1.

    2.

    3.

APPENDIX B

COVER LETTER AND QUESTIONNAIRE

APPENDIX B

COVER LETTER AND QUESTIONNAIRE

C HARLEVOIX *the Beautiful*

C HARLEVOIX PUBLIC SCHOOLS

C HARLEVOIX, MICHIGAN 49720   May 18, 1978

Dear

The enclosed questionnaire concerning the Michigan Department of
Education (MDE) is being sent to 101 K-12 public school systems in
Michigan. The superintendent, a principal and a person in central
administration will receive a questionnaire. This study will reveal
the attitudes local school administrators have toward the MDE, and
in addition, will indicate how these administrators feel about
various MDE activities. In responding to the questionnaire, it must
be kept in mind that the MDE works within certain constraints. The
results, along with recommendations, will be presented to the MDE.
Hopefully, this information will be considered by the MDE staff in
making long range plans.

Because of random sampling, it is EXTREMELY IMPORTANT that a high
percentage of questionnaires be returend if we are to gain the
desired information. Yes, it will take a few minutes to complete
the questionnaire, but this is a subject which, as administrators,
we have frequently discussed in both positive and negative terms.
It's about time for a formal, objective report!!

It will be appreciated if you complete the questionnaire prior to
May 31 and return it in the enclosed stamped, self addressed envelope.
Your name and school system will be treated confidentially.

                              Sincerely yours,

                              Gordon VanWieren
                              Superintendent of Schools

Doctoral Committee
Dr. Stanley Hecker, Chairman
Dr. Peggy Riethmiller
Dr. James McKee
Dr. Norman Weinheimer

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Instructions for Answering Questions
in Section I

- Record answers by circling the number of the appropriate answer.
- Mark only one answer for each item.

<u>Example:</u>

        My place of birth was:
           1. Michigan
           2. Another state in the U.S.
           3. Canada
           4. Other

If you were born in Illinois, you would circle number "2."

Section I

1. My age is
    1. 20 - 29
    2. 30 - 39
    3. 40 - 49
    4. 50 - 59
    5. 60 or more

2. My sex is
    1. Male
    2. Female

3. The level of my professional preparation is
    1. Ph.D. or Ed.D.
    2. Ed.S.
    3. M.A.
    4. B.S.
    5. Other

4. My current professional position is that of
    1. Superintendent of schools
    2. Central staff (other than Business Manager)
    3. Business Manager
    4. Principal

5. The number of complete years, including this year, that I have been employed in the category indicated in question 4 in <u>this state</u> is
    1. 1 - 4
    2. 5 - 9
    3. 10 - 14
    4. 15 - 19
    5. 20 or more

Section I (Continued)

6. The number of complete years that I have been employed in educational administration in Michigan is
    1. 0 - 1
    2. 2 - 5
    3. 6 - 10
    4. 11 - 20
    5. More than 20

7. I visit the Michigan Department of Education offices on professional business with the following frequency:
    1. Never
    2. 1 to 3 times per year
    3. 4 to 6 times per year
    4. 7 to 10 times per year
    5. More than 10 times per year

8. I telephone the MDE offices on professional business with the following frequency:
    1. Never
    2. 1 to 3 times per year
    3. 4 to 6 times per year
    4. 7 to 10 times per year
    5. More than 10 times per year

9. Select the single activity which has most influenced your attitude toward the MDE in a positive manner.
    1. Listening to MDE speakers
    2. Discussion groups led by MDE personnel
    3. Informal conversations with MDE personnel
    4. Personal consultation with MDE personnel
    5. MDE visitors to my school system

10. Again, select the single activity which has most influenced your attitude toward the MDE in a positive manner.
    1. Opinions of other administrators
    2. News media information
    3. MDE publications
    4. Programs sponsored by the MDE
    5. Correspondence with MDE personnel

11. Select the single activity which has most influenced your attitude toward the MDE in a negative manner.
    1. Listening to MDE speakers
    2. Discussion groups led by MDE personnel
    3. Informal conversations with MDE personnel
    4. Personal consultation with MDE personnel
    5. MDE visitors to my school system

Section I (Continued)

12. Again, select the single activity which has most influenced
    your attitude toward the MDE in a negative manner.
       1. Opinions of other administrators
       2. News media information
       3. MDE publications
       4. Programs sponsored by the MDE
       5. Correspondence with MDE personnel

Instructions for Answering Questions in Section II

Please read the following directions before beginning

In general, follow these definitions of response alternatives:

   1 - I almost always agree with this statement; or, in almost
       all instances, this statement is true.

   2 - I frequently am in agreement with this statement; or,
       more often than not this statement is true.

   3 - This statement is neither true nor false; or, the evidence
       indicates that the statement is true about half the time
       and false about half the time.

   4 - I frequently am in disagreement with this statement; or,
       more often than not this statement is false.

   5 - I almost always disagree with this statement; or, in
       almost all instances, this statement is false.

	Agree	Neutral		Disagree
	1	2	3	4	5

13. The MDE usually responds quickly to
    requests for assistance.   1   2   3   4   5

14. Most MDE personnel respect the
    judgment of local administrators.   1   2   3   4   5

15. Most MDE personnel are reasonable
    in informing school district per-
    sonnel of state and federal laws.   1   2   3   4   5

Section II (Continued)

	Agree 1	2	Neutral 3	4	Disagree 5

16. The MDE tends to give certain schools special consideration.

    1   2   3   4   5

17. Most MDE officials have made little effort to eliminate red tape.

    1   2   3   4   5

18. When initiating new state-wide programs, the MDE allots sufficient time for the local school districts to plan and organize.

