A Report of an Internship in the Niles Community Schools Niles, Michigan

David D. Shoemake
Western Michigan University

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/masters_theses
Part of the Business Commons

Recommended Citation
https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/masters_theses/1548

This Masters Thesis-Open Access is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate College at ScholarWorks at WMU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Master's Theses by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks at WMU. For more information, please contact maira.bundza@wmich.edu.
The purpose of this paper is to describe a two hundred and forty hour internship completed with Mr. Paul Montgomery, Executive Director, Business, for the Niles Community School System. During this internship, many areas of the school business management function were observed and experienced, including budget, payroll, maintenance and operations, food service, athletics, accounts payable, central office role, data processing, insurance, transportation, school elections, board meetings, etc. Many skills were developed and much appreciation for the business management function was gained; all of which will enable the author to manage a school district's business affairs when he reaches his career goal as a business manager.

Chapter I contains the rationale for the selection of Niles Community Schools, a brief description of the school system, background information on the Niles Community Schools and the city of Niles, and the prospectus which structured the experience.

Chapter II describes the experiences during the internship which involved numerous areas of business management as stated previously.

Chapter III summarizes and evaluates the experience and reaches some conclusions regarding the internship.
APPENDIX

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Appreciation and gratitude must be expressed to Dr. William Fairman, Superintendent, and the entire central office staff of the Niles Community Schools for their cooperation as I learned the operation of a business office and how it fits into the overall administrative structure.

I would like to express a sincere thank you to Mr. Paul Montgomery, Executive Director of Business, for the many hours of time he spent with me and for the expertise in the area of business management he shared with me.

Special thanks to my wife and two children who put up with me during this time of limited family activity, and at times financial sacrifice, without which this degree could not have been obtained.

David D. Shoemake
INFORMATION TO USERS

This reproduction was made from a copy of a document sent to us for microfilming. While the most advanced technology has been used to photograph and reproduce this document, the quality of the reproduction is heavily dependent upon the quality of the material submitted.

The following explanation of techniques is provided to help clarify markings or notations which may appear on this reproduction.

1. The sign or "target" for pages apparently lacking from the document photographed is "Missing Page(s)". If it was possible to obtain the missing page(s) or section, they are spliced into the film along with adjacent pages. This may have necessitated cutting through an image and duplicating adjacent pages to assure complete continuity.

2. When an image on the film is obliterated with a round black mark, it is an indication of either blurred copy because of movement during exposure, duplicate copy, or copyrighted materials that should not have been filmed. For blurred pages, a good image of the page can be found in the adjacent frame. If copyrighted materials were deleted, a target note will appear listing the pages in the adjacent frame.

3. When a map, drawing or chart, etc., is part of the material being photographed, a definite method of "sectioning" the material has been followed. It is customary to begin filming at the upper left hand corner of a large sheet and to continue from left to right in equal sections with small overlaps. If necessary, sectioning is continued again—beginning below the first row and continuing on until complete.

4. For illustrations that cannot be satisfactorily reproduced by xerographic means, photographic prints can be purchased at additional cost and inserted into your xerographic copy. These prints are available upon request from the Dissertations Customer Services Department.

5. Some pages in any document may have indistinct print. In all cases the best available copy has been filmed.

University Microfilms International
300 N. Zeeb Road
Ann Arbor, MI 48106

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
SHOEMAKE, DAVID DEE

A REPORT OF AN INTERNSHIP IN THE NILES COMMUNITY SCHOOLS, NILES, MICHIGAN

WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY  ED.S. 1984

University
Microfilms
International  300 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acknowledgements</th>
<th>ii</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chapter</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. RATIONALE AND PROSPECTUS</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demographic Information</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description of the Niles Community Schools</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Board of Education</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major Internship Prospectus</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Projected Nature of Internship Experience</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. THE INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational Management</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Management</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Management</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operational Management</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER I

RATIONALE AND PROSPECTUS

Niles Community Schools was chosen for the internship for several reasons. The Niles system has a five member central administrative team and this structure presented a different approach to central school administration. Five team members, including the superintendent, made up the executive council. A personnel director, a business manager, a K-6 curriculum director, and a 7-12 curriculum director sit on the council with the superintendent. All decisions are directed through this council and to the Board of Education. This organizational structure seemed unique to public school management and aroused curiosity to see its internal operation.

