



A study of the perceived inservice education needs of Montana school administrators
by Theodore Henry Kessel

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education in
School Administration
Montana State University
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Abstract:

This study identified the inservice education needs of Montana school administrators and determined if there was a difference between selected variables and their preferred inservice education programs. The study also identified the instructional delivery system most preferred by the administrators.

The population for the study consisted of all (671) superintendents and principals employed in the State of Montana fall quarter, 1982. The data were collected using a modified version of a survey instrument developed by Wayne County Intermediate School District, Wayne, Michigan. Five hundred sixty-six administrators returned the completed survey, resulting in an 84.3 percent response rate.

The findings were that the inservice education category, Program, Staff and Personnel Improvement, was identified as the most important area for inservice education. Also, the data indicated that school administrators preferred the time limit of one or two days for inservice offerings. They had no preference for the location of the inservice education, and were willing to drive a 50 mile radius to receive it. Educational programs offered through any form of telecommunications, except the use of videotapes, would not be highly attended.

Chi Square statistics were used to analyze the items that pertain to the demographic variables and the inservice education topics. The .05 level of confidence was used to determine if there was a relationship between the responses of the two groups. The analysis indicated that there was a significant relationship between the variables and the inservice education topics on sixteen items. They were: Conducting and interpreting district, building, staff and personal needs assessment; Developing policies; Planning for declining enrollments and school consolidation; Making effective decisions; Utilizing problem-solving techniques; Initiating effective budgeting procedures; Understanding school finance and methods and sources of funding; Selecting and orienting staff; Evaluating staff performance; Developing position descriptions; Conducting negotiations and implementing contract provisions; Understanding techniques for interacting and communicating effectively; Establishing trust relationships; Managing and resolving conflict; Employing effective change strategies; and Initiating appropriate self-improvement activities.

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by

Theodore Henry Kessel, Jr.

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree

of

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in

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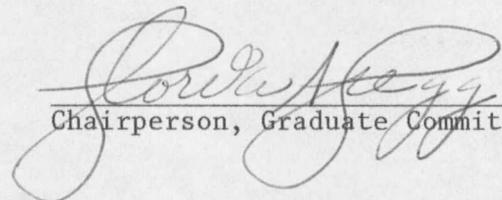
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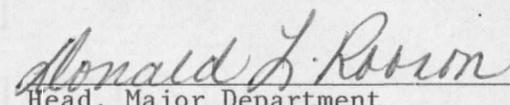
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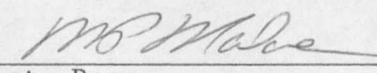
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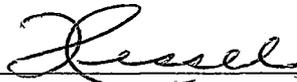
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ABSTRACT

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Few organizational managers have found it necessary to confront the high level of pressure under which school district administrators must function daily. The diversity of skills required by today's school administrators represents a challenge to local school districts and universities to offer inservice and continuing professional education which addresses needs such as goal setting, budgeting, problem solving, decision making, evaluation, futuristics, public relations, personnel administration and program development.

The value of participation by school administrators in inservice education has been documented in the professional literature (Wood, Thompson, Russel, 1981, Harris, 1980). The rapid advancement of technical knowledge has played a major part in the evolution of this society and the resultant expectations of the schools. School administrators, who in the past were qualified to manage districts and schools, find themselves facing issues and problems today that were unheard of heretofore.

Leaders in education have been pressured by their communities to administer their districts and schools in an efficient and effective manner. Because of the increasing complexities of the profession, superintendents and principals are seeking inservice offerings that will aid them in upgrading their professional competence. Management

skills in planning, leadership, operations, personnel management, climate building--as well as program, staff and personal development--need to be offered through inservice education programs to assist present-day school administrators with their assigned tasks.

Statement of the Problem

This study investigated the perceived needs for inservice education among school administrators in the State of Montana during fall quarter, 1982. The problem of the study was threefold:

1. to determine the specific needs of Montana school administrators for inservice education,
2. to determine if there was a relationship between selected variables and what Montana school administrators perceived as their inservice education needs, and,
3. to determine the preferred instructional delivery system for inservice education.

Need for the Study

In a paper presented to the University Council for Educational Administration Task-Force Seminar, Robert Howsam (1966) wrote that there was little need to dwell on the issue of whether or not school administrators needed inservice education, because "...such a need arises universally in complex societies, since those who have to deal with the complexities of the society are never adequately prepared for their responsibilities" (p. 8). Howsam (1966) expanded on the thought by saying that the need for inservice training was recognized "...even

