

The Process Used to Select Elementary  
School Principals in Québec

by

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to describe the process used to select elementary school principals in Québec. Ninety-four directors-general or their assistants, representing the sixteen administrative regions of Québec, responded to a survey questionnaire.

The results of the study indicated that the majority of school boards do not have written selection policies and procedures to guide the selection of elementary school principals. In addition, the majority of school boards do not have written job descriptions, written selection criteria or written selection techniques.

Although there was an absence of written job descriptions, respondents considered educational leadership as the main expectation for elementary school principals.

In the absence of written selection criteria, it was noted that respondents had criteria that they felt were important for the elementary school principalship. The three most important personal selection criteria were decision-making skills, human relations skills and communication skills.

Significant differences were observed in the importance given to selection criteria based on the setting, size of the student population, language of instruction and confessional status of the school board.

The results of this study indicated that the director-general and the director of human resources were the main participants in the selection committee. However, the final employment decision was primarily the responsibility of the school commissioners.

The interview was the most common technique used by respondents in this study. This technique was used by 97.9% of respondents as a selection technique.

Finally, the study found that although there is an absence of written selection documents for elementary school principals, respondents were satisfied with their selection process and do not plan to revise this process.

Given the recognized importance of the leadership role of the principal, it is recommended that school boards develop a systematic selection process. This includes such elements as written selection policies, procedures, job description, selection criteria and selection techniques.

## RESUME

La présente étude vise à décrire le procédé utilisé pour sélectionner les directeurs des écoles primaire du Québec. Quatre-vingt quatorze directeurs-généraux, ou leurs assistants, représentant les seize régions administratives de la province, ont répondu à un questionnaire.

Les résultats de l'étude révèlent que la plupart des commissions scolaires ne possèdent pas de politique ni de marche à suivre écrites sur lesquelles elles se baseraient pour sélectionner les directeurs des écoles primaires. Elles n'ont pas de définition de tâches écrite pour la fonction de directeur, pas plus que de critères ou de méthodes de sélection écrits.

Malgré l'absence de définition écrite des tâches, les répondants à cette étude, considèrent que le leadership en matière d'enseignement représente leur plus grande attente face aux directeurs d'école primaire.

On a observé faute de critères de sélection écrits, les répondants ont des critères personnels qu'ils jugent nécessaires à la fonction de direction. Parmi les trois principaux critères, qui sont relatifs aux qualités personnelles du candidat, on retrouve l'aptitude à la prise de décisions, l'aptitude aux relations humaines ainsi que l'aptitude à la communication.

On remarque que l'importance accordée aux différents critères de sélection varie de façon significative selon la composition et l'envergure de la population étudiante, la langue d'enseignement, ainsi que le statut confessionnel de la commission scolaire.

Les résultats de cette étude démontrent que le directeur-général et le directeur des ressources humaines sont les principaux participants au comité de sélection, mais que la décision finale de l'embauche, toutefois, revient essentiellement aux commissaires d'école.

L'entrevue est la méthode de sélection de 97,9% des répondants, ce qui fait de cette dernière la méthode la plus fréquemment utilisée dans le cas des directeurs d'écoles primaires.

Finalement, l'étude révèle que malgré l'absence de documents ayant trait à la sélection des directeurs d'écoles primaires, les répondants sont satisfaits de leur processus de sélection et ne prévoient pas le réviser.

Etant donné l'importance reconnue du rôle de leadership conféré au directeur, il est recommandé que les commissions scolaires mettent au point un procédé de sélection appliqué systématiquement. Dans ce dernier seraient inclus des éléments tels que les politiques de sélection écrites, le processus, la définition des tâches, ainsi que les critères et les méthodes de sélection.

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## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **1.0 Introduction**

#### **1.1 Background to the Problem**

One of the most crucial tasks bestowed on society is to provide a system of education to its populace. It is through education that society can hope to improve its quality of life. In most cultures, the responsibility of providing formal education has been delegated to the school. The educational system is seen as a vehicle for transmitting society's values and priorities, and at the same time helping students become functioning members of society. The purpose of schooling is, therefore, to provide an educational system that is conducive to the intellectual, emotional, physical and social development of every student.

The principal is the individual charged with the responsibility of managing the school on a daily basis. As Tali (1980) noted, Québec's Law 71 has identified the principal as the individual responsible for the smooth operation of the school and for the development of the school's educational project. In passing this law, Québec has acknowledged the pivotal role of the principal in the success of the school.

In recognizing the school principal as one of the most important participants responsible for improving the educational success of students, as well as increasing the

students' interest and motivation in learning, the Ministère de l'Éducation has recognized the importance of the leadership role of the school principal (Gouvernement du Québec, 1992, pp. 4,8).

The literature has also identified the principal as one of the most important variables in developing and perpetuating a successful school. The research is generally in agreement that the principal, as the leader in the school, is the key participant in the on-going effort to improve schooling (Leithwood & Montgomery, 1986, Sergiovanni, 1987 and Thomson, 1992). This task becomes more challenging when it is recognized that the role of the school principal has become increasingly difficult, varied and more complex (Manasse, 1985). The principal is seen as the middle man, caught between the expectations and the vision of the directors-general on one side, and the demands of the teachers, parents, students, unions and community on the other side. The position of the school principal is not an easy one and as such, requires a wide range of abilities, skills and knowledge in order to meet the many varied educational and school objectives.

Based on the importance given to the role of the school principal, and the wide range of qualities required to succeed, selecting the best candidate for the position is an important process which deserves careful planning. Researchers argue that as part of this planning, there must



exist a systematic selection process that will help identify candidates who possess the skills, abilities and knowledge to successfully lead the school in its quest to meet the educational goals (Bolton, 1973; Castetter, 1987 and Gatewood & Feild, 1990).

However, the research on principal selection suggests that the process used to appoint principals is far from ideal. The selection process has been criticized for being based on politics and patronage rather than on proven ability (Baltzell & Dentler, 1983). Research has shown that few school boards have written selection policies for the selection of school principals (Deblois & Moisset, 1981 and Kelsey & Luellier, 1978). It appears that over the years, the results of research on selection have not generally been incorporated into the educational setting.

## 1.2 Problem Statement

The purpose of this research is to describe the process used to select elementary school principals in Québec as reported by directors-general or their assistants.

## 1.3 Research Questions

The present study will address the following research questions:

1. What are the most important expectations for elementary school principals?

2. What is the importance given to sources of recruitment, selection criteria and selection techniques?
3. What are the most common selection techniques used to assess candidates?
4. Who makes up the selection committee and what are their responsibilities?
5. What are the written documents, if any, that guide the selection process?

#### **1.4 Significance of the Research**

The public's demand for accountability has prompted an interest in maximizing educational resources and at the same time, increasing the effectiveness of the educational system. Since research studies appear to indicate that the principal is a major contributor to the successful achievement of a school's goal, it is therefore important to study how school principals are selected if we are to improve this element of a schools' success. although the literature has recommended ways of improving personnel selection, school boards in general have not taken advantage of the research findings.

Since a similar study has not been undertaken for all public elementary schools in the province of Québec, this study will help identify the mechanism whereby elementary schools principals are selected in this province. Results of this study may be used by practitioners to evaluate their

selection process. Topics for further research will be suggested based on the results of this study.

### **1.5 Limitations of the Research**

The recruitment and evaluation of school principals have an important relationship to selection; however, these topics will not be addressed in detail.

A second limitation of the study is that the responses obtained are limited to the perceptions of the directors-general, or their assistants, as reported in a survey questionnaire. In order to confirm the results obtained from the questionnaires, interviews with the respondents, direct observations of the selection process and analysis of selection documents would be necessary.

### **1.6 Assumptions Related to the Research**

It is assumed that the data provided by the respondents accurately reflects their selection practices. It is also assumed that a systematic selection process is warranted by school boards.

### **1.7 Organization of the Research**

A review of literature will be presented in Chapter Two. The methodology will be described in Chapter Three, followed by the presentation of the analysis of data in Chapter Four. Chapter Five will present a summary of the major findings, a

discussion on these findings and make recommendations for further study.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **2.0 Review of Literature**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

The results of research on school improvement generally concur that the principal is a key participant in the ongoing effort to improve the quality of education (Edmonds, 1978; Jacobson, 1990; Perkey & Smith, 1983; Rossow, 1990 and Sergiovanni, 1987).

Based on the important role attributed to the principal in meeting educational and school goals, one would expect that school boards would incorporate the research findings on school improvement and personnel selection into their own selection process. However, this appears not to be the case. In fact, the literature is very critical of the present selection process used to appoint school principals. In general, it is alleged that school boards do not have a valid systematic process aimed at selecting school leaders (Cohen, 1982; Manasse, 1985; Miklos, 1988; Schmitt & Schechtman, 1990 and Wendel & Breed, 1988).

The following section will present a review of literature in three main areas related to principal selection. The first section will focus on the results of seven research studies on principal selection. The second section will present a brief overview of the literature on the role of the principal. The last section will present five selection models that can be

adapted for principal selection.

## **2.2 Review of Literature**

### **2.2.1 Review of Literature on the Role of the Principal**

The role of the principal has been the subject of much research. The research is generally in agreement that the principal, as the educational leader, is the key participant in the on-going effort to improve schooling (Gouvernement du Québec, 1990 and 1992; Jacobson, 1990; Manasse, 1985 and Rossow, 1990; Sergiovanni, 1984 & 1987 and Smith & Andrews, 1989).

A review of literature has revealed that there are many common qualities that are associated with successful principals. Firstly, principals in good schools demonstrate their skill as educational leaders. This implies that principals must be directly or indirectly involved in the planning, implementing and evaluation of curriculum (Edmonds, 1982; Johnson, 1989; Leithwood & Montgomery, 1986; Musella, 1983; Schmitt & Schechtman, 1990 and Smith & Andrews, 1989). Secondly, successful school principals display their administrative skills by showing their ability to manage human and material resources (Klopf, Scheldon & Brennan, 1982; Kowalchuk, 1990; Lauria, 1977; Leithwood & Montgomery, 1986; Musella, 1983 and Rutherford, 1985).

Thirdly, successful principals have good communication

and human relations skills which enables them to work effectively with central office personnel, teachers, students, parents, non-teaching staff and community groups (Carnine, Gersten Green, 1982; Hutton, 1976; Gostein & Devita, 1977; Gordon & McIntyre, 1978 and Manasse, 1985).

Inherent in these qualities is the assumption that the principal must have a vision for his/her school which helps to identify and guide school goals. This vision is one which centres around students' needs (Leithwood and Montgomery, 1986; Manasse, 1985; Rossow, 1990 and Rutherford, 1985).

The literature recognizes that the role of the principal varies from school board to school board, and as such, is subject to many professional, organizational and societal changes (Brassard, 1985 and Holdaway & Ratsoy, 1991). For this reason, the role must be periodically evaluated in order to assess the reality of the expected roles.

As varied as the role may be, the basic assumption is that the school principal is the school leader. As such, effective leadership is essential if schools hope to meet their educational objectives.

In summary, the literature indicates that there are skills associated with successful principals. These include instructional leadership and management skills, human relations skills, communication skills and a vision for their school which focuses on the needs of the students.

Many of these qualities resemble the selection criteria

found to be important by respondents in the research studies of Dehlois and Moisset (1981) and Newberry (1975). However, as indicated by these researchers, the criteria were rarely documented. Instead, as shown by Delsey and Leullier (1973), such posted criteria as academic training and teaching experience became the most important selection criteria used by selection committees. These criteria have not been validated as indicators of success as a principal (Bridges & Baehr, 1971; Duke, 1987 and Ihle, 1987).

The literature is therefore critical of selection processes that do not clearly identify the role of the principal (Baltzell and Dentler, 1983 and Cohen, 1982). The lack of clarity on the expected role of the principal may lead to misunderstanding and confusion regarding the qualities required for the principalship.

If school board leaders wish to find the candidates with the qualities they view as important, then they must identify and record the role of the principal. Otherwise, selection committees will continue to use the criteria available to them, and thus increase the chances of not identifying the best candidate for a particular position.

The following section will present five selection models recommended in the literature that can be used to systematically select school principals.

## **2.2.2 Review of Personnel Selection Models**

The selection process is a major expenditure for both



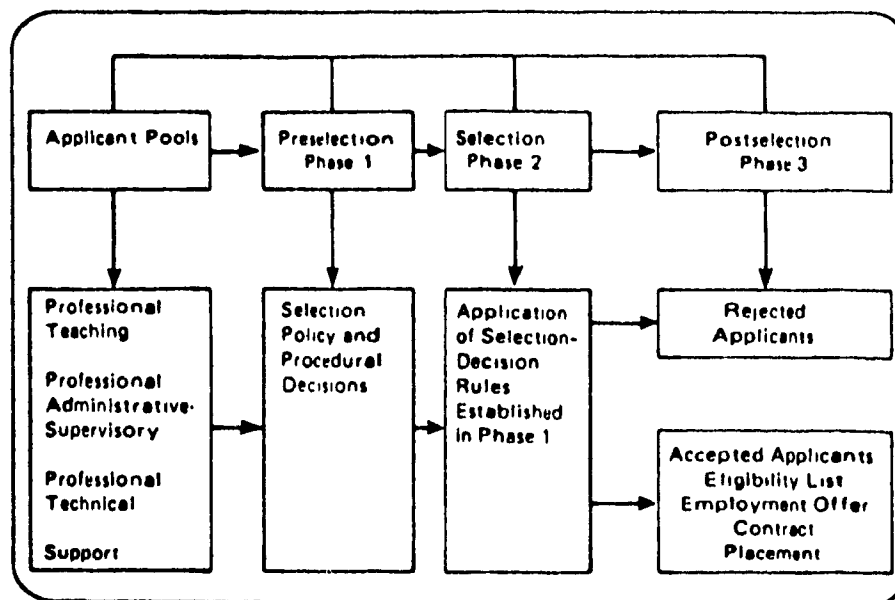
private and public corporations, and therefore must be done very carefully. Although the literature describes ways to improve personnel selection, school systems in general have not taken advantage of the research findings. The following section will present several recommended personnel selection models as described in the literature.

According to Castetter (1986), "personnel selection is a decision-making process in which one individual is chosen over another to fill a position on the basis of how well the individual's characteristics match the requirements of the position" (Castetter, 1986, p.221).

Wanous (1980 & 1992) also expresses the view that it is important to match the employee and the position in order to maximize productivity. Both Castetter and Wanous feel that there is tremendous loss of resources (money, time and personal effort) when the selection process is ineffective.

Castetter's (1986) model of selection (Figure 1) includes three phases once a pool of applicants has been compiled.

The first phase, the pre-selection phase, consists of two major parts. The first part is the development of a selection policy. This policy, which generally stems from the school board, indicates to the school staff, to those who wish to apply and to the general public, the school board's position regarding personnel selection. The policy describes the guidelines which will be used to select personnel, and the board's position relating to such issues as employment

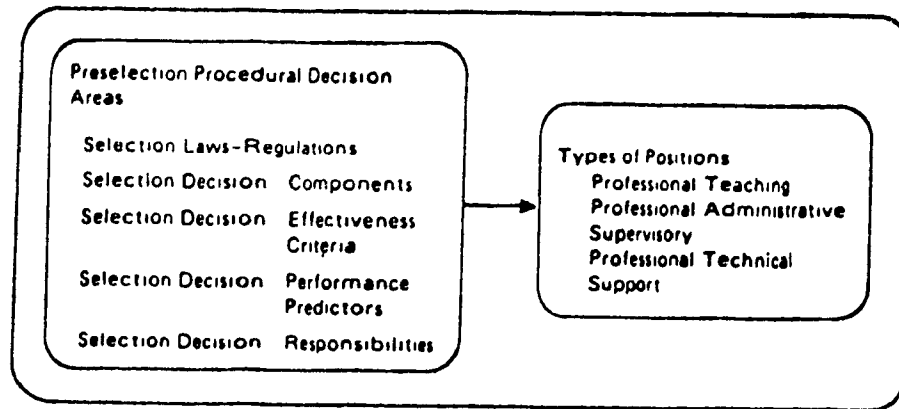


**Figure 1. Model of the Personnel Selection**

**Source:** Castetter, W.B. (1986). The personnel function in educational administration (4th ed.). New York: MacMillan Company, p.224.

discrimination, career development and job opportunities.

