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Perceived Support for Change and Implementation of Title I of the ADA in Michigan’s Public School Districts

Truman S. Forest
Western Michigan University

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PERCEIVED SUPPORT FOR CHANGE AND IMPLEMENTATION OF TITLE I OF THE ADA IN MICHIGAN'S PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Truman S. Forest, Ed.D.
Western Michigan University, 1997

Data for this study were gathered by survey from public school districts in the state of Michigan that employed more than one central office administrator. The survey was sent to human resource administrators as well as assistant superintendents and other central office administrators in 339 school districts. A total of 188 valid responses were received for a response rate of 55.8 percent.

The study tested five relational hypotheses. $H_a_1$ through $H_a_4$ were tested to determine if a relationship existed between the category of school district readiness to implement Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA Readiness) and such school district structural considerations as the presence of a full-time human resource administrator, student enrollment, size of general fund budget, and geographic location. Resulting data supported the existence of a relationship between the category ADA Readiness and size of general fund budget. A relationship was also established between Readiness and the presence of a full-time human resource administrator. Relationships were not established between Readiness and student enrollment or district geographic location.

A positive, though small, relationship was found to exist between public
school central office administrators’ perceptions of how their superintendents support change and ADA Readiness (the coefficient of determination in the study was less than 6 percent). This relationship was strong enough to support Ha, “there is a relationship between public school central office administrators’ perceptions of top school management (superintendent) support for change and school district ADA Readiness".
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Truman S. Forest
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

How is legislatively mandated change accomplished? In the public school setting, do such variables as geographic location, number of enrolled students, size of general fund budget, and/or the employment of a full-time human resource administrator share a relationship with levels of change implementation? Further, how do public school district central office administrators respond to mandated change? Are they influenced by support (or lack thereof) for change attributed to the district's superintendent?

In this study, the level of support given by Michigan public school superintendents for legislatively mandated change was viewed through the perception of their central office administrators. Additionally, the relationship between that perceived support and the schools' readiness to implement Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was examined.

This study was guided by the following purpose: to determine the readiness of public schools in Michigan to implement the employment related provisions of Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act. This purpose was translated into two major objectives: (1) to determine if a relationship exists between implementation readiness and such variables as school district geographic location, number of enrolled students, size of general fund budget, and the presence or
absence of a full-time human resource administrator; and (2) to determine if a relationship exists between public school central office administrators' perception of their superintendents' support for organizational change and reported readiness. These objectives formed the bases for the five relational hypotheses. The researcher settled on the purpose, objectives and intervening variables in an attempt to shed some light on the elements of organizational change mandated by legislative action and/or regulatory agency demands.

Researchers on effective schools (Carrow-Moffett, 1993; Ernst & Young, 1994; Heller & Firestone, 1995; Schmuck & Runkel, 1994; Siegel, 1994) provide varied descriptions of school administrators as successful change agents, but, their research is limited to self-driven change venues. This study focused on organizational change in public schools where the decision to change, and the direction of the change, were largely proscribed by legislative action.

Title I of the ADA was chosen as the vehicle for this study because implementation of the title's provisions require, from a human resource prospective, certain organizational changes. For the purposes of this study the researcher sought out the general level of implementation readiness among the state's public schools. This level of readiness, referred to in the study as "ADA Readiness", was determined by seeking out the implementation status of several ADA related human resource policy initiatives.

Allen (1993) and Snyder (1991) summarize these policy initiatives. Among these are the identification of essential job functions and the requirement to
provide "reasonable" workplace accommodations for individuals whose disabilities do not prevent them from otherwise performing those essential functions. Implementation also requires that employers keep employee medical records separate from other personnel records and prohibit employers from requiring pre-employment physical/psychological examinations except in conjunction with a bona fide offer of employment. Additionally, Kohl and Greenlaw (1992) emphasize the need for training of managers and supervisors in the implementation of the Act. These factors, providing reasonable accommodation, identifying essential job functions, employee record keeping, and management training became the variables employed in determining "ADA Readiness".

The forces for organizational change may be internally and/or externally driven. They may be independent of each other, occur sequentially, partially, and/or all at the same time. Internally driven forces for change may include changes in membership expectations (e.g., dissatisfaction with present performance) and changes in the membership itself (e.g., the retirement of elder members and an insurgence of younger members) (Tozzi, Rizzo, & Carrol, 1986). Such issues as absenteeism, employee turnover, labor relations problems, and aging facilities are additional internal forces for change (Lippert, Langseth, & Mossop, 1985).

Externally driven forces for change are primarily environmental (Burke & Litwin, 1992, pp. 529-30). Many organizations are affected by changes in ownership, mergers, and hostile takeovers (Tozzi et al., 1986). Political appointments,
changes in purchasing patterns, and the mobility of workers are counted as precursors to change. Public schools are especially susceptible to external changes in voter expectations and mores, economic growth, birth rates, funding patterns, new technologies and government legislation/regulation (Huse, 1980, p. 407).

This final force for change (government legislation/regulation) was the subject for this study. Specifically, the passage in 1990 of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) provided the impetus for the following question: What is the relationship between public school district central office administrators’ perceptions of top school management (superintendents) support for organizational change and school district readiness to implement the provisions of Title I the ADA?

Organizational change, driven by government legislation specifically in the area of civil rights, is often centered in the human resource function (Tozzi et al., 1986). Title VII of the Civil Rights Act (CRA) of 1964 was second only to the Wagner Act of 1935 (National Labor Relations Act, NLRA) in its impact. The Wagner Act canonized and legitimized the American labor movement in the 'forties, 'fifties, and 'sixties, while Title VII opened the movement to many who were previously excluded from the benefits of secure employment (Tossi et al., 1986). The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is an extension of that movement intended to provide a level employment playing field for the disabled, now the nation's largest protected class (Allen, 1993; Snyder, 1991).

Much has been written about the nature of change, organizational change
processes, resistance to and strategies for change, and the relationship and role of top organizational leaders in effecting change (Blanchard, 1992; Connor & Lake, 1994; Dalziel & Schoonover, 1988; Eccles, 1994; Ernst & Young, 1994; Kanter, Stein, & Jick, 1992; Kotter, Schlesinger, & Sathe, 1979; Nadler, Shaw & Walton, 1995). This study explores the relationship between perceived support for change and the implementation of organizational changes mandated by government legislation/regulation, in this case, the Americans with Disabilities Act.

The problem, then, at the root of this study has to do with the environment within which such changes are made. Is the rate and scope of change implemented by public schools related to the organization's support for such change as expressed by its top management (in this case, the superintendent)? According to Beer and Walton (1987), the leader of an organization must be the architect of an organizational environment in which motivation and change will flourish. Additionally, recent studies have shown that school superintendents are the most influential members of the school community (Field, 1981), and that they are perceived as such (Powell, 1990). If this is true, then the expectation is that there will be a positive relationship between top management support for change and the level of implemented change.

Using Lewin's (1951) 3-stage change process as a model, the researcher developed a survey instrument to measure the completion level of six ADA-related activities that are common among organizations progressing toward full implementation of Title I of the Act. Survey responses resulted in an "ADA
Readiness" score ranging from (+6) to (+18) and indicated the school district's progress toward implementation. The survey was also used to measure central office administrators' perceptions of superintendent support for change. Survey responses were used to calculate a "support" score ranging from (0 to (+30) for each responding school district. "Readiness" and "Change" responses and scores were used to test a series of relational hypotheses.

Study Limitations and Delimitations

This study is based on the perceptions of survey respondents. Since perception is a compilation of sense and experience, the survey responses are influenced by the variables that influence perception, including, among others, age, maturity, experience, knowledge, expertise, and physiology, etc. As ex-post-facto research, the study was not designed to determine causal relationships between the selected variables and ADA Readiness. The purpose of the study is limited to determining if any relationship exists.

The study was specifically designed for the public school setting and based on the researcher's knowledge of the common relationship that exists between elected school boards in the state of Michigan and their appointed staff. In all school districts identified in the sample, the chief school officer was a superintendent of schools.

Definitions

**ADA**: The Americans with Disabilities Act.
**ADA Readiness:** The survey respondents' reported perception of the extent to which public school districts in the State of Michigan are prepared to implement the employment related provision of Title I of the ADA. This readiness is expressed as an "ADA Readiness" score calculated on the bases of survey responses and categories of readiness developed from the responses.

**Human resource administrator:** Full-time public school administrator primarily responsible for the management of a public school district's human resource/personnel activities.

**Central office administrators:** In the absence of a designated human resource/personnel administrator, another administrator was selected from the 1994 edition of the Michigan Education Directory according to the following selection scheme in order of selection choice: (a) Assistant/Deputy Superintendents, (b) Executive Directors, (c) Managers (usually Business), and (d) Administrative Assistants.

**Support for change:** Support for organizational change as perceived by public school district human resource and other central office administrators. This support is expressed in the study through the use of a "change support" score calculated on the bases of survey responses.

**Top school management:** For purposes of this study, that person in each school district bearing the title "Superintendent of Schools".
Organization

In Chapter I the objectives of this study are outlined as well as its parameters and limitations. Additionally, useful definitions are provided as well as an indication of the study’s overall organization.

Chapter II of this study summarizes the relevant research on organizational change and leadership’s influence on it. Specifically, Chapter II looks at the nature of organizational change, and several of its models. Resistance to and readiness for change, as well as strategies for affecting change, are discussed. Additionally, leadership’s role in general and specifically in relation to the school setting are explored.

Chapter III describes in detail the procedure for development and implementation of the survey and the preparation and manipulation of the resulting data. Chapter IV reviews the findings of the study, including relationships, if any, between ADA Readiness in Michigan’s public schools and several variables including district geographic location, student enrollment, size of general fund budget, the presence or non-presence of a full-time human resource/personnel administrator, and central office administrators’ perceptions of superintendent support for change. Chapter V summarizes the study’s findings, including their relation to the researcher’s expectations, conclusions, and the study’s implications for practitioners.
CHAPTER II

RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

By their function and nature public school districts are required to react to change that may be driven by any number of external and internal forces. The purpose of this study is to examine how public schools in the state of Michigan have reacted to certain changes that were mandated by the recent passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Specifically, this study is an examination of the schools' readiness to implement the employment related provisions of Title I of the ADA, and whether there exists a relationship between that readiness and school district geographic location, student enrollment, size of school general fund budget, the presence or absence of a full-time human resources administrator, and central office administrators' perceptions of support for change coming from the school districts' top administrators (superintendents).

Organizational Change

Organizational Change Models

How groups and organizations react to changes in their environments has been the subject of much study over the past fifty years. Many researchers,
including Schein (1980), and Tichy and DeVanna (1986), consider the work of psychologist Kurt Lewin as having laid the groundwork for the future study of organizational change. Lewin's work during and after World War II yielded many insights into the inner workings of groups and organizations. Lewin was particularly interested in how homemakers make decisions about what types of food to purchase and prepare for their families. Lewin studied how these decisions were made by individuals and groups (1951).

Borrowing from the physical sciences, Lewin applied the theory of force-field analysis to group decision making. The central notion in force-field analysis is that change is the by-product of the tension between the forces for change and the forces for maintaining the status quo. Through such analysis he postulated that groups are by nature dynamic and constantly subject to change. The extent and success of group change is, therefore, dependent upon the relationship between the forces for change and existing forces supporting the status quo within the group (see Figure 1).

Lewin further argued that of these forces, breaking down resistance to change (eliminating the desire for the status quo) should have a greater positive impact on the successful internalization of change. To illustrate this phenomenon, Lewin developed his three-stage change model. Lewin's three stages are characterized as unfreezing, movement, and refreezing.

Lewin describes "unfreezing" as the process of creating a group atmosphere conducive to change. During this period, skepticism about the status quo is
introduced and a climate which supports and rewards risk-taking is developed. It is during this period that the group (often through its leadership) begins to withhold its approval (rewards) from those who resist the desired change. Such withdrawal of approval is designed to bring about a heightened desire to participate and therefore regain the group's approval.

