SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS OF BOARD MEMBERS SERVING MONTANA'S CLASS ONE SCHOOL DISTRICTS

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to survey the present socio-economic status of board members serving class one school districts in the state of Montana. The population consisted of ninety trustees. The data received by questionnaire allowed the writer to construct a model of a typical board member. He is a forty-seven year old male with approximately three or four children. He has almost sixteen years of education, was self-employed, and earned almost eleven thousand dollars last year. He belongs to the Chamber of Commerce, Elks, and Masonic Lodge. He is a member of the Protestant religion. The average trustee has lived in his district for twenty-two and a half years, and served as a trustee for five years.

This study showed that the boards serving class one districts are generally composed of individuals from the professional and entrepreneurial classes. Labor does not have a proportional representation on the local school board.

This study may be of value to prospective administrators because they may gain a better understanding of the types of people willing to serve as school trustees. An understanding of the trustees socio-economic status may lead to greater respect and cooperation between administrators and school trustees which could result in a better educational program for Montana's school children.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The power to control education in the United States is presently under the jurisdiction of state government. However, the states have delegated a large portion of their responsibility to the local school district. The state establishes minimum standards to which all schools must adhere, if they are to be certified. It distributes funds on an equalization basis to local school districts so that a minimal foundation program will be available to all children. Above and beyond these minimum standards, the local school district has the privilege of deciding what kind of education its youngsters are to receive. To decide the role education will play in the community, the citizens rely upon the judgments made by the elected school board.

The state of Montana has a small number of qualifications which a prospective board member must meet before he can be elected to this important position. According to the law, any person who is a citizen of the state, over twenty-one years of age, and a qualified voter meets these requirements. Without a doubt almost anyone who wishes to become a trustee possesses the necessary qualifications according to the law. Does the public require any additional qualifications of those who would serve as school trustees? What kind of men and women are willing to devote themselves to this important task? Why should the public seek particular individuals to serve as trustees of local education?

In Montana during the 1963-64 school year, the state superintendent of schools (14) reported that school trustees had control over a

budget totaling over ninety-eight million dollars. They headed a statewide educational system that was valued at more than two hundred thirty-five million dollars. In addition, over one hundred sixty-five thousand students in the state were under their jurisdiction. These men and women serving as school trustees formulated school policy, approved educational programs and budgets, controlled building programs, and approved the selection of teachers made by the administrative staff.

This study will attempt to identify the social and economic characteristics of school board members so that superintendents can work with them more effectively in the operation of good schools.

The Problem

The purpose of this study was to determine the social, economic, religious, and educational status of the board members of class one school districts in the state of Montana.

Procedures

The first step in solving the problem was to study all the available literature related to the history, responsibilities, and importance of school boards in the United States. When this task was completed the writer studied all previous surveys dealing with the socio-economic status of Montana school board members.

The names and addresses of the board members were obtained from the county superintendents of schools. In the case of county high school board members, the principal of the particular school was contacted for the information.

A questionnaire was drafted that required less then fifteen minutes to complete. A letter explaining the purpose of the survey was composed and a typewritten copy was sent to each trustee. This was done in an attempt to personalize the request for information in hopes of a higher percentage of return. The questionnaire, cover letter, and a stamped, self-addressed envelope were sent to each trustee. The data received was tabulated and a general description of the average board member serving class one districts was compiled. The results of the study were then compared with previous surveys conducted in 1932, and 1951, to determine what changes, if any, had taken place in terms of the socio-economic characteristics of board members. Of the one hundred ten school board members contacted, ninety or eighty-one point eight per cent participated in the study.

Limitations

This study was limited to the board members of class one school districts including county high school boards. The study was restricted to this group because they served more than one-third of the state's school population. Approximately sixty-six thousand five hundred students were enrolled in class one districts during the 1964-65 school year.

The review of literature was limited to books and periodicals obtained from the Montana State University library and the departmental library of the School of Education.

The writer found only one item appearing on the questionnaire which may have been misinterpreted by the respondees. The level of income was stated as net income, which is defined as exclusive of deductions, not

gross income defined as whole or entire, especially without having been subjected to deductions. The writer felt that the respondees reported gross income, not net income.

Definitions

A class one school district is defined by Montana Law (15) as a district having a population of eight thousand or more inhabitants. In districts of this class the number of trustees serving on the board is limited to seven members.

For clarity, a distinction must be made between salaried and wage earning individuals. The American College Dictionary (2) defines a wage earner as "One who works for wages." Wages are defined as "That which is paid for work or services by the day or week." Salary is defined as "A fixed compensation paid to a person for regular work or services, especially work other than that of a manual, mechanical, or menial kind."

