

Focus of Superintendent Efforts

It is extremely important for the new superintendent to understand that the things they would like to be doing are not necessarily the things they should be doing. “Don’t work too hard at the wrong things.” This shift of focus can be a difficult transition because it is usually new territory (“emergent behavior”).

Table 9:
Superintendent Preferred vs. Actual Use of Time

Preferred	Actual
1. Curriculum	1. Board Relations
2. Personnel	2. Finance
3. Public Relations	3. Facilities
4. Labor Relations	4. Personnel
5. Finance	5. Curriculum
6. Board Relations	6. Labor Relations
7. Facilities	7. Public Relations
8. Extracurricular	8. Extracurricular
9. Transportation	9. Transportation

Volp, Frederick D., Geoffrey H. Davis, et.al. “Snapshot 2000: A Study of School Superintendents in New York State,” NYSCOSS, March 2001.

The Ten Issues Judged to be of Greatest Significance

“In Snapshot 2000” (2001), superintendents were asked to rate a series of issues and challenges facing them in the daily practice of the profession. The four point scale ranged from ‘Of great significance’ to ‘Of little or no significance’. The 10 issues identified as ‘Of great significance’ are shown below.

Table 7:

- 70% Funding to adequately address student needs to meet NYS learning standards.
- 64% Equity in distribution of state aid.
- 59% Funding remedial/summer school programs and academic ‘safety’ nets.
- 55% Student performance on New York State assessments.
- 52% Implementation of New York State standards.
- 52% Administrator recruiting/selection.
- 52% Ability of teaching staff to teach to the new higher standards.
- 47% Funding and implementing the professional development plan required by SED.
- 43% Teacher recruiting/selection.
- 42% Changing societal values and behavioral norms.

It is clear that the primary focus for superintendents was on finding ways to finance, staff, and implement the new state initiatives.