The business manager for the Niles Community Schools possesses an excellent reputation for financial business management expertise, with credit given for saving several school districts from financial disaster. The intern has a master's degree in counseling and personnel and felt adequate in working with people and wanted to acquire the expertise necessary to become a well-rounded business manager. It was felt the Niles Community Schools could provide an opportunity to gain the technical skills of a successful business manager. With the help of Dr. Thomas Ryan, Acting Chairperson, Department of Educational Leadership, Western Michigan University, Niles Community Schools agreed to host the internship.
Demographic Information

The city of Niles is located in the southwestern corner of Michigan, and is one of the largest cities in Berrien County. Its population is 13,115 and the city covers an area of 5.5 miles. Population includes a racial breakdown of 88 percent white, 7 percent black, and 4 percent other. The area businesses include 65 industries and 561 commercial establishments. Major area manufactures are the following: National Standard (650 employees), Simplicity Pattern (783 employees), Garden City Fan (100 employees), Tyler Refrigeration Corporation (460 employees), Wm. F. Alford Company (300 employees), and AT & T (113 employees).

Government services and facilities include a City Council/Mayor/City Manager structure, a 174-bed hospital, and a well-developed parks and recreation program.

There are 46 churches, representing 24 denominations with various culture opportunities in the community. Communications include a radio station, a daily newspaper, and a cable TV station.

Finance facts show Niles with a net effective buying income of $90,100,000. Per household this is $18,000; and per capita, it is $6,800. The Niles tax assessed value is $101,608,700 with a tax rate of $61.19 per $1,000 of state equalized value.

Description of the Niles Community School

Niles Community School is a class 3 district of 4,610 students in K-12. There are 8 school buildings used to house this population. The area of the district is approximately 73 square miles. The enrollment has been declining at a rate of approximately 100 students per year,
but has not affected an operating budget which continues to rise and is $12,176,670 for the 1984-1985 school year. Total millage for the district is 35.226 mills and supports a total cost per pupil of $2,609 for 1984-1985.

Niles has accreditation from the University of Michigan and the North Central Association.

The certified staff includes 5 central administrators, 11 principals and assistants, 10 guidance personnel and librarians, 2 directors and coordinators, and 239 teachers and consultants.

Support services include 3 supervisors, 35 custodians and matrons, 8 maintenance and delivery personnel, 53 transportation personnel, 37 secretaries and library technicians, 23 teacher aides, and 30 food services personnel, for a total staff of 456 people.

The district operates an extensive transportation system, busing 3,160 of the 4,610 students, while operating its own garage maintenance service for all the district's vehicles.

Board of Education

The Niles Community School Board of Education is a progressive, middle-class group of people consisting of the following:

President: a male, local bank attorney, who came on the Board in 1980, is in his forties, is married, and has one child in college.

Vice President: a female, social agency employee, is in her late forties, is married with two children, and has been on the Board since 1978.

Secretary: a female, active social worker volunteer, is in her late forties with two children, and has been on the Board since 1983.
Treasurer: a male, airline pilot in his forties, married, who has been on the Board since 1983.

Trustee #1: a female, married, works in community college public relations, is in her late forties, has been on the Board since 1983.

Trustee #2: a male, in his late thirties, was the previous Board President, is an industrial sales executive, has several young children, and has been on the Board since 1979.

Trustee #3: a male, in his early thirties, is an executive with three young children, and has been on the Board since July of 1984.

