Center for the Study of Education Policy
Illinois State University

Illinois State Superintendent's Survey 2006: Analysis and Findings

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STATEWIDE SURVEY OF SUPERINTENDENTS, SPRING 2006

Illinois State University Center for the Study of Education Policy again in 2006 sent out a survey to every school district superintendent in the state to seek information about the superintendents and their districts as well as their opinions on a variety of current issues. Some questions were similar to those included in the 2005 (Durflinger, N. and Maki, D. 2006), 2004 (Durflinger, N. and Hunt, E. 2005) and 2002 (Center for the Study of Education Policy 2002) Superintendents Surveys; in those cases, the 2006 responses will be compared with previous responses.

Of a possible 890 respondents from surveys sent out, 127 completed a survey for a 14.27**%** return rate. This compares with a 45.1% return rate for 2005 and 48.9% for 2004. The 2006 return rate was considerably lower than that of previous years, because the survey was sent out by e-mail rather than mail. Many of the e-mails were returned as undeliverable; therefore, not all of the 890 surveys actually were received by superintendents. For this report, missing responses are not considered in the percents reported.

Those superintendents who received and returned surveys included 79% Male and 21% Female; considered themselves 95% Caucasian, 2% African American, 1% Latino/a, 1% Asian, and 1% American Indian; and 54% were from Unit districts, 36% from Elementary districts, and 10% from High School districts. More details about the participants are included in Part IV of this report.

Survey questions were divided into four sections: Part I included information about current issues the superintendents face, Part II included information about evaluation of superintendents and principals, Part III included information about school finance, and Part IV included information about district and superintendent demographics. This report will present responses in those four areas.

For most questions, responses were analyzed for all superintendents who responded, and then they were analyzed by district type to compare responses for Unit district superintendents, High School district superintendents, and Elementary district superintendents.

Part I: Current Issues

Evaluation of State Services

<u>State Board of Education Services</u>
Superintendents were asked to compare the level of services provided by the State Board of Education during the 2005-06 school year with those provided during the 2004-2005 year. Overall, almost 40% of superintendents responded the service was *Less than services in 2004-05*, whereas 10% responded it was *Greater than services in 2004-05*. The remaining 51% responded

Equal to services in 2004-05. This is a slight improvement over the responses in the 2005 survey, in which 47% of superintendents responded the service was *Less than service in 2003-04* and 43% responded *Equal to services in 2003-04*, with 10% responding it was *Greater than services in 2003-04*. Responses from superintendents from Unit districts were more favorable than those from High School and Elementary districts, as are displayed in Table 1.

Table 1
Level of State Board of Education Services by District Type

Responses	Percentages				
	2006				2005
	Unit (N=62)	High School (N=11)	Elementary (N=41)	Total (N=127)	Total (N=401)
Less than services in 2004-05	35.5	54.5	47.5	39.5	46.7
Equal to services in 2004-05	48.5	36.4	50.0	50.8	43.4
Greater than services in 2004-05	16.1	9.1	2.5	9.7	9.9

Regional Office of Education Services
In addition to assessing services provided by the Illinois State Board of Education, superintendents were asked to assess services provided by Regional Offices of Education. High School district superintendents were less positive about services by the Regional Offices of Education than were Unit and Elementary district superintendents, although 87% of all groups stated the services were either *highly valuable* (58.5%) or *somewhat valuable* (28.5%). This is a slight decline in support for those services compared with responses for this question given in 2005, in which there was a 92.4% favorable rating, with 67.1% *highly valuable* and 25.3 *somewhat valuable* (Table 2).

Table 2
Level of Regional Office of Education Services by District Type

Responses	Percentages					
	2006				2005	2004
	Unit (N=62)	High School (N=11)	Elementary (N=41)	Total (N=127)	Total (N=401)	Total
Could easily be eliminated given their current level of service	6.6	9.1	5.0	6.5	3.5	5.1
Does not perform as well as could be expected and should be improved or eliminated	9.8	9.1	2.5	6.5	4.1	4.6
Performs some valuable services but improvements in the quality of services are needed	29.5	45.5	22.5	28.5	25.3	20.0
Performs highly valuable services in a competent and professional manner	54.1	36.4	70.0	58.5	67.1	70.3

No Child Left Behind

The second issue addressed in the survey was No Child Left Behind implementation. Superintendents were asked to rank the impact six parts of the No Child Left Behind Act has had on their district. Overall, the *AYP Requirements* had the greatest impact on the districts (34% ranked it having the most impact, and 58% ranked it having either the most or second most impact) (Table 3). The second greatest impact was the *Highly Qualified Teacher Requirement* (21% ranked most impact and 44% ranked most or second most impact), followed by *Analyzing*

Table 3
No Child Left Behind Impact by District Type

Responses	Percentages					
How much impact has the Federal No Child Left Behind Act had on your district? (Rank from 1=least impact to 6=most impact)						
	1 Least impact	2	3	4	5	6 Most Impact
AYP Requirements	**11.2**	**8.8**	**10.4**	**11.2**	**24.8**	**33.6**
Unit (N=62)	6.5	6.5	11.3	9.7	25.8	40.3
High School (N=11)	0.0	9.1	9.1	9.1	27.3	45.5
Elementary N=41)	24.4	9.8	9.8	12.2	26.8	17.1
Highly Qualified Teacher Requirement	**8.9**	**7.3**	**16.1**	**23.4**	**23.4**	**21.0**
Unit (N=62)	4.9	6.6	13.1	27.9	23.0	24.6
High School (N=11)	27.3	0.0	18.2	27.3	27.3	0.0
Elementary N=41)	12.2	9.5	19.5	14.6	24.4	19.5
Analyzing Disaggregated Data Requirements	**8.0**	**8.8**	**19.2**	**24.8**	**24.0**	**15.2**
Unit (N=62)	6.5	6.5	19.4	30.6	24.2	12.9
High School (N=11)	0.0	18.2	0.0	27.3	18.2	36.2
Elementary N=41)	12.2	12.2	22.0	17.1	24.4	12.2
School Improvement Status/ Sanction	**33.6**	**7.2**	**13.6**	**16.8**	**16.8**	**12.0**
Unit (N=62)	21.0	9.7	14.5	25.8	17.7	11.3
High School (N=11)	9.1	18.2	27.3	9.1	18.2	18.2
Elementary N=41)	53.7	2.4	9.8	9.8	14.6	9.8
Para-professional certification	**12.0**	**16.0**	**19.2**	**24.0**	**17.6**	**11.2**
Unit (N=62)	8.1	16.1	25.8	21.0	19.4	9.7
High School (N=11)	18.2	9.1	27.3	27.3	18.2	0.0
Elementary N=41)	19.5	19.5	9.8	26.8	12.2	12.2
Safe School Requirements	**28.8**	**14.4**	**24.8**	**20.0**	**8.0**	**4.0**
Unit (N=62)	25.8	12.9	24.2	29.0	6.5	1.6
High School (N=11)	36.4	9.1	36.4	9.1	9.1	0.0
Elementary N=41)	36.6	17.1	22.0	9.8	12.2	2.4

Disaggregated Data Requirements (15% ranked most impact and 39% ranked most or second most impact).

The three areas of NCLB legislation with the greatest impact on the districts remained the same as they were in the 2005 and 2004 surveys, when superintendents were asked which one area had the greatest impact on their district, with *AYP Requirements* having the most impact for all three surveys; however, in the 2004 survey *Analyzing Disaggregated Data Requirements* was second and *Highly Qualified Teacher Requirement* was third, whereas in 2005 and 2006 *Highly Qualified Teacher Requirement* was second and *Analyzing Disaggregated Data Requirements* was third.

For High School superintendents, *Analyzing Disaggregated Data Requirements* (36% ranked most impact and 54% ranked most or second most impact) and *School Improvement Status/ Sanction* (18% ranked most impact and 36% ranked most or second most impact) were ranked as having greater impact than *Highly Qualified Teacher Requirement* (0% ranked most impact and 27% ranked most or second most impact), as shown in Table 3.

Staffing

<u>Principal Positions</u>
Because a shortage of highly qualified candidates for the principalship is an issue in some districts, superintendents were asked how this shortage will impact their district in the next 3 years. Overall 44% of superintendents indicated they would have no difficulty filling principal positions, including 35% who indicated the *Supply of candidates was adequate* and 9% who indicated they had *Adequate internal candidates in the pipeline* (Table 4). There were 56% of the superintendents who indicated they would have difficulty filling principal positions, with 46% indicating difficulty *To some degree* and 10% indicating difficulty *To a great degree*. Responses

Table 4
Shortage of Principal Candidates in Next 3 Years by District Type

Responses	Percentages					
	2006				**2005**	**2004**
	Unit (N=62)	High School (N=11)	Elementary (N=41)	Total (N=127)	Total (N=401)	Total (N=435)
Not at all—supply is adequate	32.3	54.5	36.6	35.2	45.6	43.5
We have a number of adequate internal candidates in the pipe line	3.2	0.0	17.1	8.8	9.6	11.6
To some degree—the pool of available candidates will not be what it should be	54.8	36.4	36.6	46.4	35.7	33.8
To a great degree—a limited recruitment pool	9.7	9.1	9.8	9.6	9.1	11.1

indicate a decrease in the supply of principal candidates from responses given in 2005: only 35% of superintendents indicated an adequate supply in 2006 compared with 46% in 2005, and 46% indicated some difficulty in 2006 compared with only 36% in 2005.

When compared by district type, almost 20% more Unit district superintendents indicated they would have some difficulty filling positions than did High School or Elementary superintendents (55% compared with 36% and 37%). Their supply was less adequate than that of High School superintendents (32% compared with 55%) and their internal candidates in the pipeline were only 3% compared with 17% for Elementary superintendents. All three groups indicated about the same rate of those who would have great difficulty filling principal positions (10% for Unit and Elementary and 9% for High School superintendents) (Table 4).

Other Administrative Positions
Principal candidates are not the only administrative vacancies that are difficult to fill. Superintendents were asked which administrative vacancy in their geographic areas was currently the toughest to fill. Responses to this question are displayed in Table 5.

Administrative positions most difficult to fill were the *Special Education Administrator* (31%) and *High School Principal* (30%). However, for Unit district superintendents, the *High School Principal* was most difficult (42% compared with 29% for *Special Education Administrator*.)

