

THE CITY SUPERINTENDENT
AND THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

BY
WILLIAM WALTER THEISEN, Ph.D.

TEACHERS COLLEGE, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
CONTRIBUTIONS TO EDUCATION, No. 84

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INTRODUCTION

1. THE PROBLEM

THE problem of this study is to discover how lay boards of education provide for the administration of city school systems through professional chief executives. The study is concerned with an analysis of the practices of boards of education in cities of various sizes, together with an attempt to evaluate such practices. It is an attempt to discover what functions boards of education themselves perform, as a body or through their committees, what functions are delegated to executives, and how these functions are delegated.

Questions which the study seeks to answer in part at least are: What are the duties that lay boards perform? What is the nature of matters receiving the attention of boards? What kind of data do they require as a basis for determining school policies? What functions are delegated to committees? What functions are delegated to executive officers? What is the form of administrative organization provided? To what extent do boards recognize professional leadership in administrative matters and in initiating school policies? Constructively the study seeks to discover the duties that are important for a lay board to perform, as opposed to those that are trivial or that are professional and administrative. It seeks to discover those functions that should be delegated to the professional chief executive and his assistants and the scope of authority that should be given them. And, finally it seeks to discover how, with such functions delegated to professional executive officers, a lay board may exercise efficient control of the responsibilities imposed upon them by the state.

2. CRITERIA

An effort will be made in this study to use objective measures as far as possible. These will be supplemented by the results of

a group of judgments and by analogies with similar practices in the fields of business and city administration.

The first criterion which we may apply is use or waste of salaried professional skill actually purchased. As a corollary to this may be added the employment or non-employment of the highest degree of skill available for the salary paid. It is a fair measure to place an unfavorable evaluation upon that board practice which employs a superintendent for the professional service he is capable of rendering, and then either, on account of the board's own ignorance or egotism, fails to utilize this professional skill for which it is paying. In this category may be placed such matters as the failure to recognize the professional character of educational leadership, the failure to give the superintendent as chief executive the power to control the educational aspects of all departments of the system, or the failure to give him the necessary authority to secure the results of which he is capable.

A second criterion which may be applied is economical use of time at the board's disposal, e.g., as represented by the distribution of time in board meetings. The assumption in this case is that the consideration which different matters coming before a board will receive is, roughly speaking, inversely proportional to the number of questions considered. The practice which gives lengthy consideration to trivial matters with the result that large and important questions are passed upon with scant treatment or that attempts to deal with fifty questions in one meeting when it has time enough to consider adequately only a few large questions is not to be considered on the same plane with one that centers its attention on important matters, and leaves administrative details to be attended to by the professional leaders it employs.

A third criterion to be used is precision or definiteness, i. e., acting on adequate or inadequate information in determining school policies as in such matters as the budget. The practice which passes upon a budget containing ten items in lump sums, not knowing whether they represent the actual school needs in relation to the financial ability of the city or not, is not to be compared in point of administrative efficiency with that which passes upon a budget knowing just what proportion of its funds

is to go for each of the different forms of service—administrative control, supervision, teaching, text-books, fuel, supplies, janitor service, repairs—that knows how these proportions compare from building to building, from year to year or with similar items in other cities; that knows how these items compare in terms of per pupil cost; that knows something of the reasons for differences in cost; that knows how large a burden may reasonably be placed upon the taxable wealth of the community for education in the light of what it must spend in other endeavors; and that knows whether or not it has secured ample returns from previous expenditures in the way of achievements.

As a fourth criterion, though largely subjective, we may use familiarity displayed by a board with its own actions. We may evaluate unfavorably the action of a board that permits committee judgments to serve without question as board judgments on matters of policy or administration; that accepts committee reports without discussion or that does not require adequate reports of executive officers nor discuss them.

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THE CITY SUPERINTENDENT AND THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

CHAPTER I

THE BOARD AND ITS DUTIES

THE purpose of this chapter is primarily to consider the duties of a board of education and of its committees. It is aimed to select, if possible, from the wide range of duties performed by boards of education, those duties which are of vital importance. It is aimed to select those that are worthy of a board's attention, as opposed to those that are of trivial importance or that are professional in nature and which ought therefore to be delegated to the superintendent or his assistants. There are those who fear that in the modern demand that the superintendent be given large powers, the board of education will have little left to do and, as a result, will not attract to its membership the community's most capable citizens. We shall present in this chapter a tentative list of the more important duties of a board of education, ranked in their approximate order of importance as judged by several hundred competent judges. As to the proper function of board committees, the writer does not hope to reach a complete solution of the problem in this study. A thorough solution of the committee question would require a special investigation in itself. We shall present the evidence found, viewing it in the light of certain other factors which influence. We may to a certain extent evaluate the work performed by committees from the standpoint of the duties that should be performed by the board as a whole and in light of the same criteria that are to be applied to the larger body.