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Since the turn of the century a growing number of studies concerning the socio-economic composition of school boards have been undertaken on state and national levels. Two prior studies have been made in Montana; one in 1932 and the other in 1952.

Studies on a National Scale

The first study made on a national scale was conducted by George S. Counts in 1927. He reported only three prior studies in his review of research. Goldhammer (7), in a discussion of the social status of school board members, reviews the surveys made prior to that of Counts. The first study was conducted by Scott Nearing in 1916. He reported that most members of school boards were representatives of the business and professional classes. No mention was made of any representation by organized labor on the boards of education.

In 1919, the New York City teachers' union studied the school boards in sixty-seven major cities in the United States. They reported that only seventeen of the cities had members of organized labor represented on the local boards.

In 1922, George Struble studied the school boards in one hundred sixty-nine cities, and found that only fifty-four of the seven hundred and sixty-one board members were from the ranks of organized labor.

After Counts completed his survey of the nature and social composition of school boards in 1927, he wrote a description of the typical city board, although he stated that one did not exist, to give the reader a better picture of a typical board in the United States. Callahan (4), in a discussion of the organization and administration of the American school system, has reproduced the description written by Counts.

> The typical city board of education in the United States is composed of six members. These members are elected at large for a term of three years. One of the six members is a woman, who follows the occupation of housewife. Of the five men, one is a merchant; one, a lawyer; one, a physician; one, a banker, manufacturer, or business executive; and one, a salesman, clerk, or laborer. Three of the members have children attending the public schools of the city. From the standpoint of formal education, they constitute, in comparison with the city population as a whole, a highly selected group. But one of the members is a product of the elementary school only; two have attended the secondary school; and three have enjoyed college or university privileges. In age, they exhibit a range of twenty-six years, or a range from thirty-seven to sixty-three years. The remaining four members are distributed between these two extremes at the ages of forty-two, forty-six, fifty, and fifty-four years. In length of service on the board, they likewise show considerable diversity. At the one extreme is a novice who is serving his first year, while at the other is a veteran who has already given fifteen years of service to the board. The others show tenures of office of two, three, five, and eight years, respectively. On the average, these members devote approximately fifty-one hours a year to board duties. For this service they receive no financial compensation.

In 1946, the National Education Association (17) surveyed the social and economic backgrounds of approximately fifteen thousand four hundred board members serving both urban and rural school systems. This study compared Count's findings with those of the Association. In addition to this comparison, a typical citizen was constructed from the data gathered in the 1940 census. Then the general socio-economic levels of the average board member were compared with the average citizen's levels of social and economic attainment.

The study showed that nine out of ten board members were males, although female representation in larger cities increased to a proportion of five to one. The educational preparation of the trustees was considerably higher than that of the average citizen. While only twenty-five per cent of the general public had graduated from high school, at least seventy per cent of the board members had completed the twelfth grade. Approximately four out of every one hundred citizens had completed college as compared to one board member in every three holding a college degree. In the larger cities this proportion increased to two board members out of three being college graduates. The researchers also found that in addition to possessing a better education, board members belonged mainly to three of eleven broad occupational categories. City trustees belonging in the proprietor and executive class represented thirty-five per cent of the total, while professional groups accounted for an additional twenty per cent. Farmers represented ten per cent of the membership in urban boards, with housewives fourth at seven per cent. The remaining seven groups accounted for twenty-eight per cent of the membership. The income reported by board members was closely correlated with the educational and occupational levels to which the trustees belonged. The average income for city members was four thousand six hundred dollars. The over-all average for the trustees was four thousand dollars contrasted with only one thousand five hundred dollars for the average American citizen. However, the median age of the trustees was forty-eight point five years while the average for citizens over twenty-five was forty-four. The studies conducted by both Counts and Struble indicated the median age at forty-eight also. The Association's study indicated that

sixty per cent of the board members had a child or grandchild in the schools they served. Their average period of service was six and seven tenths years.

Brown (3) conducted a study in 1951 surveying the board members in cities between five thousand and three hundred thousand in population. He stated that the changes in the social composition of American school boards over the past twenty-five years were relatively small despite the wars, depression, the rise in power of organized labor, and other conditions. He found a four per cent increase in the number of members from the managerial, proprietor, and professional groups. However, in all other categories the changes were negligible.

The American Association of School Administrators (1) in their Thirty-Fourth Yearbook published a summary of two surveys of board members. Their general description was as follows:

> Attend a board meeting in a typical American community and you will find seated around a table about five members. There may be one or two women -- about 1 in 10 members is the average for the country as a whole. The remainder will be men who are proprietors, executives, professionals, skilled and unskilled laborers, and in small districts, a substantial number of farmers and stockmen.
>
> A third or more of these citizens are college graduates; some have finished high school and some have not. They represent different economic, social, and political family backgrounds. In a large majority of districts the board will have been elected by popular vote either at separate or special elections. About 1 in 7 boards has been appointed by city officials or other governmental agencies.