Table 5
Administrative Candidate Shortage by District Type

Responses	Percentages					
	2006				2005	2004
	Unit (N=62)	High School (N=11)	Elementary (N=41)	Total (N=127)	Total (N=401)	Total (N=435)
Special Education Administrator	28.8	36.4	34.1	31.1	30.2	NA
High School Principal	42.4	27.3	12.2	29.5	38.8	48.9
Business Manager	11.9	27.3	14.6	14.8	16.2	26.5
Middle School Principal	5.1	0.0	14.6	9.0	9.8	16.4
Elementary School Principal	0.0	0.0	12.2	4.9	4.2	4.6
Assistant Superintendent for Instruction/Curriculum	0.0	9.1	2.4	1.6	3.1	2.5
Assistant Superintendent for Personnel	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	.8	1.1
Other	11.9	0.0	9.8	9.1	N/A	N/A
Superintendent	3.2	0.0	2.4	2.4		
K-12 Principal	1.6	0.0	0.0	0.8		
K-8 Principal	0.0	0.0	2.4	0.8		
No problem filling vacancies/NA	3.2	0.0	4.9	3.1		
Quality is the issue, not quantity	1.6	0.0	0.0	0.8		

The third most difficult position to fill was *Business Manager* (15%), which was reported more by High School (27%) than by Elementary (15%) and Unit district superintendents (12%). *Middle School Principal* was the fourth greatest difficult position to fill (9%); however, it was reported mainly by Elementary school district superintendents (15%).

In 2005 the top four positions most difficult to fill were the same as in 2006; however the *High School Principal* was most difficult to fill followed by *Special Education Administrato*r, *Business Manager*, and *Middle School Principal*. In 2004 *Special Education Administrato*r was not a given option; the top three most difficult positions to fill were *High School Principal, Business Manager*, and *Middle School Principal*.

Superintendents were given the option of *Other* as a response in the 2006 survey. Four superintendents indicated they had no difficulty filling positions, three indicated the Superintendent position was the most difficult to fill, one indicated the K-8 principal and another the K-12 principal positions were most difficult to fill. A final response was that it was the quality, not quantity, of candidates that was the issue.

Non-Administrative Positions
Superintendents were also asked which one position would be most difficult to fill from the list shown in Table 6. Overall, *Special Education Teachers* were the positions most difficult to fill (42%), followed by *Science Teachers* (14%) and *Math Teachers* (13%). Those remained the three most difficult positions to fill; however, when compared with previous results, *Special Education Teachers* were considered more difficult to fill than previously (42% in 2006 compared with 35% in 2005 and 34% in 2004). *Math Teachers* and *Science Teachers* switched first and second positions. The fourth and fifth most difficult positions overall were *Reading Specialists* (6%) and *Vocational Education Teachers* (5%).

When considered by district type, the position most difficult to fill for Unit districts (33%) and Elementary districts (55%) was *Special Education Teachers.* However, for High School districts, the most difficult position was *Science Teachers* (36%), followed by *Special Education Teachers* (27%) and Librarians (18%). *Reading Specialists* was a problem for only Elementary districts (15%).

Special education, science (physics and chemistry), and math teachers were among the teaching positions with the greatest reported shortages in "Educator Supply and Demand in Illinois 2006 Annual Report," along with foreign language (Spanish), bilingual education teachers, and library/media specialists (Illinois State Board of Education 2006b).

Table 6
Most Difficult Staffing Problem by District Type

Responses	Percentages					
	2006				**2005**	**2004**
	Unit (N=195)	High School (N=50)	Elementary (N=153)	Total (N=127)	Total (N=401)	Total (N=435)
Special Education Teachers	32.8	27.3	55.0	41.9	35.1	34.0
Science Teachers	19.7	36.4	0.0	13.9	9.9	12.3
Math Teachers	19.7	9.1	7.5	13.1	14.2	13.1
Reading Specialist	0.0	0.0	15.0	5.7	6.2	3.2
Vocational Education Teachers	8.2	0.0	2.5	4.9	6.7	6.3
Psychologists	4.9	0.0	7.5	4.9	3.8	0.9
Principals	1.6	9.1	5.0	3.3	NA	NA
Librarian	1.6	18.2		2.5	6.2	4.1
Counselors	1.6	0.0	2.5	2.5	4.8	3.9
Modern Language Teachers (Foreign Language)	4.9	0.0	0.0	2.5	3.5	7.4
Bilingual Teachers	1.6	0.0	2.5	1.6	6.7	4.1
Administrators	1.6	0.0	2.5	1.6	NA	NA
Language Arts Teachers		0.0	0.0	0.8	0.3	1.1
Primary Teachers	1.6	0.0	0.0	0.8	0.5	0.5
Intermediate Grade Teachers	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.1	0.7
Social Science Teachers	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.5	1.4
Humanities Teachers	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.3	NA
Social Worker	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.3	0.2

Student Learning

Greatest Obstacle to Student Learning

Superintendents were asked to identify their greatest and their second greatest obstacle to student learning. Their responses are displayed in Table 7. Overall, the two greatest obstacles to student learning were *Money* (57% selected it as first [42%] or second [15%] greatest obstacle) followed by *Socio-Economic Conditions* (55% selected it as first [28%] or second [28%] greatest obstacle). Overall the third obstacle was *Time* (36% selected it as first [11%] or second [24%] greatest obstacle), followed by *Union Contract* (19% selected it as first [7%] or second [12%] greatest obstacle) and *Parents* (19% selected it as first [6%] or second [12%] greatest obstacle).

However, for Elementary superintendents, *Parents* (20% selected it as first [2.5%] or second [17.5%] greatest obstacle) were a greater obstacle than was *Union Contract* (8% selected it as first [2.5%] or second [5%] greatest obstacle). For High School superintendents, *Boards of Education* (17% selected it as first [0%] or second [17%] greatest obstacle) were greater obstacles than *Parents* (8% selected it as first [0%] or second [8%] greatest obstacle) (Table 7).

Table 7
Greatest Obstacle to Student Learning by District Type

Responses	Percentages									
	2006								2005	
	Unit (N=59)		High School (N=11)		Elementary (N=40)		Total (N=127)		Total (N=401)	
	1st	2nd	1st	2nd	1st	2nd	1st	2nd	1st	2nd
Money	40.7	18.6	27.3	25.0	37.5	12.5	41.5	15.0	41.4	25.9
Socio-Economic Conditions	28.8	30.5	54.6	8.3	23.5	27.5	27.6	27.6	24.4	17.5
Time	6.8	23.7	8.0	9.1	16.7	30.0	11.4	24.4	16.0	20.0
Union Contract	11.9	13.6	10.0	9.1	2.5	5.0	7.3	11.8	6.7	8.5
Parents	6.8	10.2	0.0	8.3	2.5	17.5	5.7	11.8	4.2	11.2
Boards of Education	1.7	1.7	0.0	16.7	7.5	2.5	3.3	3.9	2.2	3.2
Community Members	3.4	1.7	0.0	8.3	2.5	2.5	2.4	3.2	0.2	1.2
Parent Organizations	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.5	0.0	0.8	0.8	0.2	0.2
Booster Organizations	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.5	0.0	1.6	0.7	0.7

The overall results were similar to those in the 2005 survey, with the top five greatest obstacles remaining *Money, Social Economic Conditions, Time, Union Contract* and *Parents.* However, it appears *Social Economic Conditions* is becoming an increasing obstacle (42% selected it as first or second greatest obstacle in 2005 compared with 55% in 2006) and *Money* relatively less so (67% selected it as first or second greatest obstacle in 2005 compared with 57% in 2006). *Time* remained constant at 36%. *Union Contract* came up to forth in 2006 from fifth place in 2005.

Consolidation

Illinois districts have consolidated as a cost-saving measure and as a way to provide quality educational program for students. There has been a 17.3% decline in the number of regular public school districts in the state from 1976-77 with 1,024 districts to 2005-06 with 873 districts (Illinois State Board of Education 2006a). There were 6 fewer school districts in 2005-06 than there were in 2004-05. Governor Blagojevich's School District Reorganization legislation, Senate Bill 2795, passed unanimously in both chambers May 3, 2006, to make it easier for school districts in Illinois to merge with each other to improve operations (Office of the Governor 2006).

Superintendents were asked several questions about their experience with consolidation and their plans for the future as well as their opinions regarding potential advantages to their district with consolidation. They were first asked their opinion of the impact of property taxes on their enrollment.

Effect of Property Taxes on Enrollment
Superintendents were asked whether property taxes encouraged or discouraged families with students from moving into their area. Overall 57% of superintendents responded that property taxes encouraged families to move into their area, whereas 43% responded they discouraged

families from moving in. However, there was a difference in response from Unit District superintendents compared with High School and Elementary district superintendents: Only 49% of Unit district superintendents responded their property taxes encouraged families to move into their area compared with 64% for High School superintendents and 68% for Elementary superintendents (Table 8).

Table 8
Property Taxes Encourage or Discourage Parents from Moving into Area by District Type

Question	Percentages			
Property tax levels in our district:	Unit (N=62)	High School (N=11)	Elementary (N=41)	Total (N=127)
Discourage families with students from moving into our area	50.8	36.4	31.7	43.0
Encourage families with students to move into our area	49.2	63.6	68.3	57.0

Recommendations to Examine Consolidation/Reorganization
Two questions superintendents were asked pertained to examining possibilities of consolidation/annexation/ reorganization in the past. Overall, one-quarter of the superintendents *Recommended the BOE discuss the possibility of consolidation/annexation during the last year*, and almost one-third of them *Examined consolidation or reorganization within the last 3 years*.

These results remain the same as they were in the 2005 survey. This cannot be directly compared with the 2004 survey. In that survey, one-third of superintendents responded they *Recommended a discussion about the possibility of having a consolidation/ annexation study within the last 3 years*, and one-third of superintendents responded that *A board member recommended a discussion about the possibility of having a consolidation/ annexation study within the last 3 years*.

More superintendents in Unit districts (27%) and High School districts (27%) *Recommended the BOE discuss the possibility of consolidation/annexation during the last year* than did superintendents in Elementary districts (17%). Likewise, more superintendents in Unit districts (38%) and High School districts (36%) *Examined consolidation or reorganization within the last 3 years* than did superintendents in Elementary districts (24%) (Table 9).