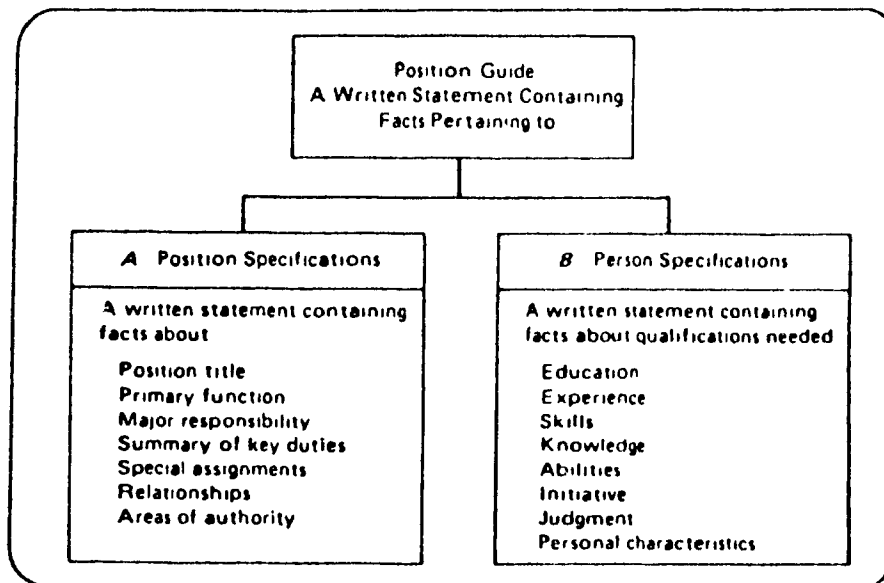
This first part of the pre-selection phase serves as a guideline to the second part of the pre-selection phase, which is the development of procedures to implement the selection policy (Figure 2).



**Figure 2. Illustration of Framework for Developing Preselection Procedural Decisions**

**Source:** Castetter, W.B. (1986). The personnel function in educational administration (4th ed.). New York: MacMillan Company, p.227.

The procedures for implementing the selection policy include examining government laws and regulations related to personnel selection, and making selection decisions related to the components of the position, effectiveness criteria, performance predictors and selection committee responsibilities. The decisions made will vary depending on the position. Figure 3 illustrates the decisions needed to be made related to the components of the position, also referred to as a position guide.



**Figure 3. Elements of a Position Guide**

**Source:** Castetter, W.B. (1986). The personnel function in educational administration (4th ed.). New York: MacMillan Company, p.229.

The second phase of Castetter's (1986) selection model is the selection phase (Figure 1). During this phase, the selection committee evaluates the match between the candidate's qualifications and the job requirements. The goal is to ensure that these two variables are as congruent as possible. One tool suggested by Castetter is the "Position-Person Compatibility Profile" which assigns a numeric value to the congruency between candidate's qualifications and the requirements of the position.

The third phase in Castetter's (1986) model is the

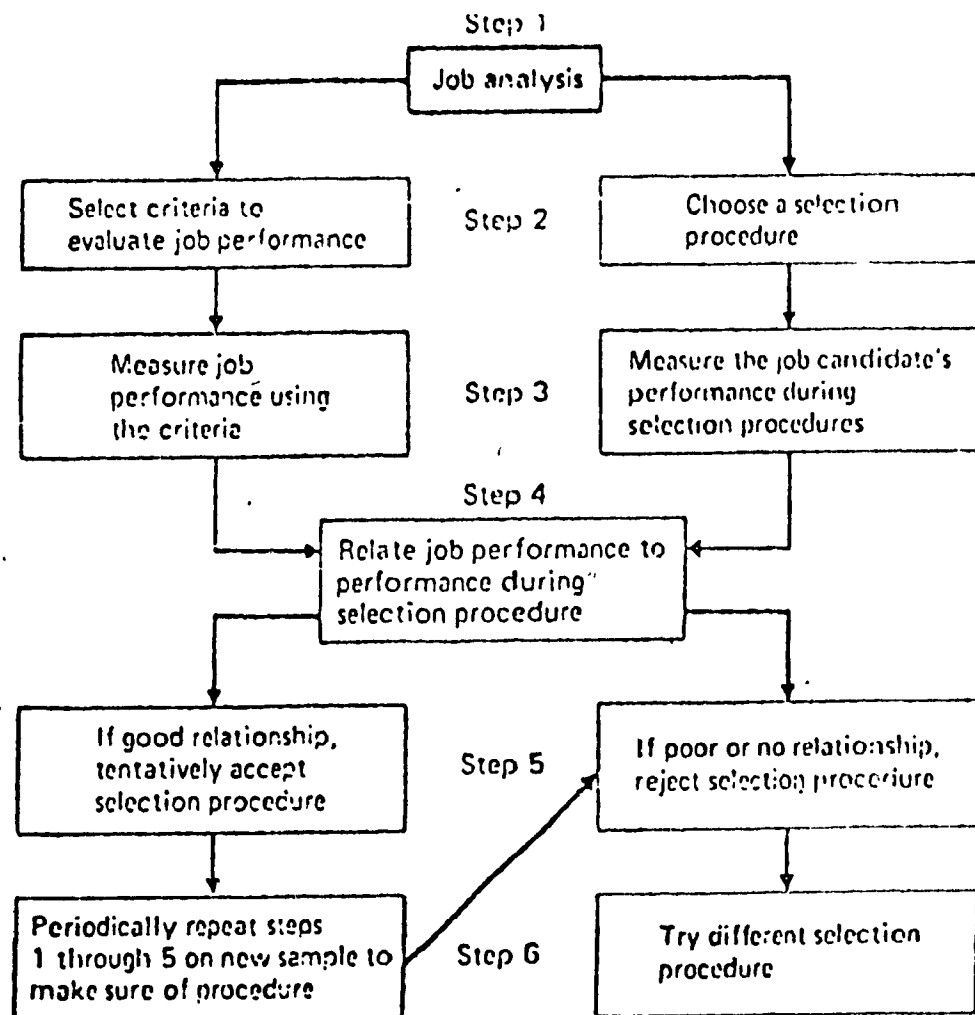
postselection phase (Figure 1). This phase includes preparing a list of candidates that the selection committee feels has met the required qualifications. The final approval or rejection is the responsibility of the board of education. Once the final decision is made, an employment offer is presented to the candidate. This is then followed by an employment contract. The terms of employment must be presented to the candidate. This is then followed by an employment contract. The terms of employment must be detailed in order to reduce the chances of misinterpretation which can lead to misunderstandings about various aspects of a position.

Castetter (1986) has included the evaluation of the results of the selection process as a responsibility of the selection committee. This responsibility helps correct imbalances in the selection process thereby updating and improving the process.

Wanous (1980) offers a slightly different model (Figure 4), although it has many of the same steps as in Castetter's model. For Wanous, a valid selection process is a prerequisite for increased job performance, employee job satisfaction and commitment. He feels that if the organization works to meet the needs of the individual and that the individual's abilities match the job requirements, then there will be increased job productivity and improved employee satisfaction.

The first step in the selection process for Wanous (1980)

is the preparation of a job analysis (Figure 4).



**Figure 4. Outline of the Organizational Selection process**

**Source:** Wanous, J.P. (1980). Organizational entry - Recruitment, selection, and socialization of newcomers. Reading, MA.: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, p.123. Adapted from M.L. Blum and J.C. Naylor (1968). Industrial psychology: Its theoretical and social foundations, p.27.

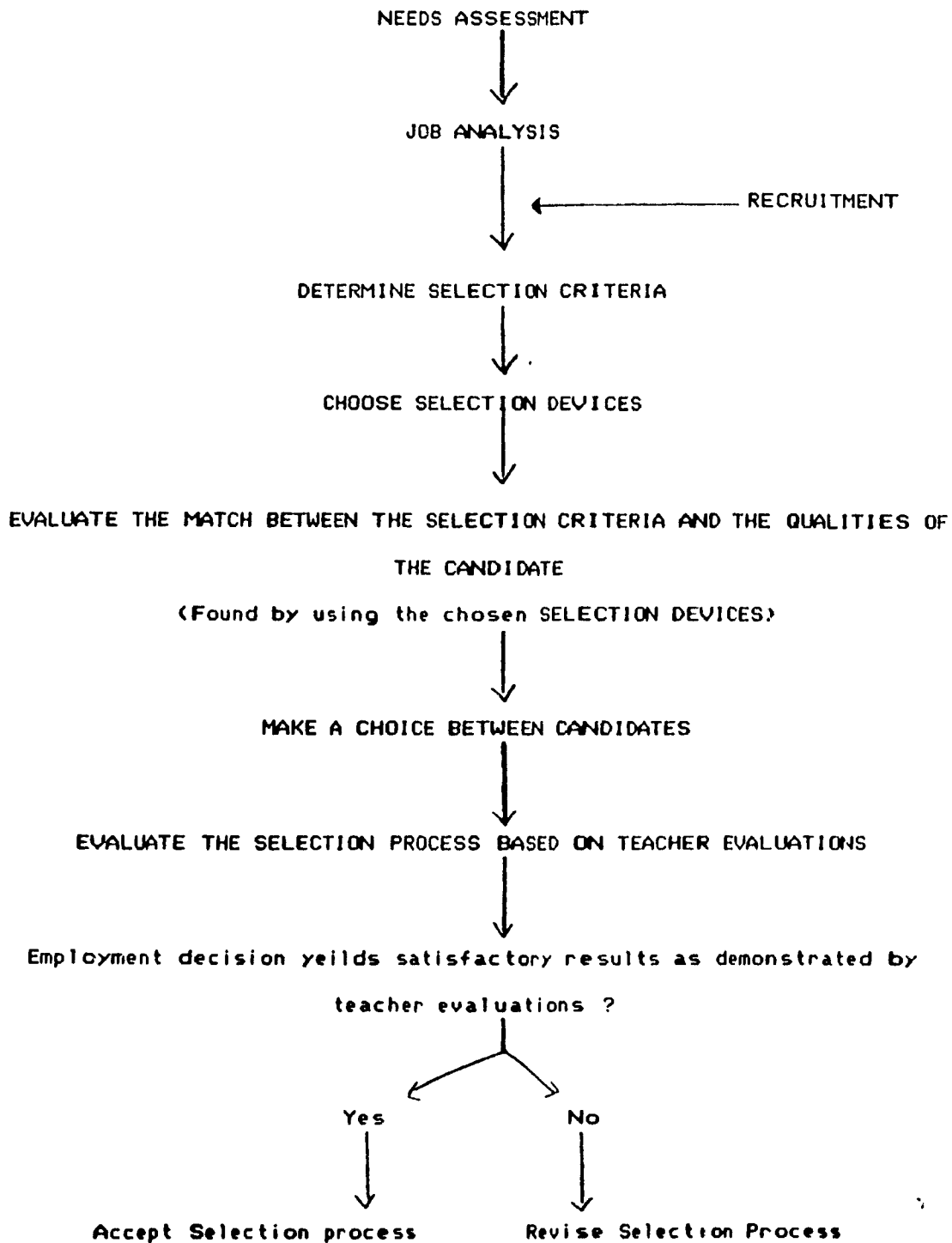
This step analyses the skills necessary for the job and enumerates the benefits received for the person holding the job. Wanous feels that this step is crucial to matching the candidate to the position.

Developing the selection criteria for job performance and establishing a valid and reliable procedure to measure these is the second step in the model. These criteria are intended to measure the candidates potential for job success.

The next step in the model calls for an assessment of the correlation between the requirements for job performance and the candidates performance during the selection process. A strong relationship between the two variables indicates the selection is accepted as being a valid indicator of job success. A small relationship between the two variable indicates the invalidity of the selection process, thus indicating that a new procedure must be established.

The selection model proposed by Wanous (1980) helps to match the candidate to the position. With a close match between the job requirements and the employee's abilities, the organization will be more effective and more efficient in reaching its goals.

Bolton's (9173) model for teacher selection can easily be adapted for principal selection (Figure 5).



**Figure 5. Bolton's Model for Teacher Selection**

**Source:** Adapted from D.L. Bolton (1973). Selection and evaluation of teachers. Berkeley, CA.: McCutchan Publishing Corporation.



The first step in Bolton's (1973) selection model is the determination of the number of teachers (or principals) needed in a district. This assessment must be examined yearly by re-evaluating the goals and resources of a district.

The second step in his model calls for the development of a job analysis for each position. A job analysis must be available for every position in order for those in charge of selection to make better hiring decisions. The job analysis will help identify those performance criteria particular to each position.

According to Bolton (1973), it is important to highlight the need for the selection criteria to be clearly stated in behavioral terms and be valid indicators of success on the job.

He includes recruiting as an integral activity of the selection process. He feels that this activity will yield a large qualified pool of applicants which can serve to improve the selection process.

The fourth step in Bolton's (1973) model calls for the use of selection devices which are capable of assessing the selection criteria established in the job analysis. The fifth step in this model is the evaluation of the match between the candidate's qualifications and the selection criteria. This step helps selectors judge, more objectively, the suitability of each candidate.

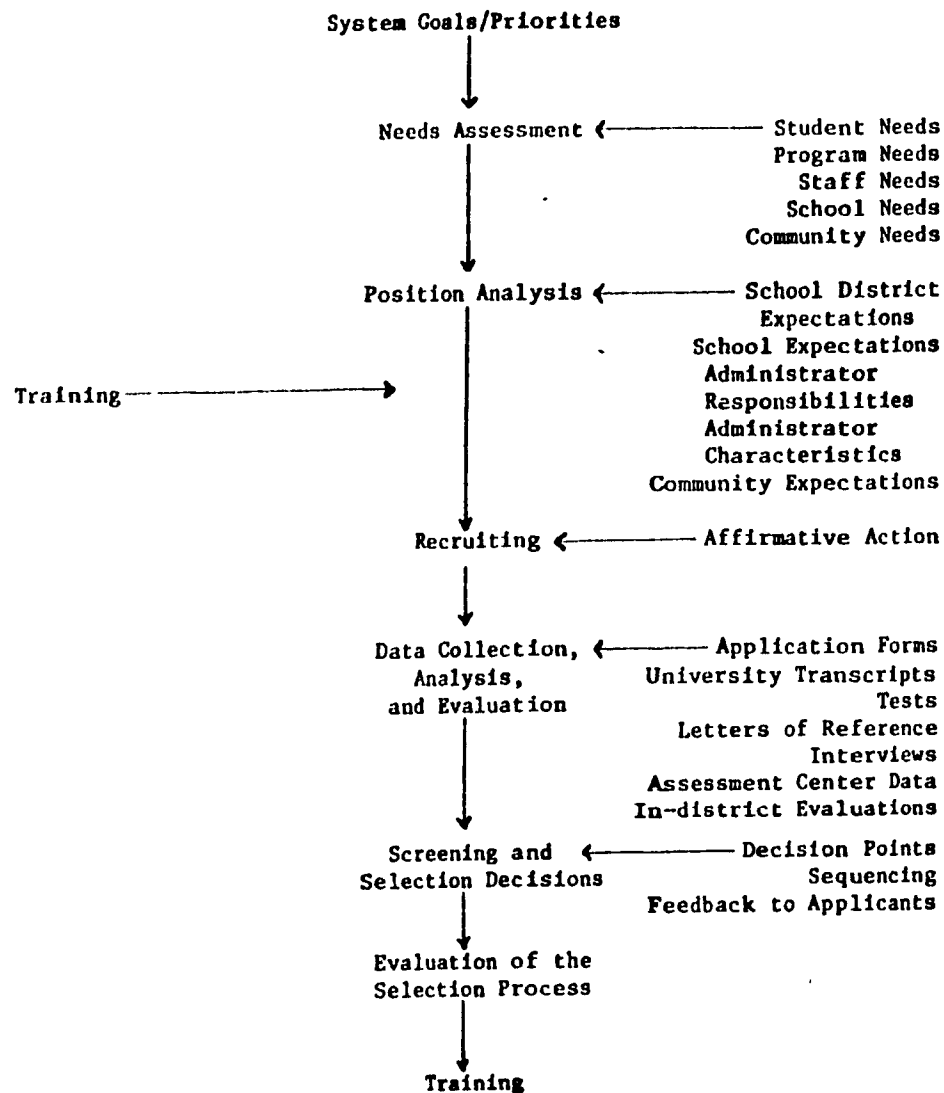
Making the employment decision is a sixth activity

described in Bolton's (1973) selection model. The decision made must reflect the needs and goals of the district, as well as the criteria considered essential for successful performance.

The final activity in the model is the evaluation of the entire process - from the needs assessment to the employment decision. Bolton concludes that a comprehensive evaluation of the selection process will help identify the ways and means of choosing the best candidate for the position. Every aspect of selection must be evaluated in terms of its positive contribution to the selection process. According to him, one way to validate the selection process is to evaluate the employee's performance. The performance criteria used to select employees must be the same ones used to evaluate teachers.