Alpheus White (19), a specialist in school board organization and practices for the U. S. Office of Education, published the results of a survey conducted in 1959 and 1960. The study included approximately four-thousand five hundred school systems serving twelve hundred students or more.

The results showed the formal education of board members was far above average. College graduates were six times as prevalent among board members as they were in the average population. The number of graduates serving as trustees on a particular board ranged from forty-three point one per cent in smaller systems to a high of seventy-two point six per cent in the largest districts. The number of women serving increased to nine point seven per-cent although fifty-six point four per cent of the boards did not have women members. The number of occupational categories accounting for the majority of board members had shrunk to two. These two categories accounted for three-fifths of the members. Business owners, officials, and managers comprised thirty-four point five per cent while professional and technical services represented twenty-seven point four per cent of the board membership. Farmers were third with twelve point four per cent and housewives fourth with seven point two per cent. Nineteen point five per cent represented the other categories. White found the length of tenure to be less than five years for fifty-three point five per cent of the members, while thirty point six per cent served from five to ten years and sixteen per cent served for ten years or more as school trustees.

The NEA Journal (16) reported the findings of a survey of the National School Boards Association that dealt with the typical big city board of education. The leading occupations of board members in forty-two large cities were businessmen, lawyers, housewives, physicians, and ministers.

Studies at the State Level

Many studies conducted on a state wide basis are discussed by Goldhammer (7) in describing the social status of school board members. He refers to research done by Hines, who studied the social composition of the Eugene, Oregon school board for a period of fifty-three years. Hines discovered that the majority of board members represented the business and professional groups. Labor and farming groups were never directly represented on the school board during the fifty-three year period.

A study done by Tiedt is also cited by Goldhammer. Tiedt found that sixty-one per cent of the board members in the Willamette Valley in Oregon came from professional, managerial, and technical occupations. He compared the average citizen with the average board member and concluded that school trustees are not representative of the total population in any particular social characteristic.

After reviewing a large number of studies, Goldhammer made the following statement:

> The evidence indicates that school board members tend to come from the sociologically higher occupational categories and that they tend to be in above-average occupational positions and levels of income.

Caughran (5) conducted a study in the state of Illinois in 1956 which explored the social and economic background of board members selected at random and their attitudes toward common educational issues. He found the average board member to be male, of the white race, approximately forty-nine years of age. The trustee had completed twelve years of school and had one or two children attending the public schools. The individual made his living as a businessman, farmer, or professional man and was a member

of one to three business organizations. The results of the study dealing with the correlation of backgrounds and attitudes possessed by board members were summarized by Caughran (6) who stated, "Possibly the most important conclusion has to do with the fact that it was not possible to correlate socio-economic backgrounds significantly with any particular attitude toward the issues studied."

Havighurst and Neugarten (11) in a discussion of the control of education in the local community made the following statement concerning the changes in the socio-economic composition of school boards:

> In recent years there have been certain changes in the socio-economic composition of city school boards. It is becoming fairly frequent to have one or two representatives of organized labor on the school board. In small cities the labor representatives are likely to be union officials, who have themselves been working men but who are now living in middle-class districts, receiving middle-class salaries, and sending their children to college.

However, they do not substantiate their statement with any empirical data. They go on to cite four studies done at the state level in the nineteen fifties which indicate that a school board is increasingly composed of persons from higher socio-economic levels.

Studies of Montana School Boards

In 1931, Haines (9) conducted a study of the school boards in the state of Montana. The major objectives of his study were to present the status of Montana school boards as a whole along with the status of the school boards by classes. Finally, he intended to point out any conditions that seemed to demand a legal remedy. This study was undertaken about five years after the comprehensive survey by Counts. All of the studies done at

this time were conducted because of Labor's objections to the school boards being dominated by the members of the upper class. Haines stated this as one of his motives for initiating the survey.

Haines began his study with a discussion of the three distinct types of terrain; mountainous, hilly country, and wheat country, and their effects upon the development of the public schools. Then he summarized the present educational situations existing within the state.

A questionnaire was sent to the county superintendents with a request for information pertaining to all school board members and clerks of the board within the county. If no reply was received, he then sent a similar request to the clerk of the school district. He reports a seventy-five per cent return from class one districts.

He describes the typical board member of a class one district as follows:

> A married man fifty-one years old who has three children. Of the seven members, four have children in the district school. The typical member owns real estate in the district and does not hold any other public offices. Of the seven members, two are professional men -- one doctor and one lawyer -- one is a proprietor, one a clerical worker, one a skilled or semi-skilled worker. One of the two remaining is either a man engaged in commercial work or a woman.

