DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 244 358   EA 016 789

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TITLE   Conflict and Frustration for School Board Members.
PUB DATE   26 Apr 84
NOTE   28p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the
                American Educational Research Association (New
                Orleans, LA, April 23-27, 1984).
PUB TYPE   Reports - Research/Technical (143) --
                Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE   MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS   *Board of Education Role; Boards of Education;
                *Conflict; Democratic Values; *Efficiency; Elementary
                Secondary Education; *Organizational Effectiveness;
                *Role Conflict; *Superintendents; Values
IDENTIFIERS   Missouri; New Jersey; Washington

ABSTRACT
                A study was conducted to assess the expectations and
sources of conflict and frustration for school board members in
Washington, Missouri, and New Jersey. It tested the widely held
belief that school board members are experiencing increased conflict
and frustration and explored how these pressures are related to the
conflicting expectations on boards to represent their constituents
and to make efficient business decisions. Questionnaires were mailed
to 100 school board members and 100 superintendents in each of three
reasonably similar western, mideastern, and eastern states, in order
to get a national sample. The study did not confirm the suggestion
that schools are becoming more complex and too demanding, with
neither information acquisition nor insufficient time seen as areas
of difficulty by the respondents. Instead, employee negotiations and
special interest groups were sources of conflict and frustration.
Divergent board expectations also led to conflict, with board members
consistently rated less effective when there were strong demands that
they be both representatives and experts. (Author/DCS)

Conflict and Frustration for

School Board Members

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presented to the annual meeting of
American Educational Research Association
New Orleans, Louisiana
April 26, 1984

School boards across the nation seem to many to have undergone dramatic changes since the 1960's as school districts have faced collective bargaining, litigation, an increase and subsequent decrease in federal financial support, state finance reform, taxpayer revolts and declining enrollment.

Issue after issue of the American School Board Journal in the 1960's featured articles on facilities planning and curriculum improvement. A typical issue of the same journal in the 1980's contains articles on dealing with angry citizens, election campaign strategies, techniques for handling heated confrontations with advisory committees, teacher termination and budget cutting techniques. These topics suggest an increased concern with conflict and declining resources.

During the decade of the 70's, school boards became less stable politically. Some research indicated that there were more incumbent challenges, more resignations and more retirements, resulting in a higher rate of turnover on boards. Many school boards became less willing to simply approve recommendations of the superintendent and wished to play an active role in decision making and a more visible role as representatives of their increasingly vocal constituents.

The American School Board Journal has been conducting surveys of members over the past several years. Recently school board members have been questioned about their concerns in this annual survey. Their answers are clearly indicative of this situation in education with collective bargaining, declining enrollment, cutting programs and declining financial resources rising to the top of the list of concerns (Underwood, Fortune and Dodge, 1982; Underwood, McCluskey and Umberger, 1978; Underwood, Thomas, Cooke and Underwood, 1980; Underwood, Thomas and Price, 1981).

It would appear that school board members today are experiencing conflict and frustration of unique dimensions.

In an attempt to enhance the effectiveness of school boards, this research examined the sources of conflict and frustration, both those from the community and those from schools. Recognizing that many of these sources of conflict and frustration result from societal changes which are beyond the control of superintendents and board members, the study attempted to identify practices which help school boards deal with inevitable complexities of the job of school governance. The study attempted to reveal information which will lead superintendents and board members to avoid practices which increase conflict and frustration whenever possible and develop techniques for managing what can't be reduced.

Background

Whether a board member is judged to be effective in school governance or finds the job to be full of frustration and conflict depends on the extent to which the expectations of the board member, the superintendent and the community are met. Expectations for board members are deeply rooted in the history of representational democracy in this country. Important events in society have changed these expectations from time to time; standards of school board effectiveness have changed dramatically as values change through the years.

The history of school boards in America shows a shifting emphasis between expectations that the board members are representatives of their constituents and expectations that the board members are experts in the business of school governance, trustees for the people. Representational boards were the basis of ward-based school governance in the 18th and 19th centuries. The reform movement of the late 19th century and first half of the 20th century

instituted boards as experts or trustees. Increased representational demands surfaced in the 1960's and 1970's in what has come to be called "counter reform."

