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Devin J. Anderson

Date

July 28, 1971

HOW SEATTLE SCHOOL PRINCIPALS PERCEIVE THEIR
ROLE IN PROFESSIONAL NEGOTIATIONS

by

DENNIS JOHN ANDERSON

A professional paper submitted to the Graduate Faculty in
partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

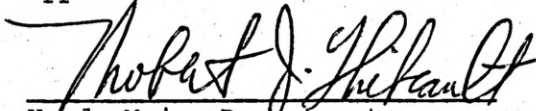
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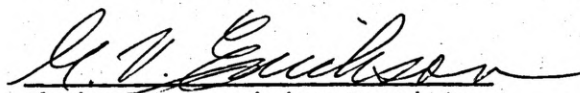
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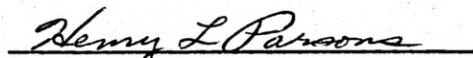
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School Administration

Approved:


Head, Major Department


Chairman, Examining Committee


Graduate Dean

MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY
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ABSTRACT

This field study was conducted to determine how the Seattle public school principals perceived their role in professional negotiations. In the city of Seattle, the public school principals currently negotiate as a constituent organization of the Seattle Alliance of Educators, an umbrella organization using the joint team concept for negotiating purposes. Some principals in Seattle have expressed interest in being involved in district negotiations in other ways. There also appeared in related literature some question as to whether a joint negotiating team could give the principal his due share in the negotiating process.

The purpose of this study was to determine the Seattle public school principals' personal opinions toward their role in professional negotiations and also to determine their degree of satisfaction with the present negotiating arrangement as it pertained to their role.

The study involved a questionnaire sent to all Seattle public school principals. The responses to each question were tabulated in separate tables to show the percentage of agreement and disagreement at the elementary, secondary, and combined levels. The responses from the elementary public school principals were further broken down into two age groups to show a significant difference of opinion between the younger and older elementary public school principals on several of the questions. There was no significant difference among age groups noted at the secondary level.

The results of the study shown in the tables significantly indicate that the Seattle public school principals want direct involvement in professional negotiations regardless of the type of organizational representation. They further indicate that they prefer to negotiate with their own team under an organization separate from the Seattle Alliance of Educators. The breakdown of age groups within the elementary level shows the younger elementary public school principals, like the secondary level, have stronger feelings about negotiating separately than do the older elementary public school principals.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The writer conducted this study to determine how the Seattle school principals perceived their role in professional negotiations.

From the beginning, Seattle school principals have been represented at these negotiations as a member of the Seattle Alliance of Educators (SAE), the negotiating body for the certificated teachers, principals, and supervisors. Each group within the SAE; Seattle Teachers' Association (STA), Seattle Principals' Association, and the Administrative and Supervisory League, is represented in negotiations on a proportionate basis according to membership in each group's own separate local organization. Counselors and librarians are included within the STA.

Statement of Problem

In respect to the foregoing statements, the investigator felt it was important to determine how well satisfied the Seattle school principals were with the joint negotiating team concept currently in operation. There appeared in the literature some question as to whether an all-inclusive organization or a joint negotiating team

could give the principal his due share in the negotiating process. Since the principal has his own set of responsibilities to the state, school board and community, some writers indicate that perhaps the principals should negotiate separately in order to get fair representation, hold respect of other groups, and help education on the whole (Epstein, 1965, 1966; Becker, 1965).

Purposes of Field Study

The purposes of this study were: first, to determine the Seattle principals' personal opinions relative to their role in professional negotiations with the Seattle school board; and second, it was thought by the investigator to be essential to determine the degree of satisfaction the Seattle school principals had with the current arrangement for professional negotiations as it pertained to their role.

Procedures

A questionnaire was sent by U. S. Mail to each principal in the Seattle School District to determine the role perceptions of the Seattle principals. This included 12 high schools, 17 junior high schools, 86 elementary schools and one special prevocational school. The questionnaire was accompanied by a cover letter, both of which are found in Appendices A and B, respectively.