In his conclusion, Haines felt that the present board members in the larger districts represented a select group of individuals who had a better education, owned more property, and were employed in jobs of higher status than the average Montana citizen.

In 1951, Hubley (12) conducted a similar study of Montana school board members because he felt few citizens realized the power wielded by the board members as a group. He stated that, "What the board member's attitudes

and opinions are, and what he does, are largely determined by his social and economic background." He, like Haines, wished to bring to the public a general picture of the present socio-economic status of Montana's school board members and to suggest remedies for any conditions warranting legal correction.

The data was collected from questionnaires sent to the clerks of all the school boards concerned. Forty-one of the fifty-six counties were sampled and a total of eight hundred sixty-seven board members were included in the study. He then compared his results with those of Haines.

Hubley found that the typical first class school district trustee possessed the following characteristics:

> The typical first class board is composed of seven members, all of which are men. Two are between thirty-one and forty years of age, two between forty-one and fifty years of age, two between fifty-one and sixty years, and one between sixty-one and eighty years, with the median being forty-seven point two years. All are married and have a family of two or three children of which one or two are attending school. This board is composed of four members having a college education, two with a high school education, and one with an elementary education. Three of the members follow some profession, two are proprietors, one is a clerk or does clerical work, one may be either a craftsman, domestic, or laborer, from which vocations they receive incomes of about five thousand five hundred dollars per year. All are of Northwestern European extraction, although half of them have lost all dominance of nationality. Only one, or possibly two, were born in Montana while the rest were born in other states of the United States. Residence in the district ranges from six to fifty years with the median being twenty-three years. In length of service on the board, one member is relatively new while one has been on the board over twelve years. The others have served between four and ten years. Six of the seven members own real-estate in the district. One of the seven holds some other public office.

This information will be analyzed in comparison with the findings of the writer in a later chapter.

CHAPTER III

THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS OF CLASS ONE SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS IN THE STATE OF MONTANA

Sex

Table I shows the representation of the two sexes serving on class one school boards. Men continued to hold the majority of school trustee positions today, just as they had in the past. Eighty-nine per cent of all positions on the board are held by men. Of the eleven per cent of females represented on the school boards, two point two per cent are

TABLE I

SEX OF MEMBERS OF MONTANA'S CLASS ONE SCHOOL BOARDS

Sex	Number	Per cent
Male	80	89
Female	10*	11
Total	90	100

*This includes two county superintendents serving as ex-officio members of the county high school board of trustees.

county superintendents serving as ex-officio members of the county high school boards. This leaves only eight point eight per cent of the female members being elected by the public.

Age of Members

When Counts (7) completed his survey in 1927, he reported that the range in age of typical city board members was from thirty-seven to sixty-three years. The average member ranged from forty-two to fifty-four years of age. Table II illustrates the range in ages of class one school district trustees in the state of Montana. The reader will note that the age of the board members ranged from thirty-one to seventy years of age.

TABLE II

AGE OF MEMBERS OF MONTANA'S CLASS ONE SCHOOL BOARDS

Age	Male	Female	Per cent
31-35	4	- -	- -
36-40	10	1	12.2
41-45	19	2	23.3
46-50	25	4	32.2
51-55	13	1	15.5
56-60	5	2	7.7
61-65	2	- -	2.2
66-70	2	- -	2.2
Total	80	10	99.7
Median 47.05	46.9	48.0	- -

This showed a wider range than that reported by Counts in 1927. Eighty-three point two per cent of all the board members were between the ages of thirty-six and fifty-five, while fifty-five point five per cent of the school trustees were between the ages of forty-one and fifty. Sixty per cent of the female members were also within this age range. The median age for all board members was forty-seven. For male board members, the median was forty-six point nine years of age. The female board member's median age was forty-eight.

Marital Status

The marital status of class one school board members is given in Table III. The percentage of married trustees was ninety-eight point nine per cent. Only one divorcee was serving as a member of the school board. No single individuals or widowers were serving on the school board.

TABLE III

MARITAL STATUS OF MONTANA'S CLASS ONE BOARD MEMBERS

Marital Status	Number	Per-Cent
Married	89	98.9
Single	- -	- -
Widowed	- -	- -
Divorced	1	1.1
Total	90	100.0

Number of Children of Board Members

Table IV presents data concerning the number of children board members have. The range in the number of children extended from one to twelve per family. It is interesting to note that the voters did not select any individual without children to serve on the school board. Fifty-eight point nine per cent of the school trustees had either three or four children. The median number of children in a board member's family was three point three.

