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EDUCATIONAL DECISION MAKING IN THE TENNESSEE STATE LEGISLATURE

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate the decision-making process of Tennessee legislators as they establish educational policy. Sources of influence or information that legislators perceive as effective and/or reliable were identified. The decision orientation of legislators in terms of authority base, reference groups, decision style, and decision mechanism was determined. Relationships between these orientations and characteristics of position, party, experience, age, and region were analyzed. Also, legislators' perceptions of the meaning of personal value systems in decision making were sought.

Thirty-four members of the 96th Tennessee General Assembly who served as education committee members or as leaders of a chamber participated in the study. Personal interviews, which focused on three educational bills that came to the floor of both chambers, were conducted. Legislators also completed a forced choice rating scale of decision resources.

Legislators' responses indicated that fellow legislators and education lobbyists were the most influential sources of information. The least important sources of influence were the higher education representatives and the governor.

Major findings were that legislators: (1) view themselves as establishing policy for the betterment of society through knowledge and information; (2) perceive that guidance for decisions more often comes from those outside of the legislature rather than inside; (3) study issues for solving problems more often than they bargain for conflict management, and (4) see themselves working with fellow legislators through negotiations and the study of issues rather than reacting to the demands from those outside of the legislature.

Responses of the legislators indicated that they rely on personal values, philosophy, expectations, and experience when establishing policy. There was little variation in the decision orientation resources between the groups studied.

Conclusions of the study centered on ways to effectively impact educational policymaking. Those who wish to affect decisions of legislators will be most effective through reasoned presentations of the value of an educational proposal. Educators can be a more powerful influence by being aware of current issues, assertive in voicing opinions, and rational in their analysis. Identification of and personal contact with education leaders in the legislature can provide linkages for establishing legislation.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Educational policymaking has shifted from the local school district to the state legislature. The emergence of state legislators as educational policymakers is the result of increased public concern for the quality and equality of education. Professional educators, who, over time, have learned to deal with local control of schools, have little experience with state control of schools. A lack of an understanding by educators of the legislative process and of the influences on legislators' decision making on educational issues has separated them from politicians. The lack of understanding and communication contributes, in turn, to a lack of collaboration.

The history of educational reform outlines the evolution of the politics of education from local control to state control. Throughout this century education has been swept by waves of reform. The early 1900s saw reform centered on "scientific management." "Sputnik"-motivated reform was the wave of the 1950s and 1960s. The educational theme of reform of the 1980s has been one of "excellence in education" (Lutz, 1988, p. 126). The educational theme of reform for the 1980s was brought about by reports such

as A Nation at Risk (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983) and Action for Excellence (Task Force on Education for Economic Growth, 1983) that were critical of the education children were receiving. These reports and others claimed that the product of education was inferior and that the students were not prepared for college or for the work force. The reports stimulated citizen involvement and media attention. The focus of research became effective teaching and curriculum change.

Federal and business pressures have contributed to the move to more state control of education. In 1965, the passage of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act resulted in a high level of federal involvement in education. Federal funding for education increased and with it a demand for accountability that fell to the states to monitor and evaluate. State departments of education became powerful by monitoring and distributing federal funds to local school systems. The 1980s have seen less federal money for education, resulting in less federal control. State agencies, however, have maintained their control while interest from the business community has increased.

Private business has expressed a concern for the lack of prepared workers available to them upon graduation. The pressure from the business community coupled with the increased publicity from critical reports of education has led to a state assertion into local education in a way and at a level that is unprecedented.

State legislatures traditionally have been involved in providing resources and finances for education. More recently, supported by national interest and dissatisfaction with education, legislatures began to assert their influence into educational policymaking. Legislative mandates aimed at control of who teaches, who is taught, what is taught, and how it is taught have been passed. As a result, changes in teacher education, certification, evaluation, and accountability have become commonplace. The impetus for this change has most often come from outside the educational sphere as the notion of "teacher-proof" education has found support in the legislatures.

Statement of the Problem

Early in Tennessee history, education was controlled by strong local school districts. Although the county remains the basic unit of school control, the gradual development of a strong state Department of Education and a state Board of Education has led to more centralization of administration. Tennessee court rulings, such as State v. Meador (1925), which stated, "The public school system is a matter of State, and not local, concern" (cited in Greene, Grubbs, & Hobday, 1982, p. 301), have supported a high degree of state control for Tennessee education.

Since the creation of a standing committee structure in the Tennessee legislature in 1965, this structure has strengthened, and legislators have become more assertive and

independent in their policymaking. Legislatures in the last ten years have passed far-reaching educational legislation, such as proficiency testing for teachers and students, expanded curriculum requirements, gifted and talented programs, and a Master Teacher Program (McAlister, 1981, 1983). Educators have not been the only source of input into this legislation. Political party, administrative staff, pressure groups, and constituents have been influential in these legislative outcomes.

Educators have reacted to this more assertive legislative body by becoming more politically aware and active. The effectiveness of this activity is hampered by limited study of legislative behavior. The research of the politics of education in Tennessee has been fragmented and provides little guidance for working with legislators. A lack of understanding of decision-making resources and of the various influences on the decisions of the legislators prohibits the collaboration of educators and politicians for successful educational policymaking. Therefore, there is a need to determine the influences on and the decision orientations of Tennessee legislators.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate how decisions are made by Tennessee state legislators concerning educational issues. Specific questions that were addressed include:

1. What factors do legislators perceive as having the greatest influence on the legislative decision process?

2. What is the decision orientation of the legislators?

3. Do legislators perceive that their decisions are directed by their own personal value system?

4. Are there differences in the decision orientation of the legislators related to position, party, experience, age, or region?

Significance of the Study

Although research has been carried out in education, and political scientists have studied the political arena, the joint study of education and the legislature is rare (Lehne & Rosenthal, 1980). The new role of the legislature in educational policymaking provides a useful focus for research. Appropriate audiences which can benefit from such research are the state legislative community, the academic and research community, and local school systems. Needs and concerns can be more effectively addressed by a better understanding of the political arena in education. There has been a recent surge of scholarly interest in understanding state legislative behavior (Mitchell, 1981). The recent development of theoretical frameworks for the study of the politics of education is an indication of a desire for this understanding.

In order to be effective in dealing with state legislators in their new roles, those who implement new programs, those who educate, license, and evaluate teachers, and those who educate children need to see the legislative process from an insider's prospective. From this prospective, educators can better understand and cooperate with politicians in enacting legislation which impacts education. This study contributes to an understanding of the legislative decision process in Tennessee and of the influences and resources to which Tennessee legislators turn when making decisions. The results of this study can enable educators to become effective partners with legislators in evaluating educational issues and in developing productive educational policy.

Assumptions

1. Legislators are influenced in their decision making by factors inside and outside of the legislature.

2. Legislative decisions are affected by legislators' decision styles.

3. Legislators' decision processes are affected by resources to which they turn in their decision making.

4. Legislators' decision processes are affected by the particular cultures in which they live.

5. Value systems of legislators affect their decisions.

6. Perceptions of legislators are accurate and reflect the true nature of their decision process.

7. Professional educators can influence legislative decisions with appropriate information about the decision-making process.

8. The scale of measurement for the Decision-Making Resource Rating Scale is of equal intervals.

Method and Procedure

A descriptive field study was conducted on subjects from the 96th General Assembly of the Tennessee Legislature to determine how decisions are reached on educational issues in the Tennessee State Legislature. Research methodology drew upon qualitative and quantitative research techniques using two instruments. A structured, open-ended interview provided data on sources of influence, on decision orientation, and on the effect of individual value systems. Demographic information was also gathered. Data from the interviews were analyzed for patterns. The second instrument was a forced choice rating scale on decision orientation of legislators which was designed by Mitchell (1981). Data from these sources allowed for comparison of groups and for description of the decision orientation of the legislators.

A total of 43 subjects was selected from the 1989 membership of the Tennessee State Legislature to participate in the study. Of the 99 Representatives, the 24 members of the Education Committee and 5 leaders of the House were included; and, of the 33 Senators, the 9 members of the Education Committee and 5 Senate leaders, one of which

was counted as a member of the Education Committee, were identified to be used. This sample represented approximately one third of the total legislature. A study of these subjects indicated that the sample consisted of approximately equal ratios of east, middle, and west Tennesseans, and that the ratio of Republicans to Democrats was approximately that of the total population.

Three bills that had come before the legislature in the 1989 session were chosen for the focus of the interview. These bills were SB 499 (HB 1248), which restricted time which students could work; SB 24 (HB 1248), which required school board members have a high school education; and SB 959 (HB 1197), which directed schools to begin after Labor Day. These bills were chosen because of the controversy surrounding them which would stimulate more interest from various groups. The ease of understanding of the bills by the public encouraged more constituency input. These bills are also current and should, therefore, provide a vivid reminder to the subjects of the decision process relating to them.

Subjects were interviewed using an open-ended format. The interview was piloted and revised prior to use with the subjects. A former senator who was on the Senate Education Committee in the 1987-1989 session of the Legislature and who is very well versed on educational issues piloted the interview and made suggestions for revisions. The interview

focused on the process by which bills are initiated and carried through the General Assembly, where subjects got information and how they used this information in relating to the bills in question, and ideologies or beliefs that influenced their decisions on these bills. Subjects were also asked questions about demographic characteristics of their districts. Other personal data were obtained from the Tennessee Blue Book (1987-1988) and from the Legislative Library in Nashville.

After the interview, legislators were asked to complete the Decision-Making Resource Rating Scale (RRS), used by permission of Mitchell (1981). Mitchell developed this scale after intensive study of legislative decision making using interviews, observations, and questionnaires. It is a differential scale that forces subjects to rate two choices relating to decision style, reference group, authority base, and decision mechanism.

Analysis of Data

Interview responses were content analyzed and frequencies of responses were tabulated. A coding form for content analysis of interview data was developed, using categories from related literature and from the RRS. After development of the coding form, interrater reliability was determined for the researcher and two volunteers. Frequency distributions of the categories of the coding form were completed for the total population and for demographic groups.

The Decision Resource Rating Scale is a semantic differential scale developed by Mitchell (1981). The instrument was designed to measure subjects' decision orientation in four dimensions. These dimensions are authority mode, reference group, decision style, and decision mechanism. Each dimension consists of factors or resources which guide legislators in decision making. After scoring of the instrument for each participant, means and standard deviations for the factors were computed and analyzed.

RRS scores were used to answer research questions two, three, and four. Interview data were used to answer questions one, two, and three. Each set of data from the two instruments was analyzed separately and then compared as a validity and reliability check. Patterns found in analysis of the interview data were presented to either corroborate or refute findings from the RRS data.

Limitations and Delimitations

Qualitative research is an attempt to describe a situation or an event at a particular time and place. With this in mind, this study was carried out within a historical and cultural context which is unique. Therefore, generalizations to other legislatures, other legislators, and to other times even in Tennessee are difficult to assume. Lack of a random sampling of subjects did not allow statistical inferences to be made. Statistical data

were reported to describe the influences on and decision orientation of the Tennessee state legislators. Specific limitations of the study were:

1. Subjects in this study were selected members of the 96th General Assembly of the State of Tennessee.

2. Assumptions made concerning the bills chosen for focus of the study may not have been appropriate.

3. Candid responses from the subjects were dependent upon their trust of the interviewer and their feeling of confidentiality.

4. Findings of the study are based on the perceptions of the subjects.

5. One researcher conducted all of the interviews.

Definitions

For the purpose of this study, the following definitions were used:

Decision making is a series of actions which lead to a choice of alternatives.

Influence is the input into a process which results in behavior that is different from that which would have occurred otherwise.

Role orientation refers to a legislator's perception of the way he or she should perform the legislative job.

Education interest groups are those groups or individuals who have a direct interest in educational issues.

Decision-making orientations are four broad areas (authority mode, reference group, decision style, and decision mechanism) defined by Mitchell (1981) that are thought to control the decision process of political actors.

Organization of Study

Chapter I contains the statement of the problem, research questions to be answered, significance of the study, underlying assumptions, design of the study, analysis procedures, delimitations of the study, and definition of terms. Chapter II contains a review of related literature which provides the basis for the study. The method and procedure used in the study are presented in Chapter III. The presentation and analysis of data are included in Chapter IV. Chapter V provides a summary of the study, conclusions based on the research, and recommendations for further study.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter will provide an overview of the historical background of the separation of politics and education and will describe the new relationship of the actors in these two arenas in order to emphasize the need for a clearer understanding of the political process as it relates to education today. The development of research, including various theories, methods, and foci that have been utilized for the study of legislatures, will be described as a rationale for the use of the choices for this study. The research discussed will be limited to those studies which have as a direct focus the sources of influence or the decision making of the state legislature.

Politics and Education from a Historical Perspective

The unspoken but long-standing belief that politics and education do not mix, which has served to keep separate the world of politics and the world of education (Wirt & Kirst, 1972) is being challenged by educators and politicians today. While educators knew that legislatures had ultimate control over schools, both those who practiced schooling and those who studied schooling encouraged this separation (Kirst & Walker, 1971). Bailey (1962) pointed out that

even though legislators and educators had a common focus of school and community, political scientists had excluded education from their study. They had applied their concepts and methodology to every institution except schools (Wirt & Kirst, 1972). This nonpolitical view of public education, which has been popular and long-lasting, is giving way to a view of mutual dependence. Thirty years ago, as the modern legislature began to develop, Eliot (1959) emphasized that education was a political issue, and he encouraged more study of the politics of education. Since then, numerous studies in the field have been conducted. However, because of the infancy of this new research, these studies were imperfect and often lacked clear concepts and methods which were fully developed (Jewell & Patterson, 1977). By 1969, as a result of this increased research activity, the American Educational Research Association had formed a special interest group concerned with methods and objects of inquiry for the study of the politics of education (Wirt, 1972). Scholarly discussion of these problems continues today.