Overall, the Board is congenial, rather low-keyed and definitely interested in the best education they can obtain for the youth in their community.
Major Internship Prospectus

SPONSORING ORGANIZATION: Niles Community Schools

FIELD SUPERVISOR: Paul Montgomery, Business Manager, Niles Community Schools

UNIVERSITY ADVISOR: Dr. Thomas F. Ryan, Western Michigan University
Dr. Harold W. Boles, Western Michigan University

MAJOR FOCUS OF EXPERIENCE: The roles and responsibilities of a school business manager.

DURATION: Two hundred and forty hours commencing Monday, July 2, 1984.

RATIONALE:

No position in a public school setting has become more scrutinized nor more valuable than the position of school financial manager. As school finance continues to be public school's number one concern, the business manager's position continues to receive increased responsibility for the total school operation. Supervision of finance, non-teaching fields, and the physical aspects of school operations is supplied to the administrative team by the business manager. Many limitations, regulations, and technical skills must be learned if one is to be successful in this ever increasing position of responsibility.

It is believed that a focus on the conceptual, human, and technical phases of a financial manager will provide the intern with insight and skills relevant to a business manager's role. The following pages outline conceptual, human, and technical skills and criteria by which the intern's success at meeting each area will be evaluated.
Projected Nature of Internship Experience

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OBJECTIVES</th>
<th>EXPERIENCE</th>
<th>TERMINAL SKILLS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A. CONCEPTUAL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. To understand the district's organization and legal classification.</td>
<td>The intern will - read the school code of 1976 which provides for the legal organizing of school districts.</td>
<td>The intern will be able - to identify how districts are classified and where to find this information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. To acquire knowledge of the relationship of the business administrator and the Board of Education.</td>
<td>read &quot;A Code of Ethical Relationships for Board of Education Members and Educational Administrators.&quot;</td>
<td>understand the importance of ethical relationships which are essential to the successful operation of the educational system.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. To comprehend the management team concept of the district.</td>
<td>work with and observe the business manager relating with central office and line manager.</td>
<td>to understand the importance of working with the overall management team to accomplish the organization's goals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. To define the legal status of business managers and purchasing agents.</td>
<td>read the school code of 1976 which defines the legal status of business managers and purchasing agents.</td>
<td>to point to the section of the school code that relates to legal status and to summarize the school codes basic position.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. To become familiar with the planning phase of managing a public school.</td>
<td>review the school systems three-year planning model through reading and attendance at planning review meetings.</td>
<td>to develop a planning model for a public school in any area.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Projected Nature of Internship Experience

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OBJECTIVES</th>
<th>EXPERIENCE</th>
<th>TERMINAL SKILLS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>B. HUMAN</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. To obtain knowledge and understanding about the management of school personnel.</td>
<td>The intern will discuss and attend sessions with central administrators relating to numerous personnel problems</td>
<td>The intern will be able to define the role of business manager in relation to the management of school personnel.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. To gain skills in operating a business office in a public school setting.</td>
<td>interview each member of the business office to understand their role in the overall business office function.</td>
<td>to create job descriptions and establish an efficient business office for public schools.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>C. TECHNICAL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. To become familiar with the accounting and finance procedures.</td>
<td>learn account numbers, read Senate Bill No. 632 to become familiar with state budgeting guidelines, study all required reports of the state, attend meetings to invest school funds, learn payroll procedures.</td>
<td>to handle all phases accounting procedures, budgeting, payroll, and investment of school funds.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. To analyze procedures for purchasing and supply management.</td>
<td>develop a flow chart for purchasing and paying invoices and observe the handling of supplies from receiving materials to delivery to the requestor.</td>
<td>to develop an efficient purchasing procedure and supply management system.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Projected Nature of Internship Experience