Table 9
Examination of Consolidation or Reorganization by District Type

Question	Percentages	

	2006								2005	
	Unit (N=195)		High School (N=50)		Elementary (N=153)		Total (N=401)		Total (N=401)	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No		
Recommended BOE discuss possibility of consolidation/ annexation study during last year	26.7	73.3	27.3	72.7	17.1	82.9	23.8	76.2	24.7	75.3
District has examined consolidation or reorganization within last 3 years	38.3	61.7	36.4	63.6	24.4	75.6	31.1	68.9	31.6	68.4

Benefits of Consolidation

Superintendents were also asked about possible benefits of consolidation to the curriculum and the financial outlook of the district. Over one-third of superintendents overall indicated the District's *curriculum would be enhanced as a result of consolidation* (36%); just over one-fourth indicated the *District's financial outlook would be improved as a result of consolidation* (26%). These results were not far from the results of the 2005 survey (32% for curriculum and 30% for financial outlook).

More Unit district superintendents (47%) and High School superintendents (46%) indicated there would be enhanced curriculum than did Elementary superintendents (18%). Likewise, fewer Elementary superintendents (20%) indicated financial outlook would be improved than did High School superintendents (27%) or Unit superintendents (27%) (Table 10).

Table 10
Benefits of Consolidation by District Type

Questions	Percentages									
	2006								2005	
	Unit (N=62)		High School (N=11)		Elementary (N=41)		Total (N=127)		Total (N=401)	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No		
Our district's curriculum would be enhanced as a result of consolidation	46.8	53.2	45.5	54.5	17.5	82.5	35.8	64.2	32.0	68.0
Our district's financial outlook would be improved as a result of consolidation	26.7	73.3	27.3	72.7	19.5	80.5	26.2	73.8	30.3	69.7

Need to Close Schools

Superintendents were asked if in the past five years their district has closed one or more schools as a result of budgetary factors. Overall 7% of the superintendents indicated they had to close one or more schools—all of them Unit district superintendents, of which 13% closed schools.

Superintendents were also asked if their district may have to close one or more schools as a result of budgetary constraints in the next 3 years. Although overall 10% of superintendents indicated their *District may have to close one or more schools as a result of budgetary constraints in the next 3 years*, more Unit district superintendents (15%) indicated such need than did High School (9%) or Elementary (2%) district superintendents (Table 11). This is just under the results from the 2005 survey, in which overall 12% of superintendents indicated their *District may have to close one or more schools as a result of budgetary constraints in the next 3 years*, with close to three times as many Unit district superintendents (19%) indicating such need as did Elementary (7%) or High School (6%) district superintendents.

Table 11
Need to Close One or More Schools by District Type

Question	Percentages									
	2006								2005	
	Unit (N=62)		High School (N=11)		Elementary (N=41)		Total (N=127)		Total (N=401)	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
In the past five years our district has closed one (or more) schools as a result of budgetary factors	13.1	86.9	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	7.3	92.7	NA	
In the next three years our district may have to close one (or more) schools as a result of budgetary constraints	14.5	85.5	9.1	90.9	2.4	97.6	9.7	90.3	12.4	87.6

Mentor Programs

One method used to improve administrative leadership is to provide mentors for first-year administrators. SB 860 will require districts to provide a mentoring program for all first year principals. Superintendents were asked several questions pertaining to mentoring in their district.

Types of Mentor Programs
Superintendents were asked if their district had an official mentoring/induction program for all first time principals and for experienced principals newly hired to their district. There was an increase in mentoring/induction programs reported for first-time principals: Overall 22% of superintendents reported such programs compared with 15% of superintendents who reported an *Official mentoring/induction program for all first-time administrators* in the 2005 survey*.* Overall 12% reported an *Official mentoring/induction program for experienced principals newly hired to the district* compared with 10% in the 2005 survey who reported such programs for experienced administrators newly hired to the district (Table 12).

Table 12
District Principal Mentoring/Induction Programs by District Type

Questions	Percentages									
	2006								2005	
	Unit (N=62)		High School (N=11)		Elementary (N=41)		Total (N=127)		Total (N=401)	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No		
Does your district have an official mentoring/induction program for all first-time principals hired in your district?	21.0	79.0	20.0	80.0	22.0	78.0	21.8	78.2	15.2	84.8
Does your district have an official mentoring/induction program for experienced principals newly hired to your district?	11.7	88.3	18.2	81.8	9.8	90.2	11.5	88.5	10.3	89.7

There was little difference in the percentage of superintendents who reported mentoring/ induction programs for first-time principals based on district type. However, High School districts were more likely to provide such programs for experienced principals newly hired to the district, with 18% having programs for first-time administrators compared with 12% for Unit districts and 10% for Elementary districts.

Length of Mentor Programs
Superintendents were asked the length of their official administrative mentoring/ induction program (Table 13). Of the superintendents who indicated they had some type of administrative mentoring/induction program, about 60% indicated the program was for one year or less.

Table 13
Length of Official Administrative Mentoring/Induction Program by District Type

Responses	Percentages				
	2006				2005
	Unit (N=62)	High School (N=11)	Elementary (N=41)	Total (N=127)	Total (N=401)
One year or less in length	13.3	9.1	15.4	13.2	13.5
More than two years in length	5.0	0.0	0.0	3.3	9.6
Two years in length	1.7	9.1	7.7	5.0	2.6
Do not have an official program	80.0	81.8	76.9	78.5	74.4

Required Mentor Programs
Finally, superintendents were asked if they thought the State of Illinois should have require a mentoring program for all first year principals as was done in SB 860. Overall, 43% of superintendents favored such a requirement, with High School district superintendents (64%) more supportive than Unit district superintendents (38%) (Table 14). This is similar to the overall 40% of superintendents in the 2005 survey who reported they thought the State of Illinois should require a mentoring program for all first year principals.

Table 14

Required Mentoring Program for First Year Principals by District Type

Question	Percentages							
	Unit (N=195)		High School (N=50)		Elementary (N=153)		Total (N=401)	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Should the state have required a mentoring program for all first year principals as was done in SB 860?	37.7	62.3	63.6	36.4	42.5	57.5	43.1	56.9

Superintendent Experience with Mentor

In addition to the district's mentoring program, superintendents were asked about their own experience with mentoring during the first year they were superintendents. They were asked if they had a mentor, official or unofficial, during their first year as a superintendent. Those responses are displayed in Table 15. Overall, only 6% of superintendents indicated they had an *Official Mentor* during their first year as superintendent and 44% had an *Unofficial Mentor*. Unit district superintendents were less likely to have an official mentor (2%) and more likely to have an unofficial mentor (51%) than High School (9% - 46%) and Elementary (10% - 32%) superintendents. The overall results are just slightly higher than those in 2005.

Table 15

Superintendents' Mentors During First Year as Superintendents by District Type

Responses	Percentages				
	2006				2005
	Unit (N=62)	High School (N=11)	Elementary (N=41)	Total (N=127)	Total (N=401)
Yes (official)	1.6	9.1	9.8	5.6	4.1
Yes (unofficial)	50.8	45.5	31.7	43.5	39.9
No	47.5	45.5	58.5	50.8	56.0

Professional Development

Superintendents were asked several questions related to professional development: quality of development opportunities, development budget, and professional development needs.

Professional Development Opportunities

Superintendents were asked two questions pertaining to the quality of professional development in the state for superintendents and other administrators (Table 16). Overall, about three-fourths of superintendents were supportive of available professional development opportunities for both superintendents (71%) and other administrators (76%). These results are comparable to the 72% and 75% support in the 2005 survey.

Table 16

Adequacy of Professional Development by District Type

Questions	Percentages									
	2006								2005	
	Unit (N=62)		High School (N=11)		Elementary (N=41)		Total (N=127)		Total (N=401)	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
The professional development activities offered for school superintendents in the state are generally worthwhile for a superintendent.	75.8	24.2	54.5	45.5	65.9	34.1	71.1	28.9	72.1	27.9
The other administrators in my district receive appropriate amounts of professional development in instructional leadership.	72.6	27.4	54.5	45.5	82.5	17.5	75.8	24.2	75.1	24.9

High School district superintendents were less satisfied with development activities for superintendents (55%) than Unit district superintendents (76%) and less satisfied with development activities for other administrators (55%) than either Unit district (73%) or Elementary district (83%) superintendents.

Professional Development Budget
Superintendents were asked whether their professional development budget has decreased, stayed the same, or increased over the past three years. Half of the superintendents responded it stayed the same, one-quarter responded it decreased, and one-quarter responded it increased (Table 17).

Elementary district superintendents were more likely to have responded their budgets increased (42%) than decreased (17%); whereas High School district superintendents were more likely to have responded their budgets decreased (36%) than increased (9%), as were Unit district superintendents, with 26% having decreased and 15% having increased. More Unit district budgets stayed the same (59%) than did those of High School (55%) or Elementary (42%) district budgets.

Table 17
Professional Development Budget by District Type

Responses	Percentages			
Over the last three years our professional development budget has:	Unit (N=62)	High School (N=11)	Elementary (N=41)	Total (N=127)
Decreased	26.2	36.4	17.1	24.2
Stayed the same	59.0	54.5	41.5	50.8
Increased	14.8	9.1	41.5	25.0

In an effort to inform the various professional organizations of the superintendents' professional development needs, superintendents were asked to list their top three professional development needs for the following two years. The major topics reported are listed in Table 18. The Top three areas of need include Budget/Finance (68), Teaching and Learning (46), and Leadership Issues (40). All specific suggestions listed under each category are given in Appendix A.

Table 18
Professional Development Needs

Total	Major Areas
68	Budget/Finance
46	Teaching & Learning
40	Leadership Issues
29	Legal Issues/Legislature
24	Personnel Issues
22	NCLB Issues
16	Special Education Issues
13	Collective Bargaining
10	PR/community relations/working with parents
9	Data-Driven Decision Making
9	Facilities
8	School Board
6	Response to Intervention Methodology
6	Personal Issues
5	Administrative issues
5	Technology
2	Socio-Ecomonics

Principal Preparation

ISLLC Standards as Base for Principal Preparation Programs
Superintendents were asked their opinion as to whether or not principal preparation programs in Illinois should be based upon appropriate standards, skills, and dispositions as outlined by ISLLC. Their responses are displayed in Table 19.
Overall over three-fourths of the superintendents thought principal preparation programs should be based upon ISLLC Standards, compared with about two-thirds in the 2005 survey; 8% thought they should not be based on ISLLC Standards, and 14% did not know the details of ISLLC Standards. The percentage of superintendents who did not know the details of ISLLC Standards decreased from 26% in the 2005 survey to 14% in the 2006 survey. It appears as superintendents learned more about what the ISLLC Standards were, they supported their use in principal preparation programs. There was little difference in responses by district type.