In the early 1900s, the structural change of school administration tended to separate education from political conflict (Wirt, 1972). "Educators have shied away not only from the word 'politics' but from political scientists as well" (Eliot, 1959, p. 1035). Reasons for the separation of politics and education, viewed as advantages by professional educators, included the following:

1. To keep the sordid image of politics out of the image of education

2. To keep schools as unique institutions rather than extensions of other government agencies

3. To keep politicians "out" and professionals "in" for the good of the children

4. To keep control in the hands of the professional school administrators

5. To keep a competitive position for tax funds with the voters (Wirt & Kirst, 1972).

One additional rationale for this separation was the awareness by schoolmen that alignment with one political party while it was in office could lead to long-range disaster when the parties alternated control (Bailey, 1962).

The irony of this ideology is stated by Martin (1962):

> Thus is the circle closed and the paradox completed. Thus does the public school, heralded by its champions as the cornerstone of democracy, reject the political world in which democratic institutions operate. Thus is historical identification with local government accompanied by insistence on complete independence of any agency or instrument of local government, lip service to general citizen activity attended by mortal fear of general politics, the logical and legitimate companion of citizen action . . . (p. 89).

An irony of a more tangible nature is that while more public money is spent on education than any other function of government, these two institutions have refused to admit, until recently, their dependence and influence (Gibbons, 1984).

However, according to Cremin (1965), an understanding and a cooperation between education and politics has been important since Thomas Jefferson. Others have recognized this need and have pointed out disadvantages that result from the separation. Flanders (1925) voiced a concern for legislating education with minimum input from educators. Bailey (1962) contended, "Many educators and lay public have paid something of a price for this lack of illumination--reluctance to articulate the politics of education" (p. ix). The failure to understand the political process and structure of state government has caused those interested in education to be unable to cope with a lack of adequate public support. Bailey added, "No public school in America exists without state legislative sanction" (p. vii), and that the success of the educator in obtaining positive legislation depends upon political sophistication.

Even with its central importance to American society, education--especially the politics of education--has received little scholarly attention (Rosenthal & Fuhrman, 1981). The small value educators have placed on legislation of their activities from government may be responsible for the lack of substantial research (Wirt, 1972). The myth of apolitical schools has contributed to the lack of an analytic scheme to make sense of the politics of schools. As Iannaccone (1967) explained, the profession has isolated itself in an effort to be free of external control and

reduce change within the system. The lack of theoretical orientation and methodology has also contributed to the lack of scholarly analysis of educational politics (Wirt & Kirst, 1972). "School systems and school problems have rarely been studied as political phenomena" (Bailey, 1962, p. vii).

The truth of the matter is that education is political and that it is a function of the state. As stated in the Tenth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, "The powers not delegated to the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people." Thus, the responsibility for education has been assigned to the States by its omission from the Constitution. Moreover, most state constitutions assign the legal responsibility of education to the state, and state laws determine in detail how schools are to be governed (Wirt & Kirst, 1972). Although control is delegated to the local school boards by these statutes, the state maintains the final authority.

Up until the 1960s, educators made educational policy. If money was necessary for the policy, the educators presented the package to the legislature and governor, who usually lacked expertise to question the educators and thus passed the legislation (Fuhrman, 1987). The trend in the last thirty years has been toward more political awareness by educators and more involvement in educational policymaking by politicians. American schools are caught

up in forces that are political as a result of the decade of the 1970s, which witnessed a dramatic expansion of legislative involvement in the policy domain of education (Rosenthal & Fuhrman, 1981). The expansion continued in the 1980s. The increase in expenditures for elementary and secondary education, teacher negotiations, and increased state supervision are examples of the erosion of the influence of the professional educators who fostered the notion of separation of education and politics (Wirt & Kirst, 1972; Rosenthal & Fuhrman, 1981).

Patterns of educational policymaking changed as legislators flexed their muscles and educational interest group configurations changed. Teacher militancy, collective bargaining, and special needs of students or communities caused fragmentation of educational interests. The divisiveness of education groups, combined with the growing expertise of state politicians, allowed the state to emerge as an educational policymaker (Fuhrman, 1987; Mazzoni, Sullivan, & Sullivan, 1983). Increased federal aid to schools in the 1960s fostered more state involvement in the implementation and supervision of educational programs. During the 1970s, financing education continued to be the predominant educational issue. The appropriating function of the legislature aided the acceleration of the leadership role of legislators.

These patterns of political change were also occurring in Tennessee. Organizational structure of the executive and legislative branches of government prior to the mid-1960s allowed for total dominance by the governor. "The General Assembly, like most state legislatures, was a relatively impotent body" (McGinnis, 1985, p. 120). Reapportionment of districts, lengthening terms of senators, and establishment of legislative committees created a strong foundation for development of a more independent Tennessee legislature (Essex & Ungs, 1990).

In the 1980s, many national reports described the mediocrity of education. These reports initiated another educational reform movement, which brought about state legislation aimed at more central schooling issues (Fuhrman, 1987). The growth in state control over education contributed to the loss of confidence in local authorities and the feeling of a need for accountability (Kirst, 1987). Accountability was the buzzword, as legislators asked for precise evaluation of the result of schooling before agreeing to financial expenditures (Wirt, 1972). The extent of the shift to more state control is illustrated by the amount of legislation which addressed the quality of teaching that was developed and implemented during this period. Tennessee and other states have passed a variety of bills which were related to teacher certification and teacher evaluation. Testing and curriculum policy have narrowed teachers'

autonomy in the classroom (Kirst, 1987). Often the bills placed restrictions on teachers' professional judgments in meeting the needs of students (Darling-Hammond & Berry, 1988). Thus, in recent years, educational policy has been directed, to a striking degree, by the governors and legislators of the states rather than by the professional educators (Fazzaro, 1989; McDonnell, 1988).

Times have changed. In the past, serving in the legislature was a part-time commitment. Today legislators have become more professional and intellectual. Legislators spend more time on the job, have increased their staffs, and improved the physical setting in which they spend so much time (Fuhrman, 1987; Rosenthal, 1981). They regard politics as their vocation and, as a result, are more assertive, ambitious, and resourceful (Lehne & Rosenthal, 1980). Legislators do not see educators as the only source of input into educational legislation. Other input comes from political party, administrative staff, pressure groups, business groups, and constituents (McDonnell, 1988).

By 1975, Tennessee legislators had office space and additional secretarial and other full-time staff. These improved facilities and staff resources were accompanied by an increase in legislative funding from slightly less than $500,000 in the late 1950s to $6.7 million in 1980-81 (Essex & Ungs, 1990). Thus, the Tennessee legislature followed the national trend toward professionalism.

Today legislators insist on a prominent role in deciding education policy. Legislatures are aggressive and independent bodies and have begun to exert influence on state departments of education, educational interest groups, local school boards, and activities of school personnel (Lehne & Rosenthal, 1980; Malen, Murphy, & Geary, 1988).

In the last twenty years, the politics of education has blossomed and legislators have been "cast in the role of institutional actors in the context of educational policy" (Lehne & Rosenthal, 1980, p. 4). "This new politics of education is, thus, characterized by a highly pluralistic and politicized decision-making process" (Burlingame & Geske, 1979, p. 50).

Legislative Research

The few political scientists who conducted studies of the politics of education at the state level examined the structure and the coalitions which exert influence on state legislatures. Of little concern was the process of policy making within the legislature itself (Milstein & Jennings, 1973). Major studies of educational policy include Schoolmen and Politics by Bailey, Frost, Marsh, and Woods (1962). In this classic study of politics and education, the authors examined the influence of coalitions of educational interest groups on the issues of state aid to education in eight Northeastern states. They found that cohesion and coalition building by schoolmen could influence

education policymaking. Quality of the leadership of the state politicians and other individuals or groups in the background were important in this collaboration even though legislators were mentioned only as subjects of influence.

Another classic study, by Masters, Salisbury, and Eliot (1964), focused on educational interest groups in an attempt to discover those who exercise power when decisions are made. These researchers investigated individuals, groups, and state agencies in three midwestern states that had a stake in the outcome of educational decisions. Passing attention was paid to legislatures in an attempt to determine the characteristics which affected educational decision making. They found that policies were designed within a state power structure and within a framework set by a coalition of responsible leaders. They also found that if the educational power structure was fragmented and lacked unity, then the governor and legislators were more influential. The study reported that public pressure, or public protest, had little influence on the decision-making process.

A third major study in educational policy was done by Iannaccone (1967). This study examined groups associated with state level politics of education. Iannaccone asserted that the view of separation of education and politics had been successful in minimizing external control of educational issues. However, he found that this structure was

weakening because of the recent success of community groups in gaining access to the decision-making process. Once again, little attention was paid to the legislators. Iannaccone identified four patterns of organizational structure within educator groups: (1) disparate local, (2) monolithic statewide, (3) fragmented statewide, and (4) syndical statewide. The ability of the educator groups to influence legislators was directly related to the structure that existed within a state.

The state of research of educational politics is marked by complexity and apparent disorder. Research tends to deal with a single unit of analysis and a restricted set of variables. Comparison and/or cumulation of research is lacking because units of analysis are not fully representative, research designs are dissimilar, and foci of study are varied (Wirt, 1972). Legislative committees, legislative staff, executive branch, and legislative members have been studied as units of analysis, sometimes collectively and sometimes individually. Functions, attitudes, perceptions, orientations, influence, and behavior have served as the focus for research. Studies have focused on either an inside legislative function, structure, or behavior or an outside model which describes influences beyond the legislative boundaries. Some organizational schemes used for discussing the research are relatively as simple as comparative studies that

involve more than one state and case studies that involve only one state. Others are more complex and may include combinations of the six areas which encompass the foci, paradigms, and conceptual frameworks of Packenham (1970):

I. Setting
   A. Historical
   B. Legal-Formal
II. Socioeconomic Backgrounds, Recruitment Patterns, and Personality Attributes of Legislators
III. Internal Functioning
IV. External Functioning or Relations
V. Legislative Self-Images and Roles
VI. The Functions of Legislatures in the Political System (p. 547)

In any attempt at organization, it becomes apparent that studies often fall into more than one category, based on different units of analysis, foci, methods, or assumptions.

Theoretical Frameworks for Research

Due to the newness of literature on the politics of education, formulation of a central theory by which policy-making can be studied is still evolving. The various theoretical frameworks under which legislative decision making has been studied have led to different methodologies each based on a different set of assumptions. The three research paradigms of institutional, process, and behavioral

have developed over time and may be used to classify the research relating to politics and education (Mitchell, 1981; Wahlke, 1975). These three methods differ in the assumptions made regarding (1) the function of the legislature, (2) the unit of analysis, (3) the nature of the independent variables, (4) the nature of the dependent variables, and (5) the motivation and decision making of the legislators (Mitchell, 1981).

Institutional Model. Political scientists prior to the 1900s explored policymaking and government under the assumptions of the institutional paradigm. The "legislature is an institution with boundaries within which legislative action takes place, and by which the behavior of the legislators is circumscribed" (Wahlke & Eulau, 1959, p. 5). Legislatures are viewed as political institutions that operate by specific rules in order to adopt legislation for a just and orderly society (Mitchell, 1981). This traditional research is based on an understanding of the good life or a moral world (Easton, 1965). The structure of the legislature and the rules for action used in the legislature are studied in order to evaluate legislative operations. Legislators are seen as actors sensitive to rules and formal structure (Mitchell, 1981). Institutional researchers are not as interested in the influences on legislators nor the perceptions of the legislators as they are in the impact that structure and procedure have on the

operation of the legislature. Support for this approach to the study of the legislature is based on the conclusion that individual or group behavior can be understood through analysis of organizational characteristics (Hedlund, 1985).

Jacob's 1966 systematic analysis of the function of state legislatures found that legislatures are less important as decision-making institutions than a variety of other political institutions or actors (cited in Packenham, 1970). In 1970, Chaffey studied the institutionalism of state legislatures and found that less professional legislatures with limited facilities, limited staff, and a large number of freshman legislators gave greater importance to committees in decision making, had less debate, and had fewer partisan causes. He also found that more professional legislatures with longer sessions, higher salaries, and less turnover were characterized by automated internal decision-making devices such as scheduling of legislation (cited in Hedlund, 1985).

One further example of the use of the institutional framework is the Rosenthal and Fuhrman (1981) study of legislative leadership structure. They found, among other things, that legislative leaders, who are experienced both in knowledge and in years, devote considerable time and energy to efforts for education, and focus mainly on fiscal matters.

Process Model. In the 1930s, the process paradigm emerged. This paradigm assumes the legislature to be an agency for allocating values (Easton, 1965; Mitchell, 1981). Easton (1963) described this systems analysis theory and argues for its potential use in political science. Many studies drew from his work. Under this systems analysis framework, the actual process of legislating, the transforming of inputs into outputs, is studied. Research based on process has looked at external forces, such as economic conditions, and at pressure groups, such as lobbyists, as variables that affect legislators' decision behavior. The human quality of how well or how poorly citizens live is not judged, but how these human qualities affect the system or the process is studied (Wirt & Kirst, 1972). Under the assumption that legislators are actors who are sensitive to power and resources, process studies often analyze roll call voting patterns and budget and policy adoptions (Mitchell, 1981).

Campbell and Mazzoni (1976) in their study of policymaking of 12 states, including Tennessee, view policy decisions as outputs of the process of legislating. The study identified participants in the legislating process and their resources in order to determine their influence on policymaking. State boards of education, chief state school officers, governors, and teachers associations were included as policy actors. The researchers found that 72

percent of legislative leaders evaluated their state school board as either of minor importance or no importance at all in formulating and working for educational legislation. Perceptions of influence of state school boards as evaluated by Tennessee legislators ranked seventh in the study. Of the sources of influence studied, teacher associations were perceived as generally most influential in the legislative arena but were also inconsistent and split by labor-management conflicts. The study found that the most effective coalitions existed in Colorado and Tennessee. The education lobby was perceived as being a stronger influence than those of other interest groups. All Tennessee legislators rated the Tennessee education lobby as the top group or in the top ten groups of influential lobbyists.