The "movement" portion of Lewin's model involves the introduction of the change itself. It is here that risk-takers are encouraged to model the change for other members of the group. Imitation (often through training and repetition) becomes the by-word for the group and the process of internalization begins.

For Lewin, the process of internalization of change is the "refreezing" of the group. During this phase the change becomes habit, rewards are commonly shared, and a new period of status quo is established.

Figure 1. Force Field Analysis.

Schein (1980), in his elaboration of Lewin’s model, included discomfortation, the introduction of guilt and anxiety, and creation of psychological safety as integral parts of unfreezing.

Schein called Lewin’s "movement" section "creating change through cognitive redefinition" and included "stimulating imitation and scanning (how are others doing it?)" as necessary for introduction of new processes and skills. For Schein, stabilizing the change (refreezing) included integration of the new process/skill into the member’s personality and incorporation of the new into key relationships and social systems in the organization (pp. 239-252).

Bridges (1980) describes the process of change as having three phases: endings, neutral zones, and new beginnings. The "endings" phase includes such basic processes as disengagement, dis-identification, disenchantment, and dis-orientation.

The "neutral zone" (transition state) is a process of death and rebirth—not simply addition of the new to the old. Conducting a funeral is an example of required transitioning, or breaking from the old to the new while leaving the old behind. "New beginnings" involves taking advantage of the adjustments made in the prior two states and expending the energy (resources) necessary to accept/deal with the new situation.

Belasco (1990) views change as a process that involves building a sense of urgency, creating a clear vision of tomorrow, developing a migration path for the introduction of change, and reinforcing the new behavior (pp. 17-18). Viewed
another way, Tichey & DeVanna (1986) liken organizational change to a three-act play. Act I is characterized by recognition of the need for revitalization. During this period the group’s leadership alerts the organization to the blessings and promises of the desired change. Act II involves creating and focusing attention on a new organizational vision, while Act III concludes with the institutionalization of the change.

Table 1 offers the reader a comparison of some of the various models and processes for change discussed above. Each of these models or processes for change is built on or very similar to Lewin’s 3-stage model. Each includes periods of disengagement, introduction, and reinforcement. These models provide ample instruction to groups and their leaders on the steps necessary to bring about organizational change. Each is based on the assumptions that organizations are dynamic by nature, that is, they seldom experience extended periods of passivity; they are highly susceptible to environmental changes, both external and internal; and that change is a process which can be planned, implemented, and, most importantly, controlled.

**Forces for Change**

The source, type, and level of change visited upon organizations is a function of external and/or internal forces. These forces seldom affect the organization in the same way, and seldom as a single participant. Internal pressures for change may include such things as dissatisfaction with the organization’s present
### Table 1
Comparison of Change Models

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model/Process</th>
<th>Stages of Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lewin</strong></td>
<td>Unfreezing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Schein</strong></td>
<td>Discomfort</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Guilt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Anxiety</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Psycho-safety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bridges</strong></td>
<td>Endings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Belasco</strong></td>
<td>Sense of urgency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tichey/DeVanna</strong></td>
<td>Need for revitalization</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Performance and changes in the characteristics of its members, while size, ownership changes and government regulation may be indicative of external pressures (Tossi et al., 1986, pp. 614-15).

Kotter (1978), on the other hand, divides external change forces into two environments. The organization's "task" environment includes its labor resources, information capabilities, capital, and materials, while its "wider" environment takes into consideration public attitudes, the state of technological development, the economy, political systems, people demographics, social structure, current market prices, and laws. (p. 111).
In drawing on their many years of experience as organizational consultants, Nadler et al. (1995) lists shifts in industry structure, technological innovations, macroeconomic trends and crises, regulatory and legal changes, market and competitive forces, and growth as the ultimate forces for change (pp. 4-6). Eccles (1994) proposes a similar list of change forces including takeovers, the injection of a new CEO, the succession of an insider to the CEO position, fundamental changes in the management team, changes in ownership, and/or the introduction of a change agent, while Kirkulus, Slack and Hinings (1995), in a study of Canadian national sports organizations summarize their findings on forces for change as reorientation, re-creation, or revolution.

In the educational setting, the very nature of school districts is an invitation for change. Schmuck and Runkel (1994), in summarizing research into the nature of school districts, describe the features of educational institutions in the following terms: They are nonvoluntary—at least on the part of its students and taxpayers. Unlike the private sector where performance is often judged by profit level, public schools are only indirectly held accountable for performance. They operate as near-monopolies—while there may be considerable competition in some localities between public and private/parochial schools for students and resources, public schools as a whole are not significantly impacted by such rivalries. The nature of student members is that they are at once members of the organization, participating in learning, and its clients, having little to say about the internal workings of the school, no possibility for promotion to a higher position, and little
chance of being remunerated for services rendered. The educational setting is also characterized by district permeability--public schools are highly permeable to the environment. Tax payers and other interest groups can do many things to disrupt the status quo in schools, such as voting against millage levies, ousting school board members, and complaining to school board members. They foster multiple and unclear goals; typically, schools have a difficult time describing to clients their goals and visions. Often factions within the organization, teachers, administrators, union officials, and non-professional employees, all vie for influence over the business of the school; and they disperse information, not goods - schools historically do not manufacture goods nor turn a profit. Schools deal with information; something that is difficult to quantify and even more difficult to evaluate.

Unlike their counterparts in the manufacturing sector, schools do not produce a product that is easily appraised, either in value or content. The nature of the schools' only product, the educated student, requires a lifetime to evaluate. All of these features, then, make public school districts highly susceptible to change influences.

Resistance to Change

Eccles (1994) defines resistance to change in terms of organizational "viscosity", the combination of power and concerted will of management, level of support for change among employees, and the cost and availability of resources to support the change (p. 14) and includes among the sources of resistance to
change, ignorance, disbelief, fear of loss, mistrust, and frustration (p. 67).

Tichy and DeVanna (1986) claim that change, whether at the societal, organizational, or individual level, means "dislocation or discomfort". It is this discomfort that is often, among other obstacles, the basis for resistance to change exhibited by the organization's members or systems. In discussing the role of "comfort" in resisting change, O'Toole (1995) indicates that the key elements of change resistance relate to loss of power and influence, fear of the unknown, and natural reaction to the imposition of someone else's will (p. 239).

Blanchard (1992) reported that when faced with change, people tend to (a) be awkward, ill at ease, and self conscious; (b) think about what they are expected to give up; (c) feel alone; (d) can handle only so much change at one time; (e) are at different levels of readiness; (f) doubt they have the resources or skills to handle the change; and (g) tend to revert to old behavior when the pressure is lifted.

Connor and Lake (1988) attribute resistance to change to a lack of understanding and acceptance (pp. 117-119). Failure to understand may be attributed to top leadership's inability to communicate effectively the need for and benefits of change (1994, p. 135).

Bridges (1980) describes resistance in technical, political, and cultural terms. Technical resistance to change include such phenomena as habit and inertia, fear of the unknown, and resources committed to old methods ("sunk costs"). He describes political resistance as including threats to power coalitions,
limitations on resources (an adjunct of sunk costs), and admission of failure (of the present system). Cultural resistance includes members’ "selected perception" (seeing what they want to see), regression to the "good old days" (success brings on the desire to regress), and the organization's lack of climate (readiness) for change.

In describing resistance to change in schools, Schmuck and Runkel (1994), depict both structural and personal barriers. Among the structural impediments are included decreasing tax bases, poverty, demographic shifts, mobility of families and students, overcrowded classrooms, and crime. Among the personal responses to the stress of change found among educators are the tendencies to become deeply pessimistic and cynical, and/or to expect that effective change will come from the outside world.

Readiness for Change

In Changing Ways (Dalzeil & Schoonover, 1988) the authors describe the organization's readiness for change in the following terms:

1. History of Change: The prior experience of the organization in accepting change.

2. Clarity of Expectations: The degree to which the expected results of change are shared across various levels of the organization.

3. Origin of the Idea or Problem: the degree to which those most affected by the change initiated the idea or problem the change solves.
4. Support of Top Management: The degree to which top management sponsors the change.

5. Compatibility with Organizational Goals: The degree to which the proposed change corresponds to past and present organizational practices and plans (pp. 51-66).

Connor and Lake (1994) describe an organization's readiness for change in structural terms, arguing that the more bureaucratic an organization becomes, the less likely it is to embrace change easily. This is attributed to bureaucratic organizations' ability and penchant for internalization and institutionalization (the setting of practice into intractable policy) (p. 26).

Hennecke (1991) contrasts the change-resistant organization with its change-sensitive counterpart. The former is characterized by consistent denial of the need for change, fondness for present methodology, and dictatorial top management. Change in such organizations only occurs as the result of a catastrophic event, which is often a precursor to the death of the organization.

Hennecke's change-sensitive organization is characterized by constantly looking for ways to change resulting in a form of "organizational tacking". Much like a sailboat that makes incremental changes in course to accommodate changes in the boat's environment, so the change-sensitive organization makes small changes in its dealings with its customers and competitors. Change-sensitive organizations work on controlling their environments and are likely to be guided by collaborative decision making.
Tanner and Tanner (1987), in summarizing research on educational improvement, describe schools that are ready for change as those that exhibit certain qualities. Among these are a professional staff with a problem-solving orientation, a democratic-participative organizational structure with incentives for cooperative, collaborative, and systematic problem solving, and a firm understanding of external environmental forces.

For Ernst and Young (1994) transformation requires the determination of (a) the organization's capacity for change, (b) the proper sequence to implement change, (c) the appropriate levels of participation, (d) the plan required to effectively communicate change initiatives, (e) how to build and maintain the sponsorship required to sanction and legitimize the change. In this context change requires a holistic approach including elements of both the structural (organizational development, performance measures, recognition, and rewards) and human aspects (leadership, communication, participation, and commitment) of change (p. 5-6).

Armenakis, Harris, and Mossholder (1993) present a typology for change readiness programs based on the following considerations: the extent to which employees are ready for change and the urgency of the change (time available before implementation). As expressed in the typology, organizations experiencing low levels of readiness and low urgency should proceed with an aggressive change program consisting of persuasive communication, active participation, externally prepared information, and the help of a professional change agent. On the other
hand, organizations exhibiting a high degrees of readiness and urgency often are compelled to implement readiness programs based solely on quick, direct, and persuasive communication.

**Strategies for Change**

Kotter et al. (1979) discuss the methods for dealing with resistance to change and the situations in which they are best used. These methods include (a) education and communication (where the information about change is lacking or inaccurate), (b) participation and involvement (where initial information is less than needed and power to resist is great), (c) facilitation and support (where resistance is related to adjustment problems), (d) negotiation and agreement (where a group which stands to lose in the change process has considerable power to resist), (e) manipulation and co-optation (where other factors will not work or are too expensive), and (f) coercion (where speed is essential and change inhibitors possess considerable power to resist) (pp. 388-91).

Hennecke (1991) offers an agenda for change sensitization that includes, first and foremost, the launching of employee involvement efforts. Since employees are closer to the customers and the products they are better positioned to offer improvements in both the product and its delivery.

Hennecke’s second suggestion includes establishing a "skunk works" where creative employees are encouraged to develop new products and marketing strategies. These small, often informal work groups are insulated from the normal,
negative flow of the organization during these "skunking" periods and are provided the time (sometimes as much as 25 percent of regular work hours) and resources to develop new and innovative ideas.

The third of Hennecke’s proposals deals with imagining and articulating "phantom competitors", thus reinforcing Lewin's "unfreezing" step. In keeping with his "skunk works" theme, Hennecke encourages organizations to cross-pollinate their key players by exposing them to all facets of the organization’s decision processes; to formalize "crystal balling", or horizon scanning as part of the planning process; to encourage (reward) painful, but needed constructive dissent; and to stir up the management pot by bringing in "new blood".