Table 19

Should Principal Preparation Programs Be Based Upon ISLLC Standards by District Type

Responses	Percentages				
	2006				2005
	Unit (N=62)	High School (N=11)	Elementary (N=41)	Total (N=127)	Total (N=401)
Yes	73.8	70.0	80.5	77.3	66.6
No	9.8	10.0	7.3	8.4	7.7
Do not know details of ISLLC standards	16.4	20.0	12.2	14.3	25.7

Master Principal Endorsement

SB860 allows for a principal to receive a Master Principal Endorsement. Superintendents were asked if they believed their principals would apply for this endorsement if it is a two-year program like the National Board Certified Teacher Program (NBCT).

Overall 39% of the superintendents believed their principals would apply for the Master Principal Endorsement. This was similar to the 40% of superintendents who supported the concept of a two-tiered system for principals in a related question on the 2005 survey. Elementary superintendents (45%) were more positive in their response than Unit (37%) or High School (30%) superintendents (Table 20).

Table 20
Master Principal Endorsement by District Type

Questions	Percentages							
	Unit (N=62)		High School (N=11)		Elementary (N=41)		Total (N=127)	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
SB 860 allows for a principal to receive a Master Principal Endorsement. Do you feel that your principals would apply for this endorsement if it is a two-year program like the National Board Certified Teacher Program (NBCT)?	36.7	63.3	30.0	70.0	45.0	55.0	39.3	60.7

NBCT Teacher Principal Candidates

Superintendents were asked if they would give preference to National Board Certified Teachers (NBCT) teachers who were candidates for principal positions. Responses are given in Table 21.

Table 21
Support for NBCT Teachers as Principal Candidates by District Type

Questions	Percentages	
	2006	2005

	Unit (N=62)		High School (N=11)		Elementary (N=41)		Total (N=127)		Total (N=401)	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
All other factors being equal, would you have a preference for a principal candidate who was an NBCT teacher in comparison to a non-NBCT teacher?	40.0	60.0	30.0	70.0	43.9	56.1	40.7	59.3	34.2	65.8

Overall 41% of the superintendents would give preference to principal candidates who were NBCT teachers. This is more favorable than the 34% response in the 2005 survey. Elementary (44%) and Unit (40%) district superintendents were more supportive than were High School district superintendents (30%) of giving preference to NCBT Teachers.

Teacher Leader Credentials

Superintendents were asked if they would create a leadership position in their schools for individuals with Teacher Leader credentials. If they would, they were then asked if they would have a preference for NBCT teacher candidates. Their responses are displayed in Table 22.

Table 22
Support for Teacher Leader and NBCT Teachers as Teacher Leader by District Type

Questions	Percentages							
	Unit (N=62)		High School (N=11)		Elementary (N=41)		Total (N=127)	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Now that Illinois is creating a Teacher Leader endorsement, would you create a leadership position in your schools for individuals with the credential?	28.3	71.7	20.0	80.0	51.3	48.7	37.9	62.1
("Yes" responses to above)	(n=17)		(n=2)		(n=20)		(n=44)	
If yes, and all other factors were equal, would you have a preference for a Teacher Leader candidate who was an NBCT teacher in comparison to a non-NBCT teacher?	64.7	35.3	100.0	0.0	70.0	30.0	68.2	31.8

Note: Only those who said "Yes" to the first question were included in the analysis for the second question.
Overall 38% of the superintendents indicated they would create such a leadership position in their schools; a slight increase over the 33% who responded positively to a similar question in the 2005 survey. Two-thirds of those who said they would create such a leadership position reported they would have a preference for an NBCT teacher for that position, compared with three-fourths of those who responded that way in the 2005 survey.

Elementary superintendents were twice as likely to create a Teacher Leader position (51%) as were High School (20%) and Unit (28%) district superintendents.

Community Colleges

Superintendents were asked several questions pertaining to the relationship between their high schools and local community colleges.

Programs Provided
The first such question asked superintendents whether or not they worked with local community colleges and what types of programs they provided high school students. Responses to that question are included in Table 23. High School districts were more likely to provide Tech Prep Programs (100%) than were Unit districts (77%); Unit districts were more likely to offer Dual/Concurrent Enrollment (92%) than were High School districts (80%). Elementary districts offered neither Tech Prep nor Dual/Concurrent Enrollment.

The only "Other Opportunities" given was "Wireless Internet Connectivity" listed by one Unit district. Overall responses are similar to those from the 2005 survey.

Table 23
Programs with Community Colleges by District Type

Responses	Percentages				
	2006				2005
	Unit (N=62)	High School (N=11)	Elementary (N=41)	Total (N=127)	Total (N=401)
Does you district work with local community colleges to provide high school students with:					
Tech Prep Programs					
Yes	77.0	100.0	0.0	52.6	56.4
No	19.7	0.0	7.9	13.8	12.1
Don't know	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.2
N/A	3.3	0.0	92.1	33.6	27.3
Dual/Concurrent Enrollment					
Yes	91.8	80.0	0.0	58.1	58.2
No	6.6	20.0	10.3	9.4	9.4
Don't know	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.2
N/A	1.6	0.0	89.7	32.5	28.3
Other Opportunities					
Yes	1.6	0.0	0.0	0.8	6.5

Because no Elementary district superintendent reported any programs in this question, only High School and Unit district superintendents' responses were considered for the following analyses.

Benefit of Programs for Students
A second question asked superintendents' opinion about the degree to which their districts' work with the local community colleges (above) enhanced educational opportunities for their high school students. Responses are shown in Table 24. Unit and High School district superintendents were supportive of the district's work with community colleges: Two-thirds reported it "definitely" and an additional almost one-third reported it "somewhat" enhanced educational opportunities for their high school students. High School district superintendents were more

positive about the benefits for their students than were Unit district superintendents. Results were comparable with those from the 2005 survey.

Table 24

Degree to which Work with Community College Enhanced Educational Opportunities for High School Students by District Type

Responses	Percentages			
	2006			**2005**
	Unit (N=62)	High School (N=11)	Total (N=73)	Total (N=245)
In your opinion, does your district's work with local community colleges (above) enhance educational opportunities for your high school students?				
Yes, definitely	62.3	80.0	68.4	67.9
Yes, somewhat	31.1	20.0	29.6	26.3
No	3.3	0.0	2.8	3.3
Don't know	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.3
N/A	3.3	0.0	2.8	1.3

Challenges of Dual-Credit Programs

Superintendents were asked what challenges they faced with allowing students to participate in dual-credit courses. They were instructed to mark as many as apply (Table 25).

Table 25

Challenges Faced with Dual Enrollment by District Type

Responses	Percentages			
	2006			**2005**
	Unit (N=62)	High School (N=11)	Total (N=73)	Total (N=208)
What challenges have you faced with allowing your students to participate in dual credit courses? (*Mark as many as apply.*)				
Scheduling	64.5	72.7	65.8	63.3
Transportation	43.5	45.5	43.8	26.7
Funding	32.3	36.4	32.9	37.1
Instruction	12.9	18.2	13.7	17.6
Books	9.7	0.0	8.2	5.7
N/A	11.3	0.0	9.6	NA

For both Unit districts and High School districts, close to two-thirds of the superintendents reported challenges with Scheduling; just under one-half reported challenges with transportation; and one-third reported challenges with Funding. There was a considerable increase in superintendents reporting challenges with Transportation in 2006 (44%) from those who reported them in 2005 (27%). There was not much difference between Unit and High School district superintendents.

Funding Effects on Support for Dual Enrollment

Superintendents were asked to what extent ADA funding for a student enrolled in a dual credit course affects their districts' decision to support dual credit. For analysis, responses from only

those superintendents who responded "Yes" to providing dual enrollment programs were considered. Results are displayed in Table 26.

Table 26
Funding Effects on Support for Dual Enrollment by District Type

Responses	Percentages			
	2006			2005
	Unit (N=62)	High School (N=11)	Total (N=127)	Total (N=205)
At what level does ADA funding for a student enrolled in a dual credit course affect your district's decision to support dual credit?				
Minimally. The district would still encourage students to take dual credit courses, even if this meant that the district would lose ADA funding.	48.1	71.4	50.8	60.0
Average. The district would not encourage students to take dual credit courses if this meant a loss of funding, but also would not discourage students who wanted to enroll in dual credit courses.	33.3	0.0	29.5	21.5
Strongly. The district would discourage students from enrolling in dual credit courses if the district did not receive funding for that student.	18.5	28.6	19.7	18.5

Note: Only those superintendents who did not respond "N/A" were included in this analysis

Overall, 60% of superintendents reported minimal effect of ADA funding on their support for dual credit courses (they would encourage students to take dual credit courses even if it meant students would lose ADA funding).

High School district superintendents (71%) were more likely to report minimal effect of ADA funding on their support for dual credit courses (they would encourage students to take dual credit courses even if it meant students would lose ADA funding) than were Unit district superintendents (48%). High School district superintendents (29%) were also more likely to report strong effect of ADA funding on their support for dual credit courses (they would discourage enrollment if the district did not receive funding for that student) than were Unit district superintendents (19%).

When compared with 2005 survey results, there was a decrease in Minimal Impact (51% in 2006 down from 60% in 2005) and an increase in Average Impact (30% in 2006 compared with 22% in 2005) indicating somewhat less encouragement for students to take dual credit courses.
Methods of Promotion of Advanced Learning Opportunities
Superintendents were asked how they promoted advanced learning opportunities for their students. They were instructed to mark as many as apply. Their responses are displayed in Table 27.

Overall 95% promoted through the Guidance Counselor, 60% through Word of Mouth, 59% through the Participating Community College, 51% through Teachers, and 34% through

Newsletters. Responses indicate increased promotion of advanced learning opportunities from responses in the 2005 survey.

Table 27
Promotion of Advanced Learning Opportunities by District Type

Responses	Percentages			
	2006			2005
	Unit (N=62)	High School (N=11)	Total (N=127)	
How does your district promote advanced learning opportunities (e.g., dual credit, Tech Prep, etc.) to students? (*Mark as many as apply*.)				
Through the guidance counselor	95.2	90.9	94.5	57.6
Word of mouth	58.0	72.2	60.3	18.2
Through the participating community college	56.5	72.2	58.9	28.7
Teachers	53.2	36.4	50.7	33.7
Newsletters	32.3	45.5	34.2	30.4
N/A	1.6	0.0	1.4	N/A

Collective Bargaining

Superintendents were asked three questions pertaining to collective bargaining, one to assess their opinion of the impact of collective bargaining laws on their educational improvement process, one to assess their opinion about an overhaul of collective bargaining laws related to public schools, and one to assess their opinion related to the use of waivers for portions of the collective bargaining agreement on a building basis for improved student learning (Table 28).