During any given period there are demands on board members for both representation and expertise. This troublesome conflict has been recognized by many writers and described in various terms. Ziegler recognizes the tension between these two opposing demands, "Part commonweal, part service school boards behave like typical schizophrenics" (1975, p. 8). Boyd describes the on-going search for a balance between "democracy and efficiency" (1975, p. 105). Lutz and Iannacone call these two kinds of member "delegate" or "trustee" (1978, p. 20). In focusing on the decision-making behavior of these two types of boards, Lutz called them "arena council" and "elite council" (1975, p. 71).

History of Shifting Demands

A brief look at the history of U.S. school boards will show the origin of these demands. Citizens have participated in school governance in America since the 17th century when school decisions were made in town meetings. As growth made this process cumbersome, management of the schools was delegated to a committee of the local government. In 1789 Boston became the first city to have elected representatives govern schools by passing a law creating a school committee of twelve members, one elected from each ward (Callahan, 1975).

This ward-based system of school boards became widespread in the 19th century; as cities grew, it allowed the citizens of a specific area to have representatives who acted in their behalf in the process of school governance. There were generally local school boards governing the schools within the ward; a central board made up of representatives from each local board coordinated education across the city (Tyack, 1974).

Not only was this system subject to corruption, it became unmanageable as city school systems experienced the unprecendented growth accompanying urbanization of America. The demands of the organization became too great for part-time board members to meet without coordination from a staff. The situation became right for reform and the rise of the superintendency. Large cities began one by one to hire superintendents, and by the last decade of the 19th century superintendents were numerous and powerful enough to significantly change the role of school boards (Callahan, 1975; Tyack, 1974).

A number of writers had begun c lling for reform in education and greater administrative leadership. In 1893 the Department of Superintendence of the National Education Association appointed the Committee of Fifteen to make recommendations on a number of topics; Andrew S. Draper, Superintendent of Cleveland Schools, chaired the subcommittee which was to study the organization of city schools. The Draper Report, issued in 1895, was a landmark in the reform of educational goverance. It recommended that the job of running the schools be turned over to superintendents and their staffs and came close to recommending the elimination of school boards (Callahan, 1975).

Industrialization had left the cities with a growing population to educate and a rising class of business experts. These men, successful in large business organizations, had acquired technical, managerial skills which were needed in managing the schools. The corporate board and manager became the model of the reform movement. The concept of managerial expertise was important to the writings of Ellwood P. Cubberly, probably the most influential advocate of reform. Cubberly wrote that successful businessmen would make the best school board members becase they were "used to handling business rapidly, were usually wide awake and were in the habit of depending on experts for advice" (Callahan, 1975, p. 36).

The success of these reformers in establishing "expert" boards was overwhelming. Researchers have documented the preponderance of businessmen and professionals on schools from 1916 to the present (Gross, 1958; Goldhammer, 1964; Ziegler and Jennings, 1974; Underwood et al, 1981).

The mid-20th century, however, saw a number of events which precipitated a nationwide call for greater representational responsibility on school boai. The most frequently cited event to increase demand for representation by school boards is the New York City teachers' strike and the subsequent rise in collective bargaining in the schools (Just, 1980; Callahan, 1975; Corwin, 1975). The civil rights movement raised concerns about the ability of a reform school board of white, affluent businessmen to represent the concern of minorities. Citizens' advisory councils and decentralized school boards of the late 1960's and early 1970's gave minorities a greater role in school governance (Clawar & Levine, 1979; Drachler, 1977; Levine, 1976; Steinberg, 1975). The Voting Rights Act of 1965 became the basis for declaring at-large elections of school boards unconstitutional. Greater accountability to constituents increased in the post-Watergate era with the enactment of various financial disclosure laws for school board members.

At the same time as the counter-reform call for greater representational responsibility, school boards may have experienced an increasing need for expertise in handling large amounts of information. Goldhammer (1964) as well as Zeigler and Jennings (1974) saw a greater need for information developing in school governance as districts grew and technical developments began to make school business more complex. While an increased need for information seems logical and is a widely held belief, this literature search revealed no actual documentation or attempts at measurements.