TABLE IV

NUMBER OF CHILDREN OF MONTANA'S CLASS ONE BOARD MEMBERS

Number of children	Frequency	Per cent
0	- -	- -
1	1	1.1
2	17	18.9
3	33	36.7
4	20	22.2
5	14	15.6
6	2	2.2
7	2	2.2
8	- -	- -
9	- -	- -
10	- -	- -
11	- -	- -
12	1	1.1
Total	90	100.0
Median number of children 3.3		

Number of Children in School

Approximately eighty-two per cent of the school board members had children in school. Table V points out that only seventeen point seven per cent of the school trustees did not have children in the elementary, junior high school, or senior high schools at that time. Sixty-eight point eight per cent of the board members had from one to three children in school. The median number of children in school was two.

TABLE V

NUMBER OF CHILDREN TRUSTEE'S HAD IN SCHOOL*

Number in School	Frequency	Per cent
0	16	17.7
1	18	20.0
2	22	24.4
3	22	24.4
4	8	8.8
5	2	2.2
6	1	1.1
7	1	1.1
Total	90	99.7
Median number of children in school	2.0	

* This does not include colleges, junior colleges, or universities.

Employment Status

In the early nineteen hundreds a great deal of discussion centered around the fact that people in the laboring classes were not adequately represented on school boards. Table VI presents evidence that this situation is still in existence. Sixty-four point four per cent of the school trustees reported that they were self-employed. Of the total board representation, eighty-seven point seven per cent of the trustees were either self-employed or salaried. Wage earners accounted for a mere eight and eight-tenths of the total membership. This number may be slightly higher because three respondees did not list their occupations.

TABLE VI

EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF CLASS ONE BOARD MEMBERS

Status	Frequency	Per cent
Self-employed	58	64.4
Wage earner	8	8.8
Salaried	21	23.3
Retired	- -	- -
Not given	3	3.3
Total	90	99.8

Occupation

According to Hansen (10), sixty per cent of the nation's school board members pursued the occupations of proprietor, manager, official, or professional and technical workers. Table VII presents data concerning the occupations of Montana's school trustees serving class one school districts.

The occupations of trustees were classified in accordance with the Alphabetical Index of Occupations and Industries (18) used by the Bureau of the Census in its 1960 survey. This system was used so a comparison with the results of prior studies might be made.

In order to give the reader a clear idea as to the types of jobs listed in each category, a small sample of each occupational class will be presented.

Professional-technical includes accountants, architects, dentists, engineers, lawyers, nurses, optometrists, physicians, teachers, technicians of all types, and veterinarians.

Managerial includes officials, administrators, buyers, managers, and proprietors.

Farm includes cattle ranchers, grain farmers, potato farmers, owners, and tenant farmers.

Clerical includes such occupations as bank tellers, file clerks, insurance adjusters, examiners, and stock clerks.

Sales includes insurance agents, brokers, underwriters, real estate agents, stock and bond salesmen, and clerks.

Craftsmen includes such jobs as foremen, machinists, mechanics, plumbers, tailors, painters and equipment operators.

Operatives include those serving as apprentices, deliverymen, taxi drivers, welders, and launderers.

Private household includes baby sitters and housekeepers.

Service includes attendants, janitors, cooks, and bartenders.

In contrast to Hansen's report of sixty per cent representation for the professional-managerial categories, Montana had only forty-nine point nine per cent of its members coming from this class.

According to the 1960 census, Montana's professional-managerial classes consisted of only twenty point nine per cent of the state's work force. The census reported that fifteen per cent of the state's work force was represented by farmers. Their representation on class one school boards varied by only one and six-tenths per cent from the state average.

In comparison with the rest of the United States, Montana also had a predominantly professional and managerial representation on its school boards. Labor was not equally represented.

TABLE VII

OCCUPATIONS OF CLASS ONE SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD MEMBERS

Occupation	Frequency	Per cent
Professional-Technical	28	31.1
Managerial	17	18.8
Farm	15	16.6
Clerical	1	1.1
Sales	8	8.8
Craftsmen	4	4.4
Operatives	3	3.3
Private household (includes housewives)	4	4.4
Service	- -	- -
Laborer	- -	- -
Not given	10	11.1
Total	90	99.6

Income

The 1960 Census (18) listed the median income for families in Montana at five thousand four hundred three dollars. Table VII presents the median income of class one school trustees at ten thousand nine hundred twenty dollars. Less than four per cent of those reporting indicated an income of below five thousand dollars. Thirty-three point three per cent of the trustees earned between five and ten thousand dollars per year. Sixty-three point two per cent of the board members listed their incomes as above ten thousand dollars.