    1   2   3   4   5

19. Most of the MDE staff are not in regular contact with public school personnel.

    1   2   3   4   5

20. One does not always know what information and reports the MDE requires.

    1   2   3   4   5

21. MDE staff are well informed on current issues and developments in education.

    1   2   3   4   5

22. The MDE gives valuable help in solving school district problems.

    1   2   3   4   5

23. MDE interest in instructional innovation has improved the climate for school district educational change.

    1   2   3   4   5

24. There is a conflict between the MDE role to enforce the laws and the role of providing consulting services.

    1   2   3   4   5

25. Presentations by most MDE personnel do not reflect many original ideas.

    1   2   3   4   5

26. Most reports requested by the MDE are necessary.

    1   2   3   4   5

27. Most MDE personnel are practical.

    1   2   3   4   5

Section II (Continued)

	Agree		Neutral		Disagree
	1	2	3	4	5

28. The MDE has had little effect on the improvement of instruction.

    1   2   3   4   5

29. Many of the MDE publications could be eliminated.

    1   2   3   4   5

30. The MDE does an effective job of promoting state legislation beneficial to education.

    1   2   3   4   5

31. Most MDE personnel do not attempt to improve through self evaluation.

    1   2   3   4   5

32. Most MDE programs do not reflect areas of genuine concern to educators.

    1   2   3   4   5

33. Most MDE staff speak out about controversial issues.

    1   2   3   4   5

34. There is a free exchange of information between the school district and the MDE.

    1   2   3   4   5

35. Significant curriculum developments originate at the MDE level.

    1   2   3   4   5

36. School district and MDE personnel work as a team in solving educational problems.

    1   2   3   4   5

37. There is too much duplication in the information requested by various MDE departments.

    1   2   3   4   5

38. Most educators are not aware of the kinds of services offered by the MDE.

    1   2   3   4   5

39. Most meetings sponsored by MDE are well planned.

    1   2   3   4   5

40. Most of the MDE staff spends too little of its time working with people in school districts.

    1   2   3   4   5

Section II (Continued)

		Agree	Neutral		Disagree
		1 2	3	4	5

41. Group presentations made by MDE staff members generally provide useful information.

1 2 3 4 5

42. Most MDE reports require too much work.

1 2 3 4 5

43. Most MDE personnel seem more concerned with regulating schools than with providing leadership.

1 2 3 4 5

44. In seeking solutions to educational problems, most educators naturally turn to the MDE.

1 2 3 4 5

45. The MDE is a good source of information about innovative programs in local school districts.

1 2 3 4 5

46. Most MDE personnel making recommendations to local school districts have inadequate understanding of conditions in those districts.

1 2 3 4 5

47. Most MDE personnel are unreasonably influenced by pressure groups.

1 2 3 4 5

48. Most materials and publications from the MDE are not very helpful.

1 2 3 4 5

Instructions for Answering Questions in Section III

Please read the following directions before beginning

Left hand scale instructions

To the left of each statement is a scale to indicate how strongly you feel the MDE should be performing the activity. Circle the appropriate number. If you are neutral or cannot decide, circle "3."

Section III (Continued)

Right hand scale instructions

After you have responded to the left hand scale for each item,
return to the first item and respond to the right hand scale as
follows: to the right of each statement is a scale to indicate
how you appraise the amount of emphasis the MDE is presently
placing on this activity. Circle "3" if neutral or cannot decide.

IMPORTANCE OF THE   PRESENT AMOUNT OF
ACTIVITY   EMPHASIS BY MDE

1 - no importance   1 - very low emphasis
2 - little importance   2 - low emphasis
3 - moderate importance   3 - moderate emphasis
4 - important   4 - much emphasis
5 - extreme importance   5 - extreme emphasis

1 2 3 4 5   49. Provide proposal writing   1 2 3 4 5
                      assistance to school dis-
                      tricts.

1 2 3 4 5   50. Assign MDE personnel in   1 2 3 4 5
                      intermediate school dis-
                      tricts to work closely
                      with school districts in
                      that area.

1 2 3 4 5   51. Make consultant-type visits   1 2 3 4 5
                      to school districts on a
                      regular basis.

1 2 3 4 5   52. Establish criteria for the   1 2 3 4 5
                      evaluation of educational
                      materials on the market.

1 2 3 4 5   53. Sponsor annual teacher con-   1 2 3 4 5
                      ferences in subject matter
                      areas.

1 2 3 4 5   54. Exchange MDE personnel with   1 2 3 4 5
                      personnel from school dis-
                      tricts on a short-term basis.

1 2 3 4 5   55. Provide services specifically   1 2 3 4 5
                      designed to assist small
                      school districts.

Section III (Continued)

IMPORTANCE OF THE ACTIVITY	PRESENT AMOUNT OF EMPHASIS BY MDE
1 - no importance	1 - very low emphasis
2 - little importance	2 - low emphasis
3 - moderate importance	3 - moderate emphasis
4 - important	4 - much emphasis
5 - extreme importance	5 - extreme emphasis

1 2 3 4 5   56. Provide research assistance to school districts.   1 2 3 4 5

1 2 3 4 5   57. Conduct public meetings throughout the state to explain recent educational legislation.   1 2 3 4 5

1 2 3 4 5   58. Assist school districts in reporting student progress to the community.   1 2 3 4 5

1 2 3 4 5   59. Carry out an in-depth study of building replacements and the construction of new facilities.   1 2 3 4 5

1 2 3 4 5   60. Assist school districts in developing competency testing for high school graduation.   1 2 3 4 5

1 2 3 4 5   61. Resolve conflicts between school districts developing from land transfers, annexations and consolidations.   1 2 3 4 5

1 2 3 4 5   62. Bring personnel together from school districts with similar problems to work on solutions.   1 2 3 4 5

1 2 3 4 5   63. Operate a state-wide insurance program for school districts.   1 2 3 4 5

1 2 3 4 5   64. Publish annually the areas of critical manpower shortages for use by high school counselors.   1 2 3 4 5

Section III (Continued)

IMPORTANCE OF THE ACTIVITY	PRESENT AMOUNT OF EMPHASIS BY MDE
1 - no importance	1 - very low emphasis
2 - little importance	2 - low emphasis
3 - moderate importance	3 - moderate emphasis
4 - important	4 - much emphasis
5 - extreme importance	5 - extreme emphasis

1 2 3 4 5   65. Provide assistance to school   1 2 3 4 5
                       districts in conducting
                       total needs assessments.

1 2 3 4 5   66. Develop teacher cadres for   1 2 3 4 5
                       planning in-service on a
                       geographical basis.

1 2 3 4 5   67. Assist school districts in   1 2 3 4 5
                       developing meaningful goals
                       and translating the goals into
                       measurable objectives.

1 2 3 4 5   68. Encourage educational experi-   1 2 3 4 5
                       mental demonstration centers.

1 2 3 4 5   69. Initiate a program to coordi-   1 2 3 4 5
                       nate purchasing for all school
                       districts in Michigan.

1 2 3 4 5   70. Work with school districts in   1 2 3 4 5
                       establishing short and long
                       range energy conservation
                       plans.

1 2 3 4 5   71. Develop state-wide data pro-   1 2 3 4 5
                       cessing services for financial
                       accounting for school dis-
                       tricts.

1 2 3 4 5   72. Provide high school students   1 2 3 4 5
                       with information regarding
                       student financial assistance
                       services.

1 2 3 4 5   73. Coordinate services between   1 2 3 4 5
                       public and school district
                       libraries.