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OBJECTIVES</th>
<th>EXPERIENCE</th>
<th>TERMINAL SKILLS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C. TECHNICAL (cont.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3. To gain knowledge</strong> of data processing for a public school.</td>
<td>The intern will - visit the intermediate school district and tour the data processing facilities to learn their capabilities.</td>
<td>The intern will be able to provide the proper data to allow a business manager to computerize his functions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4. To become aware</strong> of the procedures for the maintenance and operation of a public school.</td>
<td>work directly with the supervisor of maintenance and the supervisor of operations and interview both supervisors to find the scope of their positions.</td>
<td>to have a general knowledge of the procedures used by a public school for maintenance and operations, realizing the necessity to consult with the many experts in the various areas of maintenance and operations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5. To grasp the concepts related to school construction, renovations, property sales and leases.</strong></td>
<td>study the school board policies and state guidelines regarding school construction, renovation, and property sales and leases and consult with the experience of the business manager.</td>
<td>to find the necessary information to allow for legal transactions regarding school construction, renovation, property sales and leases.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6. To familiarize with the insurance necessary for a public school.</strong></td>
<td>read the Insurance Handbook written by the Michigan School Business Officials.</td>
<td>to identify the insurance necessary for a public school district.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Projected Nature of Internship Experience

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OBJECTIVES</th>
<th>EXPERIENCE</th>
<th>TERMINAL SKILLS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>C. TECHNICAL (cont.)</strong></td>
<td><strong>The intern will -</strong></td>
<td><strong>The intern will be able-</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>7. To develop a successful food service program.</strong></td>
<td>work with the business manager to learn procedures necessary to create and finance a food service program to include annual bids for food products.</td>
<td>to operate a public school food service program and develop the necessary financial system to account for this service.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>8. To acquire knowledge regarding a public school transportation system.</strong></td>
<td>read the Michigan Pupil Transportation handbook and work with the transportation director as he develops bus routes and procedures to operate transportation.</td>
<td>to find the necessary legal requirements of a transportation system for a public school and get a feel for the overall operation of such a system.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>9. To gain information about running a public school election.</strong></td>
<td>read the school election laws and discuss the procedures for operating a public school election with the business manager.</td>
<td>to obtain the necessary information to successfully run a public school election.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER II

THE INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE

The scope of the internship experience was extremely wide, and although not necessarily sequential in relation to a text book for school financial management, was extremely varied as to areas covered. To simplify the sequence of experience it will be reported in four subject areas: organizational management, central management, financial management, and operational management.

Organizational Management

The school code of 1976 gives school boards the authority to hire a business manager (Michigan Legislative Service Bureau, 1976, sec. 380.249). Niles is a third-class district and legally has appointed a school business official to handle the district's funds as provided by the Board of Education in its duties and responsibilities.

As an employee of the Board, the business official's authority to act on behalf of the district is subject to the laws governing the relationship between principals and agents.

The intern discussed the legal status of business managers with the supervisor of the internship and read Article 8 of the Michigan Constitution (1963) and all areas of the state laws that pertain to the school financial officer so as to become familiar with the information and learn how to find the information if necessary in the future.

In 1976, the Michigan Association of School Boards and the School Administrators Associations developed and adopted "A Code of Ethical
Relationships for Boards of Education Members and Educational Administrators." The intern obtained the most recent edition of this code, read it, and reviewed the reality of such a publication with the business manager. Although idealistic in approach, the document is extremely valuable to Board of Education members in particular. Experience indicates extreme amounts of political manipulation between board members and administrators with widespread violation of many areas of the code. The code then serves as a general guide and holds no penalties for violation of same. Board members and administrator relationships tend to be an extremely controversial area in the overview of current school management. Possible causes may lie in the recent movement toward accountability for education and the financial problems being experienced by so many school districts.

Public education is a state function and states are required by law to provide free public education. Local districts have inherited the delivery of educational services. These local districts were created by legislation and all authority that local districts exercise has been granted by the legislature.

In recent years, the state has become more and more involved in the control and funding of education. Court cases have caused mandates to change disparities that existed, especially in the areas of financing education.