1. CITIES OF THE STUDY

Table I gives the cities whose rules and regulations were analyzed.¹ In it is given also the population of each city to the near-

¹ In two of these cities the board publishes no rules and regulations. In one of these the writer made a personal investigation in some detail to

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est thousand as given by the last Federal Census, the size of the board, and the number of board committees for each city. Table II gives the cities whose minutes were examined.

TABLE I

CITY	Population	Size of Bd.	No. of Coms.	CITY	Population	Size of Bd.	No. of Coms.
1. Norwalk, Conn...	25,000	9	4	51. Portland, Ore. ..	207,000	5	8
2. Chester, Pa.	39,000	9	5	52. Terra Haute	58,000	5	0
3. Cleveland	560,000	7	6	53. Paterson	126,000	9	4
4. Akron, Ohio	69,000	7	9	54. Richmond	128,000	9	4
5. New York	4,767,000	46	15	55. Brookline, Mass...	28,000	9	5
6. Salt Lake	93,000	5	5	56. Pittsfield, Mass...	32,000	15	15
7. Waltham, Mass...	28,000	10	6	57. Columbus, Ohio ..	182,000	7	6
8. New Orleans	339,000	5	4	58. Joliet, Ill.	35,000	7	9
9. Wausau, Wis.	17,000	12	7	59. Omaha	150,000	12	6
10. Grand Rapids ...	113,000	9	4	60. Lincoln, Nebr. ...	44,000	6	6
11. St. Louis	687,000	12	4	61. Indianapolis	234,000	5	5
12. Yonkers, N. Y...	80,000	15	16	62. Beverley, Mass. ...	19,000	7	4
13. Detroit	466,000	18	8	63. Brockton, Mass...	57,000	10	9
14. Rochester	218,000	5	0	64. Central Falls, R.I.	23,000	6	6
15. Fall River, Mass.	119,000	9	11	65. Westport, Mass...	3,000	3	1
16. Minneapolis	301,000	7	0	66. Waterbury, Conn.	73,000	7	5
17. Syracuse	137,000	7	9	67. Philadelphia	1,549,000	15	8
18. Newton, Mass. ...	40,000	7	0	68. Harrisburg	64,000	9	5
19. Baltimore	558,000	9	6	69. Schenectady	73,000	5	5
20. New Haven	134,000	7	6	70. Pine Bluffs, Ark...	15,000	6	5
21. Bridgeport, Conn.	102,000	12	4	71. Fort Smith, Ark...	24,000	6	5
22. Newburyport, Mass.	15,000	12	11	72. Montgomery, Ala.	38,000	5	5
23. Boston	671,000	5	0	73. Manchester, N.H.	70,000	12	4
24. Denver	213,000	5	0	74. Joplin, Mo.	32,000	6	5
25. Covington, Ky. ...	53,000	5	5	75. Lockport, N. Y...	18,000	12	8
26. Louisville	224,000	5	5	76. Freeport, N. Y...	5,000	5	2
27. San Francisco ...	417,000	4	7	77. Everett, Wash. ...	25,000	5	5
28. Cedar Rapids, Ia.	33,000	7	6	78. Oakland, Cal. ...	150,000	7	4
29. St. Joseph, Mo...	77,000	6	6	79. Fargo, N. D.	14,000	9	8
30. Evansville, Ind...	70,000	3	0	80. Charleston, S. C.	59,000	10	7
31. Fort Worth	73,000	7	6	81. Boulder, Colo. ...	10,000	5	5
32. Moline, Ill.	24,000	13	8	82. Wakefield, Mass...	11,000	6	5
33. New Brunswick, N. J.	23,000	5	8	83. Wichita	52,000	12	11
34. Elgin, Ill.	26,000	13	9	84. Johnstown, Pa. ...	55,000	9	4
35. Spokane	104,000	5	5	85. Charlotte, N. C...	34,000	17	7
36. Houston	79,000	7	6	86. Columbia, S. C...	26,000	7	5
37. Laramie, Wyo. ...	8,000	6	4	87. Racine, Wis.	38,000	18	8
38. Lead, S. D.	8,000	5	4	88. Newport, Ky.	30,000	12	15
39. Topeka	44,000	13	6	89. Worcester, Mass...	146,000	30	14
40. Nashville	110,000	9	4	90. Milton, Mass. ...	8,000	6	3
41. Chicago	2,185,000	21	9	91. Holyoke, Mass. ...	58,000	9	11
42. Providence	224,000	33	19	92. Lawrence, Mass...	86,000	5	0
43. Winston-Salem, N. C.	17,000	7	3	93. Kansas City, Mo.	248,000	6	10
44. Sioux City, Ia...	48,000	7	7	94. West Point, Nebr.	1,800	6	6
45. Cape Girardeau...	8,000	6	6	95. Pierce, Nebr.	1,200	6	0
46. Seattle	237,000	5	6	96. Cortland, N. Y...	12,000	9	9
47. Greeley, Colo. ...	8,000	5	5	97. Fremont, Nebr. ...	9,000	6	4
48. Calumet, Mich. ...	33,000	5	6	98. Portland, Me.	59,000	13	17
49. Lebanon, Pa.	19,000	7	6	99. Middletown, N.Y.	15,000	9	5
50. Pawtucket, R. I..	52,000	9	12	100. Winchester, Mass.	9,000	3	0