The Superintendent as Change Agent

The skills and activities superintendents employ to encourage and direct change in their districts have only recently become the subject of extensive research (Cuban, 1984). Yet, several studies can be drawn upon to give an indication of what is currently known.

In summarizing the research on effective schools, Griffin (1992) cites several studies. Murphy, Hallinger, and Peterson (1985) studied 12 effective school districts on the west coast. Their findings indicated that superintendents in these districts engaged in some common activities. These included communicating an expectation of excellence in all undertakings, focusing on productivity, improvement, change, problem solving, and internal operations.
Ficklen (1988), in a case study of a growing urban district in the South, found that the superintendent had the ability to be assertive and aggressive when necessary, and projected his vision of what the district could become. DeYoung (1986), in another case study of a Southern school district, viewed the school superintendent as being "pivotal" to the process of school reform. DeYoung's superintendent was fully aware of the district's culture and used its political and social systems to create a climate of excellence.

In another case study, Strother (1990) found that the superintendent was adroit at verbalizing high expectations while Leary (1988) saw the top school administrator as an expert at networking political and staff resources. Murphy and Hallinger (1986), in a case study of 12 diverse California school districts, found that effective superintendents actively involved themselves in district activities, developed and communicated district goals, were intimately involved in the selection of teacher and administrators, made frequent school visitations, and were able to focus the instructional process.

Kent (1988), in reviewing the literature on the role of the superintendent in instructional reform, references Boyd's (1974) discussion of the developing role of the superintendent as the chief school officer. Boyd describes superintendents in terms of their ability to act as political strategists to win support for change, displaying such tactics as persuasion and coalition building.

In a case study of a large urban district, Field (1981) found that the superintendent's support was "pivotal" (see also DeYoung, 1986) to acceptance and
implementation of change. In the Field study, the superintendent used his considerable "referent" power to provide needed support for change.

Using the Leadership Behavior Description Questionnaire, Halpin (1956) found that superintendents in 50 Ohio school systems scored high on such activities as goal setting, specifying means and materials, and providing internal structures for goal attainment. Additional activities receiving high marks among superintendents included granting autonomy to subordinates, expressing warmth and friendliness, and building relationships.

In a case study of three large districts chosen at random from around the country, Jones (1989) found that superintendents were perceived by their central office administrators as crucial to the initiation of change, but not very instrumental in the process that followed. Here central office administrators viewed themselves as the facilitator of change process, providing the necessary structural changes.

Based on her years of change consulting in the education field, Carrow-Moffit (1993) argues that successful school administrators must pay attention to the six characteristics of proven change agents: (1) identifying and speaking vision, (2) empowering self and others, (3) knowing one's values, (4) knowing one's personal change barriers and enhancers, (5) environmental scanning, and (6) resisting the overwhelming desire to return to the old ways.

In a study of eight elementary schools that had introduced into their curriculum the concept of "social problem solving", Heller and Firestone (1995)
found a direct relationship between institutionalization of the concept and the presence of a number of change supportive leadership functions. These included the ability to provide and sell a vision; provide needed resources, encouragement and recognition; adapt standard operating procedures; monitor change; and handle disturbances (run interference).

Using criteria from the Malcom Baldridge National Quality Award, Siegel and Byrne (1994) studied seven highly effective school districts from West Virginia, Alaska, Wisconsin, Vermont, New York, and Pennsylvania. Four change supportive elements were found to be common among the seven districts. These districts were able to confront issues early in their development, relied heavily on resources from outside the district, placed a premium on new tools and training, and exhibited an ability to "stay the course" no matter the resistance.

Based on the results of a survey of 491 school administrators identified as "successful", Wendel, Hoke, & Joekel (1996), found that respondents described themselves in terms of eleven common elements or themes (pp. 7-9). These included possession of an educational philosophy, identified values, visionary leadership, institutional leadership, commitment, interpersonal relations, innovation and quality, risk taking, communication, selection, personal development and professional membership.

In a discussion of the institutionalization of change in schools, Jones (1988) found that research in the area is, at best, sparse. Jones believes that this lack of research may be the result of the nature of school reform, in that much of it is
initiated by legislation or by the courts. Additionally, Miles (1983) bemoaned that not much thought had been given to what a school district looks like after a change program has been institutionalized.

Miles and Lewis (1986), in summarizing the indicators of institutionalization, argue that the continuation of an innovation without an organizational and structural change does not constitute institutionalization. Their list includes such indicators as acceptance by the relevant actors; stable, routinized implementation; widespread use of the change; expected continuation of the change; continuation of the change without dependency on the actions of specific individuals; and routine allocations of time and money.

Nadler et al. (1995), in discussing the critical challenges to sustaining change efforts, describe the activities of successful change agents in terms of their ability to deal with the emotional impact of change, restore faith and confidence, form supportive teams, and foster organizational dialogue. These abilities are enhanced by a doggedness toward communicating positive potential and a compelling vision of opportunities for increased influence and rewards.

Summary

Organizational change has been defined as that "set of decisions, activities, and consequences linked to adopting different ways of conducting business" (Ernst & Young, 1994, p. 4) and has been shown to be a controllable process, with definable parameters, that may lead to expected outcomes. That organizational
change is process-laden is evident in the work Lewin (1951), Schein (1980),
Belasco (1990), Armenakis et al. (1993), and Siegel and Byrne, (1994). Each has
described organizational change in terms of steps, time periods, and/or transitions.
Likewise, the process is fraught with complex issues that organizational leaders
need to consider in planning and implementing change.

Ernst and Young (1994) argue that effective change requires a holistic
strategy including elements of both the structural (organizational development,
performance measures, recognition and awards) and human aspects (leadership,
communication, and commitment) of change while Champy (1995) holds that the
first duty of leadership is to understand people’s need-to-know, to understand
where they "fit" into the immediate and long-term purposes of the organization
(pp. 46-54).

Consideration must be given to the source of the pressure for change.
Does it derive from environmental factors outside the control of the organization,
or forces from within? Organizational change readiness must be assessed. Con­
sideration must be given to the type and level of resistance that will be met.
Strategies must be developed to break down change-resistant barriers and prepare
the membership for the inevitable. Such strategies must take into consideration
the entire realm of technical, political, and cultural barriers (Belasco, 1990;
Bridges, 1980; Dalzeil & Schoonover, 1988; Hennecke, 1991) and must include
clear signals from the organizational leaders that the old ways will no longer be
tolerated and the new is valued.
Assessing readiness and developing strategies for lessening change-resistant barriers makes possible the introduction of the targeted change. Appropriate modeling and training, and the assurance that the change is valued by the organization help smooth the transition from old to new.

Internalization (institutionalization) of the change, the process of making the change a part of the organizational routine, involves acceptance, stabilization, expected continuance and normality. Further, the change must become part of the organizational structure and be routinely funded.

As illustrations, Lewin's (1951) 3-stage model and the elaborations that follow have been used to explain the necessary steps of that process. These models assume that organizations are dynamic, change is inevitable, and the process of change may be planned and controlled. The role of leadership is considered important, if not "pivotal" to the success of change. This is true in school districts as well as in the private sector. While there is not yet a broad understanding of how school superintendents initiate and sustain change, the indications are that they can and do display the skills and actions that ensure successful change.

Leadership

Introduction

Any discussion of leadership may lead in many directions. Stodgill (1974), in his Handbook of Leadership, reminds us that there are "almost as many definitions for leadership as there are persons who have attempted to define the
concept" (p. 7). Still, the labyrinth of leadership research may be reasonably divided into a handful of definable periods.

**Periods of Leadership Research**

Loosely described, these periods begin with early attempts to define leadership in terms of traits and personalities. This period engulfs the earliest of leadership research stemming from the mid 1800's to approximately the mid 1900's. This period is exemplified by the "Great Man" theory associated with the works of Carlyle (1841) and James (1880). The thrust of these early theories is that leaders are born, not made; they are pre-destined by their heritage and/or their personality traits to become leaders. The concept was further honed by Wood (1913), who concluded that nations are shaped by the men who rule them, and Wiggam (1931), who postulated that the world's supply of superior leaders was dependent largely on a high birth rate among the "abler classes".

The second period, roughly from the 1950's to the 1970's is grounded in the search for the one "best" leadership style. During this period researchers developed many two-factor theories and models in an attempt to describe the effective leader as one who maintains a correct balance between concern for people (relationships) and production. Indicative of this thrust is the work of Rensis Likert (1967) who argued that leaders must consider the needs and desires of the organization's members, especially in providing avenues for members' influence on organizational decision making. Further work of this period is exemplified by
Blake and Mouton's Managerial Grid (1964), describing managers in terms of their penchant for consideration of people and production. These management style ranged from the "out to lunch" non-manager (1,1 on the Grid), to the highly effective (9,9) manager who exhibits a high degree of regard for collaboration of both people and production resources.

McGregor (1960), argued that while most managers treat workers as though they disliked work and must be coerced into it (Theory X), effective managers view their employees as having much to offer, consider work to be a natural part of living, and are willing to commit to mutually held goals (Theory Y). To Blake and Mouton's Managerial Grid, Hersey and Blanchard (1969) added another dimension, worker maturity. For Hersey and Blanchard, leadership style may range from delegating (conditioned by high worker maturity) to telling (when faced with workers with low maturity). Between these two style extremes are "participative" and "selling", both requiring a moderate level of worker maturity.

The third, and most recent period, beginning roughly in the 1970's, is highlighted by research into the relationship that exists between leaders and followers. Early research in this period centers on the exchange relationship (Dansereau, Graen, & Haga, 1975; Hollander, 1958; 1979). Exchange theories centered on the notion that there is a mutuality of cost and benefit that develops between the leader and the group. These theories are transactional in nature and require a continuous re-negotiation process in order for the leader to re-establish his/her influence over the group.
Later research during this period is aimed at a greater understanding of leaders' roles in developing organizations capable of the process of "environmental tacking" (learning from their successes and failures). Senge (1990), in his book *The Fifth Discipline*, describes organizations in terms of their learning disabilities, and challenges leaders to create a continual tension gap between the organization as it is and as it could be. This is accomplished by a set of disciplines which include learning to think in terms of whole systems, collaboration of learning styles (both structural and personal), institutionalization of learning through collaborative work groups, and the building of a shared vision wherein all members of the organization are encouraged to learn and contribute. Sims and Lorenzi (1992) extended Senge's work by applying social cognition (the learning process) to member behavior. Their resulting model of social learning and cognition exhorts managers to apply learning process skills to change or redirect the behaviors of subordinates in small, controllable work settings.

Somewhat earlier in this period, Burns (1978) described leadership styles in terms of their "quid-pro-quo" (transactional), or "charismatic" (transformational) relationships. For Burns, the transactional leader is an example of how exchange theories work. The transactional leader, often effectively, relies on the setting of goals and their attainment. This give-and-take process is most often uni-directional, flowing from the manager to the worker. The best of transactional leaders are able to use their considerable influence to create a cooperative work setting, where workers have "bought into" or, for consideration offered,
agreed to commit to the goals set before them.

Burns’ transformational leader relies heavily on collaboration and a shared organizational vision. In addition to the personal skills of the charismatic leader, who uses his/her unique referent power to forge the group’s direction, the transformational leader depends heavily upon the ability to project an organizational vision constructed of the best ideas and talents offered by the group. Additionally, Bass (1990) adds, the transformational leader evokes intense feelings, sends clear messages to the group, relies more heavily on ideas than on work processes, and is able to generate extreme excitement over the organization’s direction (p. 218).

In an attempt to pull together the best of the many leadership theories and models, Bass and Avolio (1994) present a framework for the ultimate contingency model, dubbed the "Full Range Model of Leadership" (FRL). The model is based on the assumption that effective leaders must be able to display a number of leadership styles in order to apply the style that best suits the organization’s current culture and environment. The FRL model is unique in that it includes, as a usable leadership style, a total lack of leadership ability.

