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## ABSTRACT

Two of the tasks of the Results Oriented Management in Education (ROME) Project are the identification of competencies of the principalship from the professional literature and the classification of these competencies by functional areas of responsibility. Three considerations became criteria in classifying existing competency statements to fit project requirements: (1) the degree to which a given functional area of responsibility was reflected in the content of a particular statement, (2) the major administrative operation indicated by the statement, and (3) the degree to which the statement met performance specifications. Statements were rewritten according to a system flowchart in order to arrive at a standardized form. The resulting model and classification system is a three dimensional grid: seven functional areas of responsibility were established as one dimension; the form of existing competency statements yielded six administrative operations as a second grid component; and the third dimension is the conceptualization of the principal's performance of various competencies or competency "clusters" in relationship to groups of persons most logically affected by performance. (Author/MLF)

## THE R.O.M.E. COMPETENCY CLASSIFICATION MODEL: A DESCRIPTION

by Chad Ellett, Jonelle Pool, and Ed Poole  
University of Georgia(Ed. Note: Results Oriented Management In Education-ROME-Is a project funded  
by the State of Georgia.)General Rationale for Design

Among the tasks of Project R.O.M.E. Is the identification of competencies of the principalship from the professional literature and classification of them by functional areas of responsibility. To do this it was necessary to develop a system model for classifying existing competency statements along dimensions needed for program planning. Originally a two-dimensional grid was formulated that included: 1) the major kinds of "operations", and 2) functional areas of responsibility that make up the principal's job in the schools. As identification and classification tasks proceeded, it became obvious that a more inclusive system model was necessary. Literature reviews identified 50 available sources of competency statements. Examination of these lists indicated duplication, variation in use of similar terms, and a mixture of statement formats. Clearly a defensible procedure and a model were needed to process the compilation of competencies which consisted of approximately 2500 to 3000 statements. The initial list was reduced to approximately half, merely by the elimination of obvious duplications. However, such a list was quite unmanageable in terms of project goals.

Seven functional areas of responsibility were established as one dimension of a two-dimensional grid. In addition, the "form" of existing competency statements implied that at least six administrative operations needed to be delineated, and this became a second grid component. These two basic dimensions and their various combinations were used as a system for the initial classification. As the initial list was reduced by eliminating duplication, statements were sorted into grid categories and a system was developed for standardizing the form in which statements were written. Because of the wide variety of ways in which existing competency statements are written, the decision was made to generate and classify statements on the basis of their overall performance characteristics. A distinction needed to be made between competency statements written in performance terms as opposed to existing statements of knowledge or affect competencies. Competencies written in performance terms were preferred to those reflecting knowledge or affect concepts of competence.

Three considerations became criteria in classifying existing competency statements to fit project requirements: (1) the degree to which a given functional area of responsibility was reflected in the content of a particular statement, (2) the major administrative operation indicated by the statement, and (3) the degree to which the statement met performance specifications.

A system was designed to facilitate the rewriting of statements found in the literature. Statements were rewritten according to a system flowchart in order to arrive at a standardized form. (See Fig. 1) In addition, the system served

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the purpose of logically classifying rewritten statements. To avoid problems with the complexities of the language found in existing statements, a word list synonymous with administrative operations was generated. A set of general guidelines for the logical classification of competency statements using the R.C.C.M. Is, of course, reflected in the system for rewriting and classifying competency statements.

The system for rewriting statements and classifying them in the R.C.C.M. was applied to the reduced set of 1500 principal competencies. In cases where statements could not satisfy characteristics of the system, they were rewritten to meet system specifications. This process prevented elimination of "content" believed to be important by those writing in the professional literature. This process served to reduce the set of approximately 1500 competencies to approximately 315. Thus the initial compilation of competency statements in the literature (3000) was reduced by approximately 90%. The process resulted in placing large numbers of competency statements in some cells, e.g., planning, while other areas in the R.C.C.M. were hardly represented. Those writing about the competency of school administrators may be viewing certain aspects while ignoring others.

The resulting list of competency statements was organized on the basis of: (1) the level of generality of a particular statement once it had been identified with the appropriate model cell, and (2) whether a particular statement was a logical performance indicator of a more generic competency existing above it. Therefore, performance statements at a second or third level are not in all cases "indicators" of more generic statements under which they are classified. The rewritten list also yielded general competency statements for which no performance indicators were found in the literature. However, no inference should be made that performance indicators cannot be added to the list and one task of a continuation of Project R.C.C.M.E. will include such efforts.