An increasing need for information can increase a board's dependence on the superintendent. Superintendents can retain a greater degree of control and heighten board members' need for expert assistance by inundating them with trivia (Goldhammer, 1964; Zeigler and Jennings, 1974; Cistone, 1977). The best intentioned superintendent, who sincerely wants to facilitate the processes of the board, can confound the processes by poor information giving.

The lack of research into the informational/expertise needs of school boards and the possible increase in those needs during the 1960's and 1970's is a serious handicap in attempting to understand conflict and frustration experienced by school board members. Historically, demands for representation and demands for increased expertise have alternated in emphasis. Increased representational demands arising from events in the 1960's have been documented. If the demand for technical expertise increased simultaneously, then school board members may be in a period of unprecedented conflict with regard to role expectations.

Boyd, in describing these two aspects of a board member's role dilemma as a simultaneous quest for democracy and efficiency, specifically traces an increased need for efficiency in times of crisis (1975). Declining enrollment and declining financial resources currently experienced by schools could constitute such a crisis and increase the demand for technical expertise and efficiency in school governance. How much and what kinds of information board members need in order to carry out their roles in changing circumstances continue to be crucial, unanswered questions.

Effective Boardsmanship or Conflict and Frustration

The definition of effective boardsmanship has changed over the years to reflect the dominant value system, changing as the values change. Effective

board members would have been defined in the pre-reform era as those who were able to command enough influence to provide for constituents in their wards (Tyack, 1974; Callahan, 1975). With reform, the definition of an effective board member changed to focus on efficiency, the ability to utilize the expert knowledge of the superintendent and the ability to represent all citizens, not a specific constituency. In the more tumultuous period of the 60's, with rising representational demands, James defined effective school boards by their ability to manage conflict ("School Boards," 1966).

The electoral process in the ultimate evaluation any official can receive. Low voter participation, lack of challenges to incumbents and frequent reelection of incumbents are assumed by many theorists to indicate that the community is satisfied with the performance of the board (Lutz & Iannocone, 1978; Mitchell & Thorstead, 1976; Burlingame, 1978). These writers, in developing the "dissatisfaction theory," attributed increased political activity to community dissatisfaction with their representatives.

There are some indications of increased political activity surrounding school board elections since the counter-reform movement of the 1960's. Drachler cites changes in urban school boards and says "competition became more spirited" (1977, p. 203). Mitchell and Thorstead found more candidates running for board positions, more defeats of incumbents and a two-fold ircrease in incumbent retirement in southern California between the 1960's and the 1970's (1976). Statistics published by the Pennsylvania School Boards Association show moderate increase in incumbent defeat and retirement in the late 1970's followed by a decrease in the same measures by 1981 ("School Board Elections," 1981). Little national data is available, but by comparing some national studies reporting length of service, no trend toward shorter time in office is apparent in recent years (Underwood et al, 1981; Underwood et al, 1982; Zeigler and Jennings, 1974).

While there is no clear notion of the amount of conflict and frustration nationally, there is some research into the sources. Reasons given for retirement are one major indication of sources of conflict and frustration for school board members. The American School Board Journal found that the time-consuming aspect of board service was the primary reason given for leaving the board. The next most frequently cited reasons were conflict associated with teachers' unions, citizens' committees and colleagues on the board (Downey, 1978). Similar reasons of frustrations with time demands and conflict with various groups have been found in other research (Stieferman, 1977).

Thus, while writers describe the tempestuous nature of school governance today, there are no consistent indications that is it filled with increasing conflict and frustration. Much of the research is anecdotal and has been drawn from case studies; little longitudinal research has been done which would show change trends.

Purpose of Study

The review of literature revealed that school board members have always been under demands to represent their constituents and demands to make efficient, expert decisions in school business. The values prevalent in society at any particular time have determined which demand has been greater. A major part of the present study was designed to ascertain board members' and superintendents' expectations with regard to a board member's management skills and expertise versus responsiveness to constituents.