To appreciate and to become familiar with the financing of schools in Michigan, the intern, under the business manager's guidance, read and worked with the equal yield state aid formula. Knowledge was acquired as to state equalized valuation, local tax levy, state levy, allocated tax rate, and extra-voted tax rate. The ability to apply the formula and to
understand it was gained. Federal funding of K-12 education was found to be in categorical programs and these funds went directly to the local districts to be allocated under regulations established by the State Department of Education. To better understand the regulations for federal funds, the intern sat in on a central office meeting to complete a self-compliance regarding civil rights in vocational-technical programs. Copies of all forms were received by the intern, who completed same for his future reference.

Communication plays an essential role to the success of any organization. Public schools are no exception and therefore, much time and effort must be taken to insure the proper medium to transmit our message.

During the course of the internship, many meetings, interviews, and discussions took place. Communication methods of many types were exhibited at Board of Education meetings, central administration meetings, in interviews with employees and prospective investment bankers, and through numerous discussions with employees, to name just a few of the varied and many communication opportunities. Face-to-face communication is the best means of delivering one's message, and if at all possible, it should be used in preference to all other means. The position of business manager has a demanding need for accurate and understandable communication. The Board of Education, the administration, the staff, the public, and the State Department of Education all must rely on the school business official's communication skills.

Report writing plays a very important part in a business manager's role. Accuracy and timeliness are keys to the success of all types of reports and the reports are relied on by local, state, and federal education groups. The intern gained respect and knowledge as numerous forms
were reviewed and discussed. Although not glamorous, this area is crucial to the success of a school district.

Central Management

The central management team in the Niles district was a unique arrangement to the author. Coming from a background of a superintendent, assistant superintendent, and business manager structure, a situation in which five members were seated on a cabinet for decision making, exhibited a new style of school management. Two full-time curriculum specialists made this district very progressive in all curriculum areas. The luxury of a full-time personnel specialist seems to be an extra that was not needed in a time of declining enrollment. Duplication of effort was often noted, and coming through loud and clear was the extreme importance of making sure the business manager is a functioning part of the team. Every aspect of education must have a means of financing and thus affects the school budget. If the business manager is not included, an accurate planning program cannot be created.

The intern observed numerous incidents where proper involvement of the business manager was not accomplished. The result of such an action caused serious problems in predicting expenditures and keeping the budget up to date and as accurate as possible. Discussion with the business manager gave much insight into this problem and the intern is sold on demanding a strong place on the superintendent's team when beginning work as a business manager. Only through a direct involvement in the decision-making process can a school business official maintain accurate and proper budgetary control over the finances of a school system.
School personnel management is an area that is continuously changing. The school business official will be directly involved with this function in areas of planning, organizing, staffing, directing, and controlling. With the swing away from hiring teachers and staff in general, to a period of declining enrollment and reduced funds, the business official must become highly skilled in procedures used to bargain, negotiate, solve grievances, write contract language, handle strikes, etc. Budgetary procedure must be included as all of these areas require a knowledge of how much will this cost the district.

The intern was able to work with the personnel manager to gain insight into the changing role of a personnel manager. The luxury of having a personnel specialist seems to be declining, and the school business official may become the person to handle all personnel for the district, including professional and non-professionals, and the contracts for these employees. Obtaining copies of equal opportunity information and reviewing the three contracts for the district employees gave a testimonial to the complexity of the personnel management function for a public school district.

School plant utilization is another area of organizational management that places the school business manager in a situation foreign to strict financial processes. Here the business official becomes a futuristic planner and a real estate, personal-property expert. Declining enrollment dictates a need for future planning. How many students will we have and how many buildings do we need to house that population? Business managers are faced with these decisions. As buildings are closed, decisions must be made. Do we sell these buildings? Do we sell
their housed personal property such as desks, chairs, etc.? These decisions affect the budget and therefore, the business manager must be knowledgeable in this area.

Observing closed buildings and going with the business manager to inspect these buildings, along with witnessing the Board taking action to sell some of these holdings, gave insight and guidance to what expertise is needed to manage the school plant economically. General knowledge with access to professionals in real estate and assessments as to values of various properties is the key to success in this area. You need not be an expert but a sound, working relationship with the experts will make the business manager accurate in his planning and prioritizing for the future in regard to school plant utilization.