Overall, almost one-half (45%) of the superintendents believed collective bargaining laws impact their district's ability to provide a quality educational improvement process for their students. A greater percentage of High School district superintendents (80%) believed this than did Unit district superintendents (48%) or Elementary district superintendents (34%). This response is just under what it was for the 2005 survey (50%).

Table 28
Opinions of Collective Bargaining Laws for Public Schools by District Type

Questions	Percentages									
	2006								2005	
	Unit (N=62)		High School (N=11)		Elementary (N=41)		Total (N=127)		Total (N=401)	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Collective bargaining laws impact my district's ability to provide a quality educational improvement	47.5	52.5	80.0	20.0	34.1	65.9	45.4	54.6	50.1	49.9

process for our students.									
There should be a major overhaul of collective bargaining laws as they pertain to public schools.	68.9	31.1	90.0	10.0	62.5	37.5	66.9	33.1	63.7	36.3
There should be the ability to waive portions of a collective bargaining agreement on a building basis so that leadership teams have the ability to work toward improving student learning	81.7	18.3	100.0	0.0	72.5	27.5	79.5	20.5	N/A	N/A

Two-thirds of the superintendents believed there should be a major overhaul of collective bargaining laws as they pertain to public schools. Again, a greater percentage of High School district superintendents (90%) believed this than did Unit (69%) or Elementary district (63%) superintendents. This response is similar to that for the 2005 survey (64%).

Overall 80% of the superintendents believed waivers of portions of the collective bargaining agreements should be allowed on a building basis for improved student learning. High School district superintendents were once again more in favor of this (100%) than were Unit (83%) or Elementary (73%) district superintendents, although they were all strongly in favor of this proposal. This question was not on the 2005 survey for comparison.

Part II: Evaluation

There are three sections pertaining to Evaluation. The first examined elements taken into consideration when the Board of Education performed its evaluation of the superintendent. The second part examined the elements taken into consideration in the evaluation of principals, either by the superintendent or the person responsible for evaluating principals. The third part examined elements taken into consideration in the evaluation of applicants when hiring new administrators.

Elements of Evaluation of the Superintendent

Superintendents were asked about various elements in the evaluation of the superintendent (Table 29). In 87% of superintendents' contracts there was a clause that was performance based; an instrument or predetermined process was used in the evaluation of 78% of superintendents; the Board considered the Illinois Professional School Leader Standards for superintendents in the evaluation of 27% of the superintendents; and in 52% of the evaluations a portion of the evaluation was based on the district-wide improvement of ISAT or PSAE test score.

These results are just slightly under the responses for the 2005 survey, with the exception of the last question, in which superintendents' responses to indicate a portion of their evaluation was

based on the district-wide improvement of ISAT or PSAE test scores increased from 42% in 2005 to 52% in 2006. The 2005 results were similar to those for the 2004 survey, in which 91% of superintendents had a performance-based clause in their contract, 83% of evaluations were based on an instrument or predetermined process, 29% of Boards considered the Illinois Professional School Leader Standards for superintendents in the evaluation, and 43% of evaluations included a portion based on district-wide improvement of ISAT or PSAE test score.

Elementary district superintendents were less likely to have evaluations based on an instrument or predetermined process (68%) than were High School district superintendents (91%), with Unit district superintendents in between (81%). Elementary district superintendents were more likely to have evaluations in which their Boards considered the Illinois Professional School Leader

Table 29

Elements of Superintendent Evaluation by District Type

Questions	Percentages									
	2006								2005	
	Unit (N=62)		High School (N=11)		Elementary (N=41)		Total (N=127)		Total (N=401)	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
There is a clause in the superintendent's contract that is performance based.	87.1	12.9	90.9	9.1	82.9	17.1	86.2	13.8	90.0	9.1
There is an instrument or predetermined process used in the evaluation of the superintendent.	80.6	19.4	90.9	9.1	68.3	31.7	77.6	22.4	83.7	16.3
The Board considers the Illinois Professional School Leader Standards for superintendents in the evaluation of the superintendent.	21.0	79.0	27.3	72.7	35.0	65.0	27.0	73.0	29.2	70.8
A portion of the superintendent's evaluation is based on the district-wide improvement of ISAT or PSAE test scores.	54.1	45.9	54.5	45.5	46.3	53.7	52.2	58.6	42.2	57.8

Standards for superintendents in the evaluation (35%) than were Unit district superintendents (21%), with High School superintendents in between (27%). There was little difference among district types for the other two questions.

Superintendents were asked in the 2006 survey for the first time to list three performance indicators if there was a clause in their contract that was performance based. Those performance indicators listed most frequently were related to Student Learning, Budget/Finance, Curriculum & Instruction, and various Management/Leadership tasks (Table 30). See Appendix B for the complete list of performance indicators given.

Table 30

Performance Indicators for Superintendents

# of Entries	Major Areas
58	Student Learning
23	Budget/Finance
20	Curriculum & Instruction
18	Management/Leadership
11	Reports/Board Information
11	Community
10	Personal/District Goals
8	Communications
7	Facilities
3	Other Student Performance

Elements of Evaluation of the Principal

Although 86% of superintendents' contracts included a clause that was performance based, only 41% of their principals' contracts included such a clause. And although only 27% of school boards considered the Illinois Professional School Leader Standards for superintendents in the evaluation of the superintendent, 53% of superintendents/supervisors considered the Illinois Professional School Leader Standards for principal in the evaluation of the principal(s).The use of improvement of ISAT or PSAE test scores as part of the evaluation was less for principal evaluations (42%) than for superintendent evaluations (52%) (Table 31).

There was a decrease in the inclusion of a clause in the principals' contract that was performance based, 41% in 2006 down from 60% in 2005. There was little difference for the other two questions from the 2005 survey.

Table 31
Elements of Principal Evaluation by District Type

Questions	Percentages									
	2006								2005	
	Unit (N=62)		High School (N=11)		Elementary (N=41)		Total (N=127)		Total (N=401)	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
There is a clause in the principal's contract that is performance based.	45.2	54.8	45.5	54.5	36.1	63.9	41.4	58.6	59.6	40.4
The superintendent/ supervisor considers the	45.9	54.1	36.4	63.6	65.0	35.0	52.6	47.4	48.0	52.0

Illinois Professional School Leader Standards for principal in the evaluation of the principal(s).									
A portion of the principal's evaluation is based on the improvement of ISAT or PSAE test scores.	41.7	58.3	60.0	40.0	41.0	59.0	42.3	57.7	39.4	60.6

Superintendents were asked in the 2006 survey for the first time to list three performance indicators if there was a clause in their principals' contract that was performance based. Those performance indicators listed most frequently are in the areas of Student Learning and Management/Leadership (Table 32). See Appendix C for the complete list of performance indicators given.

Table 32
Performance Indicators for Principals

# of Entries	Major Areas
28	Student Learning
18	Management/Leadership
9	Curriculum & Instruction
8	Parent/Community
6	Personal Goals/Growth
4	School Improvement
3	Other Student Performance
2	None Given

Elements for Hiring New Administrators

Superintendents were asked two questions about elements for hiring new administrators. Responses to those questions are shown in Table 33. Overall 58% of superintendents used applicants' portfolios and found them helpful in making decisions about hiring of applicants. This response was down just slightly from the 63% for the 2005 survey. There was not much difference based on district type.

In addition, 34% of superintendents or a representative of their district performed a site visit for finalists of an administrative vacancy. This response was also down slightly from the 2005 survey (41%). There was a greater difference among district types for this question than for the previous question. High School district superintendents were more likely to perform a site visit for finalists (45%) than were Unit (30%) or Elementary (37%) district superintendents.

Table 33
Elements for Hiring New Administrators by District Type

26

Questions	Percentages									
	2006								2005	
	Unit (N=62)		High School (N=11)		Elementary (N=41)		Total (N=127)		Total (N=401)	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
I use applicants' portfolios and find the portfolios helpful in making decisions about hiring of applicants.	61.7	38.3	54.5	45.5	55.0	45.0	58.4	41.6	63.3	36.7
Do you or a representative of your district perform a site visit for finalists of an administrative vacancy?	29.5	70.5	45.5	54.5	37.5	62.5	34.2	65.8	41.0	59.0

Part III: Finance

At the time the 2006 survey was conducted in the spring of 2006, superintendents again listed Money as the greatest obstacle to learning in their districts. One method school districts use to improve their financial condition is to try to pass bond and tax referenda. In the April 2007 consolidated election, 12 (43%) of 28 tax referenda passed and 25 (63%) of 40 bond referenda passed (Illinois State Board of Education 2007a). There were fewer, but a greater percentage of successful, referenda held in 2007 compared with 2005, when 22 (31.9%) of 69 tax referenda passed and 12 (41.1%) of 29 bond referenda passed; 2005 saw fewer referenda than in 2004, in which 41(46%) of 89 tax referenda passed and 13 (45%) of 29 bond referenda passed (Illinois State Board of Education 2005a).

ISBE news releases showed improvement in the financial condition of Illinois public schools between 2004 and 2007. A March 22, 2007 ISBE press release reported school districts showed continued financial improvement, with nearly 60% of districts in the highest category receiving financial recognition (up from 40% in FY 04), while only 6% were on the financial watch list (down from 18% in FY 04) (Illinois State Board of Education 2007b). Table 34 shows school district rankings on the Financial Profile (Illinois State Board of Education 2004, Illinois State Board of Education 2005b, Illinois State Board of Education 2007b).

Table 34
School District Rankings on Financial Profile

Categories	Percentages of Districts			
	FY04	FY05	FY06	FY07
Financial Recognition	39.8	50.6	55.3	59%
Financial Review	27.0	28.0	25.0	22%
Financial Early Warning	15.7	12.6	12.3	13%
Financial Watch	17.5	8.8	6.7	6%

A series of questions were asked to determine superintendents' opinions relating to school funding in Illinois and to ask about specific areas of their districts' finances.

Foundation
Superintendents were asked their opinions related to the current foundation formula. Responses are shown in table 35. Overall, 52% of superintendents responded that the current foundation formula would work if adequate funds were allocated and distributed to local school districts. That is lower than the 60% who responded that way on the 2005 survey; similar to the 53% who responded that way on the 2004 survey, and lower than the 58% on the 2002 survey.

There was a difference of opinion on this question among district types and a difference from their opinions on the 2005 survey. Unit district superintendents responses dropped from two-thirds believing the current foundation formula would work with adequate funds in 2005 to 53% in 2006. Just over half of High School and just under half of Elementary district superintendents agreed with the statement in 2006, whereas in the 2005 survey just over half of Elementary and just under half of High School district superintendents agreed with the statement.