Areas of conflict and frustration are caused by school board members attempting to meet diverse needs with declining resources. These are identified by research into the reasons members give for resignation and retirement as special interest groups, negotiations with employees, financial

disclosure laws, decreasing financial resources and increasing complication of decisions as well as the difficulty of obtaining sufficient information in time to make decisions. A part of the present study was designed to ascertain the degree of frustration and conflict caused by these specific areas.

While it is impossible to measure absolute amounts of conflict and frustration, the available literature led to the assumption that school board members experience significant amounts of conflict and frustration today. What may appear to be an increase in conflict and frustration may be caused by the changing nature of the task of school governance. Old skills and methods of operation may not get the job done today. Therefore, an attempt was made in the present study to determine what actions and assistance board members and superintendents felt were most helpful in coping with the tasks of school governance.

Board members rely heavily on the superintendent for information. Superintendents can control boards by supplying certain types and amounts of information. Some of the literature documents that superintendents intimidate board members by overwhelming them with great amounts of trivial, technical information. Another part of the present study was designed to evaluate the usefulness of various information techniques of the super-intendent from both the board members' and superintendents' points of view.

How well board members cope with the demands of their jobs was addressed in the final section of the present study. This section of the instrument explored the board members' ability to acquire adequate information, as well as the ability to resolve conflict and maintain relationships.

Procedures

Literature had indicated that much of the conflict in school governance resides in the representational/expert duality. This conflict has usually been reflected in the relationship of board members to the superintendent. Therefore, this study was designed as a comparison of responses of superintendents and school board members.

A sample survey was selected as the research design. The information sought in this study was opinions, attitudes and personal perceptions of effectiveness. This information was most logically obtained by a questionnaire or interview.

Since the amount and type of conflict and frustration can differ by region and type of community, a large enough population needed to be identified in order for this study to yield accurate results. It was determined that a self-reporting questionnaire was the most economical and efficient method of surveying a sample of a large population in various regions of the United States.

The survey also sought information about the respondents' school districts. This included such items as change in tax rate, enrollment, average income of property owner and population living within boundaries. While these items would be most accurately answered through public records, to do so would have been prohibitively expensive and time consuming. These items were therefore included as part of the self-reporting questionnaire with the knowledge that respondents may not have accurate information in these areas.

An initial draft of the instrument was submitted to a panel of five experts for review. These experts were knowledgeable about school boards throughout the nation and particularly about school boards in the states

selected for this research. The panel made minor suggestions in wording of questions and format as well as adding a few additional items. Categories of demographic responses were adjusted on the basis of these suggestions to make them equally descriptive in each of the states selected for the survey.

Following modification based on suggestions from the panel of experts, the questionnaire was field-tested on a small group of superintendents and board members. Two districts were selected, one in Montana and one in Oregon, since these states were not included in the research sample. The superintendent and a number of board members in each district were asked to respond to the instrument. Nine of these ten field questionnaires were returned. Respondents answered all questions, indicating that the instrument was satisfactory in terms of clarity and response format. It is important to note that board members from the same district differed in their report of the direction of change in their district. This could indicate that board members do not have adequate information in this area and their reports may not be totally reliable.

Population and Sample

In order to survey a national population it was decided to include a western, midwestern and eastern state in the sample. The states of Washington, Missouri and New Jersey were selected because they were reasonably similar in a number of ways. These states have comparable numbers of school boards so that a single sampling technique could be used producing similarly sized samples. Most boards in these states were elected; all elections are non-partisan. These states all have a range of community sizes without being dominated by one, large metropolitan school system. Finally these states all have financial disclosure laws for candidates for public office.

In each of the three states 100 districts were selected in a systematic sample from an alphabetical list of districts. The first district in each state was selected randomly, then each third district was selected in Washington, each fifth district in Missouri and each sixth district in New Jersey. Very small districts in which one administrator served as principal and superintendent were eliminated, whenever they could be identified.

A questionnaire was sent to the superintendent and one to a board member in each of these selected districts. In all cases the board member identified was the president of the board; it was suggested that the president would have somewhat greater information, experience and interest in responding to the questionnaire thus assuring more accurate data and a higher rate of return.