Section III (Continued)

IMPORTANCE OF THE ACTIVITY	PRESENT AMOUNT OF EMPHASIS BY MDE
1 - no importance	1 - very low emphasis
2 - little importance	2 - low emphasis
3 - moderate importance	3 - moderate emphasis
4 - important	4 - much emphasis
5 - extreme importance	5 - extreme emphasis

1 2 3 4 5   74. Encourage cooperation among school districts in conducting adult continuing education services.   1 2 3 4 5

1 2 3 4 5   75. Provide a state-wide assessment program for school district students.   1 2 3 4 5

1 2 3 4 5   76. Offer school districts consultant services to upgrade buildings for access by the handicapped.   1 2 3 4 5

1 2 3 4 5   77. Inform school district personnel of outstanding programs in other schools.   1 2 3 4 5

1 2 3 4 5   78. Set state-wide minimum performance objectives in all subject areas.   1 2 3 4 5

1 2 3 4 5   79. Public MDE position papers on current educational issues.   1 2 3 4 5

1 2 3 4 5   80. Involve educators, citizens and students in the formulation of goals for education in Michigan.   1 2 3 4 5

1 2 3 4 5   81. Assist school districts in negotiating contracts with employees.   1 2 3 4 5

1 2 3 4 5   82. Utilize advisory committees to evaluate MDE activities.   1 2 3 4 5

1 2 3 4 5   83. Recommend alternative state financial models for consideration by the legislature.   1 2 3 4 5

Section III (Continued)

84. What are some of the aspects of the MDE that seem to be effective or good?

85. What suggestions do you have for improving the MDE?

APPENDIX C

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

APPENDIX C

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Respondents

Three hundred three questionnaires were sent to the invited sample. Two hundred sixty-one questionnaires were returned, of which four were unanswered for various reasons. Two hundred fifty-seven useable questionnaires were returned. This represents an 84.8% response of questionnaires to be used in the study.

As indicated in Table C-1 the rate of return did not vary from one administrative position to another. In fact, the difference in percentage of return from the highest (superintendents at 86.1%) to the lowest (high school principals at 83.2% was only 2.9 percentage points.

Also, as shown in Table C-1 there was very little difference in rate of return from one geographical area to another. The greatest difference was from the upper peninsula which yielded an 80.6% return to the schools within a 75 mile radius of Lansing which had a return of 85.9%. This represents a difference of only 5.3 percentage points.

The greatest difference in percentage of return was in the category of school size as shown in Table C-2. The medium size schools had a percentage return of 89.6 for the highest. The lowest percentage return was from the small schools at 79.4%. This greatest extreme was only 10.2 percentage points.

TABLE C-1.--Number of Questionnaires Mailed with Frequency and Percent of Return by Various Categories.

Geographical Area	Size of School	Superintendents			H.S. Principals			Other Administrators			All Administrators		
		Mailed	Return		Mailed	Return		Mailed	Return		Mailed	Return	
			Freq.	%		Freq.	%		Freq.	%		Freq.	%
Upper Peninsula	Large	2	2	100.0	2	2	100.0	2	1	50.0	6	5	83.3
	Medium	3	2	66.7	3	3	100.0	3	3	100.0	9	8	88.9
	Small	7	5	71.4	7	5	71.5	7	6	85.7	21	16	76.2
		12	9	75.0	12	10	83.3	12	10	83.3	36	29	80.6
Lower Peninsula more than 75 miles from Lansing	Large	8	7	87.5	8	4	50.0	8	6	75.0	24	17	70.8
	Medium	20	20	100.0	20	17	85.0	20	18	90.0	60	55	91.7
	Small	16	14	87.5	16	14	87.5	16	12	75.0	48	40	83.3
		44	41	93.2	44	35	79.5	44	36	81.8	132	112	84.8
Lower Peninsula less than 75 miles from Lansing	Large	9	9	100.0	9	8	88.9	9	8	88.9	27	25	92.6
	Medium	25	20	80.0	25	24	92.0	25	23	92.0	75	66	88.0
	Small	11	8	72.7	11	8	72.7	11	9	81.8	33	25	75.8
		45	37	82.2	45	39	86.7	45	40	88.9	135	116	85.9
		101	87	86.1	101	84	83.2	101	86	85.1	303	257	84.8

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TABLE C-2.--Number of Questionnaires Mailed with Frequency and
Percent of Return by School Size.

Large			Medium			Small		
Mailed	Return		Mailed	Return		Mailed	Return	
	Freq.	%		Freq.	%		Freq.	%
57	47	82.6	144	129	89.6	102	81	79.4

Demographic Data

Forty-four demographic variables were reported on the com-
puter printout, many of which had little significance in the study.
Consequently, what follows is a selected number of demographic
variables which seemed to be of interest.

Age

Table C-3 gives an indication of the age groups by sex of
all the respondents. Only 3.2% of the respondents were under 30
years of age or over 60 years of age.

The younger respondents were in the smaller schools
(Table C-4).

Although none of the superintendents were over age 60, as a
group, they definitely were the oldest (Table C-5).

Of the administrators responding, 93.8% were male and 6.2%
female.

TABLE C-3.--Percentage Distribution of Administrators by Age and
Sex.

Age Group	Male	Female	Combined
20-29	1.7%	0%	1.6%
30-39	32.8%	12.5%	31.5%
40-49	38.2%	37.5%	38.1%
50-59	26.6%	37.5%	27.2%
60+	.8%	12.5%	1.6%
	100.0%	100.0%	

TABLE C-4.--Age of Administrators and School Size in a Percentage
Distribution.

	Size of School		
Age Group	Large	Medium	Small
20-29	0%	0%	5.1%
30-39	19.1%	27.7%	45.6%
40-49	46.8%	39.2%	30.4%
50-59	29.8%	32.3%	17.7%
60+	4.3%	.8%	1.3%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

TABLE C-5.--Administrative Position by Percentage in Various Age
Groups.

	Position		
Age Group	Superintendent	High School Principal	Other Administrator
20-29	0%	2.7%	1.8%
30-39	18.2%	40.7%	33.9%
40-49	48.9%	31.1%	37.5%
50-59	33.0%	25.7%	21.4%
60+	0%	.9%	5.4%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Geographically, the upper peninsula had the largest per-
centage of females with 10.3% while the schools in the lower
peninsula and more than 75 miles from Lansing had the lowest with
4.5% (Table C-6).

None of the superintendents responding were female. However,
8.8% of the high school principals and 10.7% of the other administra-
tors responding were female (Table 7).