TABLE VIII

NET INCOME OF MONTANA'S CLASS ONE SCHOOL TRUSTEES

Net income	Frequency	Per cent
Under $5,000	3	3.3
$5,001 to $7,000	11	12.2
$7,001 to $10,000	19	21.1
$10,001 to $15,000	26	28.8
Over $15,000	31	34.4
Total	90	99.8
Median income $10,920.00		

Educational Attainment

Kerr (13), in a discussion of the relationship between board members' social and economic characteristics and their educational progressivism, stated that "the only characteristic which clearly related to 'Educational Progressivism' was the members' education." If this were true, Montana's class one district trustees should be quite progressive. Table IX presents the educational status of the board members.

TABLE IX

EDUCATIONAL STATUS OF MONTANA'S CLASS ONE SCHOOL TRUSTEES

Education	Frequency	Per cent
8 or less	2	2.2
9-11 years	4	4.4
12 years	19	21.1
1-3 years college	19	21.1
Bachelor's degree	22	24.4
Master's degree	4	4.4
Phd., M.D., LLB.	20	22.2
Total	90	99.8
Median level of education 15.85 years		

Religion

The religious affiliations of Montana's class one school board members are presented in Table X. Sixty-four point four per cent of all trustees belonged to the three major Protestant religious sects. The Presbyterian Church with a percentage of twenty-four point five accounted for the largest single religious affiliation. Methodists were the second largest group with twenty-two point two per cent. The Lutheran Church was third with seventeen point seven per cent. The Seventh Day Adventist Church and the Christian Science religion were not represented by the school board members. Two point two per cent of the respondees claimed no religious affiliation.

Twenty-six of the ninety board members reported that they held some position of responsibility in the church to which they belonged. The positions held included deacons, choir directors, Sunday school teachers, and church board membership.

TABLE X

RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION OF BOARD MEMBERS

Denomination	Frequency	Per cent
Baptist	3	3.3
Catholic	11	12.2
Christian Science	- -	- -
Congregational	3	3.3
Episcopal	8	8.9
First Christian	1	1.1
Latter Day Saints	3	3.3
Lutheran	16	17.7
Methodist	20	22.2
Presbyterian	22	24.5
Seventh Day Adventist	- -	- -
Unitarian	1	1.1
None	2	2.2
Total	90	99.8

Club Membership

The social organizations to which school trustees belong are presented in Table XI. Three organizations were quite popular with the board members. The Chamber of Commerce was listed by approximately fifty per cent of the trustees. This high percentage was probably correlated with the large number of board members who were self-employed. The Masonic Lodge ranked second in popularity. Approximately forty-five per cent of the trustees belonged to this group. Within this category the writer included all branches of the Lodge including the Eastern Star, and the Scottish Rite. The members of the Shrine were listed separately. The Elk's Lodge ranked third with thirty-seven per cent of the trustees presently affiliated with the organization.

Thirty-five of the ninety school board members stated that they held some position of responsibility in the organization listed in Table XI, and in other organizations with which they were affiliated.

The median number of clubs or organization to which school trustees belong is represented in Table XII. The average board member was affiliated with two point ninety-three hundredths clubs. Only five point six per cent of all the trustees stated that they did not belong to any club or organization. Not one board member listed the Montana School Board Association or the National School Board Association as one of the organizations with which he was affiliated. The writer feels that some of the trustees no doubt belonged to these organizations, but he should have included them on his questionnaire.

TABLE XI

ORGANIZATIONS WITH WHICH BOARD MEMBERS WERE AFFILIATED

Organization	Number belonging
American Legion	13
Chamber of Commerce	43
Civitans	- -
Eagles	7
Elks	33
Exchange	2
Kiwanis	5
Knights of Columbus	4
Lions	15
Masons (Scottish Rite, Eastern Star)	40
Moose	1
Rotary	15
Shrine	17
Toastmasters	2
Veterans of Foreign Wars	5

TABLE XII

NUMBER OF ORGANIZATIONS TO WHICH EACH TRUSTEE BELONGED

Number	Frequency	Per cent
0	5	5.6
1	13	14.4
2	18	20.0
3	21	23.3
4	15	16.7
5	8	8.9
6	4	4.4
7	4	4.4
8	1	1.1
9	- -	- -
10	1	1.1
Total	90	99.9
Median number of organizations affiliated with	2.93	

Length of Service

Grieder, Pierce, and Rosenstengel (8) in discussing the terms of school board members, stated that "the median length of service as a school board member is approximately seven years." Table XIII shows the median length of service for Montana's class one school district trustees as four and six-tenths years. This was two and four-tenths years below the figure cited by Grieder, Pierce, and Rosenstengel. Forty-eight point eight per cent of the trustees had served on the board for less than five years. Only fifteen point four per cent of the board members had served for a period of more than ten years. The longest period of service reported was thirty-seven years.