The FRL model is divided into three working components, the first of which may best be described as the "non-leadership" component. Here Bass and Avolio describe the "laissez-faire" manager as one who is either physically or mentally absent from the scene. This leader shuns innovation, makes no attempt to motivate workers or meet any of their needs, and relies totally on the good-will
of subordinates and superordinates alike.

The second component of the model describes managers in terms of trans-actional leadership factors. Among these are the "management by exception" and "contingent reward" styles. Those who manage by exception are those who only intervene to make a correction. This is the passive-aggressive person who avoids confrontation until problems escalate beyond the mediation state. Such leaders rarely use positive reinforcement, but are quick to criticize.

"Contingent reward" managers, on the other hand, are those who are adroit at providing positive feedback to subordinates and place a high value on the individual achievement of their workers. For the "reward" manager, commitment to group goals and processes is often reliant on his/her persuasive ability. Bass and Avolio describe this management style as a true "quid-pro-quo" leadership style.

The final segment of the FRL model is described as "transformational", and is inclusive of four similar but distinct styles. The first exemplifies "individual consideration" and is grounded in the notion that the leader/follower relationship can be based on learning opportunities. This leader may be best described as the "coach" who challenges followers to utilize their talents to more effectively address the group's goals.

The second transformational style in the model is centered on "intellectual stimulation". In this model subordinates are encouraged to question methods, processes, and values as interpreted by their leaders. Followers are encouraged and enabled to think about old and recurring problems in new and innovative
The third style is based on "inspirational motivation". The inspirational motivator is one who uses symbols and images to focus the efforts of followers. This model operates on the emotional level and is exemplified by inspirational speeches and presentations designed to "psyche-up" group members and to focus their resources on mutually desired goals.

Bass and Avolio describe the final style in their model as "charismatic". This leader/manager is one who is thoroughly respected by the members of the group, holds high standards for him/herself and the group, and is able to challenge followers to overcome any barriers. Unlike the inspirational leader, the charismatic leader relies on his/her extensive referent power to focus the groups talents and resources.

Leadership and Change

Bennis and Nanus (1985) highlighted the importance of leadership in organizational survival by noting: "A business short on capital can borrow money, and one with a poor location can move, but a business short on leadership has little chance to survive" (p. 20). But, how do leaders bring about change? What roles do leaders play in the change process, what skills do they apply, and what kinds of activities do they engage in?

Senge (1990), in defining the "learning organization," contends that a "shared organizational vision" binds people together around a common identity
and sense of destiny (p. 206). Put another way, for Senge, the role of leadership in organizational change has to do with supporting the process of change by exemplifying the group's shared vision.

Bennis (1969) reminds us that change requires the "support of key people" in the organization, and that successful change is a process congruent with the organization's goals. He further indicates that the leader must assess the organization's readiness for change and provide security for the change agent (pp. 44-47).

McLagan (1988) insists that the leaders major function in change is to provide support to the human resource development function by seeing to it that sufficient training and development activities are provided to insure reinforcement, once the change has been identified and introduced. Dalziel and Schoonover (1988) regard the role of top management in change situations as providing ample resources, sponsorship, networking, and active problem solving (pp. 97-101).

Abraham and Flippo (1991), in reviewing Lewin's model, elaborate on the tactics of top management in bringing about effective and long-lasting change. These include, in the unfreezing stage, the generation of self-doubt as to the appropriateness of present practices; pointing out the legal requirements for change, if appropriate; and isolating the old behavior by withdrawing organizational approval. In the movement stage, Abraham and Flippo call for an "action plan" to ward off resistance to the required change and to elicit the support of the change recipients. This requires the participative involvement of the organiza-
tion's members resulting in a sort of reciprocal agreement between the change agent and the recipients of the change. Finally, Abraham and Flippo describe the refreezing stage as a period of continuous reinforcement with appropriate, value-laden rewards.

Hunt (1991) in summarizing Yukl's (1989) leadership typology, describes effective leaders as those who have learned, among other skills, to network, be supportive of peers and subordinates, build effective teams, motivate others with effective use recognition and appropriate rewards, plan and organize, solve problems and manage conflict, monitor the environment, and effectively communicate clear organizational roles and objectives. Hunt adds the abilities to recognize a crisis for its change value, create a shared vision or desired future state, mobilize commitment, and institutionalize change as it happens as the additional skills exhibited by transformational leaders.

Summary

There are, to be sure, many theories and models of leadership. They range from early understanding of personalities and traits to the continuing evolution of our knowledge of the interaction between leaders and followers. Today's research into the learning (cognizant) abilities of organizations and their members promises even more new theories and models. Hunt (1991), offers the opinion that the next step in our search for knowledge about leadership may well focus on the interaction of the socially cognizant organization and its environment, pull-
ing together all the pieces of the leadership puzzle.

There is evidence that effective schools are often described in terms of their ability and willingness to change (Carrow-Moffett, 1993; Ernst & Young, 1994, Schmuck & Runkel, 1994). There is also ample evidence that leadership skills contribute much to an organization’s ability to change (Ficklen, 1988; DeYoung, 1986; Murphy, Hallinger, & Peterson, 1985). Leadership and change, then, provide a natural bridge for studying the readiness of Michigan’s public schools to implement the federally mandated changes of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

The Americans With Disabilities Act

Introduction

The vehicle for this study, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), provides an opportunity to learn how public school human resource and other central office administrators go about the business of internalizing change that is legislatively mandated. Further, it provides a vehicle to learn how their superintendents’ perceived support for such change effects the final outcome of the change process.

The ADA, a federal response to the growing impact that persons with disabilities could and should have on the nation’s economy, was signed into law on July 20, 1990 by President George Bush.
Civil Rights for the Disabled

The ADA is considered by many to be the most sweeping piece of civil rights legislation enacted since the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Many advocate groups have hailed the legislation as the "emancipation proclamation of the disabled" (Allen, 1993).

Based on information provided by the U.S. Department of Labor, Congress, in passing the ADA, was influenced by the following workforce demographics:

1. White males, by the year 2000, will make up only 45 percent of the nation's work force.

2. Women, minorities, and immigrants will, by the year 2000, account for more than 80 percent of growth in the nation's labor force.

3. The growth rate of the work force in the year 2000 will be only around 1.2 percent, compared with an annual growth rate of 2.6 percent in the 1970's.

4. In the year 2000, one out of three people will be 50 years of age or older.

These changing demographics will lead to a labor shortage in many industries by the year 2000 (Allen, 1993; Snyder, 1991). To offset this demand for labor, previously underutilized segments of our society will be pressed into service.

Among these are approximately 43 million disabled Americans, more than 60 percent of whom are unemployed. In 1970, the total cost of maintaining per-
sons with disabilities amounted to $19.3 billion. By 1986 the cost had rocketed to $169.4 billion and in 1993 the federal government budgeted in excess of $200 billion in direct public and private assistance to the disabled (Snyder, 1991, pp. 11-15).

**Understanding the ADA**

In enacting the ADA, Congress intended to: (a) provide a clear and comprehensive national mandate for the elimination of discrimination against individuals with disabilities; (b) provide clear, strong, consistent, enforceable standards addressing discrimination against individuals with disabilities; (c) ensure that the Federal Government plays a central role in enforcing the standards established in the Act on behalf of individuals with disabilities, and; (d) invoke the sweep of congressional authority, including the power to enforce the fourteenth amendment and to regulate commerce, in order to address the major areas of discrimination faced day-to-day by people with disabilities.

There are five titles, or major sections, of the ADA. This study will focus on Title I - Employment, but an overview of the various titles is also here provided.

**Title I - Employment**

This is a key provision of the Act as it extends the protection of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to the disabled; while further strengthening and
broadening coverage of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. It further requires that employers take affirmative action to provide "reasonable accommodations" to both employees and job applicants with disabilities. Title I took effect on July 26, 1992 for employers with 25 or more employees. For employers with 15 or more workers, the Act's effective date was July 26, 1994.

Title II - State and Local Governments and Public Services

This title of the Act prohibits public entities from discriminating against qualified individuals with disabilities or excluding them from participating in their services, programs, or activities. Most of Title II's provisions deal with transportation provided the general public via bus, rail, taxi, and limousine services (oddly enough, aircraft services are excluded).

Title III - Private Entities

Title III prohibits non-employment related discrimination by private entities. It prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability with respect to the "full and equal" enjoyment of the goods, services, facilities, privileges, and accommodations of any privately owned and operated place of public accommodation.

Under certain circumstances Title III requires modification of existing structures to provide barrier-free access. Access is required in all cases of new construction. Title III became law on January 26, 1992.
Title IV - Telecommunications

Title IV requires equality of service for telephone customers who use non-voice terminal devices for communication.

Title V - Miscellaneous Provisions

This Title delineates the ADA's relationship to other laws, outlines insurance industry issues, prohibits retaliation against a claimant under the Act, prohibits the states from adopting lesser standards of compliance, and encourages "alternative" measures for the resolution of disputes under the Act (Allen, 1993, Snyder, 1991).

Legislative Environment of the ADA

Four major civil rights laws, enacted since the 1960's, paved the way for the ADA. These include the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Vietnam Era Veterans Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974.

Often referred to as the most sweeping anti-discrimination law ever enacted, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (CRA) prohibits discrimination in employment (in both private and public settings) based on race, sex, religion, national origin, and color. The Act has been credited with doing more to level the employment playing field than any legislation before or since (Kohl &
The Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 (ADEA) prohibits discrimination in employment on the basis of age by creating an additional "protected" group—individuals 40 years of age and older. The ADEA, like its precursor, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, is enforced by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC).

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 provided limited protection for the disabled but confined its coverage to federal, state, and local governments and some federal contractors. In the 1980's, Congress found the Rehabilitation Act to be "inadequate" in its protection of the disabled (Allen, 1993; Snyder, 1991, p. 15).

The Vietnam Era Veterans' Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974 provided limited re-employment protection for disabled veterans and required employers doing business with the federal government to adopt affirmative action plans for hiring and retaining disabled veterans. Even in the face of all this legislation, the EEOC estimated that in 1990 there were 15 million workers with disabilities who enjoyed little or no protection against employment-related discrimination. The ADA was enacted to fill this gap (Kohl & Greenlaw, 1992). To avoid establishing a separate enforcement agency, Congress, in adopting the ADA, specifically co-opted the "powers, remedies, and procedures" for enforcement found in Title VII of the Civil Rights of 1964 (Snyder, 1991, p. 393).
ADA Employment Issues

There is a growing volume of written material on the ADA and the changes in employment practices it requires. Snyder (1991) and Allen (1993) discuss these requirements and focus only on the mandated changes. Among those are the identification of essential job functions, the provision of reasonable accommodation to job candidates (providing such accommodation does not prove to be an economic burden to the employer) and a prohibition against certain pre-employment physical and psychological testing without first proffering a bona-fide offer of employment.

These mandated requirements, plus indications of offered training opportunities, and/or the presence of additional special pre-employment testing procedures, were used to prepare the survey used in this study.
CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY/PROCEDURE

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine the readiness of public schools in Michigan to implement the employment related provisions of Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act. This purpose was translated into two major objectives: (1) to determine if such variables as the presence or absence of a full-time human resource administrator, number of enrolled students, size of general fund budget, and geographic location may be related to that readiness; and (2) to determine the relationship, if any, between central office administrators' perception of their superintendents' support for organizational change and the degree of readiness. Support for change and ADA Readiness were measured through data supplied by responses to a survey mailed to 339 public school administrators in the State of Michigan. Additionally, survey data were used to describe overall ADA Readiness as well as readiness viewed in relation to several variables, including school district location, size of general fund budget, number of enrolled students, and the presence or non-presence of a full-time personnel/human resource administrator.

As indicated earlier, ADA Readiness was described in terms of the
implementation status of certain required human resource policy initiatives. Such policy changes are designed to bring about planned organizational change.