Males represented the younger age groups as compared to
females (Table 3). In fact, 34.5% of all the male respondents were
under age 40 while only 12.5% of the females were under age 40. Also,
it appears that females stay on the job longer as 12.5% of them were
in the above age 60 category. Only .8% of the males were above age
60.

TABLE C-6.--Male-Female Distribution in Percentage of Administrators by Geographical Area.

Geographical Area	Female	Male	Total
Upper Peninsula	10.3%	89.7%	100.0%
L.P. + 75 miles	4.5%	95.5%	100.0%
L.P. - 75 miles	6.9%	93.1%	100.0%

TABLE C-7.--Percentage of Male-Female Representation by Administrative Position.

	Superintendent	High School Principal	Other Administrator
Male	100%	91.2%	89.3%
Female	0%	8.8%	10.7%

Level of Professional Preparation

By far the most common degree held by the respondents was the M.A. (Table C-8).

A greater proportion (29.5%) of the superintendents held doctorates than the other groups of administrators (Table C-9).

TABLE C-8.--Level of Professional Preparation of All Respondents
by Percentage.

Degree	Percent of Respondents
Doctorate	16.0%
Specialist	24.2%
M.A.	52.7%
B.A.	4.7%
Other	2.3%
	100.0%

TABLE C-9.--Professional Preparation by Administrative Position.

Professional Degree	Administrative Position		
	Superintendent	High School Principal	Other Administrator
Doctorate	29.5%	8.8%	9.1%
Specialist	28.4%	23.9%	18.2%
M.A.	40.9%	61.9%	52.7%
B.A.	1.1%	4.4%	10.9%
Other	0%	.9%	9.1%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Years in Like Administrative
Position in Michigan

Superintendents have spent more time in a like position in the state of Michigan as compared to other administrators. Over 70% of the superintendents have served in a superintendency in the state of Michigan for over 11 years (Table C-10).

Years in Michigan as
Administrator

Only 1.2% of the respondents were serving their first year as an administrator in Michigan. Over 19% have been in Michigan as an administrator for more than 20 years (Table C-11).

Visits to MDE

Almost one-half (48.2%) of the respondents indicated they visited the MDE offices in Lansing one to three times per year and 36.9% do not make the trip at all (Table C-12).

Respondents in the upper peninsula do not visit the MDE very often as compared to the administrators in the lower peninsula (Table C-13).

Respondents indicated that the smaller the school district in which they serve, the greater the chance that they will not visit the MDE (Table C-14).

Many (68.8%) high school principals reported that they never visit the MDE, while only 10.2% of the superintendents reported they do not make any visits to the MDE (Table C-15).

TABLE C-10.--Years in Present or Like Position in the State of
Michigan.

Position	Years					
	0-1	2-5	6-10	11-20	20%	Total
Superintendent	1.1%	5.7%	22.7%	45.5%	25.0%	100.0%
H.S. Principal	1.8%	22.1%	27.4%	32.7%	15.9%	100.0%
Other	0%	25.0%	26.8%	30.4%	17.9%	100.0%
Combined	1.2%	17.1%	25.7%	36.6%	19.5%	100.0%

TABLE C-11.--Number of Years Served as an Administrator in the
State of Michigan.

Number of Years	Percent of Respondents
0-1	1.2%
2-5	17.2%
6-10	25.4%
11-20	36.7%
20+	19.5%
	100.0%

TABLE C-12.--Number of Yearly Visits to MDE by All Administrators.

Number of Yearly Visits	Percent of Respondents
Never	36.9%
1-3 times	48.2%
4-6 times	9.8%
7-10 times	3.1%
10+ times	2.0%
	100.0%

TABLE C-13.--Number of Yearly Visits to the MDE by Geographical Area in Percentage by Various Frequency Groups.

Number of Yearly Visits	Geographical Area		
	Upper Peninsula	Lower Peninsula more than 75 mi. from Lansing	Lower Peninsula within 75 mi. of Lansing
Never	62.1%	31.8%	35.3%
1-3 times	27.6%	54.5%	47.4%
4-6 times	6.9%	7.3%	12.9%
7-10 times	3.4%	3.6%	2.6%
10+ times	0	2.7%	1.7%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

TABLE C-14.--Number of Yearly Visits Made to the MDE by Size of School.

Number of Yearly Visits	Size of School District		
	Large	Medium	Small
Never	23.4%	32.3%	52.6%
1-3 times	59.6%	51.5%	35.9%
4-6 times	4.3%	11.5%	10.3%
7-10 times	6.4%	3.8%	0
10+ times	6.4%	.8%	1.3%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

TABLE C-15.--Number of Yearly Visits Made to the MDE by Administrative Position.

Number of Yearly Visits	Administrative Position		
	Superintendent	High School Principal	Other Administrators
Never	10.2%	68.8%	16.1%
1-3 times	65.9%	26.8%	62.5%
4-6 times	14.8%	4.5%	12.5%
7-10 times	4.5%	0	7.1%
10+ times	4.5%	0	1.8%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Frequency of Phone
Calls to MDE

Very few (10.6%) of the respondents indicated they never call the MDE (Table C-16) and only 3.4% of those in the upper peninsula replied that they never call the MDE (Table C-17).

TABLE C-16.—Number of Yearly Telephone Calls to the MDE by Administrators.

Number of Yearly Calls	Percent of Respondents
Never	10.6%
1-3 times	29.4%
4-6 times	18.0%
7-10 times	19.6%
10+ times	22.4%

TABLE C-17.—Number of Yearly Telephone Calls to the MDE by Geographical Area.

Number of Yearly Calls	Geographical Area		
	Upper Peninsula	Lower Peninsula more than 75 mi. from Lansing	Lower Peninsula within 75 mi. of Lansing
Never	3.4%	6.4%	16.4%
1-3 times	48.3%	28.2%	25.9%
4-6 times	17.2%	20.0%	16.4%
7-10 times	13.8%	17.3%	23.3%
10+ times	17.2%	28.2%	18.1%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

APPENDIX D

QUESTIONS TO BE ANSWERED

IN NARRATIVE FORM

QUESTIONS TO BE ANSWERED

IN NARRATIVE FORM

Answers to the question "What are some of the aspects of the MDE that seem to be effective or good."

Category: <u>MDE personnel are friendly, cooperative, knowledgeable, and provide assistance to local schools.</u>

Willingness to provide assistance.

Some personnel are very helpful. _____, _____, and _____ are good examples.

You get a fast, straight answer from some people.

I have enjoyed a good personal contact and they have helped me when I needed them and particularly the MDE Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Porter.

Supt. Porter is willing to receive in-put from state professional education organizations.