Finally, Bolton (1973) feels that if the evaluation process is inadequate, it may be impossible to know how effective the selection process was in choosing employees. Selection, evaluation and supervision must be viewed as a system in which each section is dependent on the success of the other.

Musella's (1983) model for selection begins with the identification of the school's long-term and short-term goals and priorities (Figure 6).



**Figure 6: A School Administrator Selection Model**

**Source:** Musella, D. (1983). Selecting school administrators. Toronto, Ont.: The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, p.24.

The second step of the model suggests the identification of needs. A needs assessment should be conducted to determine the needs of students, staff, programs, school and community.

This step will help identify the constraints impeding the achievement of school goals.

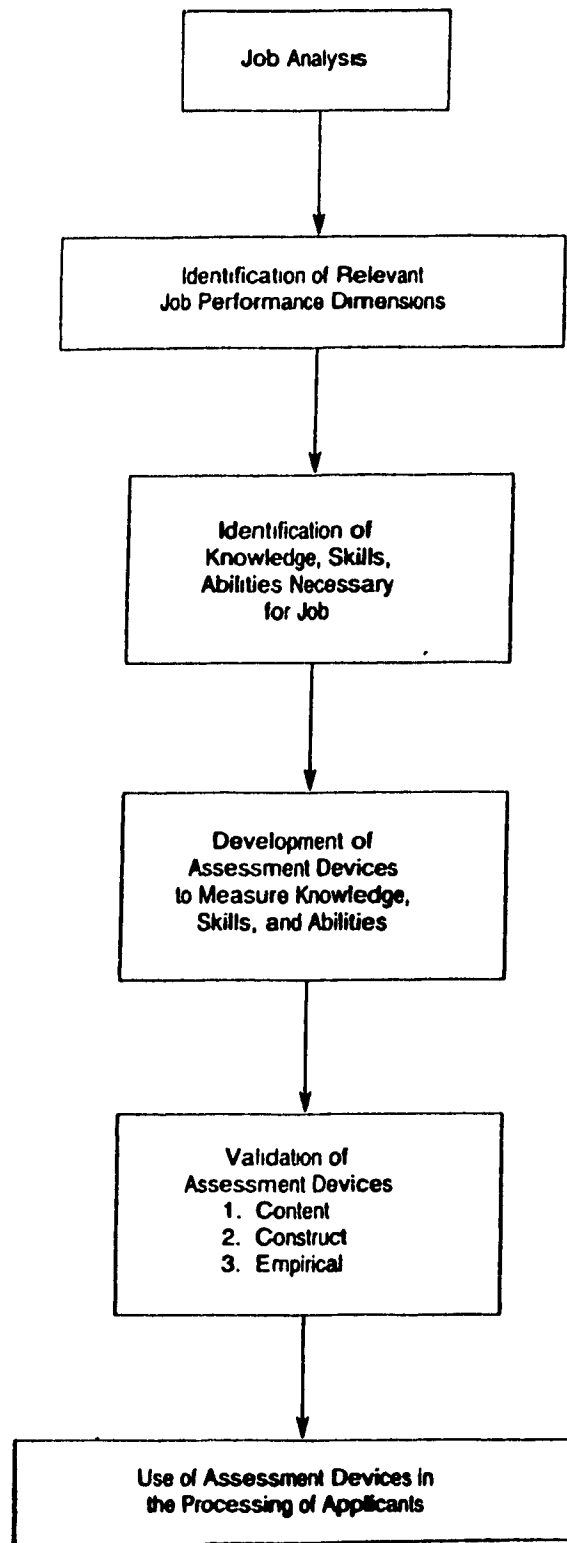
The position analysis is the third step in his model. This step requires a detailed examination of school and district expectations, goals and personal qualities required by the candidate.

The selection of performance criteria and valid measure to evaluate these is the next step in the model followed by his screening and employment decision.

He proposes recruitment and training as an integral step in the selection process. Training, for him, must be available for candidates aspiring to the principalship, for those candidates who have completed the selection process but who have been screened out, and for the selected principal.

Musella's (1983) systems-model for selection has evaluation as a pivotal step throughout the model. Each step is dependent on the previous one and will affect the succeeding steps.

Gatewood and Feild (1990) propose a six-step selection process as a way of helping organizations match the candidate's skills, knowledge and abilities to the requirements of the position (Figure 7).



**Figure 7. Steps in the Development of a Selection Program**

**Source:** Gatewood, R.D. and Feild, H.S. (1990). Human resource selection (2nd ed.). Chicago, IL.: The Dryden Press, p.17.

The first step in their selection process is the development of the job analysis. They describe the importance of this step when they indicate that

What is important here is the recognition that it is the job analysis process that is the foundation of the effectiveness of any human resource selection system. Where job analysis is incomplete, inaccurate, or simply not conducted, a selection system may be nothing more than a game of chance - a game that employer, employee and job applicant alike may lose (Gatewood and Feild, 1990, p.254).

According to Gatewood and Feild (1990), there are two purposes of developing the job analysis. Firstly, it provides a description of the duties, responsibilities and the working environment of the job. Secondly, it forms the basis for the subsequent steps in the selection process.

The second step in their developmental process for selection is the identification of those job characteristics that are associated with successful job performance. The third step involves the characteristics required by the employee to successfully perform the job characteristics. These employee characteristics include the knowledge, skills and abilities required for job success.

Once the job characteristics and the employee characteristics have been identified, the techniques used to assess the candidate's suitability to the position must be developed. The type of selection technique chosen must provide valid and reliable information on the suitability of

the candidate to perform the job successfully.

Once the five steps have been developed, then the organization can proceed with the assessment of each candidate. Gatewood and Feild (1990) recognize the importance of performance evaluations as an integral step in the selection process. They indicate that the selection process is measured by how well those who were selected perform on the job. Performance appraisals must therefore be part of a well designed selection process in order to identify and correct imbalances and inconsistencies.

It is recognized that this six-step developmental selection process is not a guarantee that the best candidate will be chosen. However, it is a way of isolating differences among candidates in order to make better employment decisions.

There are several common elements of these models that are supported in the literature. For example, Anderson (1989), the National School Board Association (NASB) (1982), and Webb, Greer, Montello and Norton (1987) indicate that it is essential to have a systematic selection process which is used to match the employee and the position in order to maximize productivity. These authors feel that there is tremendous loss of resources (money, time and personal effort) when the selection process is ineffective.

The American Association of School Administrators (1981), Anderson (1991), Barnabé (1981), Hornung (1986), Lund (1977) and NASB (1982) are in agreement that developing a selection

policy is an essential step in the selection process as a way of increasing the chances of identifying the best candidate for the position.

Albright and Nottingham (1989), Barnabé (1981), Lund (1977), NASB (1982), Rebore (1982) and Webb et al. (1987) agree that the job analysis, selection criteria and selection predictors are fundamental elements of the selection process.

The recommendation to use a variety of selection techniques has received support elsewhere in the literature (Batchelor, Bedenbaugh Leonard & Williams, 1990; Broussard, 1989; Castello, Fletcher, Rosetti & Sekowski, 1992; Hogan & Zenke, 1986, and Schmitt & Schechtman, 1990). The literature urges school boards to develop selection techniques that will measure selection criteria considered essential to succeed in the position. The challenge for school boards is therefore to identify criteria that can predict future job success and that can be measured using valid and reliable techniques.

Gips and Bredeson (1985), Meese (1981), and Van Clieaf & Romanella (1990) describe the important role of the selection committee in the selection process. These authors recommend that selection should be a shared responsibility.

Based on the review of literature, it becomes clear that there are several common elements considered essential to any selection process. These elements include written selection policies and procedures, a job analysis which is used as a basis for developing a job description, and the identification



and documentation of valid and reliable selection criteria and techniques. In addition, the delegation of responsibilities to a selection committee must be clearly described and a continuous evaluation of the selection process must be implemented. This systematic approach to selection is felt to be the best way of enhancing the validity and reliability of a selection process.

The discussion will not focus on the literature dealing with research studies on principal selection.

### **2.2.3 Review of Research Studies**

Newberry (1975) studied the practices and the criteria used in the selection of elementary school principals in British Columbia. He reported that 78.4% of the 37 school districts that formed the sample did not have written policies for the selection of elementary school principals. Seventy-five percent of the school districts in his sample did not have job descriptions for the elementary school principalship.

Newberry (1975) found that the job description outlined the minimum qualifications required for an elementary school principal. These included a Bachelor of Education Degree (elementary) or its equivalent, a British Columbia teaching certificate, as well as teaching and administrative experience. Although the job descriptions included a variety of administrative and instructional duties, they did not provide explicit criteria thought to be needed to successfully accomplish the required duties.

He found that 42.9% of the superintendents rated "instructional leadership" as the primary expectation of an elementary school principal. Superintendents rated educational-instructional duties as being 42.2% more important than administrative-manager duties.

The six most common personal criteria considered important by superintendents were mature judgement, scholarship, personal security, group skills, health and intelligence. Marital status, gender, and church membership were not considered important personal qualities for the position of principal.

The six most common professional criteria were human relations skills, classroom teaching experience, decision-making skills, community relations skills, administrative-technical skills and curriculum development skills.

Newberry's (1975) study found that the superintendent and school board members were the main interviewers of candidates. The superintendent made the final recommendation to the board and the school board made the final employment decision. Teachers and principals were rarely involved at any step in the selection process.

Based on the results of Newberry's (1975) study, the most common selection techniques were the interview, reference checks and past performance reviews.

Kelsey and Leullier (1978) studied the policies used for the identification, selection and training of school

principals in British Columbia. They found that 60% of the 70 school boards that responded to their questionnaire did not have policies or procedures for the identification, selection or training of principals. They found that only 25 (35.7%) of the 70 school districts had written policies or procedures for the selection of principals. Based on the 25 school districts that had written policies or procedures, only nine (12%) of the 70 school districts had criteria for selection.

In their study, Kelsey and Leullier (1978) found that academic training and teaching experience were the two most often cited criteria used in the selection process. These posted criteria were given much less importance by superintendents in Newberry's (1975) study.

Good health, administrative experience, recommendations from colleagues, involvement in service activities and general personal attributes were cited by only a few of the respondents in Kelsey and Leullier (1978) study as being important criteria for principal selection.

Their results indicate that the superintendent and school board members were the most active participants in the selection process. The superintendent screened applicants and made a short list. then she or he, and one or more members of the school board, conducted the interviews leading to a final decision.

They concluded that most districts ignore what has been suggested in the literature; that is, that a systematic

procedure is recommended for principal selection.

Deblois and Moisset (1981) studied the criteria used in the selection of elementary school principals in the Quebec City area. They found that 86% of the 28 school boards did not have written selection policies when selecting elementary school principals. In their study, Deblois and Moisset found that only 36% of the 28 school boards had written job descriptions for the elementary school principalship.

They found, as did Newberry (1975), that instructional leadership is considered to be the most important role expected of principals. The personnel role and the student-life role were considered to be the second and third most important role respectively.

Deblois and Moisset (1981) found, as did Newberry (1975), that mature judgement, personal security, group skills, scholarship, health and intelligence were the most important personal criteria for the selection of elementary school principal. Gender was not considered to be an important personal criteria. Human relation skills, decision-making skills, community relations skills, teaching experience, administrative-technical skills and academic training were the top six professional criteria cited by directors-general as being important for the elementary school principalship.

Finally, they concluded that although there was an absence of written selection criteria, directors-general had a clear vision of the roles and criteria needed to succeed as

an elementary school principal. These authors urged school boards to document these roles and criteria as a way of reducing the possibility of favouritism.

Girard (1983) studied the processes and criteria used in the selection of secondary school principals in the Quebec City region. Girard (1983) found that only one of the twelve school boards in his sample had a written selection policy.

The results of Girard's study indicated that the personal and professional criteria deemed important for the secondary school principal were very similar to those found by Newberry (1975), Deblois and Moisset (1981). As with the other studies, gender was not identified as a criterion for selection in Girard's (1983) study.

Oaks (1986) found that six of the seven school districts in Alberta that responded to her questionnaire had written job descriptions for school principals. Four of these school districts used general school board job descriptions, but did not develop position guides for particular placements.

She found that the criteria used most often included personal factors, experience, training, scholastic achievement, intelligence and health factors. Although age and gender were not indicated as selection criteria, Oaks noted that more males, in the 31 to 45 age bracket, were appointed to the principalship.

In her study, the selection techniques used most often were the interview, references and biodata. Field checks and

academic transcripts were sometimes used; while ability tests and physical examinations were not used in selection.

Baltzell and Dentler (1983) studied the process used to select principals in ten randomly chosen school districts in the United States. They found that teaching and administrative experience, including certification, were perceived to be essential selection criteria. These researchers found that once these basic selection criteria were met, candidates were compared on the basis of their "fitness" to the community's values and culture. The "fitness" was expressed in terms of physical presence and social manner rather than on merit. They were critical of the selection process that was more a function of a buddy system and patronage than on a systematic selection mechanism.

They reported that principals often did not know why they were chosen for the principalship, nor did they have a clear idea of the expectations required of them. According to these authors, the lack of information can lead to misunderstandings with regard to the role of the principal. Baltzell and Dentler suggest that the trust in the principal, and in the district itself, can be enhanced if the selection process appears to be clear, fair and accessible to all qualified candidates. The opposite can create mistrust throughout the system. These researchers recommend that districts be clear on how they select principals and ensure that the selection criteria reflect the defined responsibilities of the

principalship.

In their study, Baltzell and Dentler (1983) found that the interview, letters of application and curriculum vitae were the most common techniques used in selection. They found that the superintendent, deputy-superintendent and senior personnel staff controlled every aspect of selection. They discovered that parents and teachers had minimal involvement in selection.

Park (1989) found that, in the seven school boards in Ontario that formed his sample, many of the posted criteria were not the same criteria used by superintendents or principals when selecting a principal. This lack of consistency between posted criteria and criteria used by superintendents was also noted by Delsey and Leullier (1978).

Park (1989) identified several criteria that were found to have high discriminatory value in selection. These criteria included decision making skills, leadership and management skills, commitment and involvement and strength of personality. He reported that superintendents and principals felt that it was essential for candidates to perceive that the selection process be fair and equitable in order to avoid discrimination. A systematic selection process, according to Park, can provide control over the quality of the staff hired, ensure credibility of the process and provide the selectors with a means of justifying the choice of candidate. Similar recommendations were made by Baltzell and Dentler (1983).

In summary, a review of research studies indicates that few school boards have a systematic selection process designed to appoint school principals. These studies express criticism of the apparent lack of written selection policies and procedures for it is felt that without these, selection is subject to politics and favouritism.

These studies also express disapproval of the lack of written job descriptions which identify the roles and expectations for the principalship. Many of the criteria used in selection, according to these researchers, have been criticized for being unreliable and invalid measures of future job success. In addition, many of these studies show that superintendents or directors-general have criteria that are considered important for the principalship; however, these criteria are not documented. Without a clear view of the roles and expectations, the assessment of candidates becomes a subjective evaluation.

Research indicates that the interview, the application form, the curriculum vitae and reference letters are the most common selection techniques used in principal selection. According to these researchers, many of the techniques are invalid and unreliable.

The research has shown that the final selection decision is primarily in the hands of the director-general or the school commissioners. These studies are critical of this lack of participation on the part of those who will be most



affected by the employment decision.

In general however, it seems that the selection process for school principals falls short of the selection models recommended in the literature. It would therefore appear that school boards have failed to recognize the benefits of a systematic selection process.

### 2.3 Summary

In summary, based on the review of literature, it becomes clear that one important facet of principal selection is the identification of the role of the principal. Based on the literature review, successful principals are both education leaders and administrators. These principals have good communication and human relations skills, and have a vision for their school based on the needs of the students.

The literature recommends that school boards develop systematic ways of identifying principals who have the qualities to be successful. Such a process begins with a needs assessment to determine the employee requirements. Following this, a job analysis must be developed for each vacant position. Based on the job analysis, a job description must be prepared for the position. The job description must describe the expected roles of the principalship in terms of measurable objectives.

Based on the job description, valid and reliable selection criteria and techniques must be developed. The

employment decision must be determined by evaluating the match between the requirements of the position and the needs, skills, knowledge and abilities of the candidates. The literature recommends that the evaluation of candidates be a shared responsibility. Inherent in the recommended selection models is the recognition that internal and external factors affect the employment decision. Finally, the evaluation of the selection process must be considered as an integral step in the selection process.