The questionnaire was designed to provide a means of determining how the Seattle principals perceived their role in professional

negotiations and to what degree their actual role satisfied them under the current negotiating arrangement. The questionnaire was returned by use of a self-addressed, stamped return envelope provided each principal. A return of 60 percent (or 70 questionnaires) was decided to be necessary and sufficient, based on the investigator's prior experience in and knowledge about the school district and accepted practice in educational research.

In the analysis of the data collected, the investigator tabulated the results of each question separately, showing the percent of agreement or disagreement. A summary of the results follows each table and an overall statement is found in the conclusions section of this paper.

It was assumed by the writer throughout this study that the principals returning the questionnaires were aware of the current negotiating arrangement in Seattle and had become familiar with the degree of participation offered to them under this arrangement. An abstract of the Seattle agreement concerning the principal's involvement was included in the cover letter and the questionnaire referred the principals to sections of the Professional Agreements pertaining to the principals' role.

Limitations

This study was concerned only with professional negotiations as defined by the NEA and under current practice in the Seattle School District. No thought was given to collective bargaining as defined by NEA to be the union method of employer-employee relations used by the AFT.

Definition of Terms

Comprehensive Agreement. This type of agreement provides for the recognition of an organization as representing the certificated staff; provides for negotiating procedures; contains impasse resolution procedures; and contains salary schedule, leave policies, and other negotiated items related to personnel and conditions of employment.

All-Inclusive Organization. This is an organization with membership from all certified public school personnel except the district superintendent.

Joint Negotiating Team. This is a unit that negotiates with the school board and is composed of members from the local teachers association, supervisory personnel organization(s), and other interested certified public school personnel groups (but excluding the superintendent) generally on a proportionate basis.

Professional Negotiations. Professional negotiations is a process by which the school board, by written agreement, meets, confers, and makes agreements with representatives of the professional staff through educational channels.

Collective Bargaining. Collective bargaining is a process by which the school board and in some instances in conjunction with the supervisory professional staff, by written agreement, meets, confers, and makes agreements with representatives of the non-supervisory professional staff through labor channels.

Supervisor. The term supervisor in this study refers to school district administrators and supervisors not assigned to a specific building.

Summary

The investigator conducted this study to determine how the Seattle school principals perceived their role in professional negotiations and their degree of satisfaction with the professional negotiations arrangement in Seattle.

This study will add information to the local district, the local recognized negotiating unit, the local principals' association, and the state levels of the legislature and educational organizations for planning future negotiation laws and/or involvement strategies.

Some principals have expressed an interest in being involved in district negotiations in ways other than the current practice. This study, based on a questionnaire, provides compiled information of a district-wide nature to help in any future changes or additions in the present role of Seattle school principals in local district negotiations. Each question has been tabulated separately with a description of differences between elementary and secondary principals.

The study was limited to a discussion of professional negotiations in Seattle and no mention was given to collective bargaining.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Lewis Duane McPeck, Jr., Ohio State University, stated in the recommendations of his 1968 doctoral dissertation titled, "The Ohio Elementary School Principals' Perceived Role in Negotiations: A Comparison of Attitudinal Dimensions," that, "clarification of the principal's role will come about as perceptual studies are made." Norman Lee McCumsey, Colorado State College, in his 1968 doctoral dissertation, "The Effects of Professional Negotiations on Secondary School Principal's Decision Making Functions," made the following recommendations: "Conduct a study to determine what the role of the principal should be in formal professional negotiation procedures." The writer feels this study is, in part, a response to these recommendations.

For sound school district policies, school principals should definitely be involved in the professional negotiations within the district. They can and must support many teacher and school board requests whenever it is best for the educational system of the school and/or the entire district. The principal must also support the professional negotiations agreement and resist excesses that could undermine the educational system (Epstein, 1965).

Literature reviewed on the topic of the school principal and his role in professional negotiations clearly shows a wide variety of views as to how the principal should be represented and on which side of the negotiating table he should sit.