A number of MDE staff personnel are excellent and we look to them for advice.

Important liaison.

Cooperation is excellent.

Finance Department is helpful.

Willingness to assist.

I have found their consultants to be helpful on a one-to-one basis.

I have very good luck working with various department heads.

Personnel are generally most cooperative.

There are some excellent people in the MDE--_____, _____, _____, _____, _____.

Personnel are pleasant to deal with for the most part.

The MDE people have always tried to assist but lack current "Education Tools."

Very good in providing information reflecting rules and regulations.

MDE personnel are generally helpful and avail themselves as needed.

The personnel present their positions to groups very well and they field questions as well as some lawyers.

I feel that the MDE has a genuine concern for local school districts and renders as much service as it possibly can.

Personnel generally seem very knowledgeable within their area of speciality.

Consultants for state and federal programs are very cooperative and helpful.

When you call, most of the offices are helpful (especially transportation).

They are friendly and helpful in some cases.

Most MDE department heads are very responsive to questions concerning forms and rules and regulations.

Good cooperation and assistance at times.

Assistance in dealing with problems involving the MDE.

When telephoned, personnel sincerely endeavor to be of service by answering questions, etc.

We have had excellent success in gaining information by telephone from staff.

_____'s office.

I find some good consultant services in the state aid, categorical, migrant, Title I, Sec. 27.

In the areas of financing and certification, the MDE seems to have highly qualified employees.

When you call on them for help in a specific area, they most often can be helpful--especially in filling out all the endless forms, etc.

Most of the staff seem courteous and helpful.

There are some helpful people employed by MDE.

Staff highly cooperative--willing to help anytime.

Disseminating information regarding programs.

Certain departments such as school reorganization and plant planning have been helpful when we have called on them.

Their attempt at setting minimal standards.

Have some find individuals who are sincere and try to be of help.

Generally helpful when called.

They seem to be trying.

Very personable staff.

Good at returning calls and answering questions.

Very helpful/informative when called.

Some very fine people that are willing to help--especially _____, _____, _____.

Most of the people I've worked with have been friendly and helpful.

When I need help with a problem, I can rely on the MDE.

Willingness of personnel to answer questions when contacted.

_____ is very helpful.

While my contact with the MDE has been on a limited basis, I have found that a telephone call most always has given me the answer to whatever the problem and/or question.

Category: The State Assessment Test

The state testing program has been good.

Assessment Program.

Assessment testing.

State's assessment testing (great).

Assessment work.

State wide assessment.

Statewide assessment testing.

Establishment of MAT.

State assessment.

Attempt to provide state wide assessment tests.

Information on Assessment Testing program is effective <u>not</u> good.

I feel the assessment testing program has helped local districts to realize the importance of measuring student performance.

The work on assessment tests!

State assessment.

The State Assessment Program for grades 4-7 & 10.

Category: Compensatory Education programs, Title I,
          Special Education

Compensatory--very supportive.

Title IV-Innovative Program--excellent.

Title I consultant extremely helpful.

Special education division.

Special education information and reports.

Comp. Ed. Program.

The consultants for federal programs are helpful to local districts. Most are good and a few are not. I'd like local program specialists to evaluate some of these to MDE.

Comp. ed. program.

The Comp. Ed. staff.

Category: Consultants

Consultive services.

Consultant service for small programs is good. (Title I)

Visitations of consultant for Title I.

Consultant help with specific problems has been excellent with one exception when there was not the consideration of a reply.

The activities and projects that allow you to meet MDE consultants on a personal basis so they can see first hand your problems and concerns.

They have some very fine consultants employed on the staff.

Consultant services at workshops.

Category: Needs assessment, statewide goals, objectives

Objective program.

Needs assessment.

State-wide goals and objectives.

Performance objectives.

Promotion of Goals/objectives.

Minimum performance objectives

Category: MDE meetings

Program for new superintendents explaining the role of MDE

Public meetings to explain educational legislation are usually done very well.

They have had some good presentations at various meetings.

Geographical sessions on such things as scholarship, legislation, current problems in education.

Regional Meetings on issues of importance.

MDE seems to recognize that there is a problem. I have been to meetings where MDE officials were in attendance and have had positive input from them.

Category: Miscellaneous

Educational innovation is very good.

Strong leadership by superintendent is excellent. (John Porter is a very good leader.)

Research.

Certification of teachers.

Textbook approval.

Inservice training.

Legal advice.

Superintendent of MDE puts kids first.

Certification is fair.

Assistance in writing proposals.

Effort to inform superintendents of state department matters is evidently effective. It is my source of information.

Vocational emphasis.

Allocation of federal funds, i.e., vocational, special education, etc.

I like most of their publications. They are well done and clearly presented.

Position Papers.

Statistics.

The impact of the MDE in forcing LEA's to meet some education standards.

Hot lunch--very efficient operation.

The turn-around time in getting funds requested back to the local schools.

People seem to be getting out into the field working with personnel of local districts.

Resource information.

I am not sure. I have no direct dealings with the MDE.

Michigan adoption program.

Financial data: all programs.

Information on innovative or demonstration programs.

School lunch program.

Appear to have a handle on some of the problems.

They do get involved in everything.

They do have lots of ideas--some of them very good.

They are becoming aware of the need for inservice at all levels.

The Gestalt Method.

More services for handicapped, etc. (But there is a catch--more forms.)

Settling disputes between districts, e.g., property transfers, providing assistance in bonding, loan against state aid, certain title grant areas, enforcing human rights laws.

They are there. They answer a few questions.

The following departments have offered conscientious service over the past 13 years: transportation, accounting & finance, hot lunch, school plant planning and teacher certification.

The ISD arrangement has potential to be closer to the local schools, i.e. the MDE in the local district.

Recent hiring and reorganization in some areas seems positive and uplifting.

The MDE does serve as an agent to keep education in the state on an even keel and to keep unscrupulous educators honest.

State forms are simpler than federal and fewer "Thou shalts."

Communications generally relevant, clear and concise.

Involving teachers and local administrators in formulating instructional objectives and assessment items.

My dealings reflect both good and bad contacts. Positive feelings come with some personnel who know what they are doing.

Publications.

It has the resources to do many positive things for the local district. I perceive the MDE as a huge bureaucratic watchdog. It is very impersonal. I have no identity with the MDE.

It helps the unemployment figures in Lansing.

Gestalt program--This school has benefited greatly.

Many of the inservices.

The MDE has a tremendous potential of knowing the overall needs of Michigan education.

I have to admit I am biased. I have seen it go from little or no control to semi-dictatorship. I am positive that they have a positive influence and do many positive things.