In summary, based on the review of research studies, it is clear that few school boards have a systematic selection process aimed at selecting school principals. These studies indicate that the procedures and practices used in selection do not adhere to selection principles advocated in the literature. The studies reviewed indicate that the majority of school boards do not have written selection policies or procedures. In addition, few school boards have written job descriptions of the positions. Examples of school boards that had written selection criteria and techniques were also found to be scarce.

There appears to be a gap between the ideal and the actual practice of school administrator selection. Therefore, there is a need to standardize the selection process to avoid unfair hiring practices.

Chapter Three will describe the methodology used in this study.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

The purpose of this research study was to examine the process used to select elementary school principals in Québec. This chapter presents a description of the target population, the instrument used and the procedures utilised to complete the study. The characteristics of the respondents and the school boards they represent are also presented in this chapter.

#### **3.2 Target Population**

The target population consisted of the directors-general of their assistants of the 173 school boards in Québec which were responsible for appointing elementary school principals.

The source of the target population was the *Annuaire des Commissions Scolaires 1990-1991* (Gouvernement du Québec, 1990). The Canadian Education Association (CEA) Handbook (Canadian Education Association, 1992) provided further details on the target population.

#### **3.3 Data Instrument**

The data instrument was designed to obtain information which would address the research questions. The questionnaire was an adaptation of Newberry (1975), Defrahn (1974) and

Deblois and Moisset's (1981) survey questionnaires. Portions of these questionnaires were adapted to meet the needs of the study and to more closely reflect the characteristics of the target population.

Although the validity and reliability of these instruments were conducted by the originators of the questionnaires, the final instrument used in this study was not tested for validity or reliability.

The final questionnaire format and the accompanying letter, in both official languages, are presented in Appendices A and C.

#### **3.4 Data Collection Procedure**

The data instrument and the covering letter were translated into French. Copies of the questionnaires and covering letters were professionally reproduced. In April 1992, one hundred and seventy-three envelopes each containing a personalized covering letter, a copy of the questionnaire as well as a stamped self-addressed return envelope were mailed to the directors-general who formed the target population. The covering letter requested that the respondents return the completed questionnaire by May 4, 1992. Although the covering letter was addressed to the director-general of each school board, the letter clearly stated that the director's-general assistant could complete the questionnaire. It was felt that the inclusion of other staff members as respondents might

increase the number of returns. The covering letter also indicated that the responses would be kept confidential. Copies of the follow-up letters, in both official languages, are presented in Appendix B.

Eighty-six questionnaires were returned from the first mailing. A follow-up letter was sent in May to the participants who had not returned the questionnaire. Eight additional questionnaires were returned following the second letter. The total number of questionnaires returned was 94; this represents a rate of return of 54.3%.

### **3.5 Treatment and Presentation of the Data**

In July 1992 the computer program Statpac (Walonick, 1986) was used to prepare the codebook which was subsequently used for data entry. The main technique used for analysis was the compilation of the completed responses to the questionnaire. Frequency distributions and percentages of responses for each question were determined. Analysis of variance was used to determine if there were statistical differences between the means obtained by the respondents on certain aspects of the questionnaire and demographic information.

The data were analyzed and presented in the form of tables and narrative in order to address the research questions.

### 3.6 Characteristics of the Respondents and the School Boards they Represent

#### 3.6.1 Characteristics of the Respondents

Table 1 presents the distribution of positions held by the respondents.

Table 1

#### Distribution of Respondents by Position Held

| Title of Position           | N  | %      |
|-----------------------------|----|--------|
| Director General            | 63 | 67.0%  |
| Director of Human Resources | 15 | 16.0%  |
| Assistant Director General  | 6  | 6.3%   |
| Personnel Officer           | 1  | 1.1%   |
| Other                       | 9  | 9.6%   |
| Total                       | 94 | 100.0% |

The majority (67.0%) of the respondents were directors-general while 16.0% of the respondents held the position of director of human resources. In the category of "others" which made up 9.6% of respondents, there were three directors of educational services, a staff assistant, two counsellors to the personnel function, two coordinators for human resources, and one participant who held the combined position of assistant director-general and director of human resources.

The average number of years held by all respondents in their present position was ten years (Table 2).

Table 2

Distribution of Respondents by Average Number of Years in Position

| Title                                    | Years |
|--|-------|
| Average for all respondents              | 10.1  |
| Average for directors-general            | 10.2  |
| Average for directors of human resources | 13.5  |

The most recent degree held by 64.9% of respondents was a Master's Degree in either Arts, Educational Administration or Science (Table 3). This percentage includes respondents holding a "Licence". The reason for the inclusion of this degree with the Master's Degree was due to the fact that in the late sixties and early seventies in Québec's French sector, degrees were awarded as B.A. or "Licence". The term "licence" was the equivalent to the present M.A. or M.Ed. degrees. It is recommended that if this study were repeated in the future, then a separate category be identified as "Licence" on the questionnaire.

**Table 3**

**Distribution of Respondents by Most Recent Degree Obtained**

| Degree                        | Number | Percent |
|-------------------------------|--------|---------|
| Bachelor's Degree             | 31     | 33.0%   |
| Master's Degree or equivalent | 61     | 64.9%   |
| Certificates                  | 2      | 2.1%    |
| Total                         | 94     | 100.0%  |

Table 4 illustrates that 81.8% and 69.8% of respondents completed courses in School Administration and School Personnel respectively.

**Table 4**

**Distribution of Respondents Who Completed Courses in School Administration and School Personnel**

|  | N  | %     |
|--|----|-------|
| Courses completed in School Administration | 72 | 81.8% |
| Courses completed in School Personnel      | 60 | 69.8% |

**3.6.2 Characteristics of the School Boards**

Table 5 presents the distribution of school boards by



administrative regions.

Table 5

Distribution of School Boards by Administrative Region

| Region | N  | %      |
|--------|----|--------|
| 16     | 21 | 22.3%  |
| 12     | 9  | 9.6%   |
| 04     | 8  | 8.5%   |
| 01     | 7  | 7.3%   |
| 03     | 6  | 6.4%   |
| 02     | 6  | 6.4%   |
| 06     | 6  | 6.4%   |
| 05     | 5  | 5.3%   |
| 08     | 5  | 5.3%   |
| 07     | 4  | 4.3%   |
| 11     | 4  | 4.3%   |
| 14     | 3  | 3.2%   |
| 15     | 3  | 3.2%   |
| 13     | 3  | 3.2%   |
| 09     | 3  | 3.2%   |
| 10     | 1  | 1.1%   |
| Total  | 94 | 100.0% |

All of the administrative regions in Québec were represented in the study, with a large percentage of respondents (22.3%) from Administrative Region 16, known as the Monteregie Region. The reorganization of the school boards, which was put into effect soon after the data for this study were collected, did not substantially alter the distribution of administrative regions represented in this study.

Table 6 presents the total distribution of questionnaires sent and returned based on language.

Table 6

Number of Questionnaires distributed and Returned by Language of Questionnaire

| Language | Distributed |        | Returned |       |
|----------|-------------|--------|----------|-------|
|          | N           | %      | N        | %     |
| French   | 160         | 92.5%  | 82       | 51.3% |
| English  | 13          | 7.5%   | 12       | 92.3% |
| Total    | 173         | 100.0% | 94       | 54.3% |

The criterion used to determine whether to send a French or English copy of the questionnaire was the language used to list the school board in the 1992 CEA Handbook. From this

list, it was determined that 160 school boards (92.5%) of the target population would receive a French copy of the questionnaire. Thirteen school boards (7.5%) of the target population would receive an English copy of the questionnaire.

Of the 160 French questionnaires sent, 82 (51.3%) were returned. Twelve (92.3%) of the 13 English questionnaires sent were returned.

Table 7 presents the distribution of school boards by setting.

Table 7

Distribution of School Boards by Setting

| Setting of School Board   | N  | %      |
|---------------------------|----|--------|
| Rural                     | 41 | 43.6%  |
| Urban                     | 31 | 33.0%  |
| Combination - rural/urban | 22 | 23.4%  |
| Total                     | 94 | 100.0% |

As is shown in Table 7, the largest group of respondents (43.6%) represented rural areas.

From Table 8, it can be seen that the majority (62.8%) of the school boards had student populations of between 1001 and 5000 students.

**Table 8**

**Distribution of School Boards by Student Population**

| Student Population | N  | %      |
|--------------------|----|--------|
| Up to 1000         | 6  | 6.3%   |
| 1001 to 5000       | 59 | 62.8%  |
| 5000 to 10000      | 20 | 21.3%  |
| Over 10000         | 9  | 9.6%   |
| Total              | 94 | 100.0% |

As shown in Table 9, 86.2% of the responding school boards were Catholic.

**Table 9**

**Distribution of School Boards by Confessional Status**

| Religious Status | N  | %      |
|------------------|----|--------|
| Catholic         | 81 | 86.2%  |
| Protestant       | 12 | 12.8%  |
| Ecumenical       | 1  | 1.1%   |
| Total            | 94 | 100.0% |

From Table 10, it can be noted that the majority (70.3%)

of respondents represented school boards that used French as the language of instruction.

Table 10

Distribution of School Boards by Language of Instruction

| Language of Instruction | N  | %      |
|-------------------------|----|--------|
| French                  | 66 | 70.3%  |
| English and French      | 21 | 22.3%  |
| English                 | 7  | 7.4%   |
| Total                   | 94 | 100.0% |

The number of elementary schools in each school board ranged from a low of one school to a high of forty-nine schools. The number of principals in the school boards ranged from one to forty-six principals. The majority of school boards (87.1%) of the respondents indicated that principals in their school board did not have regular teaching assignments as part of their duties.

### 3.7 Summary

Directors-general, or their assistants, were asked to complete a survey questionnaire designed to identify the process used to select elementary school principals in Québec. Of the 173 school boards that formed the population, 94

questionnaires were returned; this represents a rate of return of 54.3%.

The majority of the respondents (67.7%) in this study held the position of director-general, while the position as director of human resources was held by 15.1% of the respondents. The average number of years held by directors-general was ten years, while the directors of human resources held their positions for an average of 13 1/2 years. Sixty-four and a half percent of the respondents held Master's degrees, while a third of the respondents had Bachelor's degrees. Over 80% of respondents indicated that they had completed courses in school administration, and more than two-thirds of the respondents had completed courses in school personnel.

All administrative regions were represented in this study, with a larger percent being represented from Region 16 or Monteregeie Region. There was a slightly larger representation of school boards from rural areas. More than half of the school boards had student populations between 1001 and 5000, and represented French Catholic school boards. The number of schools in each school board represented in this study varied from one to forty-nine. There was also a large range in the number of principals in each school board; the range span from a low of one to a high of forty-eight principals. Most elementary principals in schools represented in this study did not have regular classroom teaching

assignments.

Chapter Four presents the results obtained from the analysis of the data.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### ANALYSIS OF DATA

#### 4.1 Introduction

The objective of this chapter is to present the results of research on principal selection. The problem statement, as presented in Chapter One, provides the framework for organizing the results. This study is descriptive in nature and attempts to address the problem of how elementary school principals are selected in Québec.

#### 4.2 Expectations of the Elementary School Principal

As a way of understanding the criteria considered essential for the elementary principalship, respondents were asked to list the three most important expectations of an elementary school principal. Table 11 presents the most common expectations of elementary school principals as expressed by respondents.

Fifty percent of respondents indicated that "educational or pedagogical leadership" was one of the most important expectations of the elementary school principal. The second and third most common expectation was "management and administrative skills" (43.3%) and "supervision of pedagogy" (31.1%).

As a way of further exploring the expectations of elementary school principals, respondents were asked to rank



a series of functions considered part of an elementary school principal's responsibilities. The results of the ranking can be seen in Table 12.

A large majority of the respondents (94.4%) ranked the "instructional leadership and pedagogical methods" function as the most important expectation of an elementary school principal. "Personnel administration" was considered the second most important expectation by 45.6% of the respondents. Only 1.1% of respondents ranked "budget-finances" as an important expectation.

When the overall ranking of expectations was compared to rankings based on the setting of the school board, the size of the student population, the confessional status of the school board and the language of instruction used in the school board, few differences were observed.

Respondents were asked to indicate the percent of time they felt elementary school principals ideally must spend on various functions. "Supervision" was assigned the largest percent of time, followed by "administrative duties".

Table 11

Free Responses for the Most Important Expectations Held by  
Respondents for an Elementary School Principal

| Expectation  | N  | %     |
|--|----|-------|
| Educational Leadership/Pedagogical Leadership            | 45 | 50.0% |
| Management and Administrative Skills                     | 39 | 43.3% |
| Supervision of Pedagogy                                  | 28 | 31.1% |
| Communication Skills                                     | 20 | 22.2% |
| Management of School Personnel/Human Resource Management | 19 | 21.1% |
| Leadership Skills  | 16 | 17.8% |
| Motivation   | 14 | 15.6% |
| Development of the Educational Project                   | 10 | 11.1% |
| Team Building/Participative Management                   | 9  | 10.0% |
| Attentive to Students' Needs                             | 8  | 8.9%  |
| Community Relations                                      | 8  | 8.9%  |
| Innovator  | 5  | 5.6%  |
| Be Visible/Accessible                                    | 4  | 4.4%  |
| Develop a Good Working Climate                           | 3  | 3.3%  |
| Mature Judgement   | 3  | 3.3%  |
| Change Agent   | 3  | 3.3%  |

Table 12

Expectations Expressed in Terms of Importance of an Elementary School Principal under Respondent's Supervision

| Expectation                                    | N  | %     |
|--|----|-------|
| Instructional leadership/<br>Ped. methods      | 88 | 94.4% |
| Personnel Administration                       | 42 | 45.6% |
| Community Relations                            | 29 | 31.5% |
| Student Life                                   | 19 | 20.7% |
| Management of School and<br>Material Resources | 5  | 5.5%  |
| Budget-Finances                                | 1  | 1.1%  |

#### 4.3 The Importance Given to Sources of Recruitment

The importance given by respondents to various sources of recruitment is outlined in Table 13. Numeric values were given to the responses: Very Important (VI) - 5, Important (IMP) - 4, Acceptable (ACC) - 3, Questionable (QUE) - 2, Unreliable (UN) - 1. The mean values appear, in descending order, next to the source of recruitment.

Table 13

The Importance Given to Sources of Recruitment by Respondents  
when Recruiting an Elementary School Principal

| Mean Score | Source   |
|------------|--|
| 4.79       | Announcement within the School Board                     |
| 3.46       | Newspaper Announcement                                   |
| 3.26       | In-service Programs                                      |
| 3.19       | Standard Application Procedures                          |
| 3.11       | Announcement within Other School Boards                  |
| 3.01       | Recommendations by Administrators of Other School Boards |
| 2.93       | Contacts at Professional Meetings                        |
| 2.84       | Suggestions by Central Office Staff                      |
| 2.83       | Eligibility Lists  |
| 2.58       | Recommendations by University Professors                 |
| 2.17       | University Placement Offices                             |
| 2.08       | Private Placement Offices                                |

Respondents perceived "announcements within the school board" as the most important source of recruitment; this source received the highest mean score (4.79). "Newspaper advertisements" were considered to be the second most important source of recruitment. "Private placement offices" were considered the least important source of recruitment and received the lower mean score (2.08).

#### **4.4 The Importance Given to Selection Criteria**

The questionnaire requested that respondents rate the importance of eleven personal and fifteen professional criteria. Numeric values were given to the responses: Very Important (VI) - 5, Important (IMP) - 4, Acceptable (ACC) - 3, Questionable (QUE) - 2, Unreliable (UN) - 1.

A description of each criterion was provided in the questionnaire in order to avoid varying interpretations of each criterion.

The classification of personal and professional criteria used in this study are similar to those developed and used by Newberry (1975). Deblois and Moisset (1981) used the similar classification.

##### **4.4.1 Personal Selection Criteria**

Table 14 presents the mean scores for the importance given to the eleven personal satisfaction criteria.

"Personal security", "group skills", "mature judgement" were judged to be the most important personal criteria. These criteria received mean scores of 4.81, 4.74 and 4.69 respectively. "Church membership", "marital status" and "gender" were considered the least important personal criteria and received the lowest mean scores of 1.96, 1.64 and 1.55 respectively.

Table 14

Mean Scores of Importance of Personal Selection Criteria  
Expressed by Respondents

---

| Mean Score | Criterion         |
|------------|-------------------|
| 4.81       | Personal Security |
| 4.74       | Group Skills      |
| 4.69       | Mature Judgement  |
| 4.29       | Good Health       |
| 4.08       | Scholarship       |
| 3.91       | Intelligence      |
| 3.38       | Dress             |
| 2.64       | Age               |
| 1.96       | Church Membership |
| 1.64       | Marital Status    |
| 1.55       | Gender            |

---

**4.4.2 Professional Selection Criteria**

Respondents were asked to rate criteria related to the candidate's professional training, development and experience. Table 15 presents the mean scores for the fifteen professional selection criteria. The top six professional criteria, in rank order, were "decision-making skills", "human relations skills", "communication skills", "change-strategy skills", "community-relations skills" and "administrative-technical

skills". The rating made by "director's-general" and "employee of the school board" were considered the least important professional criteria.