The National Education Association (NEA) has in most cases in the past had principals included in all-inclusive local associations, by local preference. But recently, there seems to be a trend for local NEA affiliates to exclude the principals from the teachers' local association, due mainly to competition with the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) (Epstein, 1965; Stinnett, 1966). However, the NEA continues to stress the importance of a united education organization. Principals are urged to become involved in negotiations and develop new roles within their local school districts and organizations (NEA, 1968; Fischer, 1969; Edwards, 1970).

If the principals have their own local organization they may be represented either through a joint negotiating team as in many districts (Carr, 1966a; NEA, 1968) including Seattle, or have their own negotiating team to meet with the school board as many principals are currently requesting in large school systems (Epstein, 1966).

In the all-inclusive or joint negotiating teams there should not be any conflict between the teachers and principals on what is best for the education of the district's children. However, any differences that may arise must be reconciled prior to the actual professional

negotiations with the school board (Carr, 1966a). The NEA holds that if all parties are working in good faith, then all-inclusive or joint negotiation teams will unite and produce favorable results as a unified profession (Stinnett, 1966).

Another view is to have the principals either negotiating on behalf of the school district, as put forth by Grieder and Lieberman (Olson, 1967) and practiced in Flat Rock, Michigan, (Eyck, 1967) or as a consultant for the school board's negotiating team (Epstein, 1966).

The National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) has been critical of state laws that put principals in a supervisory category with respect to professional negotiations. NAESP has also been critical of local associations that tend to ignore the principal, both in organization and negotiating units. In 1970 the NAESP passed several resolutions concerning professional negotiations. Two of these state that the principals can best represent their professional services to the district by having their own spokesman in negotiations. Another resolution states that principals should also act as expert advisors to both parties in other professional negotiation activity (NAESP, 1970). The National Association of Secondary School Principals has stated that the principal is accountable for all of the school life and must, therefore, be able to protect himself in the negotiation process (Olson, 1967). If the principal is left out of these processes,

contract provisions for teacher transfer, notices of promotion, and school scheduling are often made that are administratively unworkable. As Wildman stated, "The initial practical impact of a negotiated agreement falls most heavily on the local school principal." (Cronin, 1967).

The first session of negotiations under Seattle's professional negotiations agreement was held during the 1966-67 school year. Seattle's agreement would be called a comprehensive agreement according to the NEA definitions on types of professional negotiations agreements (NEA, 1967b).

CHAPTER III

RESULTS

In October, 1970, 116 questionnaires were mailed to all Seattle school principals in Seattle School District Number 1. After a reminder to all principals in December, 1970, the researcher began compiling the results in January of 1971. The compilation of results showed that 67 Seattle school principals had returned their questionnaires. This gave an approximate 58 percent return. Included in the total were 17 secondary principals, 49 elementary principals, and one questionnaire without a level indicated. When the elementary principal questionnaires were broken down into two age groups, the researcher found 18 within the ages of 34 to 45, 24 from ages 46 to 65, and seven with no age indicated.

The tables showing the percent responses on each question were designed to illustrate the significant variance between age groups at the elementary level. No significant difference was noted with the secondary principals, so no breakdown of secondary ages was made. Nor was there any significant difference noted between male and female respondents at either level. The last item is the combined total of all principals responding to the questionnaire.

Part I

Unit Representation

Table 1. Responses to the question "The principals should continue to be represented by an all-inclusive unit such as the Seattle Alliance of Educators (SAE)."

Level	Ages 34-45		Ages 46-65		Total	
	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree
Elementary	26%	74%	52%	48%	45%	55%
Secondary					13%	87%
Combined Elementary and Secondary					38%	62%

The results shown in Table 1 indicate a definite trend away from SAE on the part of secondary and younger elementary school principals. In the questionnaire, three elementary principals who agreed to Question 1, stated they were agreeing until the law was changed.

This trend may be accounted for in part by the idea that teachers are now looking to their own colleagues for professional growth and to their own organization for protection of rights. Negotiations, therefore, are driving principals closer together (Shannon, 1970).