Results

Subjects responded on a Likert-type scale, ranging from a response of "1" for strongly disagree to "5" for strongly agree to a number of substantive statements regarding the research topic. A midpoint of 3 indicated a neutral response. Means were calculated for various groups of respondents. The differences in the means and their interactions were assessed by an analysis of variance. Using a probability of .05, a difference was said to be significant if it was greater than Fisher's least significant difference for that item.

Questionnaires were mailed to 100 superintendents and 100 school board members in each of three states, Washington, Missouri and New Jersey. Of the 600 questionnaires sent out, 414 were returned. One hundred fifty-nine were received from Washington, 79 school board members and 80 superintendents. From Missouri 133 were received, 60 board members and 73 superintendents. One hundred twenty-two were received from New Jersey, including 62 board members and 60 superintendents. Thus, within each state responses were

fairly even divided between superintendents and school board members for a total of 213 superintendents and 201 school board members.

Most of the respondents to this survey were males, between 35 and 60 years old, and had served at least four years in their current position. Most respondents served in districts in small towns or rural communities; district enrollment was less than 5,000 students in almost all cases. Over half of the school board members reported professional, managerial or technical occupations; and over half had finished four or more years of college. Districts of respondents were generally declining in enrollment, particularly in Missouri and New Jersey, although population was stable and assessed valuation, property tax rates and average income of property owners were increasing. State financial support of schools was decreasing in New Jersey and Washington, increasing in Missouri.

The first section in the questionnaire concerned expectations for school board members. These questions were designed to assess the orientation of respondents toward representational roles and/or efficient decision making roles for school board members. In order for the response scale to indicate an increasing degree of democratic orientation with responses from "1" to "5", it was necessary to invert the scale on questions 4, 5, 6 and 8. These questions asked about expertness. For example, in response to the question, "It is important for board members to have business, legal or financial background," a response of strongly agree was "1," not the usual "5". These inversions were made in the data processing and did not appear on the original questionnaire.

Differences between states are greater than differences between positions (see Table 1). There were few differences between superintendents and school board members in role expectations for board members. Expectations varied by state with Washington indicating the greatest importance of the

TABLE 1

Comparison of Mean Responses to Questions About Expectations

Question	By Position			By State			
	Board Members	Superin-tendents	Significant $\sigma = .05$	Washington	Missouri	New Jersey	Significant $\sigma = .05$
1. Represent con-stituents' views	3.08	3.11	no	3.37	3.08	2.75	yes (all)[a]
2. Willingness to dis-close personal finances	2.46	2.44	no	2.68	2.29	2.32	yes (WA)[b]
3. Importance of ethnic, racial & age repre-sentation	3.35	3.48	no	3.39	3.27	3.61	yes (NJ-MO)[c]
4. Importance of business, legal or financial background	3.13	3.15	no	3.27	2.77	3.38	yes (MO)[b]
5. Previous involvement in schools	2.75	2.82	no	2.76	2.57	3.04	yes (NJ)[b]
6. Willingness to devote time to studying issues	1.66	1.71	no	1.71	1.80	1.52	yes (NJ)[b]
7. Willingness to spend time in schools and community	2.79	2.44	yes	2.84	2.62	2.29	yes (NJ)[b]
8. Willingness to see needs of whole community	1.38	1.34	no	1.35	1.42	1.31	no

NOTE: A response of 5 indicates a democratic orientation; a response of 1 indicates an expert orientation.

[a] Differences are significant between all three states.
[b] Differences are significant between state indicated and other two states. Difference between other two states is not significant.
[c] Difference is only significant between pair of states indicated.

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representational role. Missouri showed some preference for an expert role. New Jersey showed the greatest mix of expectations.