Harrington (1976) studied decision making of the Connecticut legislature regarding education legislation. He found that education committee members most often turned to colleagues, particularly the committee chairman, for information regarding issues. The most valuable outside source of information was found to be the State Department of Education. A substantial percentage of legislators considered these two sources of information as very influential forces in the decision making process. With the exception of the state teachers' association and the State Department of Education, educational lobbyists were

not found to be valuable sources of information nor to be influential factors. Sources operating within the legislatures were found to be more effective.

Prestine (1989) used Easton's political systems theory as a model in order to examine the variables and processes by which an external agency (State Department of Public Instruction) was able to gain control of the internal program (teacher education) of the state university. She found that the public mood of education coupled with the university's underestimation of that mood allowed the state department to assume control. She suggests that isolation and fragmentations must give way to political astuteness. Complacency is dangerous. Educators cannot ignore the realities of the environment.

Behavioral Model. The third paradigm, behavioral, while predating the 1950s, gained status in the last two decades as evidenced by the volume of behavioral analysis studies (Collie, 1985). Behavior research is based on the assumption that the legislature is an arena for the interaction that leads to decision making by the actors. Thus, studies using the behavioral approach center on finding out who the key legislative actors are, why they act as they do, and why they make the decisions they do. Demographic factors, attitudes or values, atmosphere, goals, and role orientation of individuals have most often been the variables of study and are viewed as giving direction to the

decision making of committed legislators (Eulau, 1972; Mitchell, 1981). The behavioral paradigm has resulted in new views of legislative phenomena, new variables for study, and the adoption of new methodologies. The focus of study shifted to individuals and groups in the legislative process rather than to the structure of the legislature or the influence of legislative related organizations.

The study reported by Wahlke, Eulau, Buchanan, and Ferguson (1962) is one of the first to focus on legislators in an attempt to document their orientation toward style of representation. This study was also the first to describe various orientations which are believed to direct decision behavior. The researchers identified three representative role orientations of trustee, delegate, and politico. Legislators who see themselves in the role of trustee make decisions based on their convictions and principles of what is good and right. Those who do not use their independent judgment but inform themselves of what their constituencies want and carry out their wishes act in the role of delegate. The politico is the legislator who may be either trustee or delegate, depending on the situation. The study found that in all four states studied, the most common orientation was trustee. Of the 78 Tennessee legislators in this study, 81 percent were identified as trustee, 13 percent as politico, and 6 percent as delegate. Wahlke et al. (1962) also identified role orientations in geographic representation

(district, state, or district and state) and political group relations (facilitator, resistor, or neutral).

Since the initial definition of orientations and the emphasis on their potential use as explanations or predictors for decisions, studies of legislative role orientation have been numerous. Bell and Price traced changes in role orientation of California's freshman legislators and found them to move toward a trustee role during the first year (cited in Jewell, 1985). Jewell (1985) reported that studies of American state legislatures since Wahlke et al. (1962) have found more politicos and trustees in California, more trustees in Iowa, more delegates in Wisconsin and North Carolina, and nearly even distributions of roles in Pennsylvania and Michigan.

Eulau (1972) identified other dimensions which can be used to analyze decision structure. The atmosphere of the legislature may be one of congeniality and cooperation or it may be competitive and a struggle for power. He describes legislative governing style as benevolent for the good of society, pragmatic with an emphasis on knowledge, or political with an emphasis on payoff. The four decisional practices of exchange, bargaining, compromise, and coalition were also identified by Eulau.

Other examples of behavioral research are Milstein and Jennings (1973) and Mitchell (1981). These will be described below as studies on decision making.

Political scientists identify two schools of research on legislative behavior based on the object of analysis. One school, in which the object of analysis is the individual patterns of decision making, is fragmentary at the state level. The other, in which the object of analysis is "collective cleavage and alignment patterns" looks at "intraparty cohesion and conflict and the nature of voting coalitions associated with broad issue areas" (Collie, 1985, p. 472). Research activity has shifted from the study of collective behavior to the study of individual behavior. The current focus is on individual rather than on institutional decisions (Collie, 1985).

Legislative Decision Making

The decision-making process of policy makers has been researched and analyzed often during the last fifty years. Due to the diversity of such studies, establishing the determinants of individual decision making in the legislature is difficult (Collie, 1985). The theories and assumptions under which these studies have been conducted define a set of research components: unit of analysis, topic of interest, type of data, and assessment process. Mitchell (1981) identifies three schools of thought related to decision making: (1) constraint theory, (2) influence theory, and (3) role orientation theory.

Constraint theory explains decisions in "terms of the structural, political, socio-economic, and/or

demographic factors" (Mitchell, 1981, p. 43) which limit a legislator's freedom to make decisions. The assumption is that individual legislator's choices are controlled by both formal and informal economic, social, or institutional conditions. These conditions influence policy decisions and automatically affect policy outcomes (Mitchell, 1981).

Influence theory is based on the assumption that decisions are caused by resources that influence policy makers' choices. Others are able to influence legislators through power, reward, or sanction. This theory has been popular with researchers since the 1940s. Bailey (1962), Iannaccone (1967), and Campbell and Mazzoni (1976) studied influence patterns within a process theory of research.

Milstein and Jennings (1973) studied the actors and their relationship in the New York State Legislature. They examined the influence of the governor, state educational agencies, and outside educational groups on the legislature. They found that many legislators were very knowledgeable about educational issues and that they were noted as experts by colleagues. Sources of influence most relevant to legislators were the colleagues who were identified as experts and the constituents back home. Party leaders and executive department agencies were found to be least influential.

Turner (1976) identified twenty sources of influence on educational legislation as perceived by the Idaho state legislators. She found that colleagues were considered

the most influential source of educational information. Legislators also relied on individual citizens, who were primarily constituents; school administrators, who were usually school superintendents; and the professional education associations, most often the Idaho Education Association. Essex and Ungs (1990) studied the institutionalization of the Tennessee legislature. They reported that constituents' views and opinion leaders in their home districts were the most important information sources. Sources of information that were found to be somewhat important were legislative colleagues, interest groups, administrative agencies, and executive staff.

Role-orientation theory explains decisions in terms of the individual perceptions of the "socio-political milieu" within the political arena (Mitchell, 1981, p. 44). According to Mitchell, legislators respond to choices based on their knowledge, beliefs, and attitudes. Role orientation studies include those of Wahlke et al. (1962) in which the representative roles of trustee, delegate, and politico were identified. The importance of the concept of role orientation lies in its ability to predict or explain legislators' decision behavior.

Mitchell (1981) further refined and built upon the concept of role orientation started by Wahlke et al. (1962) and Eulau (1972) in creating the concept of decision orientation. Four broad dimensions are seen as influencing legislative orientation toward policymaking.

1. Authority mode is one of four sources that may be present when decisions are made. These four sources are expertise, friendship, value, and legality. Expertise refers to the policymaker who is very knowledgeable about the topic for decision and one who has information about the impact of a policy issue. Friendship authority refers to the affection or admiration of another and indicates that close personal interactions affect decisions. The policymaker who respects the symbols of tradition and who recognizes the importance of the welfare of society characterizes the authority of value. Those who respect manageable change and prior laws characterize the authority of legality.

2. Policymakers orientate themselves to certain reference groups which serve as sources of information and guidance in decision making. These groups may be inside groups such as committee members, party leaders, staff members, caucus members, or knowledgeable colleagues. They may be outside groups of constituents, state agencies, professional groups, executive staff, or special interest groups.

3. Decision styles of bargaining or analysis are characteristic of decision makers. Bargaining is used for control of conflict through management and compromise. It will allow parties to interact and will result in a winner and a loser. Rather than reshaping the problem under the

bargaining decision style, policymakers give up something to get something. Analysis allows for study of alternatives to problem solutions in an effort at openness and consensus. The assumption that there is a solution will cause the reshaping of the problem to meet the needs of the participants.

4. Decision mechanism is based on the interaction of reference group and decision style and may be inside bargaining, outside bargaining, inside analysis, or outside analysis. This orientation is based on giving higher respect and credence to certain sources of information and communication for analysis or bargaining.

Demands upon legislators to solve problems call for action. Legislators must be responsive to important constituent groups and social interests. Issues must be defined and choices identified as the basis for the legislative decision-making process. Consideration of demands, resources, information, and interests in forming legislative policy takes place in stages of a workflow process (Mitchell, 1981). Stages of the legislative process have been identified by several people. Bailey (1962) defined the policy process in three steps: (1) emergence or coalescence of energizers; (2) strategy and tactics of consent building; and (3) infighting and decision making of legislators and executives. Easton (1965) identified the inputs and the outputs to the process. The inputs

serve as gatekeepers which channel interests into or out of the political system and the outputs are the allocation of values. Clausen (1973), in his study of the policymaking process at the federal level, noted policy formulation, policy enactment, and policy implementation as the three stages of the process.

Mitchell's work (1981) included and expanded on the previous study of the legislative process. In his work he defined four stages of the legislative process:

1. Articulation in which interests are expressed as a call for action resulting in the authoring of a bill or a legislative package.

2. Aggregation where proposed legislation is screened to determine its worthiness for serious consideration, its accuracy of statute language, and if there is consensus on the solution to the problem.

3. Allocation where decisions and priorities are made by dispersion of resources.

4. Oversight where redefinition of policy problems and rearticulation of interests serve as feedback to link decisions in the workflow.

Mitchell (1981) used this theoretical framework in his study of the Arizona, California, and Oregon state legislatures. He found that legislators perceived themselves as guardians of the public good rather than solvers of problems. They are less concerned with

maintaining the legal order or serving as advocates for friends or influential people. Groups outside the legislature are more important to decision making than those inside. Legislators saw themselves as bargaining to produce compromise rather than analyzing to achieve solutions. They felt that decisions are more easily influenced by staff and fellow legislators through information-based analysis rather than bargaining by interest group lobbyists or executive agency representatives.

Gibbons (1984) investigated decision orientations of Washington state legislators in relation to educational issues. She found that the order of preference for authority mode was value, expertise, legality, and friendship, and that the decision style of analysis was used more often than bargaining. Inside reference groups were more influential than outside groups. Decision mechanism most preferred was inside analysis and the least preferred was outside bargaining.

Bryant (1985) found decision making among the Minnesota legislators was guided by value and less by expert knowledge. She found that legislators tended to look to outside groups for justification of actions and sought consensus strategies aimed at rational reliable outcomes. They were aided in decision making more by analysis with staff and colleagues than by bargaining with constituents and lobbyists.

Other legislative decision-making models have been identified. The consensus model, according to Kingdom (1981), emphasizes decision making as a function of an attempt to reach consensus among six main actors that influence a legislator's decisions--constituence, colleagues, party leadership, interest groups, administration, and staff. Under this model, after assessment of the political environment in terms of agreement or conflict on an issue, the legislator uses steps of the consensus model to reach agreement.

Another model used by Uslaner and Weber (1977) is the cue-taking model. In their study of all states, they found that legislators sought advice of personal friends in the legislature. According to this model, legislators develop different hierarchies of cue-givers which are constant over time and area of issue (Collie, 1985).

The policy-dimension model is associated with Clausen (1973). In this model, decisions of legislators are explained in terms of policy content. Proposals are sorted into a limited number of general policy areas. Decisions are made concerning positions of broad policy. Specific policy decisions are then related to these broad policy areas in such a way that voting history will predict voting behavior since policy positions are relatively stable over time.

Summary

A historical separation of politics and education has contributed to limited research on the politics of education. The slow development of theoretical foundations upon which legislative research could be based has created a variety of approaches to legislative studies. Various methodologies have also been used for legislative research. Thus, comparison and accumulation of research on legislators and education is severely lacking.

Changes in the political structure, facilities, staff, and budget of legislators, specifically Tennessee legislators, have led to more professional legislators. These internal changes were supplemented by an educational reform movement that resulted in the enactment of far-reaching educational legislation. In the last twenty years, legislators have reacted to public demands for educational change by becoming involved in legislating educational programs and adminstration. Thus, legislators have received attention as subjects of research from an educational perspective.

Three methods of research--institutional, process, and behavioral--have developed and are found in the literature. The institutional paradigm assumes that legislative decision making is determined or restricted by the rules of procedures under which the legislature operates. The process paradigm studies legislating as a system of inputs or demands that result in outcomes. The behavioral paradigm

investigates perceptions, attitudes, beliefs, and expectations of legislators to explain or predict legislative behavior.

Research which investigated sources of influence on educational decision making of legislators has reported similar listings of sources with various rankings of importance. Legislative colleagues, legislative leaders, party leaders, staff, governor, constituents, special interest groups, and administrative agencies have all been found to provide guidance for shaping policy. The perceptions that legislators have of themselves as representatives also influence their decisions.

The work of Mitchell (1981) was an attempt to construct a framework by which legislative decision making could be studied. Mitchell developed the concept of decision orientation which refined and extended previous work. His framework combined decision styles and influences into dimensions of resources for decision making.

The organizing, structuring, and systematizing of the study of legislative behavior is not complete. The research of the politics of education, which can be viewed as a subset of legislative research, continues to grow and develop into a comprehensive body of information.

CHAPTER III

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

The general focus of this study was the decision-making process of Tennessee state legislators when determining educational policy. Specifically, the study was to identify the factors of influence recognized by legislators and to determine the decision orientation of legislators. The study also was designed to determine if legislators are guided by personal value systems when making educational decisions. Additionally, comparisons of the decision orientation for specific demographic groups of legislators were made.

The research design for the study was based on the following strategies:

1. Data were gathered to understand more fully the decision-making process of the legislature.

2. Legislators were identified as participants based on their interest and influence on educational issues.

3. Instruments used to gather data were a semi-structured interview and a resource rating scale.

4. Data analysis included content analysis of interview transcripts and descriptive statistics of resource rating scale scores.