Table 2. Responses to the question "The principals should continue to be represented by an all-inclusive unit such as SAE, however, the principals should represent themselves by a separate negotiating team for certain items such as salary or length of contract."

Level	Ages 34-45		Ages 46-65		Total	
	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree
Elementary	26%	74%	38%	62%	36%	64%
Secondary					14%	86%
Combined Elementary and Secondary					31%	69%

Table 2 indicates a definite trend by all principals in the Seattle School District against this alternative form of representation. The principals at both the elementary and secondary levels apparently feel they do not want to split their negotiating rights into two different processes. The writer would agree that such a development would cause tremendous strain for the principals as they tried to balance their requests so as not to jeopardize other negotiations.

Table 3. Responses to the question "The principals should have an organization and negotiating body completely separate from the SAE through which to negotiate all negotiable items affecting the principal professionally or economically."

Level	Ages 34-45		Ages 46-65		Total	
	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree
Elementary	61%	39%	52%	48%	54%	46%
Secondary					82%	18%
Combined Elementary and Secondary					62%	38%

The desire of the secondary and younger elementary principals to withdraw completely from SAE and form their own association for negotiations is clearly brought out by the results shown in Table 3.

As pointed out in Part I of the questionnaire (see Appendix A), a change of law in the state of Washington is implied. At present, the State Negotiations Law requires that the school board will negotiate with one unit exclusively for all certificated staff except chief administrative officers of the district.

Table 4. Responses to the question "The principals should be considered part of management and their representative should, therefore, be a member of or advisor to the Seattle School Board's negotiating team."

Level	Ages 34-45		Ages 46-65		Total	
	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree
Elementary	42%	58%	45%	55%	41%	59%
Secondary					75%	25%
Combined Elementary and Secondary					50%	50%

The results shown in Table 4 indicate our first significant split between the elementary and secondary principals; although both levels have shown a trend away from SAE. The writer feels a valid conclusion is that the secondary principals go further by considering themselves a part of management.

It is noted by the writer that in reviewing doctoral dissertations, Gorton refers to a study of 61 school districts where 60% of the principals studied responded that they felt they should be a part of the management's negotiating team (Gorton, 1971).

Table 5. Responses to the question "Principals should offer advisory input only to both the SAE and the School Board's negotiating teams with the single and consistent purpose of trying to improve the education of Seattle students."

Level	Ages 34-45		Ages 46-65		Total	
	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree
Elementary	42%	58%	30%	70%	37%	63%
Secondary					37%	63%
Combined Elementary and Secondary					37%	63%

In the questionnaire, two secondary principals who disagreed stated they would have agreed if the work "only" had been omitted in this question. Also, in the comments, four elementary principals gave strong statements to the effect that the input must be more than "advisory".

The writer's conclusion is that the alternative form of representation suggested by this question was too weak for the Seattle school principals.

Table 6. Responses to the question "The principals should not be directly involved in negotiations."

Level	Ages 34-45		Ages 46-65		Total	
	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree
Elementary	11%	89%	9%	91%	8%	92%
Secondary					24%	76%
Combined Elementary and Secondary					12%	88%

The percentages shown in Table 6 indicate an overwhelming desire on the part of Seattle school principals to be involved in negotiations. As Lieberman points out, this desire is not just a local preference (Lieberman, 1970).

As state legislative bodies are now taking a look at the principal's position in regard to professional negotiations, and in some states barring the principals, it is important for principal organizations to take strong and united stands on their role.

Part II

Role Perception

Tables 7, 8, and 9 pertain to the second section of the questionnaire, which stated the assumption that the principals would continue their representation under SAE. The investigator felt that the principals may desire some change, even under the present arrangement.

Table 7. Responses to the question "The principals' representative should continue to be on the SAE negotiating team."