The quality of program put on in the Intermediate District by the MDE appears to be greatly improved in recent times.

MDE support of certain innovative programs to serve as models for other districts.

Answers to the question "What suggestions do you have for improving the MDE?"

Category: MDE personnel should get out in the field, visit schools, and made more personal contacts.

Staff needs to get out in the schools more and find out the problems.

More individual contacts with the local districts. (Even when I was president of the state association I could not get into see the State Superintendent of Public Instruction. He was never available.

Increase time for MDE eprsonnel to visit schools.

To most "building" people, the MDE is distant and far removed from the actual realities of education in the schools. Perhaps this is our own perception because we see little of MDE people and know less about their actual activities. An information P-R program is needed.

Closer cooperation with the field.

Bring staff to the operating level more often.

Cause heads and supervisors to return telephone calls.

Become knowledgeable about the many different problems faced by the schools in Michigan.

Many scheduled meetings away from Lansing do not seem to be supported by key people scheduled to make presentations. We want to listen to key people of the various departments.

More day to day feel for local school district's problems.

Need to divide the MDE into two levels of functions: (1) administration of MDE requirements, (2) consultants for local districts.

Increase contact with schools--a contact with coordinator does not insure communication.

Personalization of effort toward individual inquiries.

Make themselves better known to principals.

Closer contact with practicing educators.

Personnel at the local level should go to the MDE and get to know these people.

More personal contact with the school administrators.

When considering a mandated program, poll administrators, boards of education and teachers to see if they see a need for mandating such a program for all schools.

Periodically place personnel in local districts to meet problems first hand.

Increased consultation personnel in subject areas--elementary and secondary--for ISD and LEA's too small to employ specialists.

Have the leaders become more involved with schools in northern Michigan.

Personnel should be in tune with those in the field regarding impact of different issues. For instance, there is much conversation and effort behind state-wide purchasing of buses and no one in the field seems to see any merit in the concept.

I think the MDE should be based on a geographical basis to assist local districts. In many circumstances the members are not realistic in dealing with local or geographical problems.

More contact with ISD as an arm of the SDE.

Keep having workshops such as the one on assessment tests at Ann Arbor.

More real involvement with local school districts.

Assign members to work with various intermediate districts.

Establish better communications at grass roots level.

More work in the field.

Have an exchange of MDE personnel to see "what it's like," i.e., MDE personnel being hired out-of-state. Having come from another state, things are different (both good and bad.)

Involve school personnel earlier in developing new forms and programs.

Should ask for input before action and during drafting/implementation.

Get them out in the field every so often so they can see what is happening.

Get MDE people out into local districts to face the voters and citizens.

MDE staff members should get out of their offices to find out what the real world is like. Many times they conduct themselves as experts but are not really aware of local conditions.

What real contact does it have with a high school principal?

There needs to be an effort to understand the problems of implementation of some programs, completion of reports, etc., especially in the small high school. There just isn't enough administrative help available for all that is required.

Get it closer to the firing line--the schools themselves.

A MDE representative should visit each school at least once a year to see if there are any concerns or problems the MDE might help with.

Closer direct communications with local school districts.

Put money into involving local level administrators. (Some districts and boards cannot afford to send people to serve on advisory committees.)

More personal contact in the field so that MDE personnel can become acquainted with local problems.

Get them out of Lansing and working with on-site problems.

Closer contact with small outstate districts.

Seek advice from smaller schools.

Regional offices around the state.

From my office, I have very little contact with the MDE. I don't even know what their function is supposed to accomplish.

Category: MDE should cut red tape, reduce forms
                    and paperwork.

Simplify, unify records and reports.

Review detail V.E. added cost forms.

Consider realistic time lines.

Too much money is spent on reports that are of little or no value.

Cut red tape.

Be visible not just available.

Reduce unnecessary information which is included in reports to schools. Too much to read and understand.

Efforts should be made to reduce the "red tape"--the current emphasis seems to be that MDE is accumulating information to justify the expenditure of funds instead of allowing the programs to function.

As President Carter "promised" in Washington--cut down on the red tape. Although MDE is making some attempt, more needs to be done to consolidate numerous forms and thereby reduce the inordinate amount of administrative time necessary to complete unnecessary and redundant forms.

Reduce the number of reports due allowing more time to work on local programs and problems.

Endless paper work for them certainly could be improved on.

MDE red tape and report requirements of local districts are becoming impossible burdens on small districts. We do not have the personnel or the computerized data retrieval equipment to cope with these expectations.

Quit dreaming up new forms for information. It is getting to a point that you need an attorney to figure out instructions.

Make instructions more understandable.

Stop the flow of new forms to be filled out. Share information between departments at MDE.

Cut reports by 99%.

Review the reports requested for actual need.

Simplify the forms so they can be understood.

Use the computers and the yearly audit to obtain information that is requested over and over from every different department.

Remove red tape.

We were told that the reason for the comprehensive change in the accounting system was to "simplify" reporting. It would seem that one master financial report would eliminate the many "extra" reports now required.

Minimize reports and/or complexity of reports.

Cut paper work by 50% (to begin).

Cut down duplication of paperwork.

Forms should match "B" report accounting numbers--cafeteria, transportation, special ed., etc.

Use the same poorly written form each year rather than developing a new poorly written form each year.

Require only those form reports that are absolutely necessary.

Require less reporting. Use the ones they do get to a greater extent.

Eliminate paper work for Title I.

Cut "red-tape." Better regulation of state forms.

Reduce paperwork requirements.

Cut the unnecessary and trivial reports.

Cut down on the paperwork.

Most deadline dates are past when the material is eventually received. This makes one wonder about how much thought went into the topic and how important the return really is.

Avoid duplication.

Reduce the paper work demands they make on a district.

Gather data only if it is important.

The red tape when the local superintendent has to respond to all departments is overwhelming. Each department should be aware of the total demands of the MDE.

Cut down on the number of reports.

Get rid of some of the report (forms) and red tape.

Eliminate duplicating of information on required reports.

Be sure that all information and reports come out in laymen's language.

Spend less time collecting questionable information and more time in consulting services.

Cut back on reporting and size of staff.

Eliminate red-tape from education programming.

Eliminate needless paperwork.

Category: MDE is over regulating local schools.

Constant desire to over-regulate must be curbed (i.e. special education, vocational education).

They are not a service organization. The people are more taken with their regulation responsibility than their service functions. They must improve on this if nothing else.

What starts out as consultant help frequently turns into dictatorship: "Do it this way or we don't fund you," etc.