determine what is the actual practice. The other is a small city with which the writer was for a number of years intimately connected in his capacity as superintendent.

TABLE II

CITY	Population	Size of Bd.	No. of Coms.	CITY	Population	Size of Bd.	No. of Coms.
1. Seattle	237,000	5	6	31. Paducah, Ky.	23,000	5	—
2. Pittsburg	534,000	15	3	32. Salem, Mass.	44,000	5	5
3. St. Louis	687,000	12	4	33. Council Bluffs, Ia.	29,000	7	6
4. Reading	96,000	9	4	34. New Orleans	339,000	5	5
5. Worcester	146,000	30	14	35. Richmond	128,000	9	4
6. Newark	347,000	9	4	36. Carthage, Mo.	9,000	6	—
7. Albany	100,000	3	0	37. Owatonna, Minn.	6,000	5	—
8. Milwaukee	374,000	15	6	38. Martins Ferry, O.	9,000	5	—
9. Somerville, Mass.	77,000	14	8	39. Waterloo, Ia.	27,000	6	—
10. Lancaster, Pa.	47,000	7	—	40. Bellaire, O.	13,000	8	10
11. Muskegon	24,000	6	4	41. Mansfield, O.	21,000	5	—
12. East Orange	34,000	5	5	42. Plattsmouth, Neb.	4,000	6	—
13. Grand Rapids	113,000	9	4	43. Wichita, Kans.	52,000	12	11
14. Lincoln	44,000	6	6	44. Lead, S. D.	8,000	5	4
15. Omaha	150,000	12	6	45. San Antonio	97,000	7	9
16. Fremont, Nebr.	9,000	6	6	46. Mitchell, S. D.	66,000	5	—
17. West Point, Nebr.	1,800	6	6	47. Des Moines	86,000	7	4
18. Pierce, Nebr.	1,200	6	0	48. Winfield, Kans.	7,000	6	—
19. Schenectady	73,000	5	5	49. Kalamazoo	39,000	6	3
20. Dunkirk, N. Y.	17,000	8	11	50. Ypsilanti	6,000	6	8
21. Millville, N. J.	12,000	5	—	51. Chatham, N. J.	2,000	9	—
22. Topeka	44,000	13	6	52. Louisville	224,000	5	5
23. Framingham, Mass.	13,000	6	2	53. Montclair	22,000	5	0
24. Whitehall, N. Y.	5,000	5	—	54. Bridgeport	102,000	12	4
25. La Porte, Ind.	11,000	3	0	55. Chicago	2,185,000	21	9
26. Benton Harbor ...	9,000	6	—	56. Jersey City	268,000	9	8
27. Boise, Idaho	17,000	6	—	57. Cleveland	560,000	7	6
28. Bloomington, Ind.	9,000	3	—	58. Elizabeth	73,000	9	13
29. Kewanee, Ill.	9,000	—	—	59. New York	4,767,000	46	15
30. Burlington, Vt.	20,000	6	4	60. Los Angeles	319,000	7	6

NOTE—In both Tables I and II, where several visiting or building committees and the like have been found in a single city, they have in each case been combined into a single visiting or building committee.