Sources of Data

The population for the study consisted of 10 Senators and 24 Representatives from the 1989 session of the Tennessee State General Assembly (see Appendix A). The legislators selected for the study were certain leaders of both the House and the Senate and members of both education committees. The leadership positions chosen for the study were: Speaker of the Senate (Lieutenant Governor), Speaker of the House, Speaker Pro Tempore of both chambers, Deputy Speaker of the House, Senate Floor Leader, and majority and minority leaders of both chambers. All participants were chosen for this study by virtue of their position which indicated an awareness of and influence on educational policy.

In 1989, there was a Democratic majority in the Tennessee Legislature. This balance of power was reflected in the education committees. The Education Committee of the House consisted of 16 Democrats and 8 Republicans; the Senate Education Committee had 5 Democrats and 4 Republicans as members. Of the 42 legislators invited to participate in the study, 3 were unable or declined to participate and 5 were unable to schedule appointments. Three of those unable to participate were leaders of the House.

While not a stratified random sample of the total population, an examination of demographics of the population of the study revealed 11 Republicans and 23 Democrats as

compared with 51 Republicans and 81 Democrats in the Legislature. The regional representation of the study was 10 west Tennesseans, 15 middle Tennesseans, and 9 east Tennesseans. Other demographics of interest were experience and age. Table 1 contains the composition of the Legislature and the sample based upon these characteristics.

Techniques for Data Collection

This study was a descriptive case study which utilized a semistructured interview and a forced choice ipsative rating scale.

Rationale for the Case Study Method

The case study is characterized by an intensive, detailed investigation of a single unit and is appropriate for an in-depth examination of some phenomena (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984). In addition, descriptive studies attempt to paint a picture of an individual or a group of individuals or to describe a sequence of events (Dyer, 1979). This method of research strives to analyze variables affecting the unit of study and to analyze interaction of these variables. It does not focus on the strength of the relationships between variables (Dyer, 1979). The possibility of generalizing findings of a case study is limited due to the restrictions of population sampling and of time and place. Nonetheless, the general view of many researchers is that valuable insights, which can lead to an understanding of the unit of study or can lead to further

TABLE 1

DEMOGRAPHIC REPRESENTATION OF THE LEGISLATURE AND STUDY SAMPLE

	Legislature		Sample	
	N	%	N	%
Region				
East	47	35.6	9	26.5
Middle	46	34.8	15	44.1
West	39	29.5	10	29.4
Age				
Under 50	64	48.5	16	47.1
50 or over	65	49.2	17	50.0
Unknown	3	2.3	1	2.9
Party				
Republican	51	38.6	11	32.3
Democrat	81	61.4	23	67.6
Position				
Senator	33	25	10	29.4
Representative	99	75	24	70.6
Experience in Legislature				
1 year	21	15.9	6	17.6
More than 1 year, but 5 or fewer years	30	22.7	8	23.5
Over 5 years	81	61.4	20	58.8

research, are possible. Specifically, identifying and understanding the variables affecting decision making in many arenas including the political arena have most often been studied descriptively.

Qualitative research, of which the case study is an example, in a search for understanding, is concerned with process rather than product (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982). Perceptions, attitudes, beliefs, meanings, and behavior are appropriately studied qualitatively. Qualitative researchers are "more interested in deriving universal statements of general social processes rather than generalizing to similar settings" (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982, p. 41). Since the purpose of this study was a better understanding of the decision orientation of the legislators of Tennessee when developing educational policy, the descriptive case study was chosen as the method most appropriate.

Instrumentation

Two instruments were used in this study. The first was a semistructured interview which was used to gather information on legislators' perceptions of (a) sources of influence and information, (b) effect of personal value system, and (c) legislative role. In addition, during the interview process, participant characteristics of years of experience, party, position, and region were obtained. The second instrument was the Decision Orientation Resource

Rating Scale (RRS) developed by Mitchell (1981) and used by permission. This rating scale is a forced choice ipsative scale pairing resources for decision making to determine the decision orientation of the rater. The interview process, through the use of these two data collection techniques, provided a collaboration or verification of findings. According to Goetz and LeCompte (1984), data collected by several methods can be used to cross-check the accuracy of the data and also to assist in correcting biases that may occur when the researcher collects all of the data. Independent corroboration from multiple sources are techniques used by researchers to control against distortion of data and thus enhance reliabilty and validity (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984).

Interview Techniques

After a study of related research, the interview schedule was developed in order to gather data relevant to all research questions. Questions were designed to address each research question and to provide demographic information not found in the Tennessee Blue Book (1987-1988) from which information about Tennessee government and politicians was available.

Development of the interview schedule included the selection of education bills to provide a focus for the interview. Bills which had utility for the research questions of this study were those with which all

participants were familiar, which had received attention from a variety of sources, and which had emotional appeal for the public.

For the purpose of this study, three specific education bills that came to both the floor of the Senate and the floor of the House during the 96th Session of the Legislature were chosen as the focus for the interview schedule. The researcher followed the progress of several bills as they were discussed in committee and moved to the floor of each chamber of the legislature. Visits to committee meetings and to sessions of the House and of the Senate allowed the researcher to become familiar with the legislators and with the legislative process.

Media publicity on several bills allowed the researcher to assess interest and controversy surrounding certain education bills. Public interest in the bills chosen was high due to the media publicity and to the ease by which these bills could be understood.

Some significant bills, such as SB0336 (HB0756) which required elected rather than appointed superintendents, were excluded from the study since they did not reach the total legislature. While a bill such as this may be more substantial than those ultimately used in the study, it was important that all participants be familiar with the bills discussed in the interview schedule.

The following bills, included in Appendix B in their entirety, were chosen for the publicity they had received,

for the controversy surrounding them, and because they were considered in both the House and the Senate:

1. High School Diploma Bill. SB0024 (HB1248) required local school board members to have a high school diploma and was amended to allow present board members without a diploma to get a General Equivalence Degree (GED) or to be reelected for one term. This bill passed both the Senate and the House and is now law in Tennessee.

2. Labor Day Bill. SB0959 (HB1197) directed all schools in Tennessee to begin on Tuesday after Labor Day and was amended to allow wavers for schools having missed excessive days due to snow. This bill passed the Senate, but was amended in the House to require that school close by the first Friday in June. The bill was then sent back to the Senate, where it failed.

3. Youth Work Bill. SB0499 (HB365) restricted the work hours of youth between the ages of 16 and 17 to 4 hours a day and required them to work no later than 9:30 p.m. on week nights. This bill was amended to allow 6 hours work a day with approval and extended quitting time to 10:00 p.m. It was amended again to exclude specific jobs of teenagers such as newspaper delivery and farm work as well as jobs for specific businesses such as a local grocery. The bill passed in the Senate without amendment but was killed in the House after amendment.

The four dimensions of the Resource Rating Scale, which was used to examine legislators' decision orientations, were

discussed in Chapter II. These four dimensions of authority mode, reference group, decision style, and decision mechanism were clearly represented in the decision process surrounding these bills. The amount of media attention to the issues and the ease of understanding and personal feelings about the issues encouraged communication between legislators and constituency. Legislators received the usual input from lobbyists and educational groups. Therefore, all four categories of authority mode--friendship, expertise, legality, and value--were visible as sources of influence and information. Reference groups from both inside and outside the legislature were evident and competing for legislative attention. Due to the controversial nature of the bills, decision styles of bargaining and analysis were presented and analyzed.

These three bills were to serve as reference points for the interview. Legislators were asked to mention any other bills of which they were more aware or for which they had more interest. As the interview developed, less emphasis was placed on bills and more reference was made to general educational issues.

The interview was pilot tested with a former Senator who served on the Senate Education Committee. After being administered the interview, the former Senator pointed out problem areas and made suggestions for change. He explained availability of research staff in the House and the Senate

and indicated specific sources of information such as the National Conference of State Legislatures and the State and Local Assembly of which the researcher was unaware. During this discussion, the researcher was able to gain insight into the reaction of legislators to the interview, and through discussion of the background of certain educational bills was able to focus on the three bills used in the study. During the pilot testing, the researcher timed the response period, received immediate feedback, and discussed areas of misunderstanding. Based on the feedback and analysis of data collected in this pilot test, refinements in the interview schedule were made. Specific areas of concern suggested by Borg and Gall (1979) were used to assess the pilot interview:

1. Determining if the planned procedures actually produce the data desired.
2. Alerting the interviewer to communication problems.
3. Noting areas of inadequate subject motivation.
4. Evaluating data recording methods.
5. Rephrasing questions or revising procedures.

After changes were made, the interview was again evaluated with a member of the Political Science Department of Middle Tennessee State University. This final evaluation allowed the researcher to further refine questions, to determine the time necessary for the interview, and to develop skill in carrying out the interview. The final interview schedule appears in Appendix C.

Mitchell (1981) studied related research and his interviews with legislative actors for items with face validity as measures of the four orientations of the RRS. The pilot testing and evaluation of the two instruments for this study by two persons knowledgeable in the field also lent face validity to the instrumentation of the study.

The questions on the final interview schedule were designed to elicit information from the participants pertaining to the research questions. Participants were asked to describe the development of and their involvement with each of the bills identified for discussion. Factors or resources found in the RRS which may have influenced participants' decision making were included in questions of the interview schedule. One item of the interview dealt with the role of personal values and beliefs. Participants were asked to discuss an issue with which they and their constituents differed in order to determine their role orientation. Legislators were asked to name sources of information both inside and outside of the legislature and to give any other influence that the researcher may not have mentioned. To gather demographic data, participants were asked to describe their district economically and geographically, to give length of service in the legislature, and to estimate their political orientation. Other information pertaining to age, occupation, level of education, religious afiliation, and party affiliation was

obtained from the Tennessee Blue Book (1987-1988) and from the Legislative Library.

Legislators chosen for the study were contacted by telephone to make appointments for conducting the interview. After they were given a brief explanation of the purpose of the research, most were enthusiastic about meeting with the researcher. Only two legislators declined, and another was physically unable to participate. The researcher was unable to meet with five other legislators due to conflicting schedules.

Legislative Decision-Making Resource Rating Scale

The second instrument used in this study was the Decision-Making Resource Rating Scale (RRS) which was borrowed from Mitchell (1981) with his permission and is contained in Appendix D. A telephone conversation with Mitchell served to clarify the design of the instrument and its applicability to the present group.

The RRS was designed for a three-state legislative study of sources of information and guidance in decision making. The purpose of the instrument was to determine subjects' decision orientation in four areas: reference group, authority mode, decision style, and decision mechanism. These four areas are described in detail in Chapter II. In designing the instrument, Mitchell (1981) used interviews, observations, questionnaires, prior

research, and related literature to create measures of these orientations.

These four dimensions of decision orientation consist of 12 factors for which 12 subscales were obtained. These areas and factors are:

1. Authority Mode
   a. Friendship
   b. Value
   c. Legality
   d. Expertise

2. Reference Group
   a. Inside
   b. Outside

3. Decision Style
   a. Bargaining
   b. Analysis

4. Decision Mechanism
   a. Inside bargaining
   b. Outside bargaining
   c. Inside analysis
   d. Outside analysis

For each factor, 3 phrases were constructed that represented that factor (see Appendix E for entire listing of phrases). For example, the phrases representing the four factors of authority mode were:

a. Friendship
   (1) Developing mutual interests through close working relationships
   (2) Consulting with prominent and influential people
   (3) Discussions with friends and colleagues

b. Value
   (1) Being committed to basic values
   (2) Concern for public good
   (3) Giving priority to important goals

c. Legality
   (1) Maintaining established legal principles
   (2) Consistency with law and practice
   (3) Providing for orderly and manageable change

d. Expertise
   (1) Knowing what effects a law will have
   (2) Listening to those with expert knowledge
   (3) Technical adequacy of proposals

The four phrases numbered (1) above were then paired to form 6 pairs (combinations of 4 things 2 at a time). In a like manner, the second phrases were paired and the third phrases were paired for a total of 18 pairs of the authority modes factors. The same method of pairing was used for reference group (2 factors for 3 pairings), decision style (2 factors for 3 pairings), and decision mechanism (4 factors for 18 pairings). Thus, each factor in a dimension was paired with every other dimensional factor and not with factors in other dimensions. These pairs constituted the total 42 items of the RRS.

The RRS was a forced-choice semantic differential scale with ipsative scores where participants were instructed to give a comparative estimate of the value of decision sources. The semantic differential scale is a flexible approach for obtaining measures of attitudes and other sentiments. It is particularly useful in measuring the meaning or value which is attributed to a concept (Nunnally, 1967). The participants were to place an x in one of 4 ordered positions between 2 phrases on the scale. The position of the x was to indicate the relative importance

of the 2 factors represented by the phrases in determining or resolving an educational issue. The forced-choice design of the instrument caused participants to reject one resource when choosing another. The purpose was to determine which option was favored over the others within each dimension. The use of positive and negative scores to indicate rating of a factor created the ipsative nature of the instrument whereby the sum of the subscale scores for any dimension was zero.

Subjects were instructed to read the directions for the RRS. The researcher then answered questions concerning the directions before the subjects completed the scale.

Scoring of the instrument created a score for each of the twelve subscale factors. Each phrase of an item on the RRS received a score based on the position of the x placed by the subject. If the x was in the first position next to the phrase, a +2 was assigned to the phrase and a -2 was assigned to the paired phrase. If the x was in the second position from the phrase, it received a +1 and the paired phrase received a -1.

Examples:

Giving priorities to important goals	_____	_____	x	_____	Discussions with friends or colleagues
	-1				+1
Giving priorities to important goals	x	_____	_____	_____	Discussions with friends or colleagues
	+2				-2

The scores for phrases which represent a factor were then summed to get the subscale score for that factor. This resulted in the twelve subscale scores representing the factors.

Data Collection Process

The principal advantage of the semistructured interview as a research tool is its adaptability (Borg & Gall, 1979). The interview schedule consists of specific questions asked in a specific order which permits the researcher to have quantifiable data to analyze. The open-ended format also allows the respondents' flexibility in response and the researcher immediate feedback with ability to clarify information. A relationship of warmth and understanding on the part of the researcher can motivate openness and confidentiality on the part of the respondent (Bogden & Biklen, 1982).