Financial Management

An invaluable amount of information was obtained in the area of financial management by the intern. The business manager, who supervised the intern, is very knowledgeable in the area of accounting and financing. There are many unique characteristics that are common only to public school districts, accounting and reporting. The budget, the audit report, state and local financial reports, and the knowledge of timing for all reports must be mastered if the new business manager is to be successful.

The intern obtained copies of numerous documents and reports, such as: the current budget, the audit report, the annual financial report, the special education report, the vocational education report, the transportation report, etc. These reports were read and then, with the guidance of the supervisor of the internship, an attempt was made to follow the
procedure used to fill out these various reports. This practice gave great understanding of the process, and together with obtaining a copy of the state calendar for all reports necessary and when they were due, was a tremendously valuable experience.

School fund accounting requirements and transactions present an area that must fall strictly within the state's legally defined limits. The document that contains this information was obtained and studied extensively so an understanding and expertise would be gained in this area. Knowledge gained includes the following experiences:

1. Gaining understanding of the three major funds: the general fund, the student activities fund, and the debt retirement fund through discussions with the supervisor of the internship.

2. Traveling to the bank and observing investments being transacted.

3. Attending the July organizational meeting of the Board of Education where various banks were approved for investing and depositing the district's funds.

4. Aiding the business manager with a problem regarding summer tax collection done by the local township.

5. Studying and working out problems of a hypothetical nature involving the state aid formula, as well as figuring the accuracy of the amount obtained for the local district.

6. Reviewing with the business manager the combined debt retirement bonds and how they were originally created.

7. Reviewing the funds involved and the procedures used in the building and site fund.
8. Obtaining a memo put out by the business manager regarding the procedure used for the trust and agency fund.

9. Observing and discussing with the business manager the procedure that must be published and made available to the public.

10. Observing several bid openings and being shown copies of various specifications printed for prospective bidders.

11. Reading and then reviewing with the business manager the entire insurance portfolio for the district.

12. Monitoring the purchase and delivery of four vans purchased for the school, to include necessary insurance, safety requirements for the vehicle, and obtaining proper licensing, titles, etc.

Budgeting presents an area that promotes sound planning and efficient school management if done properly. This area places the most stress on a school financial manager and puts him in a position of accountability to the superintendent, Board of Education, and the public.

The intern had a personal copy of the budget and through study and instruction from the business manager became thoroughly familiar with its structure and its importance. Study and experience in this area included looks at past budgets and how well the school district stayed within its perimeters and a comprehensive study of the Michigan State Board of Education document, (Michigan, Michigan K-12 Public School Districts, 1983) Bulletin 1014, which provides financial data for all the Michigan public school districts.

Data processing provides all persons involved with public school administration the accurate and concise information necessary to make
decisions regarding the district. It behooves a business manager to familiarize himself with data processing techniques so proper supervision of data processing can be accomplished. The district under study by the intern sends the major part of its financial data to the intermediate school district for processing. The intern had the opportunity to visit the I.S.D. to observe the latest computer application for handling school district financial data. An understanding was obtained for the necessity of the business official to understand this process so the data he receives will provide accurate and concise information to assist in district decision making.

Payroll includes an area that is responsible for the reimbursement for services rendered by all employees. The district under study has one person responsible to the business manager for payroll procedures. The intern interviewed and discussed the process with the person responsible and gained an understanding of payroll accounting regarding deductions, social security, credit union deductions, etc. The business manager must stay on top of this area since his investments of district funds are tied in closely to meeting payrolls with sufficient cash flow. Hundreds of thousands of dollars are transferred on a bi-weekly basis to maximize investments and meet the payrolls. Mistakes in the payroll area must be closely guarded against as this can mean heavy financial losses and extreme employee disgruntlement.