2. THE QUESTION OF LEGAL LIMITATIONS

It is not deemed necessary for the purpose of this study to enter into an analysis of the legal limitations affecting the powers and duties of city boards of education. While the statutes, on the one hand, do not for the most part prescribe the exact form in which these duties shall be exercised, they do not, on the other hand, prevent boards from exercising good judgment through the application of sound business principles in providing for the administration of the school system.

Among the powers and duties commonly granted to city boards of education are these: to employ teachers and fix their salaries; to determine courses of study and adopt text-books, in so far as not regulated by state law; to purchase fuel and supplies; to divide the city into districts for purposes of distributing attendance; to submit bond issues to a vote of the electors; to recom-

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mend the tax levy; to have care and oversight of school property. The purchase and location of sites and the erection of buildings is frequently restricted by requiring a vote of approval by the electors, or in dependent city districts, by removing the power to purchase sites and erect buildings to other controlling bodies.

This study is concerned with the way in which provision is made in the by-laws of boards for the performance of duties commonly devolving upon them. It is concerned with what boards do, whether it be the result of inactivity or over-activity, or whether it be the result of legal restriction, or a combination of these factors. It is true that boards are not altogether responsible for not doing what they may be, by statute, prevented from doing, but their responsibility in that case lies in utilizing the means at their command for securing necessary changes in the laws. In short, we are interested in finding how different forms of board practice contribute to or hinder efficient school administration.

Even a casual examination of state school laws is sufficient to convince the student of educational administration that the statutes do not prevent boards from knowing what they are doing; from bending every effort (except in San Francisco, which provides for popular election of the superintendent) to secure as their chief executive officer the most capable man available; from looking to their chief executive for recommendations on questions of policy; from requiring of their executive officers adequate reports of the educational progress and business conditions of the school system; from an intelligent discussion of such reports; from requiring their chief executive and his assistants to submit a detailed analysis of proposed expenditures and probable receipts, showing just what each unit of educational endeavor will probably cost; from centering their own attention on large questions of policy and devoting a greater share of their time to large questions rather than to trivial matters. An examination of school laws reveals further that boards are not deterred by legal provisions, from refusing to appoint teachers and other officers, so far as the appointive power rests with the board, except as they are nominated and recommended by the chief executive. It does not prevent them from refusing to squander

their own time in listening to personal complaints and communications unless it is found that the matter in question cannot be adjusted satisfactorily by those whom it employs to administer its system of education.

While charters and general school laws do restrict boards in some cities by placing the money raising power, or the power to determine the location of sites and the erection of school buildings, in other hands, they may at least attempt to see that these other bodies are provided with adequate information regarding the needs of the school system. They may see that the city authorities or the legislature have opportunity to learn what is needed by the schools in the way of money, or types of educational endeavor. They may enlighten the people of the community as to the community's educational needs. They may make an honest effort to secure information as to whether or not the proposed expenditures are a fair and just burden upon the taxable wealth of the community.

Some provisions may be noted, however, that require certain administrative functions to be delegated. The Pennsylvania school law² provides that in school districts of the first class "associate and assistant district superintendents may be appointed by the board of school directors, upon nomination of the superintendent of schools. . . . They shall be under the supervision and direction of the superintendent of schools." It further provides³ that, "All plans for new school construction, additions or repairs shall be approved by the superintendent of buildings and shall be submitted to the superintendent of schools for criticism, before submission to the board of public education for adoption." The St. Louis charter provides⁴ that, "All appointments, promotions and transfers of teachers, and introduction and changes of text-books and apparatus, shall be made only upon the recommendation of the superintendent and the approval of the board."

In some instances the law provides certain statutory committees. New York City's charter provides⁵ that, "It shall be the duty of the board of education . . . to appoint an executive committee of fifteen members of the board." It does not, how-

² Pennsylvania School Law, 1913, Art. XXII, Sec. 2224.

³ *Ibid.*, Sec. 2231.

⁴ St. Louis Charter, Sec. 7.

⁵ New York City Charter, Sec. 1063.

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ever, require that the board provide, as it does, fourteen additional standing committees.