Level	Ages 34-45		Ages 46-65		Total	
	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree
Elementary	68%	32%	83%	17%	82%	18%
Secondary					65%	35%
Combined Elementary and Secondary					77%	23%

As indicated by the table shown above, the Seattle school principals feel quite strongly that as long as principals are represented under the SAE umbrella, they want to be on the negotiating team.

Table 8. Responses to the question "The principals' representative should be an advisor or consultant to the SAE negotiating team."

Level	Ages 34-45		Ages 46-65		Total	
	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree
Elementary	37%	63%	27%	73%	30%	70%
Secondary					20%	80%
Combined Elementary and Secondary					27%	73%

The results shown in Table 8 indicate that the Seattle school principals were not in favor of a consultant's role within SAE. The percentages in this table are significantly similar to those in Table 5 to conclude that the Seattle school principals feel they must have a defined role that insures them an opportunity to negotiate their professional judgments.

Table 9. Responses to the question "The principals should not be directly involved in negotiations."

Level	Ages 34-45		Ages 46-65		Total	
	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree
Elementary	21%	79%	9%	91%	12%	88%
Secondary					12%	88%
Combined Elementary and Secondary					12%	88%

The results shown in Table 9 indicate a strong desire by the principals to be involved in negotiations.

The percentages here are significantly close to those of Table 6. The writer feels a conclusion can be drawn that, irrespective of the type of representation, Seattle school principals want to be involved in negotiations.

Part III

Role Satisfaction

Table 10. Responses to the question "The present state law on professional negotiations, as it pertains to the principal's role, should be changed."

Level	Ages 34-45		Ages 46-65		Total	
	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree
Elementary	95%	5%	100%	0%	93%	7%
Secondary					88%	12%
Combined Elementary and Secondary					92%	8%

From the results indicated in Table 10, it is very clear that the Seattle school principals see a need for changes in the State Negotiations Law. By comparing the results in Tables 1 and 3 with this table, the writer concludes that one change in the State Negotiations Law wanted by the Seattle principals is to allow them to negotiate with the school board as a negotiating unit separate from SAE. According to Ackerly, compulsory statutes that assign principals to teacher organizations are no good--principals need their own negotiating body. However, Shils, in 1968, stated that it makes more sense to have one negotiating unit for all certificated staff as put forth by the NEA (Ackerly, 1969; Shils, 1968).

Table 11. Responses to the question "I am satisfied with the principals' role in negotiations by representation in SAE, the negotiating body for all certificated personnel within the Seattle School District."

Level	En-	50-50			Not
	tirely				at all
	1	2	3	4	5
Elementary, Ages 34-45	10%	0%	21%	37%	32%
Elementary, Ages 46-65	0%	33%	52%	5%	10%
Total Elementary	8%	15%	35%	25%	17%
Secondary	0%	12%	18%	29%	41%
Combined Elementary and Secondary	6%	14%	31%	26%	23%

The results shown in Table 11 indicate a definite feeling by the secondary and younger elementary school principals of not being satisfied with their role in negotiations by representation under SAE. The older elementary school principals show an undecided position as to their degree of satisfaction with their present role.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

General Conclusions

Part I

Unit Representation

The overall results indicate to the researcher a significant feeling on the part of the Seattle school principals that they 1) want to be directly involved in professional negotiations, 2) would prefer to negotiate with their own team under an organization separate from SAE, and 3) have stronger feelings about item 2 at the secondary level and among the younger elementary school principals.

Part II

Role Perception

The results of the second section of the questionnaire reinforces the conclusion from Part I that the Seattle school principals want to be directly involved in negotiations rather than taking a role of consulting or advising.

Part III

Role Satisfaction

The writer concludes from the results of the third section of the questionnaire that the Seattle school principals as a body are leaning

toward being unsatisfied with their present role in negotiations under SAE and strongly desire changes in the state law on negotiations. The writer further feels the Seattle school principals are not in agreement as to what their role should be, but are definitely wanting more options available to them.