There are limitations of the interview technique for data collection. It is both time-consuming and costly. Use of note-taking of interview data can contribute to incomplete or biased recording. Tape recording of interview responses is recommended by Bogdan and Biklen (1982) when "a study involves extensive interviewing or when interviewing is the major technique in the study" (p. 93) and can "reduce the tendency of the interviewer to make unconscious selection of data favoring her biases" (Borg & Gall, 1979, p. 315). However, one disadvantage of the use of a tape

recorder during the interview is that its presence may change the nature of the responses. Participants may be reluctant to express their feelings and perceptions when they are being recorded (Borg & Gall, 1979). Feeling that the interviews were not extensive and that the tape recorder would create an unnecessary intrusion, the researcher chose to take notes of participants' responses. During the interview, the researcher repeated or paraphrased responses to the participants to avoid distortion or misrepresentation of data.

Mitchell (1981) conducted careful analysis of the interview responses in his study to confirm and expand the understanding of RRS scores. This instrument has been used in subsequent research studies of decision making. Goetz and LeCompte (1984) state that the use of more than one data source provides a corroboration for the meanings of responses of participants. The use of the RRS and the semistructured interview in this study was to provide such corroboration of legislators' perceptions.

The interviews were conducted during the summer and fall of 1989. The researcher visited with the legislators in their home districts or in their Nashville offices. Nineteen interviews were conducted in Nashville and fifteen were conducted in legislators' home districts. Interviews lasted from 30 minutes to 1 hour and 45 minutes. Several legislators indicated they would not have completed the RRS

if it had been mailed to them, but would complete it since the researcher made the effort of traveling to their home district or of delivering it personally to their Nashville office.

The researcher traveled to west Tennessee during the month of June 1989 and to east Tennessee during July 1989. The interviews conducted on these trips along with those conducted during these months in middle Tennessee totaled 28 interviews completed by August 1989. During the fall of that year, the researcher conducted four interviews, and in January 1990 completed the final two interviews.

Each interview began with an introduction, a description of the research, and a discussion of common interest in education which allowed the researcher to establish a friendly atmosphere with the participants. Each participant read and signed a consent to participate form (see Appendix F) before answering interview questions and was assured anonymity. Interruptions by other people and the press of other appointments affected the pacing of the interview. The researcher remained aware of time and tried to progress through the interview without delay but was also aware of the need to be thorough in allowing responses. Reflection upon the interviews after their completion led the researcher to conclude that only one interview was not complete due to lack of time by the legislator. Based on the expertise and experience of this legislator, it was

decided that the information gained in the interview was of importance to the study.

During the interview, participants discussed feelings and perceptions relating to the interview questions, after which they completed the RRS. In general, the researcher felt well received and sensed a sincere interest on the part of the legislators.

A verbal log of the interview data was made during each interview. The verbal logs were transcribed to typed copy before content analysis was conducted. As suggested by Bogdan and Biklen (1982), the researcher worked closely with the typist in order to assure her accuracy.

Data Analysis

The purpose of data analysis is to search and systematize information from interviews and other data sources for better understanding and presentation. This analysis involves organizing, synthesizing, and reducing data while looking for patterns and discovering what is important (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982).

Content analysis procedures were used to organize and study data gathered through the interview. Content analysis is a technique used to describe objectively and systematically the subjective data of communication (Dyer, 1979). It involves analyzing, classifying, and quantifying data (Galfo, 1983). One important characteristic of content analysis pointed out by

Kerlinger (1973) is its general applicability to various kinds of materials including all kinds of verbal material. Also, he states that a number of variables such as attitudes, interests, and values of groups can be measured by content analysis. The procedures of content analysis include (a) collecting data, (b) development of coding categories, (c) assignment to categories, and (d) obtaining frequencies of categories for the process of analysis (Galfo, 1983).

Development of the coding categories for content analysis is a direct reflection of the theory and problem of the research and is therefore a most important step (Kerlinger, 1973). A coding form was developed to analyze interview data for all research questions except the decision orientations of decision style and decision mechanism. The initial categories for coding of information of interview data for this study were taken from the RRS. After a complete reading of the data, the researcher gained insight into additional categories which were needed. Further development of the coding form evolved through use of these sources and through use of information from related research. A preliminary coding form was used to code ten interviews during which minor additions and consolidations of categories were made. Categories for data analysis should measure variables indicated by the objectives of the study, should be mutually exclusive and independent, and

should be a rational, meaningful system (Borg & Gall, 1979; Galfo, 1983). These criteria were used to screen the final categories of the coding form (see Appendix G).

After development of the coding form, the researcher worked with two volunteers in coding the interview data. The researcher instructed the volunteers as to the meaning of the categories on the coding form and worked with them in coding six interviews. After interviews were coded by the two volunteers and the researcher, interrater reliability was computed. Percent of agreement ranged from .69 to .792 between volunteers but rose to range from .70 to .86 between researcher and volunteer. Borg and Gall (1979) state that "interrater reliability should reach at least .70" (p. 341).

After coding information by use of the coding form, the interviews were coded to analyze responses relating to decision style and decision mechanism. Legislators' comments were categorized as bargaining or analysis. These categories were further coded as inside analysis, outside analysis, inside bargaining, and outside bargaining when specific groups were mentioned in the decision process. Those statements that clearly reflected a decision orientation were coded. The interrater reliability for coding of decision style and decision mechanism ranged from .667 to .889.

Precise identification of categories of phenomena and consistency of data collection allow for the use of

data analysis strategies that use frequency counts (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984). After coding of all interview data was completed, frequencies of the responses of the total sample by categories were computed for analysis. Tabulations of codes that represented sources of influence or information were rank ordered to determine those mentioned most often. In addition, frequencies were tabulated for the demographic information of party, position, region, experience, and age.

Once the RRS subscale scores were computed for each participant, means and standard deviations of these scores were calculated. These descriptive statistics were generated for the total sample and for the demographic groups defined for the study.

Summary

The descriptive case study methodology was used to investigate influences on and decision orientation of Tennessee state legislators. Thirty-four legislators who were members of the education committees or leaders of the House or Senate were selected for the study. The study utilized a semistructured interview and the Decision Making Resource Rating Scale (Mitchell, 1981) to collect data. The data were collected between June 1989 and January 1990. Data from the interviews were content analyzed and compared with scores from the RRS for the purpose of corroboration. Statistics used for analysis were frequencies, means, and standard deviations.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF DATA

This study was designed to determine the decision orientation of Tennessee legislators when establishing educational policy and to compare these orientations over certain demographic groups of interest. Further, the study was to identify important sources of influence and information for decision making as perceived by the legislators. In addition, the study was to determine if legislators are guided in their decision making by their own personal value system. Demographic comparisons of the decision orientation of the legislators for age, experience, party, position, and region were conducted.

The data were collected through personal visits to legislative offices in Nashville or to the district home office of 34 legislators. All members of the Senate Education Committee, the House Education Committee, and five leaders of each chamber were selected to participate in the study. Of the forty-two legislators chosen for the study, thirty-four actually participated. Each participant consented to an interview and to complete the Decision Making Resource Rating Scale (RRS) designed by Mitchell (1981). The RRS was developed through extensive study of three states and has been used by other researchers

in subsequent studies. A variety of open-ended questions were developed for the interview. The questions were designed to elicit responses for all research questions. The open-ended format allowed participants the opportunity to introduce factors that affect their decisions and to describe the process through which their decisions were made.

Twelve subscale scores on the RRS were reported as means with standard deviations. The interviews were content analyzed to determine sources of influence and information and to enrich the RRS data. Categories for the content analysis were determined by review of the literature, by reference to the RRS, and by a complete reading of the transcripts of the interview data. Content analysis information was reported as frequencies and percents. The interview information was studied and compared with the RRS information to substantiate or refute patterns that were identified by the RRS. All sources of influence or information identified in the content analysis were coded, tabulated, and rank-ordered by frequency to identify the most important sources of influence as perceived by the legislators.

To determine the importance of legislators' personal value systems in their decision making, two sources of data were analyzed: (1) the rank of the value authority mode on the RRS was compared with the ranking of expertise,

friendship, and legality; and (2) the relative frequency of responses containing reference to personal values on the interview schedule was compared with other sources of influence.

Information for demographic comparison was obtained from the interview schedule, the Tennessee Blue Book (1987-1988), and from the Legislative Library in Nashville. Comparisons of the decision orientation RRS data were also analyzed by:

1. Position--Senator and Representative
2. Party--Democrat and Republican
3. Experience--1 year, more than 1 year, fewer than or equal to 5 years, and more than 5 years
4. Age--younger than fifty and fifty or older
5. Region--east, middle, and west Tennessee

Patterns of similarities and differences were identified for each demographic group. A complete summary of legislator responses from the interview data is presented in Appendix H.

Research Question 1

What factors do legislators perceive as having the greatest influence on educational decision making?

As actors in the policy process, legislators are targets of internal and external groups and individuals who attempt to influence decisions. Within the legislature are legislative leaders who control the flow of

legislation. Senior or expert legislators are listened to by less knowledgeable colleagues. Committee members function both as leaders and as experts. The legislative staff studies bills, supplies information, and provides recommendations for action

Groups outside of the legislative environment who also play a role in educational policymaking are the executive branch, state education agencies, educational interest groups, and the citizens of the state. Sources within the legislature exert more formal influence while those outside are more informal influences

Interview data were used to identify the internal and external sources of influence on educational policymaking. Legislators were asked how categories of influence affected their decisions in question 2 of the interview. Influences which they were asked to discuss included information or research, personal relationships, lobbyists, and political loyalties. In question 4 of the interview, legislators were asked to identify the most reliable sources of information outside of the legislature. Question 5 asked legislators to identify those most often consulted inside the legislature for leadership on educational issues. Question 8 asked legislators for any other influences that had not been discussed. Answers to these questions and all other comments about specific sources of influence or information were coded in the content analysis of the interview. After

frequencies were tabulated, they were rank ordered to identify those most influential and informative. Results are summarized in Table 2.

The 632 responses coded as influential or informative sources appear to cluster into three groups based on frequency of response. These three groups can be categorized into high frequency, medium frequency, and low frequency. The highest ranked frequencies of responses were fellow legislators (116/18.4%) and education lobbyists (105/16.6%). Local administration (56/8.9%) special interest groups (56/8.9%), family and friends (55/8.7%), business and industry lobbyists (51/8.1%), teachers (47/7.4%), state agencies (37/5.9%), and constituents (33/5.2%) were sources of influence that made up the medium influence. Least often mentioned were party, parents, national or regional organizations, and governor with the number of responses ranging from 18 (2.8%) to 6 (0.9%).

As a group, internal legislative resources was the top ranked source of influence. Committee members, knowledgeable colleagues, and sponsors of bills comprised approximately one-half (62) of the total 116 responses for legislative resources. Legislative caucuses with a total of 37 responses included colleagues of similar philosophy, regional caucus, and urban or rural caucus. General reference to legislative sources and leaders of the chambers, representing 17 responses, completed the inside sources of influence.

TABLE 2

Rank Ordered Influences and Information Sources by Total Interview Responses

Category	Frequency		%
Legislators			
Committee members	23		
Knowledgeable colleagues	20		
Sponsor	19		
Legislators	13		
Caucus of similar philosophy	17		
Urban/rural caucus	10		
Regional caucus (E/M/W)	10		
Leaders of chambers	4	116	18.4
Education Lobbyists			
TEA	66		
TSBA	27		
Ed. lobbyists	12	105	16.6
Local Administration			
Superintendents	22		
School Board Member	19		
Other	12		
Principals	3	56	8.9
Special Interest Groups			
Source of information	29		
Other	17		
Effective	10	56	8.9
Family and Friends			
Friends and Friends in ed.	26		
Family and Family in ed.	19		
Other	10	55	8.7
Business and Industry Lobbyists		51	7.4
Teachers		47	7.4
State Agencies			
State Department of Education	13		
State Board of Education	10		
THEC	11		
Other	3	37	5.9
Constituents		33	5.2
Party		18	2.8
Parents		16	2.5
National or Regional Organizations		14	2.2
Staff		12	1.9
College and University Representative		10	1.6
Governor		6	0.9
Total		632	100.0

Educational lobbyists ranked only slightly behind legislators (105/16.6%) as a source of influence. These references include TEA and TSBA, which cannot be assumed as having the same type of influence. Due to the nature of the membership of the two organizations, they are often on different sides of an issue. Legislators frequently explained that they know which lobbyists to trust and that if the lobbyists were not truthful then they would lose their creditability. The legislators clearly depend on lobbyists for information on both sides of an issue. However, negative references to TEA were made, including negative comments about TEA's emphasis on money issues and lack of concern with what is best for education. The legislators expressed the feeling that TEA does not always represent the classroom teacher. Some of their comments follow:

> TEA usually has good strong lobbyists. The State Board often gives the other side. We do depend on them for information. There are those who are trustworthy and those who are not.
>
> TEA has been the only lobbyist and the strongest policymaker for education.
>
> TEA is a union. It is not an educational organization. TEA didn't support me and I called them. They wanted to take the days out of teaching for personal days. They apologized to me later. They are more focused toward salary . . . too busy with the union.
>
> TEA sponsored the Youth Work Bill. It was one of the better bills they sponsored. They should be the Tennessee Teachers Association instead of the Tennessee Educators Association.

References to nonspecific special interest groups ranked third (56/8.9%). If it is assumed that the non-specific reference group often refers to educational lobbyists, then this ranking enhances the level of influence of lobbyists in general. As a longtime legislator said,

> Special interest groups play a significant role. Lobbyists can provide useful information, since we can't be experts, but lobbyists are more and more controlling what happens in Nashville.

And another commented,

> They influence the hell out of us. They are a driving force that oils the machine.

Also ranked third are local school administration groups (56/8.9%). Legislators mentioned superintendents (22) and school board members (19) as people back home with whom they talk to determine how bills might affect their community.