In evaluating the practices of boards of education, error may be made in giving credit to boards for meritorious service; whereas, as a matter of fact, they may be doing only what the law compels them to do. Such error would tend to place the practices of boards in a more favorable light. Error may be made in the opposite direction, when certain criteria are applied, condemning boards for not doing what they may be prevented by law from doing. However this may be, our purpose, as stated, is to evaluate the practice of boards as it makes for or does not make for efficient school administration.

3. THE DUTIES OF A LAY BOARD OF EDUCATION

a. Duties Undertaken in Practice

(1) *The Kind of Matters Considered in Meetings.* That the reader may form some conception of the nature of matters which occupy the attention of boards of education, matters reported in the proceedings were tabulated. Table III includes all matters considered by boards, when not in the form of committee reports, for the first two meetings⁶ whose minutes were received for the sixty cities in Table II.⁷ Too much significance must not be attached to the frequency of different matters found because certain types of business are more apt to be taken up in a given meeting than others. Bills of expenditure are commonly presented each month, while such a matter as the budget may be confined to one or two meetings each year and a question of bond issue or the selection of a chief executive may not occur in several years. Evaluation of the matters found to be engaging the attention of boards is reserved for later sections of the study.

(2) *The Kind of Data Required by Boards.* One criterion of the efficiency with which a board discharges its legislative functions is the precision or accuracy of the information it requires as a basis for passing upon proposed school policies. It is at the

⁶ In some instances only minutes of one meeting were received.

⁷ Except for reports of officers only matters occurring in three or more cities are given in the table. Matters merely referred to committees or officers are not included for the reason that such matters may be referred by the president without board consideration.

TABLE III^s

I. REPORTS OF EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

	Total
Superintendent's Report on:—	
Proposed extensions or readjustments of the scope of educational activities: 1, 3, 4, 5, 10, 12, 13, 19, 20, 21, 29, 33, 34, 40, 42, 53, 56, 57, 58, 60.....	20
Progress of the schools:	
(a) Achievement of pupils: 34.....	1
(b) Number of visits of supervision: 8, 10.....	2
(c) Enrollment and attendance: 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 10, 13, 21, 29, 32, 33, 36, 37, 59, 61.....	15
Matters pertaining to capital outlays, buildings, sites, improvements: 1, 21, 61.....	3
Selection of text-books or course of study: 2, 3, 19, 21, 31, 34, 36, 45, 46, 54, 59.....	11
Matters pertaining to maintenance expenditures: 1, 3, 16, 23, 30, 31, 33, 41, 44, 45, 53, 54.....	12
Appointment of teachers: 2, 3, 6, 20, 23, 27, 32, 34, 35, 38, 41, 45, 51, 53, 56, 58, 60.....	17
Assignment, transfer, resignation, leave of absence, or promotion of teachers: 2, 3, 4, 5, 10, 20, 29, 31, 33, 34, 35, 53, 56, 58, 60.....	15
Questions of salaries or pensions: 2, 3, 20, 41, 45, 53, 58, 61.....	8
Permits granted for use of building: 3, 57, 59.....	3
Appointments of board of examiners: 48.....	1
Appointments of administrative employees: 3, 61.....	2
Educational meetings attended: 9.....	1
Communications or complaints received: 1, 8, 34, 35, 53.....	5
Changes in rules and regulations: 4, 34.....	2
Length of school session, vacation dates: 10, 40.....	2
Suspension of pupil: 29.....	1
Granting diplomas: 33.....	1
Receipts from school entertainments: 19.....	1
Superintendent of Buildings or Superintendent of Supplies:—	
Progress of construction and amounts due on contracts: 2, 3, 14, 20, 21	5
Matters of maintenance expenditure or equipment: 2, 3, 14, 33, 34, 57, 59.....	7
Inspection of buildings, or materials, and amounts on hand: 2, 3, 57.	3
Appointments and suspensions: 3, 56.....	2
Permits granted or recommended: 2, 3, 56.....	3
Recommending investigation of building department: 3.....	1
Secretary, Business Manager ^o :—	
Business transacted or pending: 2, 3, 6, 13, 17, 21, 34, 58, 61.....	9

^s Numbers refer to cities of Table II.

^o Exclusive of receipts, expenditures, conditions of funds, or bills to be paid.