Based on the evaluation of all the mean scores for the selection criteria based on the setting, size of student population, confessional status and language of instruction of the school board, further statistical analysis, in the form of analysis of variance, was seen to be warranted.

Table 15

Mean Scores of Importance of Professional Selection Criteria  
as Expressed by Respondents

| Mean Score | Criterion                       |
|------------|---------------------------------|
| 4.75       | Decision-Making Skills          |
| 4.74       | Human Relations Skills          |
| 4.51       | Communication Skills            |
| 4.45       | Change-Strategy Skills          |
| 4.39       | Administrative/Technical Skills |
| 4.25       | Curriculum Development Skills   |
| 4.17       | Work with Children              |
| 4.15       | Research Skills                 |
| 4.00       | Classroom Teaching Experience   |
| 3.98       | University Degree               |
| 3.90       | Academic Courses                |
| 3.89       | Administrative Experience       |
| 2.81       | Director's-general Rating       |
| 2.80       | Employee of the School Board    |

Tables 16 through 24 present the results of analysis of variance in cases where a significant relationship was observed.

From Table 16 it can be seen that school boards with more than 10000 students consider church membership to be



significantly less important than school boards with less than 1000 students and school boards with between 1001 and 5000 students.

Table 16

Analysis of Variance for Church Membership by Student Population

| Size of Student Population |     |     |             |     |     |              |     |     |         |     |     |
|----------------------------|-----|-----|-------------|-----|-----|--------------|-----|-----|---------|-----|-----|
| < 1000                     |     |     | 1001 - 5000 |     |     | 5001 - 10000 |     |     | > 10000 |     |     |
| N                          | M   | SD  | N           | M   | SD  | N            | M   | SD  | N       | M   | SD  |
| 5                          | 2.4 | 1.1 | 57          | 2.1 | 1.0 | 17           | 1.8 | .72 | 9       | 1.0 | .00 |
|                            |     |     | P < .05     |     |     |              |     |     |         |     |     |
|                            |     |     | P > .01     |     |     |              |     |     |         |     |     |

Table 17 illustrates that school boards with student populations between 1001 and 5000 students consider personal security to be significantly more important than school boards with over 10000 students.

As can be seen from Table 18, school boards with between 1001 and 5000 students consider community relations skills significantly more important than school boards with more than 10000 students.

Table 17

Analysis of Variance for Personal Security by Student Population

| Size of Student Population  |     |     |             |     |     |              |     |     |         |     |     |
|---|-----|-----|-------------|-----|-----|--------------|-----|-----|---------|-----|-----|
| < 1000  |     |     | 1001 - 5000 |     |     | 5001 - 10000 |     |     | > 10000 |     |     |
| N   | M   | SD  | N           | M   | SD  | N            | M   | SD  | N       | M   | SD  |
| 5   | 4.8 | .44 | 59          | 4.8 | .32 | 19           | 4.7 | .45 | 9       | 4.4 | .52 |
| <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <div style="text-align: center;">↑</div> <div style="text-align: center;">P &lt; .05</div> <div style="text-align: center;">↑</div> </div> |     |     |             |     |     |              |     |     |         |     |     |

Table 18

Analysis of Variance for Community Relations Skills by Student Population

| Size of Student Population  |     |     |             |     |     |              |     |     |         |     |     |
|---|-----|-----|-------------|-----|-----|--------------|-----|-----|---------|-----|-----|
| < 1000  |     |     | 1001 - 5000 |     |     | 5001 - 10000 |     |     | > 10000 |     |     |
| N   | M   | SD  | N           | M   | SD  | N            | M   | SD  | N       | M   | SD  |
| 5   | 4.8 | .44 | 59          | 4.8 | .32 | 19           | 4.7 | .45 | 9       | 4.4 | .52 |
| <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <div style="text-align: center;">↑</div> <div style="text-align: center;">P &lt; .05</div> <div style="text-align: center;">↑</div> </div> |     |     |             |     |     |              |     |     |         |     |     |

The results shown in Table 19 indicate that school boards

with populations between 1001 and 5000 and between 5001 and 10000 consider decision making skills to be significantly more important than school boards with over 10000 students.

Table 19

Analysis of Variance for Decision Making Skills by Student Population

| Size of Student Population |     |     |             |     |     |              |     |     |         |     |     |
|----------------------------|-----|-----|-------------|-----|-----|--------------|-----|-----|---------|-----|-----|
| < 1000                     |     |     | 1001 - 5000 |     |     | 5001 - 10000 |     |     | > 10000 |     |     |
| N                          | M   | SD  | N           | M   | SD  | N            | M   | SD  | N       | M   | SD  |
| 5                          | 4.8 | .44 | 59          | 4.8 | .39 | 19           | 4.7 | .45 | 9       | 4.3 | .50 |
|                            |     |     |             |     |     | P < .01      |     |     |         |     |     |
|                            |     |     |             |     |     | P > .05      |     |     |         |     |     |

In general, school boards with more than 10000 students place significantly less importance on church membership, personal security and decision making skills as compared to school boards with smaller student populations.

From Table 20, it can be seen that school boards that use English, as the language of instruction, place significantly more importance on community relations than do school boards that use French, or French and English.

Table 20

Analysis of Variance for Community Relations by Language of Instruction Used in the School Board

| Language of Instruction |     |     |                    |     |     |        |     |     |
|-------------------------|-----|-----|--------------------|-----|-----|--------|-----|-----|
| English                 |     |     | English and French |     |     | French |     |     |
| N                       | M   | SD  | N                  | M   | SD  | N      | M   | SD  |
| 7                       | 5.0 | .00 | 20                 | 4.4 | .59 | 65     | 4.4 | .58 |
|                         |     |     | $P < .0$           |     |     |        |     |     |
|                         |     |     | $P > .05$          |     |     |        |     |     |

Similarly, school boards that use English as the language of instruction place more importance on curriculum development skills than do school boards using French or French and English as the language of instruction (see Table 21).

In general, English school boards consider curriculum development skills and community relations skills to be significantly more important than do school boards that use French, or French and English, as the languages of instruction.

Catholic and Protestant school boards differ significantly in their perceptions of the importance of four selection criteria. Table 22 shows that Catholic school boards consider scholarship to be significantly more important as a selection

Table 21

Analysis of Variance for Curriculum Development Skills by  
Language of Instruction Used in the School Board

| Language of Instruction |     |     |                    |     |      |        |     |     |
|-------------------------|-----|-----|--------------------|-----|------|--------|-----|-----|
| English                 |     |     | English and French |     |      | French |     |     |
| N                       | M   | SD  | N                  | M   | SD   | N      | M   | SD  |
| 7                       | 4.8 | .37 | 20                 | 4.0 | .649 | 65     | 4.3 | .75 |
|                         |     |     | $P < .05$          |     |      |        |     |     |
|                         |     |     | $P > .05$          |     |      |        |     |     |

criterion than do Protestant school boards.

Protestant school boards consider classroom teaching experience and being an employee of the school board to be significantly more important selection criteria than do Catholic school boards (Table 23 and Table 24, respectively).

Table 22

Analysis of Variance for Scholarship by Confessional Status of the School Board

| Confessional Status |     |     |            |     |     |
|---------------------|-----|-----|------------|-----|-----|
| Catholic            |     |     | Protestant |     |     |
| N                   | M   | SD  | N          | M   | SD  |
| 78                  | 4.1 | .63 | 12         | 3.6 | .88 |
| ↑                   |     |     | ↑          |     |     |
| P < .05             |     |     |            |     |     |

Table 23

Analysis of Variance for Classroom Teaching Experience by Confessional Status of the School Board

| Confessional Status |     |     |            |    |     |     |
|---------------------|-----|-----|------------|----|-----|-----|
| Catholic            |     |     | Protestant |    |     |     |
| N                   | M   | SD  |            | N  | M   | SD  |
| 77                  | 3.9 | .87 |            | 12 | 4.5 | .67 |
| ↑                   |     |     | P < .05    | ↑  |     |     |

Table 24

Analysis of Variance for Employee of the School Board by  
Confessional Status of the School Board

| Confessional Status   |     |     |            |     |     |  |
|---|-----|-----|------------|-----|-----|--|
| Catholic  |     |     | Protestant |     |     |  |
| N   | M   | SD  | N          | M   | SD  |  |
| 78  | 2.6 | 1.1 | 12         | 3.6 | 1.1 |  |
| <div style="display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center;"> <div style="text-align: center; margin-right: 100px;">↑</div> <div style="text-align: center; margin-right: 100px;">P &lt; .05</div> <div style="text-align: center; margin-left: 100px;">↑</div> </div> |     |     |            |     |     |  |

It can be noted in Table 25 that Catholic school boards consider research skills as statistically more important as a selection criterion than do Protestant school boards.

In general, Catholic school boards consider research skills and scholarship to be more important as selection criteria than do Protestant school boards.

Table 25

Analysis of Variance for Research Skills by Confessional  
Status of the School Board

| Confessional Status   |     |     |            |     |     |
|---|-----|-----|------------|-----|-----|
| Catholic  |     |     | Protestant |     |     |
| N   | M   | SD  | N          | M   | SD  |
| 79  | 4.2 | .76 | 12         | 3.6 | .65 |
| <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <div style="text-align: center;">↑</div> <div style="text-align: center;">P &lt; .05</div> <div style="text-align: center;">↑</div> </div> |     |     |            |     |     |

Respondents were asked to indicate additional qualifications that were considered when appointing a candidate to the principalship at an elementary level. The results, shown in Table 26, indicated that 96.8% of respondents viewed a "possession of Québec teacher's licence" as a requirement for the principalship.

A large percent of respondents (94.5%), considered "length of teaching experience" when appointing an elementary school principal. These results are not surprising in view of the fact that appropriate experience and a teaching licence are required by the Ministère de l'Éducation (1989) as basic employment.



Table 26

Other Qualifications Required for the Elementary School  
Principalship as Expressed by Respondents

| Qualifications                        | N  | %     |
|---------------------------------------|----|-------|
| Quebec Teaching Licence               | 90 | 96.8% |
| Length of Teaching Experience         | 88 | 94.6% |
| Length of Administrative Experience   | 65 | 69.9% |
| Member of a Professional Organization | 4  | 4.3%  |
| Other Qualifications                  | 4  | 4.3%  |

standards. "Other" qualifications reported included the following:

- Experience adapting to new situations
- Bilingual skills
- Post graduate degree in administration or involvement in the Principals Professional Certificate Training Programme and completed the board's Leadership Training Programme.

#### 4.5 The Importance Given to Selection Techniques

Respondents were asked to indicate the importance given to a variety of selection techniques. Numeric values were given to the responses: Very Important (VI) - 5, Important

(IMP) - 4, Acceptable (ACC) - 3, Questionable (QUE) - 2, Unreliable (UN) - 1. The respondents' perceptions of the importance of various selection techniques are presented in Table 27. The mean values appear in descending order next to each technique.

It should be noted that the results obtained regarding the perception of the importance of the interview had to be considered separately for French and English respondents due to an error in the questionnaire. If the questionnaire were to be used in the future, it is recommended that the French questionnaire contain questions related to the type of interview as was presented in the English questionnaire.

It can be seen that from Table 27 the interview received the highest mean scores (4.85) compared to other selection techniques. "Assessment centres", on the other hand, received the lowest mean score (2.89). Respondents provided free response ratings for "other" selection techniques. For example, "role playing" was rated as "very important" by one participant; while "curriculum vitae" was rated as "important" by three participants. "Past performance ratings" were reported by seven participants as "very important" selection techniques and by three respondents as "acceptable". Participation in "leadership training programme", "personal knowledge of the candidate", and "written French tests" were rated each as "very important" by one respondent.

Table 27

Mean Scores of Importance of Selection Techniques

| Mean Score | Selection Techniques                         |
|------------|--|
| 4.85       | Interview<br>French Population               |
| 4.70       | Second Interview<br>English Population       |
| 4.64       | Structured Interview<br>English Population   |
| 4.50       | Preliminary Interview<br>English Population  |
| 4.20       | Unstructured Interview<br>English Population |
| 3.75       | Consultation with previous employer          |
| 3.73       | Examinations/Testing                         |
| 3.67       | Application Blanks                           |
| 3.37       | University Transcripts                       |
| 3.24       | References                                   |
| 2.89       | Assessment Centres                           |

#### 4.6 Selection Techniques Used in Selection

The selection techniques used to appoint the most recent elementary school principal are presented in Table 28.

Table 28

Selection Techniques Used in the Selection of the Most Recently Appointed Elementary School Principal

| Selection Technique                 | N  | %     |
|-------------------------------------|----|-------|
| Interview                           | 92 | 97.9% |
| Application Blanks                  | 60 | 65.2% |
| Consultation with previous employer | 55 | 59.8% |
| University Transcripts              | 38 | 41.3% |
| References                          | 36 | 39.1% |
| Examination or Testing              | 35 | 38.0% |
| Assessment Centres                  | 11 | 12.0% |
| Other                               | 14 | 18.9% |

The "interview" was used by 97.9% of the respondents. This finding is not surprising since it is considered the most important selection technique as shown in Table 27. The two second most common techniques used to assess candidates are the "application blanks" (65.2%) and "consultation with previous employers" (59.8%).

Only 12.0% of those who responded report the use of "assessment centres" as a selection technique.

In the category "other", respondents reported using "simulation and role playing" as selection techniques. These techniques can be regarded as assessment-type activities.

Also within the "other" category, respondents identified the "curriculum vitae", "recommendations by the most recent superior", "leadership training programme", "performance appraisals by colleagues", and "French written and oral tests".

Of the responder indicated the use of the interview as an assessment technique, 16.5% indicated that the interview was the only technique used in selection. It was also noted that 7.7% of the respondents indicated using the interview with one other technique, mainly tests. Therefore, 16.5% of respondents use only two selection techniques, one of which is the interview.

#### **4.7 Selection Committee: Procedures and Responsibilities for Participants**

The personnel reported to be involved in the selection committee is presented in Table 29. The director-general (reported by 85.7%), the director of human resources (reported by 81.5%) and the school board members (reported by 43.5%) were the main participants in developing the selection policy for the school board.

Table 29

Stages of Personnel Involvement in the Selection of Elementary School Principals

| Functions   | Personnel |       |       |             |       |      |                 |        |       |
|---|-----------|-------|-------|-------------|-------|------|-----------------|--------|-------|
|   | DG        | ADG   | DRH   | PERS<br>OFF | PRIN  | TEAC | SC BD<br>MEMBER | PARENT | OTHER |
| Development of Selection Policy                         | 85.7%     | 27.2% | 81.5% | 10.9%       | 38.5% | 3.3% | 43.5%           | 14.1%  | 8.7%  |
| Development of Procedures to Implement Selection Policy | 50.1%     | 18.5% | 87.0% | 19.6%       | 28.3% | 2.2% | 15.2%           | 4.3%   | 6.5%  |
| Screening Candidates                                    | 58.2%     | 20.7% | 82.6% | 15.2%       | 19.6% | 3.3% | 23.9%           | 7.6%   | 10.9% |
| Evaluation of Candidates                                | 67.4%     | 23.9% | 80.4% | 13.0%       | 29.3% | 6.5% | 42.4%           | 12.0%  | 15.2% |
| Development of a Short List                             | 55.4%     | 20.7% | 79.3% | 10.9%       | 12.0% | 1.1% | 19.6%           | 5.4%   | 14.1% |
| Preliminary Interview                                   | 53.3%     | 13.2% | 70.3% | 8.7%        | 18.5% | 2.2% | 34.1%           | 9.9%   | 14.1% |
| Final Interview   | 82.6%     | 20.7% | 82.6% | 8.7%        | 38.0% | 6.5% | 72.8%           | 30.4%  | 22.8% |
| Final Recommendation                                    | 82.6%     | 16.3% | 60.9% | 3.3%        | 21.7% | 5.4% | 55.4%           | 19.6%  | 15.2% |
| Final Decision  | 28.3%     | 3.3%  | 8.7%  | 1.1%        | 5.4%  | 1.1% | 83.7%           | 2.2%   | 8.7%  |
| Evaluation of the Selection Process                     | 72.8%     | 19.6% | 73.9% | 9.8%        | 21.7% | 3.3% | 44.6%           | 8.7%   | 15.2% |

Note: Legend

DG = Director-General  
 ADG = Assistant Director-General  
 DHR = Director of Human Resources  
 PERS  
 OFF = Personnel Officer  
 PRIN = Principal  
 TEAC = Teacher  
 SC BD  
 MEMBER = School Board Member

The director of human resources was found to be the main participant in developing the procedures to implement the selection policy, screening candidates, evaluating candidates, developing a short list, and conducting the preliminary interview.