TABLE XIII

NUMBER OF YEARS SERVICE ON THE SCHOOL BOARD

Years of service	Frequency	Per cent
1	10	11.1
2	13	14.4
3	12	13.3
4	9	10.0
5	9	10.0
6	8	8.9
7	4	4.4
8	3	3.3
9	4	4.4
10	4	4.4
11	3	3.3
12	3	3.3
13	1	1.1
14	- -	- -
15	2	2.2
19	1	1.1
20	1	1.1
22	1	1.1
35	1	1.1
37	1	1.1
Total	90	99.6

Median number of years served on the board 4.61

District Residence

Table IV shows the number of years board members had resided in their particular districts. The reader will note that not one member of the boards surveyed had resided in the community for less than six years. The median number of years board members had lived within the particular school district was twenty-two point sixty-four hundredths years.

TABLE IV

NUMBER OF YEARS RESIDENCY IN THE CITY OR DISTRICT

Years in residency	Frequency	Per cent
1-5	- -	- -
6-10	8	8.9
11-15	15	16.7
16-20	19	21.1
21-25	7	7.8
26-30	4	4.4
31-35	6	6.7
36-40	2	2.2
41-45	8	8.9
46-50	11	12.2
51-55	4	4.4
56-60	2	2.2
61-65	2	2.2
66-70	2	2.2
Total	90	99.9
Median number of years spent in the district	22.64	

CHAPTER IV

COMPARISON OF RESULTS OF PRIOR STUDIES WITH THOSE OF THIS INVESTIGATION

This chapter will compare the findings of surveys conducted in 1932 and 1952 with the present study. These studies conducted by Haines and Hubley respectively, dealt with all classes of school districts in Montana. In most instances, their findings were broken down into specific school district classifications. The comparisons presented here will deal only with class one school districts.

Data concerning the class one school districts was limited, due to the small number of districts in this category within the state. Haines and Hubley both reported that there were only four class one districts existing in 1932 and 1952. Only twenty-eight board members participated in each of the prior surveys.

The writer found eleven districts classified as class one according to Montana law. The increase in the number of class one districts indicates the growth of large urban areas in the state during the past thirty-four years. The number of board members in the present survey was much larger due to the inclusion of county high school board members. Approximately thirty-three of the one hundred ten members belonged to county high school boards.

Sex

Data concerning the specific percentage of females serving on class one boards in Haines study was not available. Hubley reported that

six point two per cent of all class one trustees were female. This figure did not include any county superintendents serving as ex-officio members. The present survey showed that eight point eight per cent of the elected trustees were women. This represented a two and six-tenths per cent increase in female representation during the last fourteen years.

Age

In comparing the median age of board members from class one districts, Haines reported the median age as fifty point nine years. Hubley reported the median age as forty-seven point two years. The present study found the median age to be forty-seven. This indicates a continued downward trend in the age of those selected as school trustees. However, the decrease has been slight in the past fourteen years.

Marital Status

No great change was found in the marital status of the school trustees. Haines reported ninety-eight per cent of the trustees as being married. Hubley reported ninety-six per cent married, and the present survey found ninety-nine per cent of school trustees to be married.

Occupation

A true comparison of the occupational categories reported in this and prior studies was not possible because eleven per cent of the board members reporting in the present survey did not wish to reveal their occupations. However, according to the questionnaires received the trustees had indicated that they were either self-employed or salaried.

Table XV indicates a decrease in the number of professional persons serving as school trustees. The managerial group experienced the greatest decrease which was seventeen point two per cent. Farm representation increased sixteen point two per cent. This increase may be due to consolidation or the inclusion of county high school board members. Clerical workers decreased approximately thirteen per cent. Sales, crafts, and operatives showed a sixteen point two per cent increase during the past fourteen years.

If the board members who did not state their occupation were included in the managerial and professional groups, this would increase the combined percentage by twelve points. The new total would still indicate a decrease in representation for the professional-managerial categories amounting to twelve point two per cent.

TABLE XV

A COMPARISON OF BOARD MEMBER OCCUPATION AS REPORTED IN THE PRESENT STUDY AND IN PRIOR SURVEYS

Occupation	Haines' Study	Hubley's Study	Present Study
Professional and Technical	32	39.2	31
Managerial	20	35	18.8
Farm	4	- -	16.6
Clerical	16	14.2	1.1
Sales	8	- -	8.8
Craftsmen	- -	3.5	4.4
Operatives	- -	- -	3
Laborers	20	3.5	- -
Private Household	- -	- -	4.4
Service	- -	3.5	- -
			12 (not given)
Total	100	98.9	100.1

Education

Table XVI presents data comparing the levels of educational attainment of the trustees serving class one school districts in the state of Montana. The number of board members that received only an elementary education has continued to decline. Only two point two per cent of the trustees indicated that they had completed less than eight years of schooling.

