

SELECTION AND RECRUITMENT OF SUPERVISORS

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SELECTION for leadership positions is an established and accepted procedure in business, industry, government, education and the other professions. The selection processes vary in quality and effectiveness from one of these groups to another and within segments or divisions of each group. On a continuum extending from "poor" practices or processes to "good" practices or processes, these parent groups and division groups would probably be located from one extreme pole to the other. However, on a continuum describing *effort* and *progress* in improving practices we would probably find each large and small group a considerable distance from the "low" pole.

This activity to improve selection practices appears to stem from, or certainly to include, a concept that "leaders are both born and made." Stated differently, this concept involves finding persons who have already demonstrated leadership ability and helping them to develop further these competencies through programs designed especially for preparation for a specific task. There is no longer a question of whether there should be selection for leadership but of how it should be done and who should do it.

It is the purpose of this report to describe policies and practices of recruitment and selection for supervision in Georgia as they were originally established and as they have been adapted to meet changing conditions. A brief historical statement about the development of the total supervisory program is presented as background information.

The late 'thirties saw many educational developments in Georgia take shape and flourish. One of these developments was a cooperative approach to the task of improving teaching and learning in Georgia schools. It was believed by forward-looking educators of that time that providing supervisory assistance for teachers in service would be an effective approach to the task. However, to provide supervisory assistance for teachers almost meant starting from the beginning. At this time there were fewer than six persons employed as supervisors in Georgia schools. There was no program of preparation for supervisors at any institution in the state.

The Georgia Teacher Education Council, an agency created in the early 'forties, assumed the sponsorship of a program for preparing school supervisors. An advisory committee of the Council gave leadership and direction in developing policies of the program. A three-pronged approach was made. Simultaneous activity was directed toward (a) recruiting and selecting personnel to prepare themselves for supervisory positions, (b) developing a program of education for the selected persons, and (c) providing for the employment of these persons in supervisory positions.

Recruitment for positions that existed mainly in hopes and dreams demanded considerable enthusiasm, effort and time. The advisory committee of the Council assumed major responsibilities for this task. Criteria for selection were established. The committee was guided by the concept that if a good teacher already exhibited *good* leadership qualities this person could be helped to become an even better teacher and leader.

The criteria were informally stated and informally applied. There was more concern that the items on the list "fitted together" in a person than that they could be identified within a person. The criteria included such items as evidence (a) of leadership among children and adults, (b) of "getting along with" students, fellow teachers, administrators, and people of the community, (c) that he likes teaching and that he demonstrates effective teaching, and (d) that he is tolerant and respectful of persons with whom he differs. Evidence of intellectual ability, emotional stability, and social adjustment was sought. Chronological age was not considered to be too important but "age in spirit" was important.

Procedures

The next task was to find teachers who seemed to meet the established criteria. The advisory committee assumed this responsibility. Contacts were made with administrators, teachers, and other school leaders to secure names of teachers who might become prospective supervisors. Applications for study in supervision were sent to the prospects.

As applications were received visits were made to the teachers by one or more members of the committee for observation of classroom procedures and for conferences with the teachers and their associates. Letters of inquiry were sent to other persons who knew the teachers. Questions relating to the criteria for selection were asked of the teachers and of persons who knew them.

The materials about each prospective supervisor were carefully reviewed by a small group of the advisory committee. This selection committee made recommendations for approval or non-approval. Invitations were extended to persons who were recommended. Other applicants were advised of the committee's decisions.

Needless to say, making these contacts for recruitment was a time-consuming process on the part of several persons—especially for the Executive Secretary of the Council and the chairman of the advisory committee. However, making contacts for recruitment provided opportunities for giving information about super-

visory services to administrators and teachers, thus assisting with creating supervisory positions and with placement of supervisory personnel. These close personal contacts in the early years of the program also helped many people to become familiar with criteria for selecting prospective supervisors.

Patterns of Selection Change

In these early years, by now the mid and late 'forties, the committee worked toward recruiting, training and placing in employment about twenty persons each year. As a general pattern these persons came into the education program without a commitment for employment. Again the advisory committee gave assistance in this phase of the program by helping administrators and prospective supervisors to arrange interviews and visitations with each other. These contacts usually resulted in employment for the supervisor.

By the early 'fifties administrators and other school leaders had been approached many times for names of prospective supervisors and had been asked for recommendations concerning them. These leaders had become familiar with the selection criteria and their recommendations were usually quite valid. This acquired competency on the part of school leaders relieved the advisory committee of making as many contacts as formerly with the prospective supervisors.

Another change of practice caused a shift of responsibility for selection for study in supervision. In the early years of the program most administrators made nominations of persons "to work in school systems other than ours." As time passed and as the program of supervision was recognized for its merit, administrators began to nominate persons "to come back to our own system." Generally these nominations were made by teachers and administrators selecting a person or persons from their own system "because they know us and our situation."

The practice of presenting these nominations to the selection committee is continued. However, the committee does not collect as much information as it previously required. Only seldom does the committee find much to question about a candidate who has "passed the test" of being nominated by his peers to be a supervisor in that system.

Has the selection process broken down or become weaker? The persons connected with the Georgia program do not believe it has. The selection procedures have been shifted in part from a state educational agency and institution to the local school staff and administrators. These persons are perhaps more concerned that the supervisory personnel meet accepted criteria than even are the members of the advisory committee.

This shift in "who does the selecting" has almost eliminated the need for seeking and creating positions for employment. It is seldom that a person who enters the program of preparation has not already been selected for employment.

This report has discussed "selection for supervision" from the standpoint of "selection for *study* in supervision." This is the point at which selection is made in the Georgia program. Selection for employment presents no problem if selection is made at entry of study or preparation for supervision. ❧

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