Recommendations

The researcher strongly recommends a study to determine what changes the Seattle school principals want in the state law on professional negotiations as it pertains to the principals' role. Another study is recommended to determine the reasons for the variances in opinions between secondary and elementary school principals. It is suspected by the writer that the administrative roles may vary sufficiently to cause at least a part of this difference.

The researcher would recommend to the Seattle Principals Association that it take a strong look at why the secondary school principals are leaning toward being part of management. If this is a definite trend, the writer would suggest some different role descriptions are in order and changes in responsibilities at the individual building level. The writer feels there is a difference between the policy making role of management and the operational role of administration. This difference, when identified and studied, may be a factor in the school principal's uncertainty of his role in professional negotiations.

APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE

Please refer to your copy of the Professional Agreements between the Seattle School District No. 1 and the Seattle Alliance of Educators for the year 1970-71. Note in particular Article 1, Section A, Paragraphs 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 8, and 9, and Section C.

(Check one) ELEMENTARY PRINCIPAL _____, SECONDARY PRINCIPAL _____.
SEX _____ AGE _____.
LENGTH OF SERVICE AS A PRINCIPAL IN THE SEATTLE SCHOOL DISTRICT _____.

Part I
Unit Representation

(It is understood by the investigator that one or two ideas implied here may require a change in Washington State Law)

1. The principals should continue to be represented by an all-inclusive unit such as the Seattle Alliance of Educators (SAE).

AGREE DISAGREE

Comments: _____

2. The principals should continue to be represented by an all-inclusive unit such as SAE, however, the principals should represent themselves by a separate negotiating team for certain items such as salary or length of contract.

Comments: _____

3. The principals should have an organization and negotiating body completely separate from the SAE through which to negotiate all negotiable items affecting the principal professionally or economically.

Comments: _____

4. The principals should be considered part of management and their representative should, therefore, be a member of or advisor to the Seattle School Board's negotiating team. AGREE
DISAGREE
-
- Comments: _____
-

5. Principals should offer advisory input only to both the SAE and the School Board's negotiating teams with the single and consistent purpose of trying to improve the education of Seattle students. AGREE
DISAGREE
-
- Comments: _____
-

6. The principals should not be directly involved in negotiations. AGREE
DISAGREE
-
- Comments: _____
-

Part II
Role Perception

(These questions assume the continuance of representation under SAE)

1. The principals' representative should continue to be on the SAE negotiating team. AGREE
DISAGREE
-
- Comments: _____
-

2. The principals' representative should be an advisor or consultant to the SAE negotiating team. AGREE
DISAGREE
-
- Comments: _____
-

3. The principals should not be directly involved in negotiations.

AGREE DISAGREE

Comments: _____

Part III
Role Satisfaction

1. The present state law on professional negotiations, as it pertains to the principals' role, should be changed.

Comments: _____

2. I am satisfied with the principals' role in negotiations by representation in SAE, the negotiating body for all certificated personnel within the Seattle School District.

RATE BY THE FOLLOWING SCALE:
(Check one only)

En- tirely		50-50		Not at all
1	2	3	4	5

APPENDIX B

-30-

LETTER

October 19, 1970

Dear Mr. Principal:

The enclosed questionnaire is part of a study on how Seattle school principals perceive their role in local professional negotiations. The results of the study will be used to write a professional paper for partial fulfillment of a Master's degree in Education at Montana State University, Bozeman. The results will also be sent to the local constituent organizations of SAE and to the school district for their review and possible use.

In marking each question, please keep in mind that the all-inclusive negotiating unit, SAE, is presently composed of proportionate membership from the 1) Seattle Teachers' Association, 2) Seattle Principals' Association, and 3) Administrative and Supervisory League. The SAE, as one body, negotiates with the school board on behalf of all the members of the three constituent organizations.

Thank you for your participation in this study. Your questionnaire will be kept confidential as there are no identification marks required when returning it in the enclosed envelope. If you desire a summary of this study, please indicate by putting your name and address on this letter and return with the questionnaire.

Sincerely yours,

Dennis J. Anderson, Teacher
Eckstein Junior High School
Seattle, Washington

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