The final interview was reported by over seventy percent of respondents to be the combined responsibility of the director-general, the director of human resources and school board members/school commissioners.

Over eighty-two percent (82.5%) of respondents indicated that the director-general was responsible for making the final recommendation

The final decision was reported by 83.7% of the respondents to be the responsibility of the school board members/school commissioners.

The director-general and the director of human resources were the main evaluators of the selection process.

The roles of assistant directors-general and personnel officers appears to be minimal; however, it must be pointed out that the low rate of involvement of these groups may reflect the small number of school boards that actually have these positions.

Respondents were encouraged to describe "other" individuals responsible for the various selection functions. The following is a summary of the additional personnel involved in selection.

In two cases, the director of educational services performed all functions except developing the selection policy and procedures, and making the final decision. However, the directors of educational services in two other boards had fewer responsibilities. In these latter cases, the directors of educational services were responsible for the development of the selection policy, evaluation of candidates, preparing a short list of candidates and conducting the preliminary interviews. One of these directors also was involved in the evaluation of the selection process.

In yet another school board, the director of educational services was responsible for conducting the final interview, making the final recommendation and evaluating the selection policy.

The director of schools (sic) for one school board was responsible for all functions except making the final decision, which was made by the school board.

Others involved in the development of selection policy include an association of concerned people and a working committee specializing in selection policy development.

Preparing the procedures for implementing the selection policy was delegated to a management committee in one school board, and in two other school boards, this function was the responsibility of the school orientation council.

Human resource committee members in one school board were given the responsibility of preparing a short list of



candidates, preliminary and final interviews, making final recommendations, being involved in the final decision and evaluating the selection process.

In two school boards, conducting the preliminary and final interviews, were the responsibility of "management team" which assisted the educational services department.

In summary, the main participants in the selection process were the director-general, director of human resources and school board members including school commissioners. Principals, teachers and other board personnel are involved in selection at different stages and their responsibility varies from board to board.

Participants were asked to identify the most common practice used in making the final selection for the appointment of an elementary school principal. The most common practice, reported by 85% of respondents, involved the director-general, usually acting on the suggestion of the selection committee, who recommended the top candidate to the executive committee of the school board for approval. A much smaller percent, or 15% of respondents, indicated that the selection committee recommends the top candidate to the director-general for approval.

#### **4.8 Budget for Recruitment and Selection**

Respondents were asked to indicate the percent of the school board's budget that was allocated for recruitment and

selection. As can be seen from Table 30, over 90% of the respondents, who answered to this question, reported no specific funds for recruitment or selection respectively.

Table 30

Percent of Budget allocated to Recruitment and Selection

| Percent Allocated | Recruitment | Selection |
|-------------------|-------------|-----------|
| 0.0%              | 90.2%       | 92.3%     |
| 0.01%             | 2.0%        | 1.9%      |
| 0.02%             | 2.0%        | -         |
| 0.05%             | 5.9%        | 5.8%      |
| Percent Response  | 54.3%       | 55.3%     |

Several respondents contributed comments which provided an insight into the amount of money allocated for these functions. For example, seven respondents indicated that money was allocated to recruitment and selection "according to the needs". Three respondents indicated that there were "negligible amounts" of funds for recruitment and selection. "No specific allocation" was the phrase described by three other respondents when asked to comment on the allocation of funds for these two functions.

The results appear to indicate that financial support for recruitment and selection seems to be relatively insignificant

at this time.

#### 4.9 Possession of Written Selection Documents

Respondents were asked to indicate whether the school board had written selection policies and procedures, job descriptions for the elementary school principalship and written selection criteria and techniques.

Table 31 presents the results related to the prevalence of selection documents.

Table 31

Prevalence of Documents Related to the Selection Process of  
Elementary School Principals

|                              | Yes   | No    |
|------------------------------|-------|-------|
| Written Selection Policies   | 32.2% | 67.8% |
| Written Selection Procedures | 34.1% | 65.9% |
| Written Job Description      | 43.2% | 56.8% |
| Written Selection Criteria   | 29.1% | 70.9% |
| Written Selection Techniques | 24.4% | 75.6% |

Over two-thirds of the respondents indicated that they do not have written selection policies or written selection procedures to guide the selection of elementary school boards.

Over half of the school boards (56.8%) indicated that

they do not have written job descriptions for the position of elementary school principal. Of the 56.8% who did not have written job descriptions, four respondents indicated that the school board uses the Ministère de l'Éducation's job description for principals as the job description for the principals in their school boards.

Over 70% of respondents do not have written selection criteria or techniques to guide the selection of elementary school principals. There were differences in the availability of selection documents based on the setting, student population, confessional status, and language of instruction of the school board. For example, "rural" and "urban and rural" settings have fewer school boards that have written selection policies as compared to "urban" settings.

#### **4.10 Level of Satisfaction with the Selection Process**

Respondents were asked to rate their level of satisfaction with the present process used to select elementary school principals. Numeric values were given to the responses: Very Satisfied - 6, Satisfied - 5, Marginally Satisfied - 4, Marginally Dissatisfied - 3, dissatisfied - 2, Very dissatisfied - 1.

Table 32 illustrates that, in general, respondents were satisfied with their selection process as demonstrated by a mean score of 5.01.

The largest percent (47.8%) indicated they were

Table 32

Degree of Satisfaction of Respondents with their Present Selection Process

| Level of Satisfaction   | N  | %      |
|-------------------------|----|--------|
| Very Satisfied          | 29 | 32.2%  |
| Satisfied               | 43 | 47.8%  |
| Marginally Satisfied    | 13 | 14.4%  |
| Marginally Dissatisfied | 0  | 0.0%   |
| Dissatisfied            | 5  | 5.6%   |
| Very Dissatisfied       | 0  | 0.0%   |
| Total                   | 90 | 100.0% |

"satisfied" with their selection process. A small group, or 5.6% of respondents, indicated their dissatisfaction with the selection processes used in their school board.

Since the majority of respondents were satisfied with their selection process, it is not surprising to observe that two-thirds of respondents (66.7%) do not have plans to review their present selection process as shown in Table 33.

Even though a high percent of respondents indicated that they were satisfied with their selection process and that they had no plans to revise their processes, a vast majority of respondents (91%), expressed a desire to receive a copy of the results of this research (Table 34).

**Table 33**

**Plans to Revise Selection Process as Expressed by Respondents**

| Decision to Revise | N  | %      |
|--------------------|----|--------|
| No                 | 58 | 66.7%  |
| Yes                | 29 | 33.3%  |
| Total              | 87 | 100.0% |

**Table 34**

**Request for Results of the Study as Expressed by Respondents**

| Request for Results | N  | %      |
|---------------------|----|--------|
| Yes                 | 81 | 91.0%  |
| No                  | 8  | 9.0%   |
| Total               | 89 | 100.0% |

**4.11 Recommendations for Improving the Selection Process**

Respondents were given the opportunity to include recommendations for improving the selection process. Of the respondents, only 19 (20.8%) provided recommendations. Below is a summary of the recommendations.

Six recommendations expressed the need for a more

systematic approach to selection, while four respondents provided recommendations related to improving the techniques used in selection.

There were two recommendations related to the selection criteria used to appoint elementary school principals. The first suggestion related to the education pre-requisites for the principalship, while the latter suggestion related to the candidate's background knowledge in pedagogy.

Two recommendations related to the commissioners' roles in the selection committee. Both comments related to the need to reduce the power of the commissioners' vote in the final decision. One recommendation calls for more involvement of teachers in the selection process. Providing training to selection committee members was recommended by one respondent.

One recommendation expressed the view that the selection processes in rural areas need not be as systematic as in urban areas.

There was only one comment expressing satisfaction with their systematic selection process. One respondent indicated that their school board has recently revised their selection process and will be evaluating this process in the near future. One school board indicated that they are in the process of developing a selection policy.

#### **4.12 Summary**

The most common expectation of the elementary school

principal was as educational/pedagogical leader. The second most common expectation was "management and administrative skills", closely followed by "supervision of pedagogy".

Respondents indicated that "announcements within the school board" were the most important source of recruitment for elementary school principals.

The most important personal criteria were found to be "personal security", "group skills" and "mature judgement". "Church membership", "marital status" and "gender" were considered the least important criteria.

The most important professional criteria, identified by respondents were "human relations skills", "decision making skills" and "communication skills". The least important professional criteria were "director's-general rating" and "employee of the school board".

There were significant differences observed in the importance given to selection criteria based on the setting, the size of the student population, the confessional status or the language of instruction of the school board. For example, Catholic school boards consider scholarship, classroom teaching experience and being a member of the school board to be statistically more important than do Protestant school boards.

The majority of respondents felt that the "interview" was the most important technique used in selection. "Consultations with previous employers" received the second



highest mean score.

The most common selection technique used to appraise selection criteria was the interview. All respondents who answered this question indicated that an interview was used to evaluate the candidate's suitability to the position. "Standard application blanks" and "consultations with previous employers" were the second and third most widely used techniques respectively.

The major participants in the selection committee included the director-general and the director of human resources. The final employment decision was primarily the responsibility of the school board commissioners. Other school board members, teachers and parents had varying roles and responsibilities as members of the selection committee. There is much variation observed in selection committee member's responsibilities.

Over two-thirds of respondents, or 67.8%, indicated that they did not have written selection policies. Approximately the same percent (65.9%) reported the absence of written selection procedures that guide selection. Slightly over half the respondents (56.8%) did not have written job descriptions for the elementary school principal. Over 70% of respondents reported the lack of written selection criteria (70.9%) and techniques (75.6%).

The majority of the respondents (80%) reported satisfaction with their selection process. Over two-thirds of

respondents do not plan to revise their selection processes. A large majority of respondents, 91% expressed an interest in receiving a copy of the results of this study.

The final chapter will present the major findings of this study, and a discussion on these findings. Recommendations for further study will also be presented in the concluding chapter.

**CHAPTER FIVE**  
**MAJOR FINDINGS, DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**  
**FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

**5.1 Introduction**

The purpose of this research study was to describe the process used to select elementary school principals in Québec. The data was obtained by means of a survey questionnaire completed by directors-general or their assistants.

In an effort to describe the process used in selection, the following research questions formed the framework of the study:

1. What are the most important expectations for elementary school principals?
2. What is the perceived importance given to sources of recruitment, selection criteria and selection techniques?
3. What are the most common selection techniques used to assess candidates?
4. Who makes up the selection committee and what are their responsibilities?
5. What are the written documents, if any, that guide the selection process?

This chapter presents a summary of the major findings, a discussion on these findings and makes recommendations for further study.

## 5.2 Summary of the Major Findings

In response to the first research question, the most common expectation of the elementary school principal was educational leadership. The second most common expectation was management and administrative skills, closely followed by supervision of pedagogy.

In response to the second research question, the most important source of recruitment for elementary school principals was announcements within the school board.

The most important personal selection criteria were found to be personal security, group skills and mature judgement. Church membership, marital status and gender were considered the least important criteria.

The most important professional selection criteria were human relations skills, decision making skills and communications skills. The least important professional criteria were director's-general rating and employee of the school board.

There were significant differences between the overall mean scores for each criterion and the mean scores for each criterion based on the setting, the size of the student population, the confessional status or the language of instruction of the school board. For example, Protestant school boards consider classroom teaching experience to be more important as a selection criteria than do Catholic school boards.

Based on the responses regarding the perceived importance given to selection techniques, it was found that over 85% of respondents felt that the interview was the most important technique used in selection.

In response to the third question, the most common selection technique used by respondents to assess selection criteria was the interview. All respondents who answered this question indicated that an interview was used to evaluate candidates' suitability to the position. Standard application blanks and consultations with previous employers were the second and third most widely used techniques respectively.

The least used technique was the assessment centre, although there were indications that assessment centre-like activities were used during the interview.

In response to the fourth question, the major participants in the selection committee included the director-general and director of human resources. School board members, school commissioners, teachers and parents had diverse roles and responsibilities as members of the selection committee. There was much variation observed between school boards as far as the selection committee members' responsibilities and level of participation.

The most common practice leading to the final employment decision involved the director-general, usually acting on suggestions of the selection committee, who recommended the top candidate to the executive committee of the school board

for approval. The executive committee members, involving primarily school commissioners, were the major participants in the final employment decision. The directors-general rarely make final employment decisions on their own.

Finally, in response to the last research question, over two-thirds of respondents, (67.8%) indicated that they did not have written selection policies. Approximately the same percent (65.9%) reported the absence of written selection procedures that guide selection. Over half the respondents (56.8%) did not have written job descriptions for the elementary school principal. Over 70% of respondents reported the lack of written selection criteria (70.9%) and techniques (75.6%).

In addition, this study found that the majority of the respondents (80%) reported satisfaction with their selection process. Over two-thirds, (66.7%) of respondents do not plan to revise their selection process. The results of this study indicate that school boards found it difficult to isolate the percent of a school board's budget which was allocated to recruitment and selection. In fact, over 90% of respondents indicated that funds for recruitment and selection were minimal. Even with the majority of respondents satisfied with their selection process and not planning to review their selection system, there seems to be much interest in selection as demonstrated by a 91% rate of respondents who wish to receive a copy of the results of this study.

### 5.3 Discussion

Despite the literature on principal selection which calls for school boards to systematize the selection process, many of the processes described by school boards in this study run contrary to this literature. Principal selection, now as then, appears to be a task for which guidelines do not exist. It is difficult to understand why school boards have yet to acknowledge the benefits of a systematic selection process for appointing school principals. One can only speculate on the reasons for this continued gap between the recommendation made by researchers and the processes used in principal selection. Outlined below are four reasons along with some observations and elements of the current selection process that perpetuate this gap.

The first reason may be that since school boards hire mainly from within the board, due primarily to contractual restraints, the performance records of applicants may be "known" to the selectors. The disadvantage of this type of perception is that there may be individuals who feel it is not possible for them to aspire to leadership positions since they are not "known" to the central office. In addition, since there is generally no career planning for principals in Québec, these individuals may feel that their chances at an administrative position is not within their grasp. This potential resource may remain untapped.

A second reason is the cost of developing a systematic

selection process. However, this cost may be minimal as compared to the huge cost of academic failure due to poor educational leadership. The victims will be the students and society as a whole and not the school board's balance sheet.

A concentration of power may also be a contributor to the continued gap between the current and recommended selection processes. From the results of this study, it can be seen that selection decisions are kept within a small elite group, made up primarily of the school commissioners, directors-general and directors of human resources. As a result, selection is in the hands of too few, and these individuals have not been held accountable for their decisions. In addition, the input of individuals who are directly affected by the selection decisions has often been overlooked.

Finally, another reason may be that the lack of written selection documents does not have a negative effect on the school board's level of satisfaction with their selection processes. One might assume that the selectors in the education field have been resistant to adopt selection principles shown to be valid and reliable in other fields, such as in business.

Although the majority of school boards in this study indicated that they are satisfied with their selection process, one wonders how the school boards can be satisfied if the product (the performance of principals) is not regularly evaluated. Therefore, the indication that school boards are



satisfied with their selection process cannot be considered to be based on empirical evidence.

Based on the current selection processes, one can observe that the interview is the most widely used selection technique. It appears that those responsible for selection have failed to recognize the deficiencies of the interview and have instead taken the easy way out.

Also, it is clear the directors-general or their assistants have clear expectations and criteria for the principalship. Knowing this, why would they not document these? The lack of documentation may reflect the selectors lack of knowledge regarding the importance of clearly defining the roles, responsibilities and requirements of the position. Whatever the reason for this deficiency, it must be seen as a limitation in the process of identifying the best candidate for the position. The lack of documentation of this kind may also create confusion and misunderstanding regarding the duties and responsibilities of the principal. The lack of written expectations and criteria allows selection to be influenced by patronage, personality traits and/or word of mouth recommendations.

If the educational community, and society in general, want educational improvement as a major objective, and if it is accepted that the principal is a major contributor to school improvement, then the present selection process must be radically revamped. Therefore, the lack of a systematic

selection process is one academic paradigm that must change.