Don't keep adding more tasks for us to do, but help us do a better job with basic education.

MDE seems more interested in administering programs than developing them.

MDE seems self-serving. It should serve the needs and goals of local LEA's rather than formulate policy to legislate to them. Administering of legislative law is an accepted fact of life. MDE should attempt to intervene on behalf of LEA interests.

Fewer reports and monitoring of LEA's by MDE. Without justification, all report forms are altered annually, which requires more annual training sessions to instruct LEA personnel on how to prepare new forms--a vicious circle that wastes time and resources! Rather than busying themselves with developing new report forms, MDE personnel would be better advised to attempt to be of genuine service to LEA's.

Participation in any state wide purchasing program (buses?) should be at the LEA's option. MDE has a tendency to be an "empire builder," always looking for an excuse to create a larger and larger bureaucracy.

Let the local school board run the school.

Change intent from policing to service and cooperation.

MDE should be a service oriented group, primarily serving as a consultant group rather than a regulatory agency.

Much of the MDE activity is regulatory as opposed to service. We create our bureaucracy by wanting more service in terms of laws. No one seems to trust LEA's in carrying out mandatory functions.

Very negative feeling toward MDE. Being constantly bombarded with new rules, regulations, etc., the department's role seems to be that of an "enforcer."

Category: Fund mandated programs.

Seek funding for mandated programs. If no funds, then no programs.

Provide adequate funds for schools to provide continually increasing services that are being mandated.

MDE should not mandate programs they cannot assist with financially.

The MDE has a bad habit of mandating programs before adequate funding and/or personnel are available to implement the mandated program. This puts a real pinch on the already tight budgets of many local districts. The MDE should become more familiar with the practicality of the programs they design.

Dome out of the "White Tower" and see what's going on before mandating programs.

Don't mandate programs without full funding.

Fully fund Learning Disabled special education programs.

If additional tasks are essential, provide the funding.

Too much "pushing" and very little money to implement.

Any required program should be fully funded with a minimum of paperwork. If money is not available, then the regulation should not be effective.

Category: Improve MDE organization structure

A lot of overlapping--department is so big the left hand doesn't know what the right hadn is doing.

Needs re-organization--into many things that local districts can handle, i.e., athletics.

Consolidate various departments in one building.

The department is so large they don't know what is going on within their own ranks. Communication within the department and a direction of action that is evident would help.

ISD reorganization should be a priority.

Work to combine migrant, Indian, bi-lingual, black and all other programs back into one category. That is, "Basic Needs to Help the Children with Learning Problems." Too many programs overlap and children are labeled. Also, put this money where it will do most good. More state aid to schools directly to deal with their needs, which may take in all of the above categories or just a few. Let's deal with "Kids" not their race, language or handicap. We are all handicapped in one way or another!

Category: Hold regional meetings

Have meetings throughout the state.

State meetings by region of smaller schools to share ideas to improve their schools. We could do this like the old MEA conferences used to do. We could try it at least.

Communicate in person at a regional level to get the input from all districts.

Have meetings throughout the state so that the school districts have a closer relationship with the MDE. At the present time, the MDE is a group of people with names that I cannot associate with or have a close feeling for, a governing body that I cannot relate to.

Hold MDE meetings so we do not need to drive 100 miles or more to attend.

Sponsor annual regional teacher conferences in subject areas, as done years ago. Let it count as a day of school as before. This exchange of ideas is more important than ever before.

Workshops and seminars on what they have to offer local districts. Perhaps they could do these at state conventions or at intermediate offices.

Category: Reduce staff

Reduce staff. I honestly feel the same job could be accomplished with 2/3 staff that were willing to work!

Cut the staff in half.

Cut staff by 50% (to begin).

Reduce the staff.

Force them to reduce by 1/2 the number of people they employ. School administrators are supposed to comply with and be aware of all the rules and regulations. In the MDE, they have specialists in all areas and can answer questions only in their area of speciality.

Category: MDE should be evaluated

An evaluation process.

They need an evaluation of performance.

Evaluation of personnel should be undertaken. Like any organization, weeding is periodically necessary.

Evaluate personnel/Discharge when necessary.

Category: MDE influenced too much by teachers

Too political--run by M.E.A.

Teachers too important--Students seem secondary.

The MDE has a very poor image in the field. They are perceived as being allied with the MEA and Legislature in implementing programs and procedures while letting the administration and citizens find a way to pay for them. They are going to have to work very hard to become creditable with the administrative structure in this state.

Category: Miscellaneous

More involvement in the aspects of running a local school district-- at times rely too much on theory, rules and regulations, etc. without fully recognizing the pragmatics of operating a school system.

Review graduation requirements--perhaps design an exit exam.

Stop injecting personal biases into regulations the MDE is authorized to write.

They should have a more definite managing by objective system for each department; one which is understood by all superintendents.

Act on some of the conclusions evolving from this survey.

More public relations.

Provide and encourage in-service education for teachers and adminis- trators.

Set a standard school day and how many hours of instruction should we have at elementary and secondary. Example, are recessed needed at K-4, K-6? What is a good length of the school day for K-4, 5-8 and 9-12?

Provide adequate lead time for schools to implement policies that are required.

The only suggestion I have probably isn't very realistic because I'm sure it will not happen--but it would be great to see the MDE stop being politically subservient to the M.E.A.

Establish state-wide uniform graduation requirements.

Establish state-wide curriculum.

Establish state-wide competency testing.

De-emphasize "fads" started by MDE.

Quit talking to themselves so much in early stages of programs. They become oblivious to outside inputs, be it constructive or otherwise.

MDE is in most instances a remote bureaucracy--of little help in sensitive areas.

More information on how to get assistance in many areas mentioned in this survey. (By the way, you have asked some very good questions.)

More personnel in some areas needed.

Seek out more competent administrators like _____ and _____.

Much more assistance needed in funding experimental programs, researching funding sources, speeding up actual funds once grant approved. My school has been sorely abused in this area.

Develop a strong posture on curriculum and standards. Requirements by the state are vague and limited. I recognize the legislative constraints, however, we have the image of a weak MDE.

Have the MDE put into action the programs they promote.

They keep local districts confused.

Keep local school districts abreast on successful model programs or practices that are taking place in various school districts.

More concentrated contact with administrators and teachers other than central office personnel.

Step up lobbying and research for more equitable financing of schools.

Provide more assistance to districts in determining total needs assessment.

I have never received help or information when requested.

Drastically curtail "pilot studies," workshops and innovative programs.

Northern Michigan schools are different from southern Michigan schools. Problems and solutions are not the same. All schools should not be expected to be similar. Folk ways and mores of the area should be respected.