ADA Readiness in Michigan's public schools was viewed not only in terms of policy implementation, but also in relation to the (perceived) support for such implementation efforts emanating from the school district's top administrator. Scholars agree that the success of planned change in organizations is often related to the leadership style of organizational leaders (Bennis, 1985; Dalziel & Schoonover, 1988; McLagan, 1988; Senge, 1990). Further, recent studies of effective schools have found that superintendents are a pivotal factor in successful education-related change (DeYoung, 1986; Field, 1981; Heller & Firestone, 1995; Jones, 1985). Thus, the relational hypothesis, "There is a relationship between public school central office administrators' perceptions of top school management (superintendent) support for organizational change and school district ADA Readiness" was tested.

Statement of the Hypotheses

To carry out the study, five relational hypotheses were formed:

$H_{a_1}$: There is a relationship between public school district geographic location and ADA Readiness.

$H_{a_2}$: There is a relationship between public school enrollment and ADA Readiness.

$H_{a_3}$: There is a relationship between size of public school general fund
budgets and ADA Readiness.

$H_{a4}$: There is a relationship between the presence of a full-time public school human resource administrator and ADA Readiness.

$H_{a5}$: There is a relationship between public school central office administrators' perceptions of top school management (superintendent) support for organizational change and school district ADA Readiness.

Population and Sample

The nature of hypothesis #5 ($H_{a5}$), that is, the determination of a relationship between public school central office administrators' perception of support for change and ADA Readiness, and the nature of that change, dictated the population selection. The population chosen consisted of those public school districts in the State of Michigan that employ, in addition to a superintendent of schools, at least one other central office administrator. The population was gleaned from the 1994 edition of the Michigan Education Directory (MED). The MED contains information about each public and private school district in the State of Michigan. Because the study compared perception of support for change, as exhibited by school superintendents, it was necessary to seek out the perceptions of school central office administrators other than the superintendent of schools. There were 339 public school districts listed in the MED that employed a superintendent of schools and at least one other central office administrator. These formed the basis of the study population. The groups identified with the
largest numbers of entries in the MED were school districts with assistant superintendents (n=131), business managers (n=105), and human resource/personnel directors (n=38). Many other entries were also found, including administrative assistants, directors of community education, special education, buildings and grounds, food services, etc.

School districts listing a superintendent as the only central office administrator were not included in the sample. First among those selected for the sample were human resource/personnel administrators. If the Michigan Education Directory listing did not include a human resource/personnel administrator, other central office administrators were selected for the sample in order of preference as follows: assistant/deputy superintendents, executive directors, business managers, managers, and administrative assistants. There were 339 such administrators listed in the directory. (Note: administrative secretaries, directors of transportation, athletics, community/adult educators, maintenance, building and grounds people were not included in the sample.)

Each school district's name, address, and location (by county) were entered into a sample database. Likewise the name and title of each survey recipient (as selected from the Michigan Education Directory) were also added. In entering the data, each district was given an ascending numerical designation (beginning with 001) to aid in the selection of recipients in the survey pre-test.
The Questionnaire

The Michigan Public School ADA Support/Readiness Survey (for the full questionnaire, see Appendix A), was developed by the researcher to provide a first-hand look at the state of public school ADA Readiness and to examine the relationships between the variables in the relational hypotheses. The questionnaire consists of four parts. Part I is designed to measure public school readiness to implement Title I of the ADA. Part III is meant to glean from central office administrators their perceptions of how their superintendents support various behaviors associated with successful change efforts. Parts II and IV elicit several demographic responses with which the returns of Parts I and III are discussed. The physical design of the questionnaire allowed the addressee to easily complete the two-page, four-part questionnaire, fold and tape it, and drop it in the return mail.

In selecting items to be included in Part I of the survey, the researcher drew from materials and information gleaned from attending several training workshops on implementation of Title I the ADA and nearly a quarter-century of employment in human resource administration. Additionally, writers of early texts on the ADA and employment issues (Allen, 1993; Snyder, 1991) stressed the importance of such policy initiatives as providing for reasonable accommodation, alternative testing procedures, appropriate pre-employment testing procedures, as well as the need for training and personnel record keeping policies in tune with
In discussing the level of ADA Readiness found in the public schools, four variables were selected to limit and add meaning to the scope of the study (see Gay, 1976, pp. 10-11; and Kerlinger, 1986, p. 29). The variables include one that is driven by a relatively fixed force (geographic location, $H_{a1}$), one variable that is externally driven (school enrollment, $H_{a2}$), and two variables driven primarily by internal, budgetary decision making (size of general fund budget, $H_{a3}$, and the presence or absence of a full-time human resource administrator, $H_{a4}$).

Education researchers have used a myriad of variables to describe public schools and their environments. From these variables, three were chosen that have received much attention. Many studies have used school district geographic location as a controlling and/or intervening research variable. Tomkins and Deloney (1994) looked at the relationship between urban and rural school locations and such other variables as drop-out rates, unemployment, student isolationism, and levels of student participation. Heller (1993) described geographic location in terms of its relationship to higher order thinking skills. Alspauch (1992), Kearney (1994), and Renchler (1992) studied geographic location's effect on student achievement and Capper (1990) opined that schools in rural locations had a markedly more difficult time implementing education change strategies. Location, in the case of Michigan schools, was operationally defined as southeast, southwest, northern lower peninsula, and upper peninsula. These categories represent dense urban populations (southeast) and sparsely populated rural areas.
School enrollment has also been a variable in many studies. Lambdin (1995) and Walberg (1994) describe the relationship between school size and student achievement. Stevens and Peltier (1994) looked at the relationship between school size and student participation in extra curricular activities while Howley (1989) concluded that small school districts provided certain intangible benefits to low socioeconomic students. Respondents were asked exact enrollment figures within 1,000 students.

Likewise, school expenditures have received much attention. Renchler (1992) and Sharp (1993) compared school expenditures to student achievement. Babbett (1992) described the state of Tennessee's school district "report card" system, indicating that school expenditures was one of 39 variables used in grading the state's public school districts; and (State Education Performance Chart, 1989) described the relationship between expenditures and ACT and SAT scores, graduation rates, average teacher salaries, pupil/teacher ratios, and school district per capita income. Respondents were asked the total general fund budget within $10,000.

In its report on school district adequacy, the American Association of School Administrators (AASA, 1988) found that several factors needed to be considered in determining the adequacy and effectiveness of public school districts. In addition to such factors as the district's education program, available leadership, instructional personnel, physical facilities, operations, and community
participation, pupil enrollment and local tax resources were included. Additionally, school enrollment figures, geographic location, and per pupil expenditures are commonly reported by the Michigan State Department of Education and are used extensively in decision making by state boards of education and the state legislatures.

The presence or absence of a full-time human resource administrator was chosen as a research variable primarily because the policy initiatives mandated in Title I of the ADA are human resource policies. The ability to deal with requests for reasonable accommodation, the proper keeping of personnel records, the scheduling of pre-employment physical examinations, the provision of appropriate training opportunities are all human resource related activities, generally centered in the personnel/human resource function of an organization (Cayer, 1980; Ivancevich & Glueck, 1989; Odiorne & Rummler, 1988; Tozzi et al., 1986).

The six change related activities included in Part III of the questionnaire were constructed based on relevant research on planning, implementing, and institutionalizing change in organizations. Lewin's (1951) model was used as the basis for constructing this part of the survey. The six change related items are concerned with creating a positive atmosphere for change (unfreezing), providing resources for change (movement) and folding the change into the every-day life of the organization (refreezing).

In constructing the instrument, the researcher followed the general construction outlines provided by Sellitz, Jahoooda, Deutsch, and Cook (1959) and
Ary, Jacobs, and Razavich (1985). The overall purpose of the study, to determine the general level of implementation of Title I of the ADA in Michigan's public schools, dictated the survey population. It was decided that public school central office administrators would be the primary target population. The survey items were developed in consultation with the researcher's dissertation committee chairperson.

As a pre-test, the researcher asked three education doctoral students and three full-time personnel/human resource directors to complete and comment on the questionnaire. The pre-test resulted in the re-writing of several of the policy initiative statements in Part I and the sequence of the change-related statements in Part III.

Measuring ADA Readiness

There are a number of human resource/personnel activities and policy initiatives indicated as necessary, if not mandated, by the ADA. Relying on published texts (Allen, 1993; Snyder, 1991), related articles (Allred, 1991; Barlow, 1991; Levin, 1992), and the researcher's involvement in Title I specific training, six of these were selected in the development of the ADA Readiness portion (Part I) of the questionnaire. These were: (1) management/staff attendance at ADA-specific training opportunities, (2) delineation of essential job functions in school district's job descriptions, (3) development of a policy/strategy for assessing requests for "reasonable accommodation", (4) development of a policy/strategy for
alternative employment testing procedures if required, (5) separation of employee medical records from other personnel records, and (6) provision for pre-employment physical and/or psychological examinations only as a function of a "bona fide offer of employment".

These activities formed the basis for the six "readiness" indicators in Part I of the Questionnaire. Questionnaire responses to Part I yielded an ADA readiness score ranging from (+6) to (+18) and was used in conjunction with the district's "change support" score (discussed below) to test the relational hypotheses. Additionally, ADA Readiness category scores were developed from the total ADA Readiness score to examine the holistic states of ADA readiness. Thus, readiness will be described (a) at the item level reflecting particular policy initiatives, (b) on a continuum from planning to implementation, and (c) as a categorical.

Measuring Support for Change

Part III of the survey measured superintendent support for change through the eyes of public school central office administrators in the three areas of Lewin's (1951) model for change: unfreezing, movement, refreezing. Respondents were asked to indicate whether their superintendents "Never", "Seldom", "Occasionally", "Often", or "Always" acted as delineated in the survey's six change statements: (1) withholds resources and/or rewards from those who resist change, (2) provides adequate psychological security for those who attempt change, (3)
provides adequate funding for the change, (4) provides necessary networking of resources and personnel to support change, (5) provides training resources to introduce and reinforce change, and (6) provides meaningful rewards for those who embrace and internalize change.

These change indicators were used as the basis for the six "change" items found in Part III of the questionnaire. The responses yielded by Part III of the survey were used to create a change support score ranging from (+1) to (+28). These support scores were used in conjunction with district ADA Readiness scores in testing relational hypothesis #5.

The Logic Behind the Survey

The six activities/policy initiatives chosen for inclusion in Part I of the questionnaire were selected because they can readily be accomplished, in most cases, with available school district staff and/or resources. The strength of this logic was borne out in the responses to the survey. While nearly two-thirds of the districts responding supported less than a full-time human resource/personnel function, none responded that no actions had been taken to prepare for implementation of Title I the ADA.

Survey Pre-Test

The questionnaire underwent a pre-test by being mailed to 30 addressees (by name and position) randomly selected from the research population. In pre-
paring the pre-test sample the population database was sorted by the assigned dis-
trict identification numbers. Using the database file as sorted, mailing labels were
printed for all 339 districts in the sample. From these printed labels, each ele-
venth label was selected (yielding a total of 30 labels) to form the pre-test sample.

The pre-test mailing occurred in late January, 1994. Within two weeks 18
surveys (60 percent) of that mailing, had been completed and returned. This
response level was interpreted as an indication that the survey did not confuse the
respondents, was easy to complete and return, thus it required no further modifi-
cations. The data from the pre-test could be aggregated with the full survey
response.

The Main Survey

On February 28, 1994 questionnaires were mailed to the remaining 309
addressees in the population sample with no identifiers on the questionnaire. By
March 11, a total of 161 (52.1 percent) of those questionnaires had been com-
pleted and returned. On March 15, in an attempt to solicit additional survey
responses, a post card was sent to all 339 addressees in the population, because
all data were anonymous (see Appendix B). The message on the post card was
intentionally ambiguous. It could be read as a "Thank you" for having completed
and returned the survey, or as a "reminder" in the event the addressee had forgot-
ten or mislaid the survey. On April 12, 1994 the 181st questionnaire was returned
from this main survey mailing. These, combined with the pre-survey responses,
brought the total to 199 returns (58.7 percent) (one survey response was badly damaged in mailing and was not usable in the study).