Table 35
Opinions Related to Foundation Formula/Level by District Type

Questions	Percentages									
	2006								2005	
	Unit (N=195)		High School (N=50)		Elementary (N=153)		Total (N=127)		Total (N=401)	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
The current foundation formula would work if adequate funds were allocated and distributed to local school districts.	53.3	46.7	54.5	45.5	47.5	52.5	51.8	48.2	60.4	39.6

Taxes
Superintendents were asked their opinion about changing the state income tax and the property tax for funding education. Their responses are given in Table 36. Overall, 62% of superintendents would support an increase in state income tax, 47% would support an increase in the income tax only with a corresponding decrease in the property tax, and 14% would support an increase in the property tax. A direct comparison cannot be made for this issue with previous surveys. In the 2006 survey 80% of superintendents would support an increase in state income tax, which is comparable to the 84% in the 2004 survey and 78% in the 2002 survey. Because superintendents could check all that apply in the 2006 survey, it is not know how many in total would support an increase in the income tax: Some may have checked both items pertaining to that increase and others may have checked only one.

Table 36
Opinions Related to Increased Income Tax for Education by District Type

Questions	Percentages			
	Unit (N=62)	High School (N=11)	Elementary (N=41)	Total (N=127)
In order to better fund schools (check all that apply):				

	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
I would support an increase in the income tax.	69.4	30.6	81.8	18.2	63.4	36.6	62.2	37.8
I would support an increase in the income tax only with a corresponding decrease in the property tax.	54.8	45.2	54.5	45.5	46.3	53.7	46.5	53.5
I would support an increase in the property tax.	14.5	85.5	9.1	90.9	17.1	82.9	14.2	85.8

Working Cash Fund Bonds
Districts float working cash fund bonds as a way to address insufficient funds for education. Superintendents were asked if they issued such bonds during the current school year for the first time in the last 5 years. If the answer was no, they were asked if they issued working cash fund bonds sometime during the last 5 years. Responses are given in Table 37.

Only 9% of districts approved Working Cash Fund Bonds that year for the first time in the last 5 years. This compares with 10% of superintendents who responded in the 2005 and 11% of superintendents who responded in the 2004 survey that they issued working cash fund bonds that year for the first time in the last 5 years. Elementary district superintendents were slightly more likely to issue such bonds (9.8%) than were Unit district superintendents (8.1%) with High School district superintendents in between (9.1%).

Table 37
Use of Working Cash Fund Bonds for First Time in Last 5 Years by District Type

Questions	Percentages									
	2006								2005	
	Unit (N=62)		High School (N=11)		Elementary (N=41)		Total (N=127)		Total (N=401)	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
My district has approved Working Cash Fund Bonds this year for the first time in the last 5 years.	8.1	91.9	9.1	90.9	9.8	90.2	8.7	91.3	10.0	90.0

If Superintendents answered no to the above question, they were asked if they approved Working Cash Fund Bonds sometime during the last 5 years. Overall 27% responded they had approved Working Cash Fund Bonds sometime during the last 5 years. As in the previous question, Elementary district superintendents were more likely to approve such bonds (33%) than were Unit district superintendents (23%), with High School district superintendents in between (27%) (Table 38).

Table 38
Use of Working Cash Fund Bonds During the Last 5 Years by District Type

Questions	Percentages			
	Unit	High School	Elementary	Total

	(N=62)			(N=11)			(N=41)			(N=127)		
	Yes	No	NA	Yes	No	NA	Yes	No	NA	Yes	No	NA
If no above, my district has approved Working Cash Fund Bonds sometime during the last 5 years.	23	64	13	27	64	0	33	48	20	27	59	14

Deficit Operating Funds

According to an ISBE press release March 16, 2006, "Illinois schools continue to show financial improvement: Number of school districts in deficit spending declines for second straight year," for FY05 slightly more than 40% of Illinois school districts were deficit spending, compared with nearly 80% of districts in FY03 (Illinois State Board of Education 2006c). By the strictest definition, an operating fund is experiencing a deficit when the expenditures in a fiscal year exceed the revenues in that fiscal year (excluding pre-existing balances and fund transfers).

Table 39
Deficit Operating Funds Across The Four Surveys

Funds	Percentage of Districts in Deficit						
	2002 Survey			2004 Survey			
	FY '00	FY '01	FY '02 est	FY '01	FY '02	FY '03	FY '04 est
Education	31.0	47.0	61.4	44.6	53.3	63.0	63.2
O B & M	23.8	38.4	46.8	28.7	37.2	42.1	44.1
Transporta-tion	12.6	18.4	23.8	17.9	22.8	23.2	25.5
	2005 Survey			2006 Survey			
	FY '04	FY '05	FY '06 est	FY '05	FY '06	FY '07 est	
Education	55.6	54.9	54.6	33.1	33.1	31.5	
O B & M	40.6	42.6	41.1	30.7	34.6	29.1	
Transporta-tion	20.4	22.4	20.4	23.6	29.9	29.1	

Superintendents were asked to use the above definition of deficit to identify the operating funds in their district that demonstrated a deficit for FY '05, FY '06, and FY '07 Estimate. Previous surveys asked the same question with comparable years. It appears there was an increase in the percent of districts in deficit in all funds from FY00 to FY03, with slightly decreasing deficit spending reported on the 2005 survey. The 2006 results show a decrease in both the Education Fund and the O B & M funds for both FY '05 and FY '06 Table 39). It appears the survey sample for 2006 may not fully represent those in the 2005 survey. Of note, however, is the increase in the Transportation Fund in the 2006 survey from 24% in 2005 to 30% in 2006. This corresponds to the increase in districts citing challenges with transportation for their dual-enrolled students in the section of the survey on Community Colleges.

Projected Cutbacks

In order to avoid deficit spending, school districts need to either increase revenue or decrease spending. Superintendents were asked which program(s) or service(s) would be considered for

the next round of cutbacks if their revenues continued to fall. Major areas of cuts, shown in Table 40, included Co-curricular Activities (27), Non-mandated programs or elective courses

Table 40
Programs/Services Considered for Next Rounds of Cuts

Total	Area	Specifics	
27	Co-Curricular Activities/Activities		21
		Athletics/Sports	6
24	Non-mandated programs/elective courses		7
		Music/Art/Band/Orchestra	13
		Foreign Languages	2
		Gifted	1
		PE	1
19	Class Size/Teachers/Block Schedule		19
19	Support Services/Reduction in services without cutting		5
		Title I/Reading Specialist	3
		Library/Media	4
		Nurse	2
		Guidance	2
		Teacher assistants	3
10	Vocational Education/Industrial Technology/Consumer Economics		10
18	Other		
		Staff development/in-service/travel	4
		Technology	3
		Textbooks/Instructional materials	2
		Deferred Maintenance	1
		Administration	1
		Office	1
		Closing a school	1
		Considering moving to HS deactivation	1
15	Nothing/NA/Don't Know		11
		Nothing left to cut	4

(24), Teachers/Increase Class Size (19), Reduction in Support Services (16), and Vocational Education (10).

Superintendents were also asked which jobs would most likely be cut in order to save money. They were asked to check all that apply, so the total will not equal 100%. Overall, Instructional (e.g. teachers, aides, specialists) jobs were most likely to be cut (59%), closely followed by Staff/service jobs (55%), with 28% likely to cut Administrative jobs. However, there was considerable difference among district types. Twice as many Unit district superintendents (68%) and Elementary superintendents (71%) indicated they would cut Instructional (e.g. teachers, aides, specialists) jobs as did High School district superintendents (36%). Elementary district superintendents were less likely to cut Administrative jobs (22%) than were Unit district superintendents (36%) and High School district superintendents (46%). There was little difference among district types for Staff/service jobs (Table 41).

Table 41

Jobs Most Likely to be Cut to Save Money by District Type

Questions	Percentages			
	Unit (N=62)	High School (N=11)	Elementary (N=41)	Total (N=127)
Instructional (e.g. teachers, aides, specialists)	67.7	36.4	70.7	59.1
Staff/service	62.9	63.3	56.1	55.1
Administrative	35.5	45.5	22.0	28.3

Site-Based/School-Based Budgeting

Superintendents were asked if their district had a site-based/school-based budgeting process. Responses are shown in Table 42. Overall 59% of the superintendents reported their district had a site-based/school-based budgeting process with at least purchased services, supplies, and equipment, down from 66% in the 2005 survey. High School districts were more likely to have such a process (72%) compared with Unit (62%) and Elementary (54%) districts.

Table 42

Site Based/School Based Budgeting by District Type

Questions	Percentages									
	2006								2005	
	Unit (N=62)		High School (N=11)		Elementary (N=41)		Total (N=127)		Total (N=401)	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Does your district have a site based/school based budgeting process with at least purchased services, supplies, and equipment?	61.3	38.7	72.7	27.3	53.7	46.3	59.1	40.9	66.3	33.7

School Improvement Funds

Superintendents were asked at what level(s) school improvement funds are designated: school level and/or district level. Responses are shown in Table 43. More districts designate funds for school improvement at the district level (80%) than at the school level (62%). These figures are down somewhat from the 2005 survey, in which 87% designated funds for school improvement at the district level and 79% designated funds at the school level. High School districts were more likely to designate such funds at school level (82%) than were Elementary districts (68%) and Unit districts (53%). However, High School districts were least likely to designate school improvement funds at the district level: 73% compared with 79% for Unit districts and 81% for Elementary districts.

Table 43

Designated Level for School Improvement Funds by District Type

Questions	Percentages									
	3006								**2005**	
	Unit (N=62)		High School (N=11)		Elementary (N=41)		Total (N=127)		Total (N=401)	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Does your district designate funds for school improvement at the school level?	53.3	46.7	81.8	18.2	68.3	31.7	61.9	38.1	78.7	21.3
Does your district designate funds for school improvement at the district level?	79.0	21.0	72.7	27.3	80.5	19.5	79.1	20.9	86.5	13.5

Part IV: Demographics

District Demographics

District Type
One set of questions pertained to characteristics of the school district. The first question in this set pertained to District Type: Unit, High School, or Elementary. In 2005-06 there were 873 Operating Districts in Illinois, not counting the five state-operated schools. Of those districts, 45.36% were Unit districts, 43.18% were Elementary districts, and 11.45% were High School districts (Illinois State Board of Education 2006a).