All states want school board members to devote significant time to studying issues. Respondents from all states also want board members to keep the needs of the whole community in mind. New Jersey respondents felt it was important to have school board members of various ethnic, racial and age groups but low demand that board members represent constituents' views regardless of their own opinion. Likewise, New Jersey respondents expressed strong disagreement with financial disclosure laws but did not express a strong demand for legal, business or financial backgrounds of board members. Missouri respondents wanted their board members to have business, legal or financial backgrounds and previous experience in the schools. Missouri board members were likely to want their colleagues to spend time in the schools, with school personnel and with community groups between board meetings. Respondents from Washington felt that school board members should represent constituents' views regardless of personal opinion. Washington respondents were also less negative toward financial disclosure laws than respondents from other states were.

The second major section of the questionnaire attempted to identify sources of conflict and frustration among school board members. The results are displayed in Table 2.

Acquiring expertise did not seem to be a problem for school boards. They reported no trouble getting legal or financial information. They did not seem to be hampered by insufficient time when studying an issue. Acquiring knowledge about the instructional program did not seem to be a problem. Only negotiations and demands of special interest groups were reported as significant sources of conflict and frustration. The demands of special interest groups

TABLE 2

Comparison of Mean Responses to Sources of Conflict and Frustration

	By Position			By State			
Question	Board Members	Superin-tendents	Significant α = .05	Washington	Missouri	New Jersey	Significant α = .05
1. insufficient infor-mation about instruc-tional program	2.21	2.21	no	2.18	2.12	2.34	no
2. employee negotiations too difficult	3.08	3.49	yes	3.26	3.26	3.37	no
3. insufficient legal information	2.13	2.23	no	2.22	2.13	2.18	no
4. too many demands from special interest groups	2.92	3.44	yes	3.05	3.23	3.32	yes (WA-NJ)[a]
5. decreasing finanical resources	2.71	2.70	no	2.76	2.80	2.53	no
6. insufficient financial information	2.05	1.98	no	2.08	2.05	1.90	no
7. insufficient time to study issues	2.20	2.21	no	2.20	2.27	2.14	no
8. over-reliance on superintendent for information	2.97	2.65	yes	2.80	2.74	2.86	no

[a]Difference is only significant between pair of states indicated. No other differences are significant.

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were of significantly greater magnitude in New Jersey than in Washington. Decreasing financial resources seemed to be a source of conflict or frustration for about a third of the respondents across states and positions.

An important difference seems to be indicated by the tendency for superintendents and board members to each be more critical of the other group than they are of themselves. Superintendents see special interest groups and employee negotiations as more troublesome for school board members than the board members themselves do. Board members are more apt than superintendents to think they are too dependent on superintendents for information.

The next major section of the questionnaire asked what actions of the superintendent help or hinder the school board. Whether it is assumed that a superintendent chooses certain practices in the belief that they will lead to effective board processes, or as the best means for controlling the school board, big discrepancies between responses of superintendents and school board members would be an indication of conflict. The responses of school board members are an important way of evaluating these practices.

In general, the respondents' evaluation of superintendents' actions in board functioning were very positive (see Table 3). There was a tendency for superintendents to rate themselves significantly higher than they were rated by board members. Both superintendents and board members in all three states thought material was supplied by the superintendent in a format that was easy to understand. There was uniformly high agreement that superintendents and their staffs have adequate knowledge of the issues. Superintendents saw their personal contacts with board members as more important than board members did. Both board members and superintendents agreed that agendas and information packets contained enough information and yet were neither too extensive nor supplied too late to be read before board meetings. Respondents felt that superintendents generally gave boards enough advance notice on important issues. Board members from New Jersey tended to see this as more of a problem than

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TABLE 3

Comparison of Mean Responses to Effectiveness of Superintendent

Question	By Position			By State			
	Board Members	Superin-tendents	Significant $\sigma = .05$	Washington	Missouri	New Jersey	Significant $\sigma = .05$
1. agenda and information packet	3.76	3.97	yes	3.86	3.80	3.94	no
2. personal contacts	3.47	3.82	yes	3.86	3.51	3.53	yes (WA)[a]
3. clarity of format	3.99	4.10	no	4.04	3.96	4.13	yes (NJ-MO)[b]
4. conciseness of information	3.92	3.66	yes	3.79	3.71	3.87	no
5. timeliness of information	3.78	3.83	no	3.83	3.76	3.83	no
6. knowledge of superintendent	4.16	4.19	no	4.14	4.20	4.20	no
7. advance notice	3.83	3.99	no	3.96	3.95	3.82	no[c]

[a]Differences are significant between state indicated and other two states. Difference between other two states is not significant.
[b]Difference is only significant between pair of states indicated.
[c]New Jersey school board members had a mean response of 3.60; this differed significantly from other groups.

other responding groups did. About a third of the respondents thought that timelines imposed by state and federal changes caused problems.