#### **5.4 Recommendations**

1. It is recommended that school boards develop a systematic selection process for selecting school principals.
2. School boards are urged to develop explicit job descriptions for the position as a way of defining the expectations to the selectors and to the candidates. In this way, there is no misunderstanding regarding the expectations of the position.
3. In order to obtain valid and reliable selection criteria, an evaluation system to measure principal's performance is recommended.
4. It is recommended that a variety of selection techniques be used to assess candidates.
5. Efforts must be made by school boards to ensure that the interview protocol be based on the job description and on the pre-determined selection criteria.
6. There must be more participation in the final employment selection by personnel who are directly affected by the decision.
7. It is recommended that school boards develop career planning for those aspiring to the principalship.

#### **5.5 Topics for Further Study**

This study was descriptive in nature; therefore, further studies are required in order to provide a better

understanding of different facets of the process used to select elementary school principals. For example, due to the widespread use of the interview as a selection technique, a study analysing this technique may provide details regarding the type of interview used, who conducts the interview, what training is given interviewers, which criteria are assessed and how these criteria are assessed.

In order to complement the findings of this research study, it is recommended that analysis be conducted to evaluate how closely the selection practice resembles the results of this study. In addition, a study of the selection documents would provide insight into the process used in selection. A study could be conducted that would assess how closely the criteria used in selection compare to those noted in selection documents.

Since this study was limited to the directors-general view of selection, it is important to study the selection process from the viewpoint of the principals selected and from candidates who did not receive an appointment. This data may reveal important information regarding principal selection.

The results of further study will help practitioners interested in improving the effectiveness of the selection process.

The need to continue the research on principal selection seems essential in view of the fact that the principal is the individual charged with the responsibility of providing the

best education possible to all student sin the school. The importance of this position merits a carefully planned selection process.

Finally, the need to continue research on principal selection seems essential in view of the fact that the research to date has failed to convince school boards that a systematic selection process can help identify the best candidate for a school. As a result of this lack of research, principal selection continues to proceed in an unsystematic manner.

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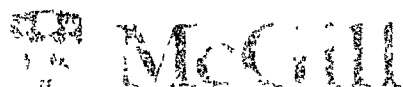
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## **APPENDICES**

## Appendix A

Covering Letter (English and French Versions)



Administration and Policy Studies  
in Education  
McGill University

Postal address  
3724 McAvish Street  
Montreal PQ Canada H3A 1Y1

(514) 398-6116

April 13, 1992

Sir,

I am presently conducting a research study as part of the requirement for a Masters Degree in Educational Administration. The study is concerned with the selection process of elementary school principals in the province of Quebec. The study is being conducted by Professor Clermont Barnabé in the Department of Administration and Policy Studies in Education at McGill University. Results of this research will help school boards and directors-general evaluate their selection process.

I am writing you in the hope that you will help me obtain information for my research. Specifically, I would appreciate if you, or your assistant, would complete the enclosed questionnaire and return it to me by May 4, 1992. The questionnaire will take approximately 25 minutes to complete and the data you will provide will be held in strict confidence and in no way will you or the school board be identified in the study.

Please note that if you would like to receive a copy of the results of this study, please place a check mark (✓) in the space provided on page 12, letter J, of the questionnaire.

I thank you, in advance, for the time and effort you have given this questionnaire.

Sincerely,

*Constance M. Buki*

Constance M. Buki  
Researcher

*Clermont V. Barnabé*

Clermont Barnabé  
Associate Professor and  
Thesis Advisor

Enclosure



Administration and Policy Studies  
in Education  
McGill University

Postal address  
3724 McTavish Street  
Montreal, PQ, Canada H3A 1Y2

(514) 398 6746

Le 13 avril 1992

Monsieur,

J'effectue présentement une recherche de l'éducation à l'Université McGill requise à l'obtention de ma maîtrise en administration pédagogique. Cette étude se rapporte aux procédures et critères de sélection des directeurs d'écoles primaires dans la province de Québec. Cette étude est sous la direction de Professeur Clermont Barnabé, département d'administration et politiques scolaire à l'Université McGill. Les résultats de cette recherche aideront les commissions scolaires et directeurs généraux à évaluer leur processus de sélection.

Je vous écris en espérant que vous m'assisterez à obtenir des informations pour ma recherche. Précisément, j'apprécierais si vous, ou votre adjoint(e), complétiez le questionnaire ci-inclus et me le retournez avant le 4 mai 1992. Le questionnaire prendra environ 25 minutes à compléter et les données seront confidentielles. Les répondants ainsi que les commissions scolaires ne seront pas identifiés dans cette étude.

Veuillez noter que si vous désirez recevoir une copie des résultats de cette étude, veuillez cocher (✓) dans l'espace fourni à la page 12, lettre J, du questionnaire.

Je vous remercie de votre collaboration et du temps que vous m'avez accordé pour répondre à ce questionnaire.

*Constance M. Buke*

Constance M. Buke  
Rechercheuse

*Clermont Barnabé*

Clermont Barnabé  
Professeur agrégé et  
directeur de Thèse

pièce-jointe

## **Appendix B**

**Follow-up Letter (English and French Versions)**



Administration and Policy Studies  
in Education  
McGill University

Postal address:  
3724 McTavish Street  
Montreal, PQ, Canada H3A 1Y2

(514) 398 6746

May 15, 1992

Sir,


RE: Research Study: The Selection Process for Elementary School  
Principals in Quebec


I recognize that this is a very busy time of the year for you, as such I am taking this opportunity to remind you of the letter and questionnaire I sent you on April 13, 1992.

The information being requested about your school board will be extremely valuable to me. I would, therefore, appreciate your return of your questionnaire so that I may have a wider data base to report in my study. The information you give me will be kept confidential and no reference will be made to the Director-General by name nor will the school board be identified in the study. If you have returned your questionnaire, please disregard this letter.

I thank you, in advance, for your co-operation in returning the questionnaire as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

  
Constance M. Buki  
Researcher

  
Clermont Barnabé  
Associate Professor and  
Thesis Advisor





McGill

Administration and Policy Studies  
in Education  
McGill University

Postal address:  
3774 McTavish Street  
Montreal PQ, Canada H3A 1Y1

0514-3961-46

Le 15 mai 1992

Monsieur,

Sujet: Recherche: Les procédures et critères de sélection des  
directeurs d'écoles primaires au Québec

J'admets que cette période de l'année est très occupée pour vous, mais puis-je prendre l'occasion de vous rappeler la lettre et le questionnaire que je vous ai envoyés le 13 avril courant.

L'information que je demande au sujet de votre commission scolaire sera très précieuse pour moi. Donc, j'apprécierais que vous me retourniez le questionnaire pour je puisse bénéficier d'un plus vaste champ de données afin de rédiger mon rapport de recherche.

Ces données seront confidentielles et le répondant(e) ainsi que le nom de la commission scolaire ne seront pas identifiés dans cette étude. Si vous avez retourné le questionnaire, je vous prie de ne pas tenir compte de cette lettre.

Je vous remercie de votre collaboration et de retourner le questionnaire dans le plus bref délai.

*Constance H. Bulie*

Constance H. Bulie  
Rechercheuse

*Clement Barnabé*

Clement Barnabé  
Professeur associé et  
directeur de thèse

## Appendix C

### Questionnaire (English and French Versions)

A STUDY OF THE SELECTION PROCESS USED TO SELECT ELEMENTARY

SCHOOL PRINCIPALS IN THE PROVINCE OF QUEBEC

The purpose of this questionnaire is to gather information on the process used to select elementary school principals. The objective of the research can only be met with the co-operation of the participating school boards and the individuals responding to the questionnaire. The researcher appreciates your collaboration in meeting the goals of the study.

Respondent's Code Number: \_\_\_\_\_ (This number is given to each participant by the researcher in order to maintain anonymity, to ensure a follow-up, and to provide a copy of the summary, if desired.)

PART I: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

A. QUESTIONS RELATED TO THE RESPONDENT

1. Title of Respondent (Please check only one)

Director General ( )  
Assistant Director General ( )  
Director of Human Resources ( )  
Personnel Officer ( )  
Other ( )

Please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Using the response given in Question 1, please indicate the number of years held in this position. ( )

3. Indicate the most recent degree obtained. (Please check one)

B.A. ( )  
B.Sc. ( )  
B.Ed. ( )  
M.A. ( )  
M.Sc. ( )  
M.Ed. ( )  
Ph.D. ( )  
Other ( )

Please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Have you completed courses in:

|                       | Yes? | No? |
|-----------------------|------|-----|
| School Administration | ( )  | ( ) |
| School Personnel      | ( )  | ( ) |

B. QUESTIONS RELATED TO THE SCHOOL BOARD

1. Indicate the setting of the school board: (Relative to Kindergarten and Elementary schools)

Rural ( )  
Urban ( )

2. Student population in the school board: (Relative to Kindergarten and Elementary schools)

Less than 1000 ( )  
Between 1000 and 5000 ( )  
Between 5001 and 10000 ( )  
Over 10000 ( )

3. Religious status of the school board: (Relative to Kindergarten and Elementary schools)

Catholic ( )  
Protestant ( )  
Ecumenical ( )  
Other ( )

Please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Language of Instruction in the Board: (Relative to Kindergarten and Elementary schools)

English ( )  
French ( )  
Both English & French ( )  
Other ( )

Please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

5. Number of elementary schools in the school board by level:

Kindergarten to Grade 6 \_\_\_\_\_

Grade 1 to Grade 6 \_\_\_\_\_

6. Number of elementary school principals: \_\_\_\_\_
7. Number of elementary school principals who have scheduled teaching responsibilities: \_\_\_\_\_

PART II: ROLE OF THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

A. What are the three most important expectations of an elementary school principal?

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

B. What are your expectations of an elementary school principal under your supervision?  
Rank order the following expectation from 1 (most important) to 6 (least important):

- |  |     |
|--|-----|
| Budget - finances                                    | ( ) |
| Community relations                                  | ( ) |
| Instructional Leadership and pedagogical methods     | ( ) |
| Management of school building and material resources | ( ) |
| Personnel Administration                             | ( ) |
| Student Life   | ( ) |

C. In your opinion, what percent of her or his time must an elementary school principal ideally spend in each of the following areas in one week?

- |                     |      |             |                            |
|---------------------|------|-------------|----------------------------|
| Administration      | ( %) | Supervision | ( %)                       |
| Clerical Duties     | ( %) | Teaching    | ( %)                       |
| Community Relations | ( %) | Other:      | ( %) Please specify: _____ |
| Total: (100%) _____ |      |             |                            |

PART III: RECRUITMENT

Rate all the following items as to importance when recruiting an elementary school principal. Check one block for each item.

LEGEND: Very Important..VI - Important..IMP - Acceptable..ACC - Questionable..QUE - Unreliable..UR

|  | VI  | IMP | ACC | QUE | UR  |
|--|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Announcements within the school board                    | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| Announcements within other school boards                 | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| Contacts at professional meetings                        | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| Eligibility lists  | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| In-service programs                                      | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| Newspaper advertisement                                  | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| Private placement offices                                | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| Recommendations by administrators of other school boards | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| Recommendations by university professors                 | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| Standardized application procedures                      | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| Suggestions by central office staff                      | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| University placement offices                             | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| Other (Please specify)                                   | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |

PART IV: SELECTION COMMITTEE

- A. At what stage in the selection process of elementary school principals are the personnel below involved? (Circle the letter for the appropriate personnel in front of each function)

LEGEND: (a) Director General  
 (b) Assistant Director General  
 (c) Director of Human Resources  
 (d) Personnel Officer  
 (e) Principal  
 (f) Teacher  
 (g) Board Member  
 (h) Parent  
 (i) Other: Specify: \_\_\_\_\_

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Development of a selection policy                       | a | b | c | d | e | f | g | h | i |
| Development of procedures to implement selection policy | a | b | c | d | e | f | g | h | i |
| Screening of Candidates                                 | a | b | c | d | e | f | g | h | i |
| Evaluation of Applicants                                | a | b | c | d | e | f | g | n | i |
| Development of a short list                             | a | b | c | d | e | f | g | n | i |
| Preliminary Interviews                                  | a | b | c | d | e | f | g | h | i |
| Final Interviews  | a | b | c | d | e | f | g | n | i |
| Final Recommendation                                    | a | b | c | d | e | f | g | h | i |
| Final Decision  | a | b | c | d | e | f | g | n | i |
| Evaluation of the selection process                     | a | b | c | d | e | f | g | n | i |

B. Which of the following practices is used in making the final selection for the appointment of an elementary school principal? (Check one)

The Director General recommends only the top candidate to the school board for their approval. ( )

The Director General recommends the top candidates to the school board. ( )

The Selection Committee recommends only the top candidate to the Director General. ( )

The Selection Committee recommends the top candidates to the Director General. ( )

Other: (please describe) ( )

PART V: SELECTION TECHNIQUES

A. Check the techniques used by your school board in selecting the most recently appointed elementary school principal.

Application Banks ( )

Assessment Centers ( )

Consultation with candidate's supervisor for previous employment ( )

Examinations/Testing ( )

Interviews: Structured ( )

Unstructured ( )

Interviews: Preliminary ( )

Second (or more) ( )

Performance appraisal rating ( )

References ( )

University Transcripts ( )

Other: (please specify) ( )



B. Rate all of the following techniques for the degree of their importance in the selection of an elementary school principal. Check one block for each item.

LEGEND: Very Important..VI - Important..IMP - Acceptable..ACC - Questionable..QUE - Unreliable..UR

|  | VI  | IMP | ACC | QUE | UR  |
|--|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Application Banks  | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| Assessment Centres   | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| Consultation with candidate's supervisor for previous employment | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| Examinations Testing   | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| Interviews: Structured   | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| Unstructured   | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| Interviews: Preliminary  | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| Second (or more)   | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| Performance appraisal rating                                     | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| References   | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| University transcripts   | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| Other: (please specify)  | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |

#### PART VI: SELECTION CRITERIA

Rate all of the following personal and professional selection criteria for the degree of their importance in the selection of an elementary school principal. Check one block for each item. On the lines following each criterion, describe the justification for the use of the criterion and means of assessment.

LEGEND: Very Important..VI - Important..IMP - Acceptable..ACC - Questionable..QUE - Unreliable..UR

#### A. Selection Criteria of Personal Qualities

Acc

| VI  | IMP | ACC | QUE | UR  |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |

Age of candidate reflects suitability for an administrative position.

|  | VI  | IMP | ACC | QUE | UN  |
|--|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Church Membership: Membership in, and regular attendance at, a recognized church in candidate's community.   | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| Dress: Quality, appropriateness and style of attire worn by the applicant.   | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| Good Health: Possess sound physical and mental health as shown by a consistent positive attendance patterns at present career functions.                                     | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| Group Skills: Ability to achieve consensus among peers regarding a specific problem by the use of group techniques   | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| Intelligence: Possess above average mental ability.  | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| Marital Status: Consideration is given as to whether a candidate is single, married or divorced.   | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| Mature Judgement: Ability to see the whole picture when examining a problem, and ability to relate it to a broader context so that a rational administrative action results. | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| Personal Security: Displays an emotional stability; a healthy self-concept by dealing with a crisis in a patient, calm manner.   | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |

Scholarship: Evidence of sound educational background and knowledge base of education as indicated by success in academic achievement at university.

| VI  | IMP | ACC | QUE | UN  |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |

Sex of Candidate:

|     |     |     |     |     |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|

Other: (please specify)

|     |     |     |     |     |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|

#### B. Selection Criteria of Professional Background

Academic Courses: Recognized courses for credit at an accredited university.

|     |     |     |     |     |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|

Administrative Experience: Previous experience at the vice-principal or other administrative level.

|     |     |     |     |     |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|

Administrative Technical Skills: Ability to plan, organize, direct and control in areas of staff utilization, finance, office management, and plant maintenance as evidenced by a knowledge base in these administrative areas.

|     |     |     |     |     |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|

Change Strategy Skills: Understand the process of change in a school organization, by knowledge of at least one model of the change process.

|     |     |     |     |     |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|

Classroom Teaching Experience: Actual experience as a classroom teacher at the elementary level.

|     |     |     |     |     |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|

|   | VI  | IMP | ACC | QCE | AN  |
|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Communication Skills: Capacity to exchange information in oral and written form as indicated by ability to speak and write messages that are understood by the receiver, and the ability to interpret the messages sent by others.  | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| <hr/>   |     |     |     |     |     |
| Community Relations Skills: Ability to work effectively with community groups to develop objectives for the local school, and to develop strategies for informing the community of policies and activities of the school, and to provide a means of feedback from community to school. Ability to analyze community structures and the influence of various elements. | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| <hr/>   |     |     |     |     |     |
| Curriculum Development Skills: Knowledge of recent curriculum development and ability to assist teachers introduce new programs in classrooms as shown by personal involvement in at least one curriculum innovation.   | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| <hr/>   |     |     |     |     |     |
| Decision-Making Skills: Ability to define a problem; pose and evaluate alternate solutions so that a rational decision results.   | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| <hr/>   |     |     |     |     |     |
| Director-General Rating: Rating of a learning situation in a classroom as noted on the most recent official report of the Director General.   | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| <hr/>   |     |     |     |     |     |
| Employee of Local District: Employed as a teacher or administrator in the school system where the appointment is to be made.  | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| <hr/>   |     |     |     |     |     |

Human Relations Skills: Involves motivation, attitude, development, understanding of human needs, development of positive morale and of human resources. Requires appreciation, empathy and consideration for others based on a pattern of successful interpersonal relations as shown by experience in working effectively and efficiently with other people.

| VI  | IMP | ACC | QUE | UN  |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |

Research Skills: Ability to help select relevant data for the solution of a problem, and employ the appropriate research tools so that analysis and interpretation of findings may lead to adequate and accurate inferences.

|     |     |     |     |     |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|

University Degree: A recognized degree from an accredited university is a pre-requisite to appointment as a school principal.

|     |     |     |     |     |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|

Work With Children: Demonstrated success patterns in working with children by Director General's rating of classroom teaching situation.

|     |     |     |     |     |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|

Other: (please specify):

|     |     |     |     |     |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|

### C. Other Qualifications Required

Check from the list below those qualifications you consider when making an appointment to the principalship at an elementary level.