For the 2006 survey, 54% of respondents were from Unit districts, compared with 49% in 2005, 52% in 2004, and 53% in 2002. Results of district type for the four surveys are displayed in Table 44.
It would appear Unit districts were somewhat overrepresented in this survey data (54.4% of respondents were from Unit districts whereas 45.4% of Illinois districts in 2005-06 were Unit districts).

Table 44
District Type

Response	Percentage by Year			
	2006	2005	2004	2002
Unit	54.4	49.0	51.5	53.1
Elementary	36.0	34.5	34.5	36.8
High School	9.6	12.6	14.0	10.1

Formula for State Aid
In addition to district type, a question pertained to the Formula for State Aid: Foundation, Alternate, or Flat Grant. For 2006 82.2% of the districts relied on Foundation support, which was similar to the 80.1% in 2005, 82% in 2004 and 80.5% in 2002. Results are presented in Table 45.

Table 45
Formula for State Aid

Response	Percentage by Year			
	2006	2005	2004	2002
Foundation	82.2	80.1	82.0	80.5
Flat Grant	12.1	9.4	10.2	10.7
Alternate	5.6	10.5	7.0	8.8

When Formula for State Aid was compared by District Type, however, we see that Unit Districts relied more heavily on Foundation support (93% compared with 70% for High School and 67% for Elementary Districts) and less on Alternate or Flat Grants. Whereas only 3% of Unit districts relied on Flat Grant support, 24% of Elementary and 20% of High School districts relied on Flat Grant support. Details may be seen in Table 46.

Table 46
2005 Formula for State Aid by District Type

Response	2005 Percentage by District Type		
	Unit (n=62)	High School (n=11)	Elementary (n=41)
Foundation	93.2	70.0	67.6
Flat Grant	3.4	20.0	24.3
Alternate	3.4	10.0	8.1

District Size
Superintendents were asked their Fall 05 district enrollment (Table 47). District sizes ranged from a minimum of 66 to a maximum of 28,000 with a mean of 1,526. Mean district size in the 2005 survey was 1,640 with a range of 43 to 27, 500; in the 2004 survey was 1,721 with a range of 3 to 26,500; for 2002 the mean enrollment was 1,854, with a range of 11 to 39,400, a steady decline in mean enrollment in participating districts. Of note is that the minimum enrollment has been increasing almost steadily over the survey years, possibly a result of consolidation.

Table 47
District Mean Size by District Type

District Type	District Size			
	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard Deviation
Unit (n=62)	217	28,000	1,879	3,856.52
High School (n=11)	465	3,860	1,762	1,305.31
Elementary (n=41)	66	5,900	948	1,161.59
Total (n=127)	66	28000	1,526	2,953.04

Superintendent Demographics

<u>Superintendent Characteristics</u>
In addition to the questions about the school district, another set of questions pertained to characteristics of the superintendent, including gender, ethnic background, and level of schooling. Overall, 78.8% of respondents were male; 95.2% were Caucasian; and 54.9% had a Certificate of Advanced Study or Ed. Specialist Degree, 37.2% had a doctorate, and 8.0% had a masters plus degree (Table 48).

Table 48
Personal Characteristics by District Type

Characteristics	**Percentages by District Type**				
	2006				**2005**
	Unit (N=62)	High School (N=11)	Elementary (N=41)	Total (N=127)	Total (N=401)
Gender					
Male	81.7	90.9	70.7	78.8	78.8
Female	18.3	9.1	29.3	21.2	21.2
Ethnic Background					
Caucasian	98.2	100.0	89.5	95.2	98.2
African/American	0.0	0.0	5.3	1.9	1.3
American Indian	0.0	0.0	2.6	1.0	.5
Latino/a	0.0	0.0	2.6	1.0	N/A
Asian/Pacific Islander	1.8	0.0	0.0	1.0	N/A
Level of Schooling					
Masters Plus	6.6	0.0	12.2	8.0	7.3
Certificate of Advanced Study or Ed. Specialist	68.9	40.0	36.6	54.9	47.9
Doctorate	24.6	60.0	51.2	37.2	44.8

The percentage of superintendents responding to the 2006 survey who were male (78.8%) remained the same as in 2005 (78.8%) and decreased from 2004 (82%). The percentage of respondents in 2006 who were Caucasian (95.2%) decreased from 98.2% in 2005 and 98.6% in 2004. The percentage of respondents holding a doctorate in 2006 (37.2%) decreased from 44.8% in 2005 and 47% in 2004.

When the results were compared by District Type, Elementary superintendents were somewhat more diverse than High School and Unit superintendents, with 71% male and 90% Caucasian compared with 82.0% male and 98% Caucasian for Unit district superintendents and 91% male and 100% Caucasian for High School district superintendents. Elementary superintendents have increased their diversity from the 2005 survey, whereas High School and Unit superintendents have decreased their diversity: Elementary superintendents in the 2005 survey reported 75% male and 97.4 Caucasian compared with 80.0% male and 99% Caucasian for unit district superintendents and 82.0% male and 98% Caucasian for high school district superintendents.

A greater discrepancy was shown in level of schooling, in which over twice as many High School and Elementary district superintendents had a doctorate compared with Unit district superintendents (60% and 51.2% versus 24.6%, down from 32.1% in the 2005 survey).

Superintendent Longevity
A final set of questions pertained to the professional career of the superintendent. Superintendents were asked their age, length of time in education, length of time in their district, and length of time in their current position. The responses by district type are displayed in Table 49. The average superintendent was just over 52 years old, had been in education for 28 years, has been a superintendent for just over 8 years, and in the current position for just over 5 years. These results were similar to those for 2005, 2004, and 2002 except for years as a superintendent: 8.05 years in 2006 compared with 8.37 years in 2005, 9 years in 2004, and 10 years in 2002, indicating a trend for superintendents to be newer to the position of superintendent than they were since 2002.

Table 49
Superintendent Longevity

Characteristics	Years						
	2006				2005	2004	2002
	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Mean	Mean
Age	31	75	52.16	7.83	52.68	52.9	NA
Years in Education	2	49	28.42	7.95	28.82	28.8	29.0
Years as a Superintendent	0	29	8.05	6.87	8.37	9.0	10.0
Years in Current Position	0	32	5.26	5.07	4.96	5.3	5.83

A closer look at Years as a Superintendent shows an increase in the percentage of new superintendents, those who have been in the position from 1 to 5 years, from the 2002 survey to the 2006 survey. In 2002 one third of the superintendents were in the position from 1 to 5 years, whereas in 2005 and 2006 almost one half of the superintendents were in the position from 1 to 5 years. There was a corresponding decrease in the percentage of superintendents with 6 to 25 years experience, whereas the percentage of superintendents with 26-30 years experience increased. There were no superintendents with over 30 years experience who responded to the 2006 survey (Table 50). Female superintendents were newer to the position than were male superintendents: 95.5% of females were in the position 0-10 years compared with 67.8% of males.

Table 50
Years as Superintendent

Years as Superintendent	Percentages			
	2006	2005	2004	2002

	Male	Female	Total			
0 to 5	46.4	50.0	47.2	48.6	42.1	33.2
6 to 10	21.4	45.5	26.9	19.0	22.3	27.4
11 to 15	13.1	4.5	11.1	14.2	16.5	16.9
16 to 20	9.5	0.0	7.4	8.6	9.5	12.3
21 to 25	3.6	0.0	2.8	7.1	7.2	7.2
26 to 30	6.0	0.0	4.6	2.0	2.1	2.6
Over 30	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.5	0.2	0.4

When examining Superintendent Longevity among superintendents from unit, high school, and elementary districts, Unit district superintendents were slightly younger (50.47 years) and had slightly fewer years in education (26.68 years) than did High School (54.45 years of age and 30.09 years in education) or Elementary district superintendents (53.90 years of age and 30.53 years in education), as is shown in Table 51. High School district superintendents had more years as a superintendent (11.45) than did Elementary (7.62) or Unit (7.39) district superintendents, and more years in their current position (6.91) than either Elementary (5.84) or Unit (4.63) district superintendents. Details are shown in Table 52.

Although there was little difference among superintendents from different district types, there was a significant difference in Superintendent Longevity among superintendents from different Levels of Education: The average superintendent with a Doctorate was 4 (6) years older, had

Table 51
Superintendent Longevity by District Type

Characteristics	Years			
	Unit (N=60)	High School (N=11)	Elementary (N=41)	Total (N=127)
Average Age	50.47	54.45	53.90	52.16
Average Years in Education	26.68	30.09	30.53	28.42
Average Years as a Superintendent	7.39	11.45	7.62	8.05
Average Years in Current Position	4.63	6.91	5.84	5.26

been in education close to 3 (9) years longer, had been a superintendent 1 (2) years longer, and had been in the current position about 1 (2) years longer than superintendents with a Certificate of Study/Ed. Specialist Degree (Masters Plus). Those differences were significant on Oneway ANOVA for years in education (.003).

Table 52
Superintendent Longevity by Level of Education

Characteristics	Years			
	Masters Plus	Certificate	Doctorate	Total
Average Age	48.33	50.89	54.74	52.16
Average Years in Education	21.61	27.63	30.95	28.42

Average Years as a Superintendent	6.50	7.69	8.93	8.05
Average Years in Current Position	4.06	4.90	5.93	5.26

A comparison of superintendent longevity by gender shows the average female superintendent was about 1 year older, had been in education 1 years longer, had been a superintendent 3 years less (a significant difference at .001 on 2-tailed Independent Samples T Test), and had been in the current position 1½ years less than the average male superintendent (Table 53).

Table 53
Superintendent Longevity by Gender

Characteristics	**Years**		
	Male	Female	Total
Average Age	51.90	53.13	52.16
Average Years in Education	28.19	29.04	28.42
Average Years as a Superintendent	8.82	5.37	8.05
Average Years in Current Position	5.58	4.07	5.26

Contract Length
The final question regarding superintendent characteristics pertained to the length of the superintendent's personal contract. The mean contract length was 3.45 years, slightly longer than

Table 54
Superintendent Contract Length by District Type

Responses	**Percentages**			
	Unit (N=62)	High School (N=11)	Elementary (N=41)	Total (N=115)
1 Year	6.5	0.0	12.2	7.8
2 Years	4.8	0.0	7.3	5.2
3 Years	50.0	36.4	53.7	49.6
4 Years	9.7	9.1	7.3	8.7
5 Years	29.0	54.5	19.5	28.7
Mean	3.50	4.18	3.15	3.45

the 3.3 years in the 2005 and 2004 surveys. Results show that High School district superintendents had longer contracts (mean = 4.18 years) than did unit district superintendents (mean = 3.50 years), and that both had longer contracts than did elementary district superintendents (mean = 3.15 years). More High School district superintendents had 4 or 5-year contracts (64%) than did Unit (39%) or Elementary (27%) district superintendents. Those results are shown in Table 54.