**Preparation of Data**

Survey responses (n=198) were entered by keyboard into a database (the particular computer software used was Ashton Tate's dBase III Plus) and coded for easy recall and manipulation. The database was further divided into two sub-databases: (1) all survey responses (n=198), and (2) survey pre-test responses (n=18).

Responses to the six items in Part I of the questionnaire (ADA Readiness) were assigned a numerical value from (+1) to (+3). Each "A" response (the activity is still in the planning stages) was given the value of "1"; "B" responses (the activity is in progress) were assigned the value of "2"; and "C" responses (the activity has been completed) were assigned the value of "3". There were no missing data in responses to Part I of the survey. Each respondent district's ADA Readiness score was determined by summing the values assigned to each item response in Part I. This yielded an ADA Readiness score ranging from (+6) to (+18). This variable is relevant to Ha5.

When testing hypotheses Ha1 through Ha4, school district ADA Readiness scores were converted to holistic categories. Readiness scores ranging from 0 to +6 (low level of Readiness) were given the designation, "A". Likewise Readiness scores ranging from +7 to +12 (moderate level of Readiness) were given the
designation, "B", while those ranging from +13 to +18 (high level of Readiness) were given the designation "C". In performing the crosstabulation analyses, these Readiness groupings were compared to school district demographic responses discussed below.

Part II of the survey sought responses to items regarding the district's employment of a full-time human resource/personnel administrator (coded in the database as "Y" for yes responses or "N" for no responses), and the title of the person completing the survey. This data is related to Ha.

Responses to the six items in Part III of the questionnaire (superintendent support for organizational change) were assigned a numerical value from (+1) to (+5) according to Table 2. There were several missing responses to Part III of the survey. During input they were assigned the value "0" and the statistical software was specifically programmed to count these entries as missing values. Each respondent district's "Change" score was determined by summing the values assigned to each item response in Part III. This yielded a change score ranging from (+1) to (+30).

Part IV elicited information regarding the number of enrolled students (entered as a numerical value representing units of 1,000 students), total general fund budget (entered as a numerical value based on $million), and the geographic location of the school district: (a) Southeast; (b) Southwest; (c) Northern, Lower Peninsula; and (d) Upper Peninsula. The variable student enrollment was a priori defined as small districts (5,000 or less), medium districts (5,001 - 10,000), and
Table 2
Values Assigned to "Change" Responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Value Assigned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seldom</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occasionally</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Often</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Always</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

'Missing responses were assigned the value "0"

large districts (more than 10,000). The rationale for these categories was based on complexity of plant and central office size. The variable size of general fund budget was a priori defined by four categories: (1) up to $10 million, (2) $10.1 to $20 million, (3) $20.1 to $50 million, and (4) more than $50 million. While funding is somewhat related to size, these categories spread the districts with respect to resource availability.

Hypotheses and Data Analysis

Statement of the Hypotheses

The survey brought forth data used to measure the readiness of schools in
the population to implement the employment related provisions of Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA Readiness). Responses formed the bases for testing hypotheses $H_{a_1}$ to $H_{a_4}$ which were operationalized as follows:

$H_{a_1}$: There is a relationship between public school district geographic location (southeast, southwest, northern lower peninsula, and upper peninsula) and category of ADA Readiness (low, medium, and high).

$H_{a_2}$: There is a relationship between public school enrollment (small, medium, and large) and category of ADA Readiness (low, medium, and high).

$H_{a_3}$: There is a relationship between size of public school general fund budgets ($0 - $10 million, $10.1 - $20 million, $20.1 - $50 million, and more than $50 million) and category of ADA Readiness (low, medium, and high).

$H_{a_4}$: There is a relationship between the presence of a full-time public school human resource administrator (yes or no) and category of ADA Readiness (low, medium, and high).

Likewise, the survey provided data to measure the perceived level of superintendent support for organizational change activities. The data were used in conjunction with district readiness scores to test hypothesis $H_{a_5}$, operationalized as follows:

$H_{a_5}$: "There is a relationship between public school central office administrators' perceptions of top school management (superintendent) support for organizational change score and school district ADA Readiness score."
Statement of the Null Hypotheses

$H_{01}$: There is no relationship between public school district geographic location and ADA Readiness. This null hypothesis was tested by performing Chi-square analysis of ADA Readiness categories and the size of general fund budget category. This type I error level was set at .05.

$H_{02}$: There is no relationship between public school enrollment and ADA Readiness. This null hypothesis was tested by performing Chi-square analysis of ADA Readiness categories and categories of student enrollment. This type I error was set at .05.

$H_{03}$: There is no relationship between size of public school general fund budgets and ADA Readiness. This null hypothesis was tested by performing Chi-square analysis of ADA Readiness categories and the size of general fund budget category. This type I error level was set at .05.

$H_{04}$: There is a relationship between the presence of a full-time public school human resource administrator and ADA Readiness. This null hypothesis was tested by performing Chi-square analysis of ADA Readiness categories and the presence of a full-time human resource administrator categories. This type I error level was set at .05.

$H_{05}$: There is no relationship between public school central office administrators' perceptions of top school management (superintendent) support for organizational change and school district ADA Readiness. This null hypothesis
was tested by calculating a Pearson Product Moment Correlation coefficient (PPMC) to determine the direction and strength of that relationship. This type I error was set at .05.
CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

Introduction

An interest in assessing the readiness of Michigan's Public schools to implement the employment-related provisions of Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA Readiness) formed the basis of this research. ADA Readiness was defined as the extent to which responding school districts reported completion or implementation of six employment-related ADA activities. These indicators were management staff training; identification of essential job functions; presence of policies/strategies to deal with requests for reasonable accommodation, including alternative testing procedures; personnel record keeping practices; and pre-employment inquiry. Readiness was operationally defined as responses to the items, total readiness score, and categories of readiness.

Survey data were used to describe readiness among responding districts on several selected variables. These included school district geographic location (southeast, southwest, northern lower peninsula, and upper peninsula), number of enrolled students (0-5,000, 5,001-10,000, more than 10,000), size of general fund budget ($0 - $10 million, $10.1 - $20 million, $20.1 - $50 million, and more than $50 million), and the presence or absence of a full-time human resource
administrator (yes or no). Additionally, the data were used to determine if any relationship existed between the level of school superintendents' perceived support for organizational change and reported ADA Readiness.

**Survey Response**

There were a total of 339 central office administrators identified in the population sample. The largest sample groups were those listed as assistant superintendents (n=131), business managers (n=109) and human resource administrators (n=38).

A total of 339 questionnaires were mailed in late January and early February, 1994. By April 12, 1994, 199 questionnaires had been completed and returned. Of these, one questionnaire was unusable due to damage during mailing. Ten of the questionnaires received were from respondents who identified themselves as school superintendents. These responses are not included in the final count of survey responses, nor in the findings because the respondents could not supply information regarding the support variable. Thus, the final sample was 188 for a response rate of 55.5%.

A total of 165 respondents included their titles when responding to the survey. The largest single respondent group (n=50) indicated a title beginning with Assistant Superintendent. The second largest group were Business Managers (n=36), while the third largest were Directors of Personnel (n=25). The distribution of those responses is found in Table 3.
Table 3
Most Frequently Indicated Titles
of Respondents (n = 198)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>FREQUENCY OF RESPONSE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Superintendent</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Manager</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director of Personnel</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Assistant</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Superintendent</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director of Building/Grounds</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director of Operations</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Title Indicated</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Others</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>198</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The resultant nature of the respondent group can be defended by the relative predominance of these categories of titles. Taken together, assistant/deputy superintendents, business managers, and human resource administrators comprise a commanding majority of the population sample as well as the respondents. In the sample population, 38.6% (n=131) of all titles were identified as assistant superintendents. In the respondent group, 25.2% of all titles were assistant or deputy superintendent. Likewise, in the sample population, 32.2% (n=109) of titles were listed as business managers. Among the responses, 18.8% were
identified as business managers. Those listed as human resource administrators in the population sample equaled 11.2% (n=38) while 12.6% of respondents indicated the title of HR director.

**Nonrespondents**

Authors of research textbooks (Ary, Jacobs, & Razavieh, 1985; Borg & Gall, 1971; Gay, 1976) generally agree that a response rate of less than 80 percent for mail surveys indicates that the nonrespondents, had they responded, could easily have altered the results of the survey. In this study, the measures taken to determine the identity of nonrespondents were generally less than successful. Each recipient in the study population received, in addition to the questionnaire, a pre-printed and pre-address post card which could be completed and returned at the same time, but separately from the completed questionnaire. The post card contained the name, title, and school district of the survey recipient and offered the respondent an opportunity to indicate that he/she had just completed and mailed the survey and to indicate a desire to receive an executive summary of the study upon its completion. Although a total of 198 questionnaires were completed and returned, only 115 of the post cards were returned.

The low rate of return for the post cards (33.9%) made identifying nonrespondents and therefore completing a follow-up survey of nonrespondents virtually impossible. Therefore very little may be said about the characteristics of the nonrespondents, whose responses may well have biased the results of the survey.
As a result, in discussing the findings of this study, the researcher is careful not to generalize any of the findings beyond the scope of those who responded.

Characteristics of the Sample

The distribution of respondent school districts by geographic location and size of general fund budget is found in Table 4. While 30.3% (n=57) of responding districts were geographically located in the densely populated southeast part of the state, that does not imply that the sample was dominated by large districts as 85.6% (n=161) of responses were from districts with fewer than 5,000 students. By contrast, 18 responses (9.6%) were received from districts with enrollments of 5,001 to 10,000 and only 8 responses (4.3%) were from districts with enrollments larger than 10,000. Likewise, while 6.4% (n=12) of responding districts indicated general fund budgets of more than $50 million, 62 of 188 responses (34.1%) were from districts indicating the presence of a full-time human resource administrator. By contrast, 120 responding districts (65.9%) indicated the absence of a full-time human resource administrator.

ADA Readiness

Introduction

This study offered an opportunity to examine the general state of ADA Readiness of the public K-12 school districts in Michigan who responded to the
Table 4

Distribution of Responses by Geographic Location and Size of General Fund Budget

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location (N=187)</th>
<th>Southeast</th>
<th>Southwest</th>
<th>Northern Lower</th>
<th>Upper Peninsula</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>(30.1%)</td>
<td>(28.7%)</td>
<td>(36.4%)</td>
<td>(4.8%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size of General Fund Budget</th>
<th>$0 - $10 million</th>
<th>$10.1-$20 million</th>
<th>$20.1-$50 million</th>
<th>more than $50 million</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>(33.5%)</td>
<td>(38.3%)</td>
<td>(21.3%)</td>
<td>(6.9%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

survey. Part I of the survey asked the respondent to indicate the level of completion by the school district of the following six ADA employment related activities or policy initiatives:

1. "At least one manager/staff person has attended training specific to implementation of Title I of the ADA."

2. "School district job descriptions delineate essential job functions."

3. "There is a policy/strategy in place for assessing requests for "reasonable Accommodation"."

4. "There is a policy/strategy in place for providing alternative employment
testing procedures."

5. "Employee medical records are kept separate from employee personnel records."

6. "Pre-employment physical/psychological examinations are performed only as a function of a 'bona fide offer of employment'."

The response possibilities were limited to: "A" - the activity/policy initiative is still in the planning stages, "B" - the activity/policy initiative is in progress but not yet completed, and "C" - the activity/policy initiative is in place/has been completed. In coding the data, each "A" response was awarded 1 point, each "B" response, 2 points, and 3 points were assigned to each "C" response. The distribution of item response scores is found in Table 5.