A general system for storing existing competency statements classified on the basis of the R.C.C.M. Is being developed. This system will allow for the storage of existing competency statements and those added in the future in the appropriate model cells. For instrument development purposes, competency statements in any functional area and representing any particular administrative operation, or sets of these, can be retrieved. Once completed, the storage-retrieval system has implications for those interested in designing instructional or training packages useful for pre-service and in-service training of building-level administrators.

The R.C.C.M. conceptualized the principal's performance of various competencies or competency "clusters" in relationship to groups of persons most logically affected by performance. Reference Groups represent "publics" with which the principal interacts daily on the job, rather than an additional dimension for classifying competency statements. The shadow figure mirroring the R.C.C.M. ideally represents an accumulation of evaluative kinds of information. As principals become competent and perform existing competencies, consequences of performance should be observable. For example, the principal may have acquired competencies in the area of Staff Personnel that relate to the Administrative Operation of Planning. If the principal is competent in this area, then staff within his school would logically represent the referent group most directly affected by the performance of this cluster of competencies. Staff members in his school would be in the best position to evaluate performances in this area since they are most directly affected by them. Various referent groups

could possibly yield information about existing competency levels of principals in relationship to competencies of identified and known importance. In this sense, reference groups could be surveyed to establish baseline information about current levels of principal competence in relationship to competencies in the R.C.C.M.

The R.C.C.M. (See Fig. 2) necessitates that several assumptions be made about the way in which principal competencies are conceived, classified, and made operational. The following descriptions represent some of the general assumptions of the R.C.C.M. and the competency classification system:

- (1) The model assumes that principal competencies classified within any model cell must be directly related to the principal's overt performance. While performance statements of competence are preferred in any model cell, knowledge and affect competencies are assumed, in all cases, to underlie these.

While the first synthesis and rewriting of competencies has been in general performance terms, the model assumes that certain knowledge and affect competencies are required if a particular performance is, as a matter of fact, to occur. One task for the continuation plan of Project R.O.M.E. will focus on writing and identifying knowledge and attitudinal competency statements underlying principal performance in various model areas:

- (2) The model assumes that any classified competency has several characteristics represented by the major model dimensions-- functional areas of responsibility, administrative operations, and the performance and subsumed knowledge-affect dimension.
- (3) The model assumes that competency statements existing in any single cell represent overt activities, performances, and behaviors of the principal that are distinguishable from one another. Thus, the R.C.C.M. assumes that competency cells represent discrete performances.

Those competency statements classified in the front, upper, right-hand cell, indicating the operation of Collecting Information in the area of Curriculum and Instruction, are different performances than those found in other model cells. Discrete characteristics of the model imply that the principal's overall competency is probably best understood as an accumulation of "clusters" of competencies unique to particular functional areas of responsibility as reflected in various administrative operations. When a particular principal is observed or evaluated, he might well be competent in some model cells and not in others. This concept of understanding principal competence allows for existing variability in competencies between particular principals in various systems and schools. For future diagnostic and training purposes, this is considered an asset of the R.C.C.M. The model then becomes adaptable to the particular school systems in various locations.