Back off on all of the new education programs such as career education and now Global Education which should allow us more time to devote to the basics.

Some MDE people never have the answers to questions asked at the small group meetings. They put on, or they don't want to answer, or they just don't know.

Stop playing favorites and start relating to the over 300 small school districts.

They do as they please.

Stop trying to take over local control.

All MDE people should be required to serve an "Intership" in a large, medium and small school district.

I do not believe the MDE people understand our day to day problems. They are concerned only with rules, regulations and degress.

Weed out some of the dead wood.

Stay away from pre-determined solutions to all problems.

Coordinate public information releases so that local districts are not caught unaware of changes.

Don't infer that all districts benefit from a new program or law unless all do.

We are an out-of-formula district and, therefore, many news releases about new funds, for example, do not apply to us.

The closer local and state agencies work together the more apt we
are to salvage some public respect for our statements.

Develop a better way of returning tax money back to small school dis-
tricts. Income tax is collected but small schools don't receive
any state aid/child monies back.

Many school administrators are very wary of the MDE.

Retaining local control appears to be an underlying issue.

It is difficult for the MDE to be a helper (consulting services) and
a policeman at the same time.

The MDE has little political effect on the legislature. Legislators
have their own advisors, thus creating a little recognized "third
power" in state education policy.

Do not send out information for news releases which compares school
district scores on Michigan Assessment Tests without also sending
information about limitations of test scores.

Some MDE members have no practical experience in either teaching or
administration and in my opinion do not have a realistic approach to
the solution of an educational problem.

Most information or procedural letters from MDE are undated.

Standardized testing should be expanded to include all grade levels
for local evaluation purposes with selected grade levels used for
state wide assessment.

Assessment testing should allow for local emphasis or variation.

Need a stand on 180 day student minimum attendance days.

Keep schools informed.

Stay out of the Michigan High School Athletic Association.

Reduce the activity and number of employees that is growing so
rapidly in the Department of Education.

"That government which governs least, governs best." T. Jefferson.

Worry about the next generation rather than the next election.

Develop a good, strong program to test the competency of teachers,
administrators, making all the professionals pass tests every 5
years or so. (Similar to the nursing profession.)

Most important--deal with and solve the real important issues in
Michigan education: (1) public school finance, (2) the power
struggle--negotiations, teacher strikes, etc.

Exert more leadership in the improvement of teacher certification.

Develop more stringent requirements for teacher-training programs.

Fewer three-martini lunches--no drinking during working hours,
either in Lansing or in the field.

Child accounting has changed every year. Prorating of personnel and
special education students is of no value because it changes all
during the year.

Make sure that each position is filled by a qualified individual
who has had experience and possesses empathy for people in local
school districts.

If the job qualifications come under civil service, all positions
should be filled in that manner. I understand this is not always
true. Politics?!

Improve adult education services.

Make workshops more easily understood and organized. Have been too
many workshops with 3 or 4 "experts" and they meet in groups and all
tell something different.

If you can't find a highly qualified person to fill a particular job,
don't fill the job.

If they would return a phone call, it would help.

The laws must be changed so that recommendations by an improved MDE
would not be negated by lobbying pressure, etc. put on the legisla-
ture. Allow the business of education to be the responsibility of
the professionals.

Less theory and more practical help.

More involvement of small and medium sized school personnel.

Quit dreaming up ridiculous educational schemes for local school
districts to try to adjust to their particular situation.

Many programs are designed for specific schools and areas but all
schools are asked to participate. It's a waste of time and paper,
etc.

Curriculum too fragmented--e.g., areas of social sciences need to be integrated.

Send out a listing for LEA's to prioritize their needs.

Too mnay allocations for special projects--let's share the wealth more equitably.

Inform us what the credentials of these people are who are always telling us what to do. They should establish some credibility with us.

Make meetings more interesting and informative.

Hire knowledgeable and interesting people. Get rid of the dry, dull and uninformative people who conduct meetings.

End affirmative action hiring.

Re-orient the department as being assistance oriented.

Hire people who "care" and have some personal skills.

Let the department become "advocates" of school districts and let the Governor's hey-boys (_____ and _____) do their own dirty work.

Discharge the _____, _____, etc.

Help small rural schools write and design unique programs. They cannot afford staff for this, yet programs are needed.

Should have studied: career ed., professional development advisory councils, testing, driver ed.

Take the initiative in developing alternative methods of funding public education in Michigan.

Does the MDE exist?

I get mostly negative feelings.

Hire good people!

Better planning and organization for area presentations. Schools attend to get information, but many times leave confused.

I feel that education has gotten out of hand with all the Federal programs. I feel we should get back to the basics and develop some realistic goals and responsibilities to life and forget the numerous alternative programs that don't amount to anything.

Removal of the God-complex.

Use assessment to improve education not to judge school districts.

Yearly workshops--one day--reviewing new or revised services for all superintendents. Also, review of future "thrusts" of MDE.

Truthfully, I have little or no contact with MDE. I'm so busy and Lansing too far away for "jaunts" to MDE. I find it big and elusive.

Maybe a directory of services and contact people.

Show concern for all schools and all students and not just those from large cities with an overload of minorities.

Honestly, I have attended hearing where the decision is not whether a concept should be considered but how it is to be implemented.

Reduce the responsibility and staffs of Intermediate School Districts by 95%.

The department needs a strong dose of "good" educational philosophy. They chase every new idea as a panacea. Bilingual education, career education, vocational education, state assessment, minimum standards for graduation are generally counter-productive. There are too many mandates based on popular themes of "conventional" wisdom.

Department personnel need to have narrower range of responsibilities. Most are "overloaded."

Be realistic in developing programs.

Hire more practical people.

Become aware of problems that all districts have (large, medium, small).

Formulate a different plan for financing schools.

Provide inservice for all levels (Bd. of Ed., admin., teachers, etc.) when implementing new rules and regulations so local districts can gear up to implement. Parent groups sometimes have more information before professional educators.

Allocate funds to local school districts and let LSD's determine accountability.

Get away from the idea of Minimal Performance Objectives, because minimal will become the norm.

Do less innovation and more carry-through on present activities.

Be able to relate to individual school districts and their unique, isolated problem areas such as finance, building, curriculum, etc.

Inservicing their leadership so they know what education in the trenches is all about. It's a light year away from the college text to the classroom.

The MDE posture on "special education" should be re-evaluated in terms of what a local district can reasonably be expected to do.

Quality personnel not quantity.

Realization that problems exist in small districts as well as in the larger ones and legislate changes with them in mind!