Family and friends were ranked fourth (55/8.7%) in sources of influence. Legislators referred to family members who were educators and to personal experiences with their children.

The business and industry lobbyists ranked fifth, with 51 responses or 8.1% of the total responses. It was noted that these lobbyists were in conflict with the educational groups on the Labor Day Bill and on the Youth Work Bill. Examples of comments were:

> If I vote one way, I'm against TEA, and the other for business. We should be looking at what's good for the students.

> Some are effective. They keep getting hired. We have some hired guns--trade industry or union, or very special interests. They are interested in how it affects their industry. They can't survive if they lie. I'm not always in agreement with them. I've scolded them a time or two.

Individual classroom teachers (47/7.4%) were ranked sixth in influence and information. Legislators frequently mentioned talking to classroom teachers who were more interested in what was best for the education of the children and less concerned with money than organized lobbyists were.

State agencies were seventh (37/5.9%). State Department of Education, Tennessee Higher Education Commissions, and the State Board of Education were specifically mentioned. Constituents (33/5.2%) were eighth and party (18/2.8%) was ninth.

Legislators found parents (16/12.5%), national or regional organizations (14/2.2%), staff (12/1.9%), college and university representatives (10/1.6%), and governor (6/0.9%) as the resources of least influence in their decision making. Several legislators discussed the lack of staff for research. Some also mentioned specific national or regional reports or groups from which they received information. For example:

> TEA does supply information. I used my own experience and philosophy. We don't have much staff or money for research.

> Number one is the Southern Regional Education Board, which has been in the vanguard of educational reform.

Research Question 2

What is the decision orientation of the legislature?

Data from the RRS and from the interview were used to answer this question. The two sets of data were analyzed separately and then compared as an internal reliability check. The twelve subscale scores of the RRS were compared within the four dimensions to determine legislators' decision orientation. After being coded and tabulated, the interview data were rank ordered by frequency. The use of transcript responses from the interview will be quoted to further enrich the data from the RRS. Table 3 presents the means and standard deviations for the 12 subscale factors grouped by the four dimensions of authority mode, reference group, decision style, and decision mechanism.

Authority Mode

Reliance on different modes of authority for decision making may cause the acceptance or rejection of a certain piece of legislation (Mitchell, 1981). Friends and experts are sources to which legislators may turn for justification of decisions they must make. Concern for traditional values or for legal implications can affect decisions.

Examination of the mean scores of authority mode indicates agreement by legislators that value questions are very influential factors in guiding their decisions. Value authority mode had a mean of 8.38, the highest subscale mean for the RRS, and a standard deviation of 4.07. The

TABLE 3

Decision Orientation for Total Population
Resource Rating Scale Subscale Scores

Dimension	All Subjects Combined (N = 34) Mean	S.D.
Authority Mode		
Expertise	-0.85	3.73
Friendship	-3.12	4.64
Legality	-4.41	4.86
Value	8.38	4.07
Reference Group		
Inside	-2.12	1.85
Outside	2.12	1.85
Decision Style		
Analysis	0.44	2.88
Bargaining	-0.44	2.88
Decision Mechanism		
Inside Analysis	5.56	4.61
Outside Analysis	0.47	3.95
Inside Bargaining	0.24	4.66
Outside Bargaining	-6.26	5.36

participants ranked expertise with a mean of -0.85 and standard deviation of 3.73 as less important than value in guiding their decisions but more important than friendship with a mean of -3.12 and a standard deviation of 4.64.

Respect for legal rules was ranked last as a resource for guiding policymaking with a mean of -4.41 and a standard deviation of 4.86.

Thus, legislators see themselves as being more concerned with the public good, committed to basic values, and giving priorities to important goals. Of lesser concern is knowing what effects a law will have and listening to expert information. Also of lesser importance is consulting with prominent and influential people and discussions with friends or colleagues. Legislators are least concerned with consistency with existing law and procedure, maintaining established legal principles, or providing for orderly and manageable change.

Included in the interview schedule were questions relating to the four factors of the authority mode of the RRS. Legislators were asked how personal values or beliefs, information or research, personal relationships, and prior laws or constitutional restraints affected their decisions. In addition, comments about these resources were found in responses to other questions in the interview. Table 4 summarizes the number of responses and the associated percent of total responses for the authority mode factors. Interview data analysis revealed that 277 responses or 56.2% of the total 493 responses were related to expert information from legislative sources, state, or local education agencies, and other information or research sources.

TABLE 4

Frequency of Total Responses for Expertise, Value, Friendship, and Legality

Category	Frequency		%
Expertise			
Committee members	23		
Knowledgeable colleagues	20		
Sponsor	19		
Legislators	13		
Staff	12		
Leaders of chambers	4	91	
Superintendents	22		
Education	20		
Local School Boards	19		
State Department of Education	13		
Local administration	12		
Tennessee Higher Education Comm.	11		
State Board of Education	10		
College and university rep.	10		
National or regional org.	6		
Southern Region Education Board	5		
National Council of State Leg.	3		
Principals	3		
State education agencies	3	137	
Information or research	47		
Other	2		
Not available, important, reliable	(12)*	49	
Total		277	56.2
Value			
Beliefs and philosophy	53		
Experience and background	34		
Good of society or ed.	29		
Other	9		
Not important	(0)	125	25.3
Friendship			
Friends and Friends in ed.	26		
Family and Family in ed.	19		
Other	10		
Political friends with sim. phi.	8		
Not important	(10)*	63	12.8
Legality			
Oath to uphold the constitution	3		
Fiscal or budgetary considerations	5		
Other	20		
Rely on A. G. or staff lawyers	(17)*		
Not an issue or not important	(17)*	28	5.7
Total (*Not counted)		493	100.0

References to information or expert knowledge often included the fact that the legislative staff is limited and that experience or beliefs are important. Typical comments were:

> If statistical data is relevant, we get it. Tourism information on revenues for the Labor Day Bill was available. I gather lots of information that I get. We are limited in staffing, and so it is hard to be thoroughly informed.

> I frequently ask information of the sponsor, lobbyists, and the department of state government. Sometimes I'm blind as a bat.

One hundred twenty-five responses, or 25.3% of the total responses, were in reference to values such as personal beliefs and philosophy, good of society of education, or experience and background. Legislators often mentioned personal philosophy and discussions with people of the same philosophy as being important when making decisions. Also, they mentioned that personal or family experience was helpful in shaping their decisions. One legislator responded to the question of importance of personal values in decisions as follows:

> Philosophically, I don't like states telling local government what to do, but sometimes we have to when money is concerned. Obviously, everyone starts out with beliefs, experiences, and heredity in making decisions. I am more likely to defend my own opinion on a less emotional issue and debatable issue.

Often legislators felt they had been elected because they shared similar beliefs and philosophy with constituents. Another response to the question:

> [My decisions are affected] a great deal [by my values and beliefs]. I am sensitive to listening to my community, but it is hard to separate out my feelings and beliefs. I have been active in the community and therefore have experience to make me qualified and typical of my district. I asked to be on Education. It was my number one priority.

Sometimes legislators equated experience and values:

> I vote for what I think is right. My background and upbringing often determine the way I vote.

Even though friends and family (63/12.8%) ranked lower in frequency, legislators often mentioned relatives or friends who were especially influential. For example:

> Friendships are more important than lobbyists. Working with colleagues over the years you know what they need.

> A neighbor, for example, who is very active, knowledgeable, and concerned. I really depend on him and vote as he says on special education.

> My wife is a teacher and I have two children in school. I went on experience.

Legal concerns were expressed in only 28 responses or 5.7% of the total. While legislators admit that they took an oath to uphold the Constitution of the State of Tennessee, they are not as concerned about the legality of bills or of the impact of bills on previous legislation. They depend on the State Attorney General, staff lawyers, and the courts to make those decisions. Comments were:

> Occasionally we talk to the Attorney General to see how it will affect other laws; but rarely. Sometimes the constitution does come into effect with education, but we don't often worry about it.

> We have passed legislation that the attorney general has said may be unconstitutional.

> Prior laws do not enter in because they can be changed. Lawyers are used to explaining why things have been done in the past. There are times when the constitution is a question. We vote and let them decide later. We do take an oath to support the constitution.

No one responded that values were not important in decision making. Expertise was mentioned as not important in 12 responses, family as not important in 10 responses, and legality as not important in 34 responses.

Data from the two instruments indicate that values and expertise are the most important in the decision-making process of legislators. The rankings of these two resources were reversed in the first and second positions on the two instruments. Friendship and legality were least important ranking in the third and fourth positions on both instruments.

Reference Group

Policymakers identify and orient themselves to certain reference groups which serve as sources of inspiration and self-evaluation as well as guidance and direction. Inside groups are those such as chamber leadership, caucus groups, colleagues, committee members, and staff. Groups that serve as outside reference groups include constituents, special interest groups, statewide party leaders, administrative agencies, and education staff (Mitchell, 1981).

Data from the RRS (see Table 3 on page 74) ranked outside reference groups as more important with a mean

of 2.12 and standard deviation of 1.85 than inside reference groups with a mean of -2.12 and standard deviation of 1.85. Outside groups representing legitimate public interests, interaction with constituents and interest groups, and vigorous public leadership were more important. Insider groups of legislative factors, interaction among legislators, and behind the scene work were less important.

Thus, legislators in the study look to constituents, special interest groups, and other external groups for justification of their decisions. They did not perceive legislative members and groups as guiding their decision making. This pattern of reference group importance was even more pronounced in the interview data.

Question 4 of the interview schedule asked legislators to identify the most reliable sources of information outside the legislature. Question 5 asked them to identify reliable sources of information inside the legislature. Answers to these questions and other comments about reference groups were analyzed and summarized in Table 5. References to outside groups (504/79.7%) were almost 4 times those for inside groups (128/20.3%). Participants identified educational lobbyists (105) as the most important outside decision-making resources. Least important outside resources were college and university representatives (10) and governor (6). Legislative colleagues were identified as important inside resources. The three most frequently identified

TABLE 5

Frequency of Total Responses for
Inside and Outside Resources

Category	Frequency		%
Outside Resources			
Education Lobbyists	105		
Local Administration	56		
Special Interest Groups	56		
Family and Friends	55		
Business and Industry Lobbyists	51		
Teachers	47		
State Agencies	37		
Constituents	33		
Party	18		
Parents	16		
National or Regional Organizations	14		
College and university representative	10		
Governor	6	504	79.7
Inside Resources			
Legislators	116		
Staff	12	128	20.3
Total		632	100.0

legislative resources were committee members (23), knowledgeable colleagues (20), and bill sponsor (19) (see Table 2, page 69). The most important inside resource was legislators (116) and the least important was staff (12).

External resources far outnumbered those inside. A variety of sources were included. Examples of comments:

> I have more confidence in the information I get from constituents, educators, teachers, students, and parents. I value most that of teachers I know are interested in education.

> The Tuesday Parade . . . K-12 and Higher Education.

Specific legislators were identified as educational experts who were consulted in decision making. Committee members and caucuses were referred to as helpful in forming decisions. Two such comments were:

> People who have been around for several years. There are those who are considered experts. Some who are not on the Education Committee come and check with me about bills for education.

> We look at how bills come out of the committee to see what those folks did.

The perceptions of legislators for reference groups were found to be consistent on both instruments. Legislators relied on outside resources more often than on inside resources when making decisions.

Decision Style

Decision style is a choice between management and negotiations to control conflict and problem solving through consensus building and meeting diverse needs. Bargaining is most often used to control conflict in situations so

that working relationships can be maintained even though differences may be irreconcilable. Analysis is a strategy for consensus building by solving problems through common interests. Differences are not accepted as irreconcilable, but, by reshaping proposals and examining opposing interests, acceptable solutions can be found (Mitchell, 1981).

Data from the RRS (Table 3 on page 74) ranked analysis of the issues, adopting a reasonable policy, and technical considerations as more important in guiding legislators' decisions. Bargaining to achieve a politically acceptable solution, reaching consensus among interested parties, and other political considerations were found to be less important. RRS subscale score for analysis was a mean of 0.44 with a standard deviation of 2.88. A mean of -0.44 with a standard deviation of 2.88 was reported for bargaining.

During the discussion of development of the educational bills in the interview schedule, legislators described the process and rationale for their decisions. Analysis of the various issues and problems arising with the bills was explained, and the groups for and against were identified. In this portion of the interview data, no references were made of specific negotiations or deals for support of bills. However, legislators did explain situations in which other legislators worked toward a politically acceptable solution. As a probe for more information related to building consensus and/or gaining compromise on issues, legislators were asked to discuss the purpose of amendments. Often

legislators perceived specific amendments to a bill as a compromise to gather more support. Legislators also saw amendments as an effort toward a solution of problems created by the bills. Some amendments were perceived as a means of killing a bill. Responses to other interview questions which indicated analysis or bargaining styles were included in the data analysis for decision style which is contained in Table 6.

TABLE 6

Frequency of Total Responses for Decision Style

Decision Style	Response Frequency		%
Analysis			
Analysis of bills	93		
Information/research	47		
Personal study	9	149	65.9
Bargaining			
Bargaining for bills	50		
Party loyalties	18		
Legislative negotiations	9	77	34.1
Total		226	100.0

One hundred forty-nine responses (65.9%) were classified as analysis, while 77 (34.1%) exhibited a bargaining style. Analysis of the interview discussions of specific

bills and the related amendments yielded 93 analysis responses and 50 bargaining responses. Information and study (56) contribute to the relative importance of analysis in the decision process of the legislators. Party loyalties (18) and legislative negotiations (9) included the bargaining responses. From the interview data, only the 9 negotiations responses referred to deals or debts and discussion with fellow legislators for support of bills.

The responses on both instruments were consistent. The decision style of analysis rather than bargaining was preferred by the legislators. Legislators see themselves gathering information in order to arrive at rational solutions. They perceive negotiating to reach a consensus or for political considerations as less often utilized.