The number of trustees completing only a high school education has also declined. A ten per cent decrease was indicated. Trustees who attended college or received a baccalaureate or advanced degree increased fifteen per cent during the past fourteen years. This trend is probably related to the increased emphasis placed upon a higher education.

TABLE XVI

A COMPARISON OF THE EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF BOARD MEMBERS REPORTED BY THE PRESENT STUDY AND PRIOR SURVEYS

Level of Education	Haines' Study	Hubley's Study	Present Study
Elementary	25	7.1	2.2
Secondary	28	35.7	25.5
College	46.4	57.1	72.1
Total	99.4	99.9	99.8

Number of Children and Number of Children in School

The number of children that each board member had in his family increased from two point six to three point two children. The number of children in school also showed an increase from one point six to two. The writer has not included children presently attending a junior college, college or university in his data. There was no indication as to whether the prior studies included such information.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The typical Montana school board member serving a class one district is a married man approximately forty-seven years of age. He has completed almost sixteen years of school and very likely possesses a baccalaurate degree. This man is self-employed either as a professional, a proprietor, manager, executive, or a farmer. He earns approximately ten thousand nine hundred dollars per year. The typical trustee has three to four children, two or which are presently enrolled in schools within the district. He has resided in the school district for twenty-two and a half years and has served on the board for almost five years. He is a member of either the Presbyterian, Lutheran, or Methodist church. Socially he is active in three organizations, which would probably include the Chamber of Commerce, Elks, and the Masonic Lodge.

Recommendations

In completing this study the writer encountered certain questions that could be answered through further research.

First, what individuals or groups within the community consistently select and nominate local trustees?

Second, what is the trustee's relationship to the community power structure?

Third, what relationship exists between a trustee's attitude toward vocational education and his own educational and occupational background?

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APPENDIX A

7 Madison Court
Bozeman, Montana
March 23, 1966

Mr. John W. West
Box 1164
Billings, Montana

Dear Sir:

While working toward my master's degree in school administration at Montana State University, I have found very little current information pertaining to Montana school board members. In an attempt to assist prospective school administrators to understand their role in relation to the school board, I have initiated a study designed to survey the present social, economic, religious, and educational status of Montana's school trustees.

You are undoubtedly a dedicated citizen of your community, otherwise you would not devote hours and days of your time (without pay) to improve your schools. Consequently I thought that, perhaps, you would be willing to answer the enclosed questionnaire and return it in the self-addressed envelope provided for your convenience. This would further our knowledge of the kinds of persons willing to serve as board members.

Your signature on the questionnaire is not necessary because this study is designed to deal with the general characteristics of all the selected board members and not with individual personalities. The information I receive will be confidential and no attempt will be made to identify any individual.

If you are interested in the findings of the study, so indicate, and I will send you a copy of the results.

Sincerely yours,

John C. Monson, Jr.

APPENDIX B

_____Age
_____Sex

Marital status:
_____married
_____single
_____divorced
_____widower

Number of children:
_____boys
_____girls

Number of children attending:
_____elementary school
_____junior high school
_____high school
_____college

_____Occupation

Check one of the following:
_____self-employed
_____wage-earner
_____salaried
_____retired

Level of net annual income:
_____under $5,000
_____$5,001 to $7,500
_____$7,501 to $10,000
_____$10,001 to $15,000
_____over $15,000

Years of formal education that you have completed:
_____8 years or less
_____9 years to 11 years
_____12 years
_____1 to 3 years of college
_____Bachelor's degree
_____Master's degree
_____Doctorate

Church affiliation: If you currently hold a position of responsibility in the church, please indicate what position.
_____Baptist
_____Catholic
_____Christian Science
_____Congregational
_____Episcopal
_____First Christian
_____Latter Day Saints
_____Lutheran
_____Methodist
_____Presbyterian
_____Seventh Day Adventist
_____Other

Organizations in which you are currently a member: If you currently hold a position of responsibility in the organization, please indicate what position.

_____ American Legion
_____ Chamber of Commerce
_____ Civitans
_____ Eagles
_____ Elks
_____ Exchange
_____ Kiwanis
_____ Knights of Columbus
_____ Lions
_____ Masons
_____ Moose
_____ Rotary
_____ Shrine
_____ Toastmasters
_____ Veteran's of Foreign Wars
Other

_____ _____
_____ _____
_____ _____

_____ Please indicate the number of years you have served as a member of the school board.

_____ Number of years you have been a resident of Montana

_____ Number of years you have been a resident in the city or surrounding area where you are serving as a school board member.