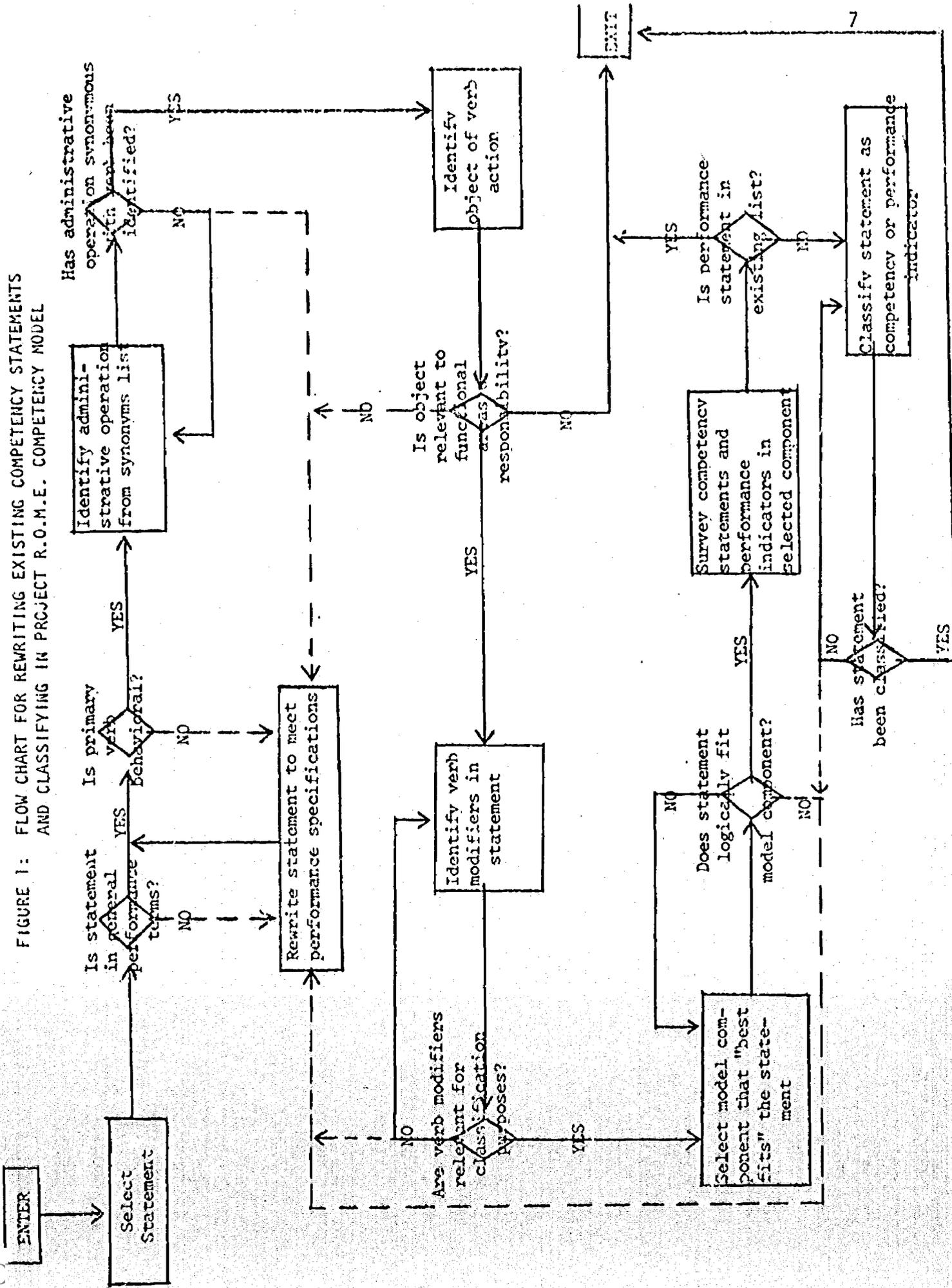
There may be "generic" sets of competencies that all principals need to function efficiently on the job, as well as "clusters" of competencies required of a particular principal in a particular system that may be quite different than those required for other principals in other systems. Future factor analytic studies are planned in order to identify these.

- (4) The model and classification system assumes that identified competences do not necessarily represent a "mirror image" of the real world. The R.C.C.M. rather attempts to represent a systematic way of classifying existing competency statements in the professional literature and those derived from working with principals on the job. The "reality" of identified competences is strongly dependent on the future accumulation of supportive observational and measurement data.

As the model is tested and extended it would be appropriate to use it to 1) classify additional competency statements, 2) design training modules and sequences of training activities, 3) design an assessment package for use with principals in determining competences needed, 4) construct a competency profile for principals, 5) develop instruments for needs assessment purposes in school districts, 6) examine scope and sequence of activities for pre-service and in-service programs, and 7) determine baseline information for the purpose of developing certification criteria for principals.

To date the project has demonstrated the capability of identifying, classifying, and validating competency statements for principals. The methodology, instruments, and procedures should provide the means to greatly extend the developmental work that is being undertaken relative to competency based educational administration.

FIGURE 1: FLOW CHART FOR REWRITING EXISTING COMPETENCY STATEMENTS AND CLASSIFYING IN PROJECT R.O.M.E. COMPETENCY MODEL



- Staff
- Students
- Community
- Central Office
- The Profession
- Self

**FUNCTIONAL AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY**

- Curriculum/Instruction
- Staff Personnel
- Student/Personnel
- Support Management
- School-Community Interface
- Fiscal Management
- System-Wide Policies and Operations

**PERFORMANCE**

Knowledge ← → Affect

**ADMINISTRATIVE OPERATIONS**

- Evaluating
- Implementing
- Decision-making
- Communicating
- Planning
- Collecting Information

**MODEL FOR CLASSIFYING COMPETENCIES OF SCHOOL LEVEL ADMINISTRATORS**