As Table 5 implies, respondent school districts reported high levels of activity with regard to ADA Readiness indicators. In considering responses indicating that policy initiatives were either "under development" or "completed", 175 respondents (93.1%) indicated that their management staff had attended or were scheduled to attend training programs specific to ADA readiness. Likewise, more than three-quarters (77.7%, n=146) of the districts had delineated or were involved in projects to delineate essential job functions in their job descriptions.

Likewise, districts have prepared in large numbers (86.7%, n=163) to respond to requests for "reasonable accommodation", to assure that employee medical records are kept confidential (80.9%, n=152), and to require physical and/or psychological examinations only as part of a "bona fide offer of
Table 5
Frequency Distributions of "ADA Readiness"
Item Responses (n=188)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy/Initiative</th>
<th>In Planning Stage</th>
<th>Development in Progress</th>
<th>Complete, In-Place</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Responses Number</td>
<td>Responses Number</td>
<td>Responses Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>Percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 - Staff Training</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 - Essential Job Functions</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>27.1</td>
<td>43.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 - Reasonable Accommodation</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18.6</td>
<td>33.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 - Alternative Testing</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>54.3</td>
<td>28.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 - Separate Medical Records</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>22.3</td>
<td>17.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 - Bona Fide Pre-employment Tests</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18.1</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

employment" (82.9%, n=156). The only area where significant readiness was not recorded was in providing alternative employment testing procedures; only 94 (50.0%) of the responding districts reported having such procedures in place or
in progress.

For purposes of this study, item responses from part I were summed to create an ADA Readiness score for each responding district. Further, for purposes of hypotheses testing, readiness scores were categorized as low (from 0-6), medium (7-12), and high (13-18). The distribution of those readiness scores is found in Table 6.

The data indicate that respondent districts reported having taken positive steps toward ADA Readiness. Only 4 of 188 respondents (2.1%) indicated a low level of readiness while 71.3% (n=134) reported completed policies and/or practice initiatives to warrant a high level of readiness.

Support for Change

Part III of the survey asked the respondent to "indicate whether you believe the Superintendent of Schools of your district...", "Never", "Seldom", "Occasionally", "Often", or "Always" acts as delineated in the survey's six change statements: (1) withholds resources and/or rewards from those who resist change, (2) provides adequate psychological security for those who attempt change, (3) provides adequate funding for the change, (4) provides necessary networking of resources and personnel to support change, (5) provides training resources to introduce and reinforce change, and (6) provides meaningful rewards for those who embrace and internalize change. The distributions of "Change" item responses are provided in Table 7.
Table 6

Distribution of ADA Readiness Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Raw Score</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Number by Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>–</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>–</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>–</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>–</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>–</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>19</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>37</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ \bar{X} = 13.63 \quad Sd = 2.77 \]

For purposes of testing Ha, each item response was scored with values ranging from 1 to 5 (see Table 2). These values were summed to create an overall district support score. The distribution of those support scores is found in Table 8.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Seldom</th>
<th>Occasionally</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Withholds Resources&quot; (n=187)</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>43.9</td>
<td>29.9</td>
<td>16.6</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Provides Psycho-Security&quot; (n=186)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>52.7</td>
<td>33.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Provides Adequate Funding&quot; (n=184)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>21.7</td>
<td>60.9</td>
<td>14.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Provides Networking&quot; (n=187)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>17.7</td>
<td>53.5</td>
<td>26.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Provides Training&quot; (n=185)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>15.7</td>
<td>56.2</td>
<td>25.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Provides Rewards&quot; (n=183)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>31.2</td>
<td>39.9</td>
<td>16.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 8

Distribution of Change Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Raw Score</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Raw Score</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>17</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>18</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>19</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td>20</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td>21</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td>22</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td>23</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td>25</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
<td>28</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>29</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ \bar{X} = 21.24 \quad Sd = 3.67 \]

Tests of Null

The data does not support hypothesis Hₐ, "there is a relationship between public school geographic location and ADA Readiness". A crosstabulation of
ADA Readiness categories and school district geographic location yielded a Chi-square statistic of 10.151, with 6 degrees of freedom and a p-value of 0.121. Rejection of the null hypothesis required a Chi-square statistic accompanied by a p-value of less than .05. Therefore the null may not be rejected (see Table 9).

The data does not support hypothesis $H_a$, "there is a relationship between public school enrollment and ADA Readiness". A crosstabulation of ADA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ADA Readiness</th>
<th>Southeast</th>
<th>Southwest</th>
<th>Northern Lower</th>
<th>Upper Peninsula</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(25.0%)</td>
<td>(50.0%)</td>
<td>(25.0%)</td>
<td>(.0%)</td>
<td>(2.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(16.7%)</td>
<td>(33.3%)</td>
<td>(39.6%)</td>
<td>(10.4%)</td>
<td>(25.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(35.8%)</td>
<td>(26.1%)</td>
<td>(35.1%)</td>
<td>(3.0%)</td>
<td>(72.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(30.6%)</td>
<td>(28.5%)</td>
<td>(36.0%)</td>
<td>(4.8%)</td>
<td>(100.0%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chi-square statistic = 10.151  Degrees of Freedom = 6  p-value = 0.121

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Readiness categories and school district student enrollment yielded a Chi-square statistic of 6.281, with 4 degrees of freedom and a p-value of 0.181. Rejection of the null hypothesis required a Chi-square statistic accompanied by a p-value of less than .05. Therefore the null may not be rejected (see Table 10).

The data supports hypothesis Ha₃, "there is a relationship between size of public school general fund budgets and ADA Readiness". A crosstabulation of ADA Readiness categories and size of general fund budget yielded a Chi-square

Table 10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ADA Readiness</th>
<th>Student Enrollment</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0 - 5,000</td>
<td>5,000-10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>4 (100.%)</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>46 (95.8%)</td>
<td>1 (2.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>111 (82.2%)</td>
<td>17 (12.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>161 (86.1%)</td>
<td>18 (9.6%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chi-square statistic = 6.281  Degrees of Freedom = 4  p-value = 0.181
statistic of 15.658, with 6 degrees of freedom and a p-value of 0.017. Rejection of the null hypothesis required a Chi-square statistic accompanied by a p-value of less than .05. Therefore the null may be rejected (see Table 11).

The data supports hypothesis $H_a$, "there is a relationship between the presence of a full-time public school human resource administrator and ADA Readiness". A crosstabulation of ADA Readiness categories and presence of a full-time

Table 11
ADA Readiness and Size of General Fund Budget

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ADA Readiness</th>
<th>Size of General Fund Budget</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$0 - $10 million</td>
<td>$10.1-20 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>3 (75.0%)</td>
<td>1 (25.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>25 (52.1%)</td>
<td>16 (33.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>35 (25.9%)</td>
<td>55 (40.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>63 (33.7%)</td>
<td>72 (38.5%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chi-square statistic = 15.658  Degrees of Freedom = 6  p-value = 0.017
human resource administrator yielded a Chi-square statistic of 25.124, with 2 degrees of freedom and a p-value of 0.000. Rejection of the null hypothesis required a Chi-square statistic accompanied by a p-value of less than .05. Therefore the null may be rejected (see Table 12).

Chi-Square Difficulties

In conducting the analyses of ADA Readiness category scores, more than

Table 12

ADA Readiness and Presence of Full-Time Human Resource Administrator

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ADA</th>
<th>Full-Time Human Resource Administrator</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>TOTAL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>4 (100.0%)</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
<td>4 (2.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>44 (93.6%)</td>
<td>3 (6.4%)</td>
<td>47 (25.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>72 (55.0%)</td>
<td>59 (45.0%)</td>
<td>131 (72.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>120 (65.9%)</td>
<td>62 (34.1%)</td>
<td>182 (100.0%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chi-square statistic = 25.124 Degrees of Freedom = 2 p-value = 0.000
20% of the expected values in each analysis was less than 5. Further, the frequency in at least one cell in each analysis was equal to zero. Hinkle, Wiersma, and Jurs (1988) advise that findings should result in combining the categories, provided such combination does not distort the data. In this study, combining the categories would have resulted in a major change in its structure and would have misrepresented the data. As a result the reader must take into account the existence of low or non-existent expected values.

The data does support hypothesis Hₐ, "there is a relationship between public school central office administrators' perceptions of top school management (superintendent) support for organizational change ("Change") and school district ADA Readiness". A Pearson Product Moment Correlation coefficient of district "Change" and "ADA Readiness" scores yielded a Pearson's r of 0.2429 (R-Square = 0.0590, p = .001).

Statisticians Hinkle, Wiersma, and Jurs (1988) insist that a correlation coefficient of less than 0.30 indicates "little if any correlation" (p. 118). Borg and Gall (1971) maintain that a correlation coefficient of less than 0.35 shows a "very slight relationship between the variables, although the relationship may be statistically significant", has only "limited meaning" in exploratory research, and is of no value in either "individual or group prediction" (p. 259). Thus, even though the indicated correlation coefficient of 0.2429 and its corresponding coefficient of determination (R-Square) of 0.059 reveal that there may be a relationship
between perceived support for change and "ADA Readiness" among the survey respondents, that relationship is of little or no significance. Rejection of the null hypothesis required a Pearson Product Moment Correlation coefficient of .50 or greater at the .05 significance level. Based on the findings, the null hypothesis may be rejected.
CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine the readiness of public schools in Michigan to implement the employment related provisions of Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act. From this purpose came two major objectives: (1) to determine if a relationship exists between such variables as the geographic location of the school district, number of enrolled students, size of general fund budget, and the presence or absence of a full-time human resource administrator and that readiness; and (2) to determine whether a relationship, if any, exists between public school central office administrators' perception of their superintendents' support for organizational change and readiness. This chapter summarizes the findings of the study. The relationship of those findings to the researcher's expectations are discussed as well as suggestions for further research. Overall conclusions are drawn and implications for organizational practitioners are offered as well as suggestions for improvements in methodology.

Summary of Findings

Indications are that respondent school districts have taken positive steps
toward implementation of Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act as indicated by their ADA Readiness scores. Findings suggest an enhanced level of ADA Readiness in such areas as providing administrator training, delineation of essential job functions, providing reasonable accommodation upon request, separating employee medical records from general personal records, and requiring pre-employment physical/psychological examinations when conditioned by a bona-fide offer of employment. The presence of a full-time human resource administrator appears to enhance ADA Readiness in such areas as staff training, providing reasonable accommodation, and pre-employment testing. Additionally, size of school district general fund budgets played an important role in ADA Readiness. The study indicates that responding districts with the smallest general fund budgets ($0 - $10 million) received generally lower readiness scores than districts in the other three budget categories. Additionally, districts with budgets ranging from $20.1 - $50 million had ADA Readiness scores generally higher than the other spending groups.

A significant, but small, relationship was found to exist between school district central office administrators' perceptions of how their superintendents support change and ADA Readiness.

Findings in the Context of Prior Research

This study was grounded primarily in the work of psychologist Kurt Lewin (1951). Lewin's work during and following World War II led to a basic
understanding of the nature of change, not only in small groups, but in organizations as well. Additionally, the studies of education researchers Murphy, Hallinger, and Peterson (1985), Murphy and Hallinger (1986), Halpin (1956), Jones (1989), Carrow-Moffett (1993), Siegel and Byrne (1994), Wendel et al. (1996), and Nadler et al. (1995) established that public school superintendents are indeed agents of change.

Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act was chosen as the vehicle for this study and a survey was constructed to ferret out corresponding levels of perceived support for change and ADA Readiness. Responses to the survey provided data for discussing the general state of ADA Readiness in the population sample and to test the five relational hypotheses. Survey response data did not support the expectation that readiness was somehow related to student enrollment or school district geographic location. Data did support the researcher's expectation that a relationship exists between readiness and such district structural factors as size of general fund budget and the presence of a full-time human resource administrator. The data also supported the expectation that a positive relationship exists between public school central office administrators' perceptions of their superintendents' support for legislatively mandated change and the level of ADA Readiness reported in the sample.