The beginning business manager should understand the purpose of an audit and know how to work with the auditor. The intern was able to personally talk to an auditor and obtain a perspective as to just what this legally required activity entails. This procedure is done to verify
that the financial records are accurate. The auditors are concerned with the materiality of the materials used for the audit and they test transactions for internal controls. After this an opinion is given by the CPA who does the audit. The most important aspect of the audit is that the manager of the financial records is honest and treats the audit as an aid to keeping your district out of trouble and that the financial information presents fairly the financial picture of the district.

Operational Management

The purchasing and supply management of a district is crucial to the procurement of necessary materials to successfully complete the process of educating our youth. A sound system of purchasing, accounts payable, warehousing and invoice payments is necessary. The experience gained by the intern in this area included actually drafting a document to describe this procedure for the school district. Interviews were conducted and procedures were drawn up to provide for a step-by-step process complete with necessary internal controls to eliminate possible mismanagement of funds. Much appreciation was gained for the purchasing agents, the person responsible for accounts payable, and the administrative assistant who issues checks to pay the invoices. The ability to create such a system has been gained and the intern feels good about the ability to create a sound process.

Maintenance and operation provides another vast area of responsibility for the business manager and poor supervision in this area can mean deterioration of the school plant, properties, and financial losses in the millions of dollars. The intern was allowed several days to observe and
confer with both the director of operations and the director of maintenance. Activities included a tour of the maintenance facilities, description of general maintenance and custodial procedures and some on site visits to see the employees in operation. Roof and carpet problems in buildings, exterior renovation of various properties were observed with an explanation of dollar figures involved. The business manager discussed varied problems in this area involving contractual and grievable incidents that interfered with the success of the employer's efforts in the area of maintenance and operations.

The transportation aspect of public schools could be a business within itself, and a business manager must rely on someone's expertise in the areas of bus transportation of public school children and the upkeep of these transportation vehicles. Safety, legal ramifications, financial procedures, etc. are just a few of the many responsibilities created by the transportation department of a public school district. The intern visited the bus garage and sat in on varied discussions regarding bus transportation and the cost to keep the buses maintained. Here again as in maintenance and operations, a director of transportation must be relied on to manage the system properly. The business manager must be kept informed and up to date on all aspects of this highly expensive district endeavor. Ability to communicate your desires to people with delegated authority highlighted my most important aspects as to responsibility in this area.

Food service mirrors the previous two areas covered in regards to responsibility and adds a revenue creating capability to the district. A food service director and complete staff is necessary to provide food
for 4,610 students, five days per week. State requirements must be met to account for revenues and expense of this program and Federally funded lunches, food, etc. are included in its management function. The intern was provided the opportunity to discuss the financial accounting for this district program with the person in charge of the student activities fund which houses this function. Insight was gained on how this was accomplished and an appreciation for the tremendous responsibility it entails was gained. The business manager again must rely on his hiring skills and ability to delegate authority to an expert in this area. He must, however, understand with expertise the financial accounting for all the programs mentioned previously.
CHAPTER III

Summary and Conclusions

The internship provided one of the most comprehensive and valuable experiences this student has had in the educational specialist program. Insight acquired into the position of school financial manager can only be obtained through the actual observation of a business manager in action on a day-to-day routine basis. The responsibility of the position is awesome and necessitates an extremely good manager with exceptional abilities in organizational management and communication techniques. The position covers a vast magnitude of responsibilities and fluctuates from the preciseness of an accountant to the humanism of a guidance counselor. The experience in business and in education is invaluable as many decisions require a knowledge of how the educational system functions as well as sound business management techniques.

More emphasis should be placed on the understanding of financial procedures for all professional educators. Too many curriculum and instructional specialists do not understand the workings of the school financial structure. If they did, a more logical approach to getting the best possible education for our youth within a certain amount of dollars could be realized. Emphasis should be placed on making sure the business manager is included in all decision making as all decisions affect the financial position of the district.

The student has been exposed to many aspects of the business manager's position and believes the ability to successfully function
as a beginning business manager has been gained. With the knowledge and experience acquired, it is hoped that such an endeavor soon will provide the dividends necessary to reach a career goal of a position as a school financial manager.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