Representative of the comments which inferred an analysis style of decision making are the following:

> It was TEA sponsored because of students who work coming in sleepy and not being able to study. When it got to the House, I looked up the codes and found there were too many exemptions. There are lots of kids who are just out cruising late at night. Farm work, musical groups including school events, deliveries on motorcycles, family-owned business, and newspaper delivery were exempt. There was a strange mixture of representatives who questioned this bill. It was not a party bill or conservative or liberal bill. An amendment was to exempt you if you have a B average. No other amendments were accepted which says there was more than meets the eye here. A study committee to study the problem is what we need.

> Teachers were split for and against. To me, it boiled down to whether it was a local issue or a state issue. It is a local issue to me. I didn't look at it as a tourist issue.

I was opposed to start with. It should be a local issue since the state is so diverse. On the other hand, it makes more sense to start after Labor Day, since some schools are not air conditioned. I am still undecided. Maybe school teachers can't get to summer school. The amendment made it more attractive in that respect, but it added Saturdays and holidays as make-up days. TEA was opposed; the School Board was opposed; my wife was for it; friends opposed it; the lobbyists for tourism were for it; there were no figures on it.

With the grandfather clause, it's okay. A school board member without a diploma may be competent and knowledgeable about education and do a good job. The amendment was a solution to the problem of those already on the board. Times have changed and, it is good.

Legislators discussed adding amendments to get strength or support for bills. When legislators could not come to a consensus and different positions were not reconciled, amendments were introduced to defeat the bill. Examples:

The Senate doesn't take bills personally. We don't often get married to a bill, because we often need to work out compromise.

Political loyalties have more effect than they should. I'm too new to have debts to pay back. That may not be bad. You know who you can work with. Only a few votes were really party lines. There are urban/rural and east/middle/west loyalties. I try to keep rapport with all of them and not burn bridges.

To get along you've got to get along.

There are outside discussions, and I'll vote for you if you'll vote for me on less important bills. It doesn't happen when there are major concerns across the state. Then you look at right and wrong.

The hours changed in the Commerce Committee to make it more compatible. The amendments on the floor were to kill the bill. Committee amendments are usually better. The amendment here was an attempt to take care of a problem.

Data from both instruments indicate legislators' preference for analysis rather than bargaining as a decision style. Legislators' mode of operation is more often working out compromises for problem solution instead of deals of giving up something to get something.

Decision Mechanism

Subscale scores of the RRS (see Table 3 on page 74) for decision mechanism ranked inside analysis with a mean of 5.56 and standard deviation of 4.61 as more important in guiding decisions. Outside analysis with a mean of 0.47 and standard deviation of 3.95 was second and inside bargaining with a mean of 0.24 and standard deviation of 4.66 was third. With a mean of -6.26 and standard deviation of 5.36, outside bargaining was clearly the least favored.

These subscale scores for the factors of decision mechanism showed that legislators rely most on adequate staff work, deliberations within the legislative committees, and reaching legislative consensus through study and discussion. The scores showed that insight provided by interest group lobbyists, interpretations by executive agencies, and understanding constituency interests are somewhat preferred resources for decision making. Of about equal preference to legislators are negotiations among legislators, legislative leadership priorities, and reaching political accommodation through compromise. Further, legislators indicated that pressure from the governor's office, support from

influential groups, and balancing budget demands of various groups were least important when making decisions and developing policy. Thus, decisions are more often reached through discussion of problems and solutions with fellow legislators and staff than as a response to pressure or support from interest groups or by budget demands.

Table 7 presents interview data for decision mechanism. Rank ordering by frequency placed inside bargaining (44/43.5%) first, and inside analysis (24/23.8%) second. Outside analysis (23/22.8%) was only slightly lower in third, and outside bargaining (10/9.9%) was ranked fourth. Legislators clearly perceived legislative negotiations as the most utilized decision mechanism. Analysis with internal and external resources were of medium importance. Least utilized as a means of decision making were negotiations with those outside of the legislature.

TABLE 7

Frequency of Total Responses for Decision Mechanism

Decision Mechanism	Frequency	%
Inside Bargaining	44	43.5
Inside Analysis	24	23.8
Outside Analysis	23	22.8
Outside Bargaining	10	9.9
Total	101	100.0

Ranking of the decision mechanism factors on the two instruments was inconsistent for one factor. Inside bargaining was the third ranked factor on the RRS, but it was the highest ranked factor of the interview frequencies. With this exception, the other rankings were the same.

Research Question 3

Do legislators perceive that their decisions are directed by their own personal value systems?

The analysis of both RRS scores and interview responses were used to determine the importance of personal value systems for guiding decision behavior. The rank ordering of means for factors of the authority mode and the frequency of value laden responses in the interview were studied.

Subscale scores of the RRS dimension of authority mode rank the importance of values, friendship, expertise, and legality as resources for decision making. Scores reported in Table 3 (page 74) clearly show legislators' preference for values ($X = 8.38$) over expertise ($X = -0.85$), friendship ($X = -3.12$), and legality ($X = -4.41$).

Table 8 presents the top individual categories for responses of interview data. Of these, three denote value systems. Beliefs and philosophy (53), experience and background (34), and good of society (29). These three categories with 116 responses represent 26.8% of the total 433 responses in the top categories. Education lobbyists of TEA and TSBA with 79 responses represent 18.2% of the total.

The two categories that refer to constituents (64/14.8%), and the remaining four categories of business and industry lobbyists (51/11.8%), teachers (47/10.9%), information (47/10.9%), and special interest groups (29/6.7%) complete the top categories.

TABLE 8

Rank Ordered Top Categories by Frequency of Responses for Total Population

Category	Frequency
Beliefs and philosophy	53
TEA	52
Business and Industry	51
Teachers	47
Information	47
Constituents	33
Experience and Background	34
Represent Constituents	31
Good of Society	29
Special Interest Groups	29
TSBA	27
Total	433

An alternate analysis of interview data is summarized in Table 4 (page 76). Even though this analysis ranks value second, 25.3% of the responses were value oriented. Data

from the RRS and the interview indicated that legislators perceive their personal value systems as very important factors in the decision process. On both instruments value outranked other factors by a wide margin.

Research Question 4

Do decision orientations differ when compared by position, party, experience, age, or region?

The subscale scores of the RRS were analyzed for the five demographic groups of:

1. Position--Senator and Representative
2. Party--Democrat and Republican
3. Experience--1 year, more than 1 year but fewer than or equal to 5 years, and more than 5 years
4. Age--younger than 50 and 50 or older
5. Region--east, middle, and west

Tables I-1-5 in Appendix I present RRS data for each group.

Position

Table I-1 presents a summary of the RRS scores for the 10 Senators and 24 Representatives who participated in the study. No difference was found between the groups, nor with the total sample, when comparing the highest ranked factor of the four dimensions of the RRS. The highest ranked authority mode factor was value. Legislators preferred outside reference groups and a decision style of analysis. Inside analysis was the highest ranked decision mechanism factor.

Variations do exist in the 12 subscale scores for Senators and Representatives. However, there are only minor differences for rankings of resources by the two groups. Concern with the legality of a bill was ranked last in the authority mode by Representatives. Legality was ranked second by Senators. In the ranking of decision mechanism factors, Senators ranked inside bargaining ahead of outside analysis. Representatives reversed the ranking of these two resources.

Based on the data from the RRS, both Senators and Representatives perceive values as most influential in the decision-making process. They look outside of the legislature for resource groups. RRS scores indicate that legislators in both groups see themselves as finding solutions to problems and issues by studying and working with fellow legislators. These findings are consistent with those found for the total population.

Party

Slight variation exists among Democrats and Republicans in the rankings of the factors of resources on the RRS as presented in Table I-2. Rankings of authority mode, reference group, and decision style were consistent across the two groups. The decision mechanism ranking for Democrats places inside bargaining before outside analysis. The ranking for Republicans reverses these two resources.

The patterns of decision orientation for Democrats and Republicans are consistent with those found for the entire population of the study. Legislators of both parties rely on values, outside reference groups, an analysis decision style, and discussions with colleagues in reaching decisions.

Experience

RRS subscale scores were analyzed in terms of length of experience in the legislature. Legislators were categorized into three groups: 1 year experience, more than 1 year but fewer than or equal to 5 years' experience, and more than 5 years' experience. This categorization was based on study of previous research and on the belief that perceptions of legislative resources change as legislators become more familiar with and aware of their environment. A freshman Senator commented that his views of the legislature had changed in the one year he had been in office.

Table I-3 illustrates the RRS subscale scores for the three experience groups. Only one difference exists in rankings between the groups. The decision mechanism factors of outside analysis and inside bargaining are ranked second and third respectively by legislators with more than 1 year but fewer than 5 years' experience. This order is reversed by the first-year legislators and the legislators with more than 5 years' experience.

Patterns found through analysis of data for the experience groups are consistent with those found for the entire

population of legislators. Factors of all dimensions of the RRS are nearly identically ranked for the three levels of experience and with the total population.

Age

The characteristics of age and legislative experience, while interrelated, may result in different perceptions. The age of legislators may affect their perceptions based on their maturity, background, and personal experience. Legislative experience may affect their perceptions of the function of the legislature, their role as a legislator, and the role and utility of other players in the decision process. For these reasons, both age and experience were analyzed.

The RRS data were analyzed to determine if there were differences in decision orientation for legislators in the two age groups. Scores for those legislators under 50 years of age were compared with those of legislators 50 years old or older. These scores are shown in Table I-4.

Rankings of resources on the RRS do not vary over age for the three dimensions of authority mode, reference group, and decision mechanism. Those legislators 50 years old or older ranked the decision style of bargaining over that of analysis. The under 50 age group ranked analysis as the preferred decision style rather than bargaining.

Decision style ranking of bargaining first and analysis second by legislators 50 years old or older is inconsistent

with the ranking by the total population of the study. The legislators under 50 years old and the total population are consistent in ranking the decision style of analysis before the decision style of bargaining.

Region

Historically and geographically, Tennessee has been divided into three grand divisions of east, middle, and west. Settlement of these three geographic regions by diverse groups from different parts of what finally became the United States caused the three areas to be quite different. The long distance from west Tennessee to east Tennessee has served to maintain this difference. Through the history of the state, east Tennessee has been noted as a Republican stronghold while west and middle Tennessee were seen as Democratic areas. The dominance of these parties in the respective areas is still evident but has shown signs of weakening in the last decade. While conducting the interviews, the researcher was made more aware of these continued regional loyalties. Based on the background of the state and the present awareness of the researcher, perceptions of legislators in the east, middle, and west regions of Tennessee were compared.

The RRS scores by region are summarized in Table I-5. The decision orientation patterns as ranked by the 12 subscale scores were consistent among the three groups with one minor difference in decision mechanism. Middle

Tennessee legislators ranked inside bargaining before outside analysis. East and west legislators reversed this order.

Patterns for regional groups do not vary across groups nor do they vary from those found for the entire population. Legislators in all areas of Tennessee perceive values, outside reference groups, analysis, and discussions with colleagues as most important in their decision making.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Summary

Education faces a new and different environment as it takes the center stage in American politics. It has become the number one priority of politicians at the local, state, and national levels. National reform movements have called for excellence in education. Business leaders are concerned with the lack of prepared high school graduates. National studies report a poor showing by American students when compared with other countries. Economists warn of the declining American leadership in the world economy. The popular view that educational change can solve all of these and other problems has led to public demands and political interest.

At the same time, state legislators have become more experienced and more professional. With the increases in staff, budget, and facilities, coupled with the decrease in legislative turnover, being a Tennessee legislator is becoming a full-time profession. With education at the top of the list of concerns, legislators are primed to take action. They are faced with an array of resources and influences when deciding educational issues. There

is a potential for leaders in education to be one of these resources to aid in the creation of education legislation. Coalitions of educators and politicians must communicate and cooperate in the production of the best education for all citizens.

The Problem

The research of the politics of education is fragmented and limited in its usefulness for application toward a coalition of educators and politicians. Only recently has research focused on legislators, their attitudes, goals, and perceptions. A better understanding of legislative behavior may be the ingredient needed for linking educators and legislators.

If educators are to impact legislation that affects schools, they must deal with legislators in a productive manner. This study was designed to assist educators in working with legislators by focusing on the processes and resources to which legislators turn when making decisions.

The Purpose

The purpose of the study was to identify the sources of influences or information which legislators perceived as effective and/or reliable. Further, the study was to determine the orientations of legislators in the four dimensions of authority mode, reference group, decision style, and interaction of reference group and decision style. Specific questions that were addressed were:

1. What factors do legislators perceive as having the greatest influence on their decisions?

2. What is the decision orientation of the legislators?

3. Do legislators perceive that their decisions are directed by their own personal value systems?

4. Are legislators' decision orientations different when compared by position, party, experience, age, or region?

Procedures

The population of this study was thirty-four members of the 96th General Assembly of the Tennessee State Legislature. The participants were members of the education committees and leaders of the Senate and the House of Representatives. Selection of these subjects was based on their involvement with and influence on educational issues. Each legislator was interviewed and completed the Decision-Making Resource Rating Scale (RRS). The combination of interview responses and RRS scores comprised the data for the study.

The RRS was developed by Mitchell (1981) after extensive study of three states and has been used in subsequent studies. The interview schedule was based upon a review of the related literature and reflected resources from the RRS. The interview was pilot tested and revised prior to its use with the participants. Data were collected

by visits to legislators' home districts or to their Nashville offices from June 1989 to January 1990.

The RRS consisted of the four dimensions of authority mode, reference groups, decision style, and decision mechanism. Each dimension was categorized by factors. Authority mode contained the factors of value, expertise, friendship, and legality. Factors for reference group were inside groups and outside groups. Decision styles were either analysis or bargaining. Combinations of the reference group factors and the decision style factors made up the decision mechanism factors. The instrument was a semantic differential scale which consisted of forty-two items of pairs of phrases representing these twelve factors. Each item presented a pair of factors in a forced choice format on which the legislators indicated a preference for one of the factors over the other paired factor. Then twelve subscale scores for these factors were computed for each subject. Descriptive statistics of means and standard deviations of the subscale scores were used for analysis. Factors within each dimension were rank ordered by means for comparison.