The final section of the questionnaire inquired about what school board members do to carry out their role effectively. All responses in this section showed statistically significant differences among responding groups. (See Table 4).

In this section respondents evaluated their board on various practices; respondents from New Jersey were consistently more critical of their school boards. On every issue the mean response from New Jersey was significantly lower than the mean responses from the other two states. Washington respondents were most positive about their school boards. On every question the mean response from Washington was higher than that of the other two states. School board members rated themselves higher than they were rated by superintendents, rating themselves significantly higher on sharing information objectively, keeping the needs of the whole community in mind, refraining from making individual promises and seeking community opinion on a regular basis.

Conclusions and Recommendations

This study revealed more differences between states than between positions, suggesting that conditions varying from state to state are related to differing levels of conflict and frustration for school board members. Some of these variables were declining enrollment, state financial support of schools, property tax rate and average income of property owners.

Mixed expectations for school board members proved to be indicative of greater conflict. In New Jersey where strong demands were shown for both representational role and role of expert, board members were consistently rated as less effective. In Washington where demand for the representational

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TABLE 4

Comparison of Mean Responses to Effectiveness of Board Members

Question	By Position			By State			
	Board Members	Superin-tendents	Significant $\sigma = .05$	Washington	Missouri	New Jersey	Significant $\sigma = .05$
1. come to meetings prepared	3.78	3.70	no	3.89	3.73	3.56	yes (WA-NJ)[a]
2. share information objectively	3.93	3.75	yes	3.97	3.89	3.58	yes (NJ)[b]
3. members communicate with superintendent	3.97	3.92	no	4.13	3.95	3.70	yes (NJ)[b]
4. have adequate knowledge	3.70	3.77	no	3.82	3.82	3.52	yes (NJ)[b]
5. make necessary but unpopular decisions	3.86	3.68	no	3.95	3.75	3.53	yes (NJ-WA)[a]
6. keep needs of whole community in mind	3.87	3.68	yes	3.99	3.75	3.52	yes (all)[c]
7. refrain from making individual promises	3.96	3.37	yes	3.92	3.62	3.35	yes (all)[c]
8. seek community opinion on regular basis	3.73	3.54	yes	3.78	3.61	3.46	yes (WA-NJ)[a]

[a] Difference is only significant between pair of states indicated.
[b] Differences are significant between state indicated and other two states. Difference between other two states is not significant.
[c] Differences are significant between all three states.

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role was expressed by both superintendents and board members, board members were consistently rated as being more effective. Missouri showed preference for an expert role and fell between Washington and New Jersey in effectiveness.

This finding sheds new light on the experiences of school board members. The greatest amount of conflict and frustration may not be caused by diverse, demanding groups, but by groups demanding representation within an organization demanding expert management.

The suggestion that schools are becoming more complex and too demanding for lay school board members was not confirmed by this study. Neither board members nor superintendents felt that it was too difficult to acquire the kind of information needed to make decisions. The tendency for board members to rate themselves higher than they were rated by superintendents is an interesting phenomenon. It should not be interpreted as a major conflict between board members and superintendents across all states because superintendents gave board members high ratings in general and board members gave superintendents high ratings in general. It should more likely be interpreted as indicating a certain healthy amount of confidence on the part of board members generally.

Further research should be conducted on a national sample based on the variables which were found to vary among these three states. It is also imperative that the educational community begin to keep demographic records nationally on school board members. Annual data should be collected nationally by the National School Boards Association or by the states on length of board service, rate of resignation, rate of retirement and rate of incumbent defeat. These are important measures of the politics of school governance and are a necessary part of testing the many theories in

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