Length of previous administrative experience. \_\_\_\_\_

Length of previous teaching experience. \_\_\_\_\_

Member of a professional organization. \_\_\_\_\_

Possession of a Quebec Teacher's Licence. \_\_\_\_\_

Other: (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

PART VII: MISCELLANEOUS

- A. Does your school board have a written policy for the selection of elementary school principals?  
If yes, would you kindly send a copy of your policy. Yes ( ) No ( )
- B. Does your school board have written procedures for the selection of elementary school principals?  
If yes, would you kindly send a copy of your procedures. Yes ( ) No ( )
- C. Does your school board have a written job description for the role of the elementary school principal?  
If yes, would you kindly send a copy of your job description. Yes ( ) No ( )
- D. Does your school board have a written personal and professional criteria for assessing prospective elementary school principals? If yes, would you kindly send us a copy of these criteria. Yes ( ) No ( )
- E. Does your school board have a written description of the selection techniques used to measure the personal and professional criteria for prospective elementary school principals? If yes, would you kindly send us a copy of this document. Yes ( ) No ( )
- F. What percent of the school board's budget is allocated to the recruitment and selection of elementary school principals? Recruiting \_\_\_\_\_ %  
Selection \_\_\_\_\_ %
- G. How satisfied are you with the present selection process used in your school board to select elementary school principals?  
Very Satisfied ( ) Satisfied ( ) Marginally Satisfied ( )  
Marginally Dissatisfied ( ) Dissatisfied ( ) Very Dissatisfied ( )
- 
- H. Does your school board have any plans to revise its selection process of elementary school principals? Yes ( ) No ( )
- I. Recommendations you believe would improve the selection process in your school board relative to elementary school boards.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 
- J. Do you wish to receive a copy of the results of this study? Yes ( ) No ( )

The researcher thanks you for your co-operation in responding to this questionnaire.

A STUDY OF THE SELECTION PROCESS USED TO SELECT ELEMENTARY  
SCHOOL PRINCIPALS IN THE PROVINCE OF QUEBEC

The purpose of this questionnaire is to gather information on the process used to select elementary school principals. The objective of the research can only be met with the co-operation of the participating school boards and the individuals responding to the questionnaire. The researcher appreciates your collaboration in meeting the goals of the study.

Respondent's Code Number: \_\_\_\_\_ (This number is given to each participant by the researcher in order to maintain anonymity, to ensure a follow-up, and to provide a copy of the summary, if desired.)

PART I: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

A. QUESTIONS RELATED TO THE RESPONDENT

1. Title of Respondent (Please check only one)

|                             |     |
|-----------------------------|-----|
| Director General            | ( ) |
| Assistant Director General  | ( ) |
| Director of Human Resources | ( ) |
| Personnel Officer           | ( ) |
| Other                       | ( ) |

( ) Please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Using the response given in Question 1, please indicate the number of years held in this position. ( )

3. Indicate the most recent degree obtained. (Please check one)

|       |     |
|-------|-----|
| B.A.  | ( ) |
| B.Sc. | ( ) |
| B.Ed. | ( ) |
| M.A.  | ( ) |
| M.Sc. | ( ) |
| M.Ed. | ( ) |
| Ph.D. | ( ) |
| Other | ( ) |

Please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Have you completed courses in:

|                       | Yes? | No? |
|-----------------------|------|-----|
| School Administration | ( )  | ( ) |
| School Personnel      | ( )  | ( ) |

B. QUESTIONS RELATED TO THE SCHOOL BOARD

1. Indicate the setting of the school board: (Relative to Kindergarten and Elementary schools)

Rural ( )  
Urban ( )

2. Student population in the school board: (Relative to Kindergarten and Elementary schools)

Less than 1000 ( )  
Between 1001 and 5000 ( )  
Between 5001 and 10000 ( )  
Over 10000 ( )

3. Religious status of the school board: (Relative to Kindergarten and Elementary schools)

Catholic ( )  
Protestant ( )  
Ecumenical ( )  
Other ( )

Please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Language of Instruction in the Board: (Relative to Kindergarten and Elementary schools)

English ( )  
French ( )  
Both English & French ( )  
Other ( )

Please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

5. Number of elementary schools in the school board by level:

Kindergarten to Grade 6 \_\_\_\_\_  
Grade 1 to Grade 6 \_\_\_\_\_



6. Number of elementary school principals: \_\_\_\_\_

7. Number of elementary school principals who have scheduled teaching responsibilities: \_\_\_\_\_

PART II: ROLE OF THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

A. What are the three most important expectations of an elementary school principal?

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

B. What are your expectations of an elementary school principal under your supervision?

Rank order the following expectation from 1 (most important) to 6 (least important):

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| Budget - finances                                    | ( ) |
| Community relations                                  | ( ) |
| Instructional Leadership and pedagogical methods     | ( ) |
| Management of school building and material resources | ( ) |
| Personnel Administration                             | ( ) |
| Student Life   | ( ) |

C. In your opinion, what percent of her or his time must an elementary school principal ideally spend in each of the following areas in one week?

|                     |      |             |                            |
|---------------------|------|-------------|----------------------------|
| Administration      | ( %) | Supervision | ( %)                       |
| Clerical Duties     | ( %) | Teaching    | ( %)                       |
| Community Relations | ( %) | Other:      | ( %) Please specify: _____ |
| Total: (100%) _____ |      |             |                            |

PART III: RECRUITMENT

Rate all the following items as to importance when recruiting an elementary school principal. Check one block for each item.

LEGEND: Very Important..VI - Important..IMP - Acceptable..ACC - Questionable..QUE - Unreliable..UR

|  | VI  | IMP | ACC | QUE | UR  |
|--|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Announcements within the school board                    | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| Announcements within other school boards                 | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| Contacts at professional meetings                        | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| Eligibility lists  | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| In-service programs                                      | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| Newspaper advertisements                                 | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| Private placement offices                                | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| Recommendations by administrators of other school boards | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| Recommendations by university professors                 | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| Standardized application procedures                      | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| Suggestions by central office staff                      | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| University placement offices                             | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| Other (Please specify)                                   | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |

---



---

PART IV: SELECTION COMMITTEE

- A. At what stage in the selection process of elementary school principals are the personnel below involved? (Circle the letter for the appropriate personnel in front of each function)

LEGEND: (a) Director General  
 (b) Assistant Director General  
 (c) Director of Human Resources  
 (d) Personnel Officer  
 (e) Principal  
 (f) Teacher  
 (g) Board Member  
 (h) Parent  
 (i) Other: Specify: \_\_\_\_\_

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Development of a selection policy                       | a | b | c | d | e | f | g | h | i |
| Development of procedures to implement selection policy | a | b | c | d | e | f | g | h | i |
| Screening of Candidates                                 | a | b | c | d | e | f | g | h | i |
| Evaluation of Applicants                                | a | b | c | d | e | f | g | h | i |
| Development of a short list                             | a | b | c | d | e | f | g | h | i |
| Preliminary Interviews                                  | a | b | c | d | e | f | g | n | i |
| Final Interviews  | a | b | c | d | e | f | g | h | i |
| Final Recommendation                                    | a | b | c | d | e | f | g | h | i |
| Final Decision  | a | b | c | d | e | f | g | n | i |
| Evaluation of the selection process                     | a | b | c | d | e | f | g | n | i |

B. Which of the following practices is used in making the final selection for the appointment of an elementary school principal? (Check one)

The Director General recommends only the top candidate to the school board for their approval. ( )

The Director General recommends the top candidates to the school board. ( )

The Selection Committee recommends only the top candidate to the Director General. ( )

The Selection Committee recommends the top candidates to the Director General. ( )

Other: (please describe) ( )

PART V: SELECTION TECHNIQUES

A. Check the techniques used by your school board in selecting the most recently appointed elementary school principal.

Application Banks ( )

Assessment Centers ( )

Consultation with candidate's supervisor for previous employment ( )

Examinations/Testing ( )

Interviews: Structured ( )

Unstructured ( )

Interviews: Preliminary ( )

Second (or more) ( )

Performance appraisal rating ( )

References ( )

University Transcripts ( )

Other: (please specify) ( )

- B. Rate all of the following techniques for the degree of their importance in the selection of an elementary school principal. Check one block for each item.

LEGEND: Very Important..VI - Important..IMP - Acceptable..ACC - Questionable..QUE - Unreliable..UR

|  | VI  | IMP | ACC | QUE | UR  |
|--|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Application Banks  | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| Assessment Centres   | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| Consultation with candidate's supervisor for previous employment | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| Examinations Testing   | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| Interviews: Structured   | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| Unstructured   | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| Interviews: Preliminary  | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| Second (or more)   | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| Performance appraisal rating                                     | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| References   | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| University transcripts   | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| Other: (please specify)  | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |

PART VI: SELECTION CRITERIA

Rate all of the following personal and professional selection criteria for the degree of their importance in the selection of an elementary school principal. Check one block for each item. On the lines following each criterion, describe the justification for the use of the criterion and means of assessment.

LEGEND. Very Important..VI - Important..IMP - Acceptable..ACC - Questionable..QUE - Unreliable..UR

A. Selection Criteria of Personal Qualities

|     | VI  | IMP | ACC | QUE | UR  |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Age | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |

Age of candidate reflects suitability for an administrative position.

Church Membership: Membership in, and regular attendance at, a recognized church in candidate's community.

VI      IMP      ACC      QUF      UN  
( )    ( )    ( )    ( )    ( )

Dress: Quality, appropriateness and style of attire worn by the applicant.

( )    ( )    ( )    ( )    ( )

Good Health: Possess sound physical and mental health as shown by a consistent positive attendance patterns at present career functions.

( )    ( )    ( )    ( )    ( )

Group Skills: Ability to achieve consensus among peers regarding a specific problem by the use of group techniques

( )    ( )    ( )    ( )    ( )

Intelligence: Possess above average mental ability.

( )    ( )    ( )    ( )    ( )

Marital Status: Consideration is given as to whether a candidate is single, married or divorced.

( )    ( )    ( )    ( )    ( )

Mature Judgement: Ability to see the whole picture when examining a problem, and ability to relate it to a broader context so that a rational administrative action results.

( )    ( )    ( )    ( )    ( )

Personal Security: Displays an emotional stability; a healthy self-concept by dealing with a crisis in a patient, calm manner.

( )    ( )    ( )    ( )    ( )

Scholarship: Evidence of sound educational background and knowledge base of education as indicated by success in academic achievement at university.

| VI  | IMP | ACC | QUE | UN  |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |

Sex of Candidate:

|     |     |     |     |     |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|

Other: (please specify)

|     |     |     |     |     |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|

#### B. Selection Criteria of Professional Background

Academic Courses: Recognized courses for credit at an accredited university.

|     |     |     |     |     |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|

Administrative Experience: Previous experience at the vice-principal or other administrative level.

|     |     |     |     |     |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|

Administrative Technical Skills: Ability to plan, organize, direct and control in areas of staff utilization, finance, office management, and plant maintenance as evidenced by a knowledge base in these administrative areas.

|     |     |     |     |     |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|

Change Strategy Skills: Understand the process of change in a school organization, by knowledge of at least one model of the change process.

|     |     |     |     |     |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|

Classroom Teaching Experience: Actual experience as a classroom teacher at the elementary level.

|   | VI  | IMP | AOC | QUE | UN  |
|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Communication Skills: Capacity to exchange information in oral and written form as indicated by ability to speak and write messages that are understood by the receiver, and the ability to interpret the messages sent by others.  | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| <hr/>   |     |     |     |     |     |
| Community Relations Skills: Ability to work effectively with community groups to develop objectives for the local school, and to develop strategies for informing the community of policies and activities of the school, and to provide a means of feedback from community to school. Ability to analyze community structures and the influence of various elements. | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| <hr/>   |     |     |     |     |     |
| Curriculum Development Skills: Knowledge of recent curriculum development and ability to assist teachers introduce new programs in classrooms as shown by personal involvement in at least one curriculum innovation.   | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| <hr/>   |     |     |     |     |     |
| Decision-Making Skills: Ability to define a problem; pose and evaluate alternate solutions so that a rational decision results.   | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| <hr/>   |     |     |     |     |     |
| Director-General Rating: Rating of a learning situation in a classroom as noted on the most recent official report of the Director General.   | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| <hr/>   |     |     |     |     |     |
| Employee of Local District: Employed as a teacher or administrator in the school system where the appointment is to be made.  | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| <hr/>   |     |     |     |     |     |



|  | VI  | IMP | ACC | QUE | UN  |
|--|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Human Relations Skills: Involves motivation, attitude, development, understanding of human needs, development of positive morale and of human resources. Requires appreciation, empathy and consideration for others based on a pattern of successful interpersonal relations as shown by experience in working effectively and efficiently with other people. | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| Research Skills: Ability to help select relevant data for the solution of a problem, and employ the appropriate research tools so that analysis and interpretation of findings may lead to adequate and accurate inferences.   | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| University Degree: A recognized degree from an accredited university is a pre-requisite to appointment as a school principal.  | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| Work With Children: Demonstrated success patterns in working with children by Director General's rating of classroom teaching situation.   | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| Other: (please specify): _____   | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |

### C. Other Qualifications Required

Check from the list below those qualifications you consider when making an appointment to the principalship at an elementary level.

- Length of previous administrative experience. \_\_\_\_\_
- Length of previous teaching experience. \_\_\_\_\_
- Member of a professional organization. \_\_\_\_\_
- Possession of a Quebec Teacher's Licence. \_\_\_\_\_
- Other: please specify \_\_\_\_\_

PART VII: MISCELLANEOUS

- A. Does your school board have a written policy for the selection of elementary school principals?  
If yes, would you kindly send a copy of your policy? Yes ( ) No ( )
- B. Does your school board have written procedures for the selection of elementary school principals?  
If yes, would you kindly send a copy of your procedures. Yes ( ) No ( )
- C. Does your school board have a written job description for the role of the elementary school principal?  
If yes, would you kindly send a copy of your job description. Yes ( ) No ( )
- D. Does your school board have a written personal and professional criteria for assessing prospective elementary school principals? If yes, would you kindly send us a copy of these criteria. Yes ( ) No ( )
- E. Does your school board have a written description of the selection techniques used to measure the personal and professional criteria for prospective elementary school principals? If yes, would you kindly send us a copy of this document. Yes ( ) No ( )
- F. What percent of the school board's budget is allocated to the recruitment and selection of elementary school principals? Recruiting \_\_\_\_\_%  
Selection \_\_\_\_\_%
- G. How satisfied are you with the present selection process used in your school board to select elementary school principals?
- Very Satisfied ( ) Satisfied ( ) Marginally Satisfied ( )  
Marginally Dissatisfied ( ) Dissatisfied ( ) Very Dissatisfied ( )
- 
- H. Does your school board have any plans to revise its selection process of elementary school principals? Yes ( ) No ( )
- I. Recommendations you believe would improve the selection process in your school board relative to elementary school boards.
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- J. Do you wish to receive a copy of the results of this study? Yes ( ) No ( )

The researcher thanks you for your co-operation in responding to this questionnaire.