Limitations and Caveats

Where the results of this study show relationships, it should not be
assumed that those relationships are causal in nature. As noted by Ary, Jacobs, and Razavieh (1985) and Kerlinger (1986), relational hypothesis testing may well indicate a relationship between variables, but it tells us little about the nature of that relationship, or the influence on that relationship of other, intervening variables.

Such an intervening variable was the nature of the legislation used as a vehicle for the study. The changes required to implement the ADA are mandatory and the cost to school districts for not implementing the employment related changes necessary for implementation of Act could be considerable, both in terms of court imposed fines and loss of public confidence.

The study questionnaire gathered data that were clearly subjective and based solely on the perception of the respondents. Van Dalen (1973), in his discussion of the nature of observation, explains that perception is the combination of sense and past experience, thus giving meaning to the observed. Perception, then, is subject to many factors including, among others, age, maturation, experience, expertise, and physiology. The survey-elicited levels of change implementation and support for change were subject, then, to the respondents' perceptions at the time of survey completion. Because the respondents were typically those responsible for implementing ADA requirements, bias is possible.

The study questionnaire was designed to measure perception, which is difficult to quantify, and six change-related activities that were chosen because they could be accomplished with little or no expenditure of school district resources.
As a result the survey responses yielded consistently "high" change scores with few variances. Further, one notices that in the case of the single change statement beginning with "withholds", responses of "never" and "seldom" were the norm. This was contrary to the responses to the other five change statements, all of which began with the word "provides". As a result survey change scores may well be inflated and/or biased toward the positive.

Approximately 45 percent of the survey population failed to respond and the design of the survey process prevented the identification of those non-respondents. Therefore the reader must take into consideration the knowledge that little is known about this group or the effect nonrespondents might have had on the results of the study.

Additionally, the reader must consider that in conducting the Chi Square analyses of ADA Readiness category scores, more than 20 percent of the expected values in each analysis were less than 5. Additionally, at least one cell frequency in each analysis was equal to zero. In their discussion of Chi Square distributions, Hinkle, Wiersma, and Jurs (1988) advise that adjacent categories should be combined if this will not result in a distortion of the data. For purposes of this study, combining adjacent categories would have required significant changes in its structure.

Implications for Practitioners

Public school districts in the population sample reported much activity in
the area of ADA Readiness. The relationships found between ADA Readiness and the presence or absence of a full-time human resource administrator and the size of general fund budgets should cause practitioners in smaller, less wealthy school districts to seek out assistance from the wealthier districts in working toward a higher level of ADA Readiness.

A significant, but small relationship between central office administrators' perceptions of superintendent support for change and the schools' ADA Readiness was found. School officials could assume, based on this finding, that little or no prodding is required from top administrators in order for legislatively mandated change to be implemented. On the other hand the finding might be construed to indicate that central office administrators sometimes act with little or no regard for the influence of top administrators.

The study indicates that while districts employing a full-time human resource function are in the minority, they reported higher ADA Readiness levels in all areas of ADA related activities. Further, they reported higher ADA Readiness scores in such important areas as providing staff training, adjudicating requests for reasonable accommodation, and in keeping proper employee records. Consideration should be given, then, to providing greater human resource functioning in smaller districts. This does not necessarily mean that all districts should employ an human resource-specific administrator, but could include the employment of a technical or administrative assistant specially trained in employment related issues and operating under the tutelage of an assistant superintendent or
business manager. There are a number of nationally recognized human resource certification programs available that would be cost effective for smaller districts and require considerably less of a time commitment than the completion of a two or four-year degree in human resource management.

Recommendations for Further Study

The variables in this study should provide many opportunities for further study in any hierarchical organizational setting, but especially, local municipal governments. With their city commission/city manager governance schemes, they resemble in structure most public school districts. Additional organizational settings for this kind of research would include the burgeoning not-for-profit arena. Many of these agencies are controlled by appointed boards of directors and managed by an executive director whose authority may parallel that of school superintendents. Many of these agencies also share contiguous geographic boundaries with school districts and/or municipalities.

Improvements in Methodology

In retrospect, the questionnaire itself could be much improved. The activities and policy initiatives tested in the survey, though clearly within the parameters of the original survey construction logic, provided too simple a test. Likewise the change-related activities attributed to superintendents were not measurable beyond the survey respondent's perception. In retrospect these "weaknesses"
could be cured with the construction of a survey using more easily measured variables.

In Part I, activity statement #4, regarding providing alternative employment testing, could easily have been interpreted as redundant to (or implied in) the previous activity statement (assessing requests for reasonable accommodation). This confusion may have resulted in the consistently lower ADA Readiness scores on this particular activity statement.

In Part III, "change" statements 2 through 6 each begin with the word "provides", while statement 1 begins with the word "withholds". This may have accounted for the very low response scores for statement 1. Making sure that all survey statements are constructed using positive language may well have affected those results.

The survey mailing and response tracking proved to be cumbersome and costly. In an attempt to provide complete anonymity to respondents, surveys were mailed in large manila envelopes accompanied by an "I have responded" post card. This method of distributing the surveys made it virtually impossible to determine which school districts had responded and was further confounded by the return of a much larger number of survey responses than response cards. It further required a second mailing—the sending of a post card to the entire population sample. A simple re-design of the survey to include identification of the respondent's school district could have significantly reduced mailing costs and facilitated the identification of non-respondents.
Closing Remarks

This study was conducted for the purpose of examining ADA Readiness in Michigan's public schools. Respondent districts reported that they were relatively well prepared to implement the employment related provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act. The study found that relationships exist between Readiness and such school district structural factors as the presence of a full-time human resource administrator and the size of school district general fund budgets. Further, perceptions held by central office administrators of their superintendents' support for mandated change were found to be related to that Readiness.
Appendix A

Michigan Public Schools ADA Support/Readiness Survey
Dear Michigan Public School Administrator:

My name is Truman Forest. I am a doctoral student in Education Leadership at Western Michigan University. My dissertation topic has evolved around the recently enacted Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and its impact, especially in the area of public school human resource policy and practice.

Enclosed on pages 2 and 3 of this document you will find a short, 16 item survey seeking information about your school district and its progress toward implementation of Title I of the ADA in the human resource area. Additionally, the survey seeks your opinion about how the Superintendent of your school district generally supports the kinds of policy and practice initiatives required by the passage of the ADA. Please take a minute to respond to these information/opinion items, complete the short demographic sections, fold, and mail the survey back to me.

You were selected as an administrator from your school district who would most likely be able to respond to the items in the survey. Please be assured that this is an anonymous survey and your participation is totally voluntary. The survey documents are not coded in any way. The results will not be reported out by individual school district, nor will the identity of the person completing the survey be disclosed.

You will notice that the back page of the survey is pre-posted and pre-addressed. It is designed to be folded once, secured with a small piece of tape (no staples, please) and dropped in the mail box.

There is enclosed with this survey a pre-posted, pre-addressed post card. Please use this card to let me know that you have completed and mailed the survey. This card will not in any way be paired with your returned survey. Additionally, please use the same post card to let me know if you are interested in receiving an executive summary of the results of this survey. I will gladly provide such a summary upon completion of the research.

Thank you very much for your valuable time.

Sincerely,

Truman Forest
1208 Washington Ave.
Muskegon, MI 49441

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MICHIGAN PUBLIC SCHOOL
ADA SUPPORT/READINESS SURVEY

This survey is designed to gather information about the preparedness of Michigan public school districts to implement Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 in the human resource/personnel arena.

After completing the survey, please fold and mail to Truman Forest, 1208 Washington Ave., Muskegon, MI 49441.

PART I: ADA IMPLEMENTATION READINESS

The following are recognized as activities/policy initiatives undertaken by most organizations in preparation for implementation of Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Please indicate the level at which your school district has completed or engaged in each activity/policy initiative using the following scale of indicators:

- **"A"** = Activity/policy initiative is still in the planning stages.
- **"B"** = Activity/policy initiative is in progress but not yet completed.
- **"C"** = Activity/policy initiative is in place/has been completed.

- At least one manager/staff person has attended training specific to implementation of Title I of the ADA.
- School district job descriptions delineate essential job functions.
- There is a policy/strategy in place for assessing requests for "reasonable accommodation".
- There is a policy/strategy in place for providing alternative employment testing procedures.
- Employee medical records are kept separate from employee personnel records.
- Pre-employment physical/psychological examinations are performed only as a function of a "bona fide offer of employment".

PART II

Does the school district employ a full-time Human Resource/Personnel Administrator? **YES [ ] NO [ ]**

Title of person completing this survey ____________________________________________________________

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PART III: The following statements are indicative of actions/activities taken by top organizational managers in support of organizational change (such as the activities/policy initiatives required for implementation of Title I of the ADA).

After each statement indicate whether you believe the Superintendent of Schools of your district acts as described in the statement:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Always</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Occasionally</th>
<th>Seldom</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. ...withholds resources and/or rewards from those who resist change.</td>
<td>Always</td>
<td>Often</td>
<td>Occasionally</td>
<td>Seldom</td>
<td>Never</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. ...provides adequate psychological security for those who attempt change.</td>
<td>Always</td>
<td>Often</td>
<td>Occasionally</td>
<td>Seldom</td>
<td>Never</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. ...provides adequate funding for the change.</td>
<td>Always</td>
<td>Often</td>
<td>Occasionally</td>
<td>Seldom</td>
<td>Never</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. ...provides necessary networking of resources and personnel to support change.</td>
<td>Always</td>
<td>Often</td>
<td>Occasionally</td>
<td>Seldom</td>
<td>Never</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. ...provides training resources to introduce and reinforce change.</td>
<td>Always</td>
<td>Often</td>
<td>Occasionally</td>
<td>Seldom</td>
<td>Never</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. ...provides meaningful rewards for those who embrace and internalize change.</td>
<td>Always</td>
<td>Often</td>
<td>Occasionally</td>
<td>Seldom</td>
<td>Never</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PART IV: School District Demographics

a. Indicate the total number of enrolled students (nearest 1,000) ___________

b. Total general fund budget (to nearest $10,000) ________________

c. The majority of the school district is geographically located:

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
|   | East of US-127 and south of I-69
|   | West of US-127 and south of I-96
|   | Lower peninsula, north of I-96 and I-69
|   | Upper peninsula

RETURN TO: TRUMAN FOREST, 1208 WASHINGTON AVE., MUSKEGON, MI 49441

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(Fold here, apply small piece of tape and drop in the mail)

TRUMAN FOREST
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MUSKEGON, MI 49441
Appendix B

Follow-up Notice
During the last week of February, more than 300 surveys were sent to public school administrators throughout the State of Michigan gathering information about implementation of the recently enacted Americans with Disabilities Act.

More than 50% of those surveys have now been completed and returned to me. If you are among this group of surveyees, please accept this card as an expression of my gratitude; your contribution to the completion of my dissertation is really appreciated.

If, for some reason, you were unable to complete and return the survey, please look around your desk and I'm sure you'll find it there at the bottom of that most important pile of "things to do". Once you've found it, please respond to the survey items on the two inside pages, complete the small section on school demographics, fold, tape, and put in the mail box.

Thank you so much!

Truman Forest • 1208 Washington Ave. • Muskegon, MI 49441
Appendix C

Human Subjects Review Board Approval
Date: January 12, 1994

To: Truman Forrest

From: M. Michele Burnette, Chair

Re: HSIRB Project Number 94-01-10

This letter will serve as confirmation that your research project entitled "Dissertation: Michigan Public Schools and the Americans with Disabilities Act" has been approved under the exempt category of review by the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board. The conditions and duration of this approval are specified in the Policies of Western Michigan University. You may now begin to implement the research as described in the application.

You must seek reapproval for any changes in this design. You must also seek reapproval if the project extends beyond the termination date.

The Board wishes you success in the pursuit of your research goals.

Approval Termination: January 12, 1995

cc: Brinkerhoff, Ed. Leadership
BIBLIOGRAPHY


ADA Experience Varied (1994) HR Report, 2(7) (pp. 1-7).


Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan.