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Officers in charge of special departments:—	
Medical inspection: 6, 11, 12, 19, 21, 30, 33, 59.....	8
Attendance: 4, 5, 6, 9, 10, 11, 13, 21, 33, 56, 59.....	11
Attorney:—legal opinions, matters pending or adjusted: 3, 15, 57....	3
President's annual report: 8.....	1

II

Appointments, consider: (a) Teachers: 9, 10, ¹⁰ 25, 29, 30, 34, 54.....	7
(b) Nurse: 32.....	1
(c) Janitors: 14, 17, 27, 37, 43.....	5
(d) Business employees: 12, 28, 38.....	3
Adopt text-books or courses of study: 5, 12, 20, 45, 50.....	5
Approve or reject expenditures: 1, 2, 3, 7, 9, 12, 14, 16, 18, 20, 22, 23, 24, 25, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 33, 36, 37, 39, 40, 41, 43, 44, 46, 49, 51, 54, 59.	32
Expenditures, authorize: 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 18, 20, 21, 22, 29, 30, 33, 36, 41, 42, 45, 46, 47, 49, 54, 58.....	22
Grant leaves of absence to teachers or others: 22, 24, 31, 32, 34, 39, 43, 45.....	8
Grant use of buildings or grounds: 12, 14, 16, 25, 26, 27, 30, 32, 48, 56.....	10
Building insurance: 29, 30, 43, 46.....	4
School calendar: 9, 10, 18, 24, 35, 36, 39, 40, 44, 46, 47, 49, 56, 57, 58, 59.....	16
Resignations of teachers accepted: 18, 37, 47.....	3
Authorize teachers, superintendent or board members to attend educa- tional gatherings: 29, 37, 44, 48.....	4,
Non-resident tuition: 12, 29, 30, 34, 36, 43.....	6
Question of bids, supplies or equipment: 1, 2, 7, 12, 14, 15, 17, 20, 21, 25, 28, 29, 31, 33, 34, 35, 37, 41, 54, 55, 57, 58.....	22
Questions pertaining to legal matters:	
Official bonds: 10, 13, 17, 46, 51.....	5
Legal proceedings to quiet title: 47.....	1
Heard report of receipts, expenditures and condition of funds: 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 18, 20, 21, 29, 31, 33, 34, 36, 42, 51, 57, 58, 59, 61.....	27
Consider questions of capital outlays and means of financing:	
Bonds: 2, 13, 27, 36, 50, 51, 55, 58.....	8
Sites and buildings: 10, 36, 43, 47, 48, 49, 60.....	7
Consider matters of salary: 34, 42, 43, 48, 55.....	5
Communications and complaints, written or oral: 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 14, 15, 17, 19, 20, 21, 25, 26, 29, 31-7, 39-41, 43-5, 48, 51, 53-7, 59-61.....	38

¹⁰ Voted on all applicants.

Plans and specifications: 2, 6, 32, 33, 54, 55, 60.....	7
Consider questions of budget, including sources of revenue: 1, 2, 12, 17-8, 20-1, 24-5, 27, 35, 37, 43, 46-7, 49, 51, 57.....	18
Questions of representing needs before city authorities or the legis- lature: 7, 9, 34, 53, 57, 59, 60.....	7
Select (a) Chief executive: 38, 56.....	2
(b) Other executive officers: 10-12, 15, 32, 36.....	6

same time a measure of the facts as to whether or not a board is holding its chief executive responsible for results and whether or not it is demanding that the chief executive, through such instruments as the budget, shall initiate new policies. A board which votes a lump sum of \$100,000 for teachers' salaries without knowing how many teachers at each grade and type of service and without knowing wherein and why there are differences from previous years, or which appropriates a lump sum of \$10,000 for fuel and supplies without knowing whether this money is being spent where most needed, can scarcely be said to be properly serving its community. We may select two topics for measuring practice of boards in this respect, the budget and the reports of its officers. The importance of adopting the annual budget as recommended by the chief executive and that of requiring and considering reports may be judged from the tentative scale of board duties.

(a) The Form of Budget Adopted. It is not our purpose to enter into an exhaustive study of budget making. We may, however, examine the data of boards for certain matters of information which contribute most effectively to a board's ability to pass upon school policies. In any scientifically constructed budget data are necessary which will show whether school funds are being expended for those things which mean most for the education of the children, whether they are sufficient to purchase a high quality of instruction, and whether they represent a fair proportion of the community's ability to support good schools. The science of educational administration has established norms¹¹ for the guidance of boards which make it unnecessary to guess in matters involving annually, as in some cities, millions of dollars.

¹¹ For data on this point see the studies of Strayer, Updegraff, and Elliott.