Male superintendents had longer contracts than did female superintendents, as shown in Table 55. The mean for males was 3.53 years and for females was 3.17 years. More males had 4 or 5 year contracts (41%) than did females (25%).

Table 55
Superintendent Contract Length by Gender

Responses	Years		
	Male	Female	Total
1 Year	7.9	8.3	7.8
2 Years	3.4	12.5	5.2
3 Years	48.3	54.2	49.6
4 Years	9.0	4.2	8.7
5 Years	31.5	20.8	28.7
Mean	3.17	3.53	3.45

In summary, the average Illinois superintendent in 2006 was a white male 52 years old who had been in education for 28 years, had been a superintendent for 8 years, and was in his current position for just over 5 years. He had a 3 or 4-year contract and a Certificate of Advanced Study or Ed. Specialist degree. However, an elementary district superintendent was more likely to be female or minority. In addition, a high school or elementary district superintendent was more likely to have a Doctorate, and a High School district superintendent was more likely to have a longer contract.

Findings

Major findings, along with recommendations based upon those findings, are listed below.

Part I: Current Issues

Evaluation of Services
Just over half of superintendents perceived the services of the State Board of Education were equal to the services in the previous year, a slight improvement from the 2005 survey, with 40% perceiving services were less than those in 2005. Policymakers should determine in what ways the services can be modified to better meet the needs of district superintendents.

Almost 90% of superintendents perceived the services of the Regional Office of Education to be valuable. Those positions should continue to be supported.

No Child Left Behind
Adequate Yearly Requirements continues to have the greatest impact on school districts, followed by Highly Qualified Teacher Requirement and Analyzing Disaggregated Data. Districts need continued support in these areas after efforts are made to determine what the specific challenges are and how they can be supported.

Staffing
The majority of superintendents indicated they would have difficulty filling principal positions, 37% to some degree and 10% to a great degree. This is a 10% increase from the previous two surveys. This is especially true for Unit district superintendents (65%, up from 49% in 2005). Only 9% of superintendents reported adequate internal candidates. Special Education Administrators, High School Principals, and Business Managers continue to be administrative positions most difficult to fill, with Special Education Administrators becoming the most

difficult. Special education teachers continue to be most difficult positions to fill, and the difficulty has increased from 35% in 2005 to 42% in 2006. Math and science continue to be the next most difficult positions to fill.

There need to be increased initiatives at the university level supported by the state designed to recruit and prepare candidates for these positions, particularly in the area of special education. In addition, initiatives need to be expanded for local districts to increase the pool of internal candidates for principal positions.

Student Learning
Although Money continued to be reported as the greatest obstacle to student learning, it was considered less of a problem (57%) than in the 2005 survey (67%). On the other hand, Socio-Economic Conditions continued to be second but increased from 42% in 2005 to 55% in 2006. Time remained third at 36%. Schools need increased support for programs designed to offset the effects of socio-economic conditions on learning. Policymakers need to be made aware of the effects on student learning of inadequate and inequitable funding for education, as well as for inadequate funding for programs designed to offset social economic conditions.

Consolidation
Overall 43% of superintendents believed property taxes discourages families from moving into their district; 51% of Unit district superintendents believed that. Over one-third of the superintendents reported the district's curriculum would be enhanced as a result of consolidation, and just over one-fourth reported the district's financial outlook would be improved as a result of consolidation. One-quarter of superintendents examined consolidation or reorganization within the last three years as a result of budgetary factors. Thirteen percent of unit district superintendents reported closing schools within the past five years and 15% of unit district superintendents reported the need to close one or more buildings within the next three years as a result of budgetary constraints. Policymakers should study the effects of property taxes on enrollment. With the passage of School District Reorganization legislation, Senate Bill 2795, to make it easier for school districts in Illinois to merge with each other to improve operations, initiatives should be developed to support local school boards in their exploration of consolidation/annexation as a means to both improve curriculum and the financial condition of the district.

Mentoring
Although only 22% (up from 15% in 2005) of superintendents reported an official mentoring/ induction program for all first-time administrators, and even fewer, 12%, reported an official mentoring/induction program for experienced administrators newly hired to the district, 43% of superintendents agreed with the state requirement for a mentoring program for all first-year principals as was done in SB 860. Superintendents will need support in establishing effective mentoring programs for their principals. In addition, with an increase in superintendents in the position of superintendent for 0-10 years, provisions should be made to provide mentors to new superintendents.

Professional Development
About three-fourths of superintendents were supportive of current professional development opportunities for both superintendents and other administrators. Superintendents' top

professional-development needs were in the areas of budget/finance, teaching and learning, and leadership issues. Professional development for superintendents and other administrators should be provided in these areas.

Principal Preparation

Three-fourths (up from two-thirds in 2005) of the superintendents thought principal preparation programs should be based upon ISLLC Standards; 14% (down from one-fourth in 2005) did not know the details of ISLLC Standards. Policy makers should assure principal preparation programs are based upon ISLLC Standards.

Overall 39% of the superintendents believed their principals would apply for the Master Principal Endorsement. Forty-one percent (up from one-third in 2005) of the superintendents would give preference to principal candidates who were NBCT teachers. Overall 38% of the superintendents indicated they would create a Teacher Leader leadership position in their schools; two-thirds of those who said they would create such a leadership position reported they would have a preference for an NBCT teacher for that position. Policymakers should promote discussions regarding the benefits of the Master Principal Endorsement and Teacher Leader leadership position and initiatives needed to implement them.

Community Colleges

Two-thirds of superintendents reported their district's work "definitely" and an additional almost one-third reported it "somewhat" enhanced educational opportunities for their high school students. Over 90% of Unit districts and 80% of High School districts provided Dual/Concurrent Enrollment. The greatest challenges of Dual-Credit Programs for Unit and High School districts were scheduling, transportation, and funding, with a considerable increase in those reporting challenges with transportation (44% in 2006 up from 27% in 2005). In spite of superintendents' support for the programs, 49% of districts would either not encourage students to take dual credit courses if this meant a loss of ADA funding or would actually discourage students from taking them, an increase from 40% in 2005. Policymakers need to be made aware of this barrier to increased learning opportunities for students and should make recommendations for school funding that would eliminate this situation that limits student learning.

Collective Bargaining

Almost one-half of the superintendents believed collective bargaining laws impact their district's ability to provide a quality educational improvement process for their students. Two-thirds of the superintendents believed there should be a major overhaul of collective bargaining laws as they pertain to public schools. Four-fifths of the superintendents believed there should be the ability to waive portions of a collective bargaining agreement on a building basis so that leadership teams have the ability to work toward improving student learning. Based on these findings, policy makers should make provisions for waivers of the collective bargaining agreement on a building basis to enable leadership teams to work toward improving student learning.

Part II: Evaluation

Elements of Principal and Superintendent Evaluations

The Illinois Professional School Leader standards for superintendents were considered for evaluations of 27% of superintendents; the Illinois Professional School Leader standards for principals were considered for evaluations of 53% of principals. Initiatives are needed that are promoted by the state and professional organizations to increase the use of these standards for evaluations of superintendents and principals.

In addition, improvement of ISAT or PSAE test scores was included in 52% of superintendent evaluations and 42% or principal evaluations. Student Learning was the top performance indicator for both superintendent and principal evaluations. It needs to be considered whether or not improvement of test scores should be part of all superintendent and principal evaluations.

Hiring New Administrators
Overall 58% of superintendents used applicants' portfolios and found them helpful in making decisions about hiring of applicants. In addition, 34% of superintendents or a representative of their district performed a site visit for finalists of an administrative vacancy. Study should be conducted to determine the effectiveness of these methods of candidate selection, and if they are found to be effective, professional development should be provided to superintendents as to their use.

Part III: Finance

Funding
Fifty-two percent of superintendents responded that the current foundation formula would work if adequate funds were allocated and distributed to local school districts. That leaves 48% of superintendents who didn't believe the current foundation formula would work. Superintendents continued to support an increase in the state income tax, with or without a corresponding decrease in the property tax. Policy makers should re-examine the nature of school funding and the foundation formula.

Deficit Spending/Potential Cuts
Although the percentage of districts in deficit had declined over the past few years, there were still over one-third of the districts in deficit. Nine percent of districts approved Working Cash Fund Bonds that year for the first time in the last 5 years, with an additional 27% approving Working Cash Fund Bonds during the past five years. In addition, 57% of superintendents reported money was the greatest obstacle to student learning, with the second greatest obstacle being socio-economic conditions in the district.

To avoid further deficit spending superintendents reported the next round of cuts would include co-curricular activities, non-mandated programs/elective courses, and teachers/increasing class size. Over half of superintendents reported Instructional (e.g. teachers, aides, specialists) jobs were most likely to be cut in order to save money—jobs that would have a negative impact on student learning.

Policy makers need to study the impacts on student learning of budget cuts to reduce deficit spending, especially in those districts impacted by increasing low socio-economic populations;

of union contracts; and of consolidation to develop appropriate initiatives to help districts increase revenue and reduce spending in ways that do not negatively impact student learning.

Site-Based Budgeting

Overall 59% of the superintendents reported their district had a site-based/school-based budgeting process with at least purchased services, supplies, and equipment. More districts designate funds for school improvement at the district level (87%) than at the school level (79%). Districts need to continue to be encouraged to allow principals control over their budgets as it pertains to school improvement efforts.

Part IV: Demographics

Superintendent Demographics

The average Illinois superintendent in 2006 was a white male 52 years old who had been in education for 28 years, had been a superintendent for 8 years, and was in his current position for just over 5 years. He had a 3 or 4-year contract and a Certificate of Advanced Study or Ed. Specialist degree. However, an elementary district superintendent was more likely to be female or minority. In addition, a high school or elementary district superintendent was more likely to have a Doctorate, and a High School district superintendent was more likely to have a longer contract. Policy makers should continue to encourage programs that support women and minorities to become superintendents to increase the diversity of Illinois superintendents.

An increasing percentage of superintendents were new to the position: In 2002 one third of the superintendents were in the position 1 to 5 years, whereas in 2005 and 2006 almost one half of the superintendents were in the position 1 to 5 years. As more experienced superintendents are replaced with inexperienced superintendents, initiatives should be put in place to provide mentors and appropriate professional development to support the new superintendents.

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