Interview logs were analyzed by content analysis procedures. Responses were tabulated by using categories of RRS factors and other sources of influence. Categories of responses were analyzed in relation to specific research questions and were rank ordered by frequency and percent.

Coded responses of interview data for specific sources of influence were categorized into similar types of groups and organizations. For example, TEA and TSBA were grouped together with other education lobbyists as a source of influence. Total responses for these categories were tabulated and rank ordered by frequency. These data were used to identify sources of influence for question one.

To answer question two, RRS subscale scores and interview data were used to determine the decision orientation of the legislators. Interview data were analyzed by tabulating total responses relating to the twelve factors of the RRS. The rankings of these factors by both instruments were compared.

The ranking of the value factor under authority mode and the relative ranking of value laden responses from the interview provided the data for research question three. The importance of value as a resource for decision making was compared on the two instruments.

Research question four was answered by analysis of data from the RRS. Comparison was made of the orderings of the decision orientation factors for two legislative positions, two representations of party, three levels of experience, two age groups, and the regions of Tennessee.

Findings

The findings in this study are subject to limitations that are inherent in the study of human behavior. Lack

of experimental control, selection of educational bills, and reliance on participants' perceptions present possible sources of error that may have affected the research data. Choice of subjects was based on committee or leadership positions in the legislature. Thus, participants represented an intact sample of the legislature rather than a randomly selected group from which statistical inferences could have been drawn. While every effort was made to eliminate researcher bias, the possibility that bias was introduced in interview transcripts and/or coding does exist.

In addition, important information may not have emerged because of a possible lack of candor on the part of the participants. While legislators appeared to be comfortable and open during the interview, the accuracy and frankness of their comments is actually unknown.

Choice of educational bills was dependent upon those bills that came before the legislature in the 96th session. This use of recent legislation insured that all participants were familiar with the bills for discussion. However, this choice of bills for the study may have suppressed information that was important to the study.

Despite these problems, there are factors which contribute to confidence in the findings and strengthen the study. Education was an important issue in Tennessee politics at the time of the study. The legislators who were interviewed were well informed and represented the best

information sources for this study. All interviews were conducted independently by the researcher which contributes to consistency in questions asked and information recorded. The semi-structured format of the interview allowed participants to express themselves in many ways, bringing out information which the researcher had not anticipated. The use of two instruments lends credibility to the data and strengthens the conclusions. Perceptions of interview subjects generally supported information from the RRS.

Research Question 1: What factors do legislators perceive as having the greatest influence on decisions for educational legislation?

There was a wide range of frequencies of responses in the interviews relating to the sources of influence and information. This wide range clearly distinguishes the most important sources and the least important sources. Frequencies of responses to sources of influence tended to cluster into three groups of high frequency, medium frequency, and low frequency. Within these clusters there was less difference in the frequency of responses for influences. As a result, relative importance of influences within clusters is not clear.

Based on the responses on the interview, fellow legislators and education lobbyists were the most important sources of influence or information for decision making.

The legislators referenced these two categories of influence in slightly more than one third of the total responses.

These sources were followed by local administration, special interest groups, family and friends, business and industry lobbyists, teachers, state agencies, and constituents as sources of medium importance for decision making. One half of the total responses were distributed over these seven sources of influence. The number of responses for the four categories of local administration, special interest groups, family and friends, and business and industry lobbyists were each one half of the number of responses for the categories in the high frequency group. Teachers, state agencies, and constituents each received only one third of the number of responses as the top two categories received.

The least important sources of influence were party, parents, national or regional organizations, legislative staff, college or university representatives, and governor. These categories of responses were ranked lowest with very few responses. Their combined responses were only slightly more than one tenth of the total responses.

Research Question 2: What is the decision orientation of the legislators?

According to the RRS data, the most important resources for decision making in the four dimensions of the scale were traditional values, reference groups outside of the

legislature, analytic style of decision making, and study of issues with legislative colleagues. Within the four dimensions, the factors were further ranked. In the authority mode dimension, value was followed by expertise and friendship with medium importance and by legality as least important. Reference groups outside of the legislature were preferred over inside groups. Legislators indicated that their decision style was more often analysis of issues rather than bargaining. Inside analysis was the highest ranked decision mechanism, with outside analysis and inside bargaining of medium importance. Of least importance was outside bargaining.

The decision orientations determined by the interview data varied slightly from that determined by the RRS data. From analysis of the interview data, expertise ranked higher than values and inside bargaining was the most important decision mechanism. Other rankings were identical.

From the ranking of both instruments, the following statements on decision orientations can now be made:

1. Legislators view themselves as establishing policy for the betterment of society through knowledge and information. They do not see themselves responding to personal relationships or as legal trustees.

2. Legislators perceive that guidance from educators, lobbyists, and constituents is more important than guidance from individuals or groups within the legislature when reaching decisions.

3. In their view, legislators solve problems and shape policy through study and analysis rather than managing conflict through negotiations and deals.

4. Legislators see themselves working with fellow legislators and staff in negotiations and study of an issue rather than reacting to demands from education agencies, lobbyists, or constituents.

Research Question 3: Do legislators perceive that they are guided in their decision making by their own personal value systems?

The most important resource reported by the RRS was value. In the interview, legislators mentioned beliefs and philosophy more often than any other single category of responses. Three of the top categories of responses were related to values, experience, or good of society. These responses were one and one-half times more than the next group of responses.

Thus, the importance of legislators' personal value systems in guiding their decisions is supported by both instruments. Legislators rely on traditional values, personal philosophy, experience or upbringing, and personal goals for education when approving or disapproving educational legislation.

Research Question 4: Do decision orientations differ when compared by position, party, experience, age, or region?

Little variation was identified in the ranking of resources for decision making by the RRS data for these demographic groups. The highest ranked resources in the four dimensions were consistent for all groups and for the total population with one exception. Contrasting with all other group rankings was the 50 or older age group who chose a decision style of bargaining more often than one of analysis. Lowest ranked resources for all four dimensions were also consistent for all groups with one exception. Legality was least important for all groups except Senators who ranked legality as the second most important authority mode after value. They ranked expertise third and friendship least important.

Patterns of decision orientations were very similar for all groups of position, party, experience, age, and region. Few variations were found between groups or between groups and the total population in the rank orderings of resources of the RRS.

Conclusions

This research indicates that the study of the behavior of legislators is appropriate for understanding how decisions are reached in the legislature. External sources of influence and legislative rules and procedures cannot be ignored when studying legislative decision making.

The findings of this study, which are in general agreement with the studies of Mitchell (1981) and others,

indicate a process by which the potential for influence can be enhanced. Steps of the process are:

1. Identify of the legislators who are recognized as the educational experts.

2. Analyze educational issues from the perspective of betterment of education.

3. Present the issue to the identified educational leaders of the legislature, emphasizing the value of the proposal.

4. Present the proposal during the committee stage of legislation development.

The education lobby is strong in Tennessee. Any losses of influence by the education lobbyists may be attributed to their emphasis on protection of membership and financial concerns. Presentation of information from a realistic and honest approach can contribute to a sense of trust on the part of the legislators.

Teachers and constituents can be more powerful influences in legislative decisions through personal contacts with legislators. They should be aware of current issues, assertive in voicing their opinions, and rational in their analysis.

The research component of Tennessee universities can be a source of expert information for decision making and a valuable resource for legislators. University representatives should establish personal contact with key legislators

to form effective linkages and to provide valid and reliable information on educational issues.

The same categories of influence identified by previous research are present in this study with some variation of the rankings of importance. The differences in rankings may be attributed to the leadership strength or to the cohension of sources of influence. The ability of groups and organizations to influence legislative decision making will be enhanced by strengthening the leadership and by establishing unity.

The purpose of amendments on the Labor Day Bill and the Youth Work Bill was to kill the bills because of irreconcilable differences between the business and industry interests and the education interests. In contrast, the High School Bill was sponsored and passed after the recognition of what legislators saw as a problem. In this case, rather than to kill the bill, the amendments were to alter the effects of the bill on those who were already on local boards of education. Thus, educational issues in a specific bill may affect the decision style or the decision mechanism legislators use.

Implications for Future Research

Several recommendations for further research indicated by this study are:

1. This research should be conducted as a longitudinal study at various intervals over five or ten years.

2. The use of random samples of education bills and/or legislators would allow for tests of statistical significance.

3. Similar research should be conducted on groups within the environment of the legislature where educational policy is developing, such as legislative staff, lobbyists, education agency staff, and constituents.

4. The relationship between district variables, such as economic level or population composition, and the decision orientations of legislators should be studied. Personal variables of level of education, occupation, and relationships to education community should also be included.

5. An in-depth study of decision style, with more carefully controlled probes of bargaining and analysis, should be conducted.

6. Study of leadership characteristics and styles of the legislature and of groups or organizations which are sources of influence or information should be conducted.

7. Further refinement and evaluation of the RRS are needed.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

SUBJECTS

APPENDIX A

SUBJECTS

Senate (10 subjects)

D. Wilder	Lt. Governor	West	Democrat
R. Rochelle	Speaker Pro Tempore	Middle	Democrat
M. Hamilton	Floor Leader	West	Democrat
R. Darnell	Majority Leader	Middle	Democrat
*B. Atchley	Minority Leader	East	Republican

Education Committee

R. Albright	Chairman	East	Republican
*B. Atchley		East	Republican
A. O'Brien		Middle	Democrat
A. Womack		Middle	Democrat
L. Dunavant		West	Republican
F. Lashlee		West	Democrat

East	2	Democrats	7
West	4	Republicans	3
Middle	4		

*B. Atchley, who is listed twice, is counted only once in the total.

Representatives (24 subjects)

E. Murray	Speaker	Middle	Democrat
J. Bragg	Deputy Speaker	Middle	Democrat

Education Committee

Davidson	Chairman	Middle	Democrat
Winingham		Middle	Democrat
L. Turner		West	Democrat
J. Bell		Middle	Democrat
Bivens		East	Democrat
Byrd		West	Democrat
Cain		West	Democrat
Callicott		Middle	Republican
Coffey		East	Republican
Dixon		West	Democrat
Good		East	Republican
Halteman		Middle	Republican
D. Henry		Middle	Republican
Hobbs		Middle	Democrat
U. Jones		West	Democrat
Odom		Middle	Democrat
Peroulas		East	Republican
Pinion		West	Democrat
C. Robinson		East	Democrat
Stamps		Middle	Republican
Starnes		East	Democrat
Whitson		East	Republican

East	7	Democrats	16
Middle	11	Republicans	8
West	6		

APPENDIX B

EDUCATION BILLS

APPENDIX B

EDUCATION BILLS

Prefiled for Introduction 1/11/89

SENATE BILL NO. 24

by

Koella

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 49, Chapter 2, relative to the qualifications of boards of education.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 49-2-202(a)(3), is amended by deleting the period at the end of the subdivision and adding the following:

; provided, however, beginning on January 1, 1990, no person shall qualify as a candidate for a position on a county board of education until such person has filed with the county election commission proof of that candidate's graduation from high school, evidenced by a diploma or other documentation satisfactory to the commission. After January 1, 2000, no person shall qualify as a candidate for a position on a county board of education until such person has filed with the county election commission proof of that candidate's graduation from an accredited college or university, evidenced by a diploma or other documentation satisfactory to the commission.

SECTION 2. This act shall take effect on the same date on which any act providing for appointment by county boards of education of the county superintendent or chief county education administrator, however named, becomes a law, the public welfare requiring it. If no such act becomes a law, this act shall have no effect.

FISCAL NOTE

TO: Chief Clerk of the Senate
Chief Clerk of the House

FROM: Donald L. Morton, Executive Director

DATE: January 17, 1989

SUBJECT: Senate Bill 24

Senate Bill 24 amends the qualifications of members of local boards of education so that, effective January 1, 1990, candidates for the office must file proof of graduation from high school; effective January 1, 2000, candidates must file proof of graduation from an accredited college or university.

The provisions of the bill will have effect only if legislation is enacted to provide for the appointment of superintendents by county boards of education.

The fiscal effect upon the state and local governments from enactment of this bill is estimated to be minimal.

This is to duly certify that the information contained herein is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Donald L. Morton
Executive Director

SENATE BILL 24

ON THE 3rd OF APRIL, 1989, THE SENATE ADOPTED THE FOLLOWING AMENDMENT:

SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE AMENDMENT

AMENDMENT NO. 1

FILED
Date 3-27-89
Time 10:30
Clerk dh
Comm. Amdt. ✓

Signature of Sponsor

AMEND Senate Bill No. 124 House Bill No. 1248

by deleting the second sentence from the amendatory language of Section 1 of the printed bill.

ADOPTED V.V.

5/6

18500241

28066

PREPARED AND DISTRIBUTED BY THE OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE SERVICES, G - 20 WAR MEMORIAL BUILDING - 741-3511.

PLEASE ATTACH TO YOUR COPY OF SB 24 (HB 1248).

ON THE 3rd OF APRIL, 1989, THE SENATE ADOPTED THE FOLLOWING AMENDMENT:

AMENDMENT NO. 2

M E Knight
Signature of Sponsor

FILED
Date 3-27-89
Time 5:08 p.m.
Clerk CJO
Comm. Amdt.

AMEND Senate Bill No. 24 House Bill No. 1248

by adding the following new section immediately preceding the last section and by renumbering the subsequent section accordingly:

Section ___. The provisions of this act shall not apply in counties having a population of

not less than	nor more than
14,940	15,000
49,400	49,500
74,500	74,600

Adopted V.V.

according to the 1980 federal census of population or any subsequent federal census.

18512512

ORIGINAL

PREPARED AND DISTRIBUTED BY THE OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE SERVICES, G - 20 WAR MEMORIAL BUILDING - 741-3511.

10 PLEASE ATTACH TO YOUR COPY OF SB 24 (HB1248).

ON THE 24th DAY OF APRIL, 1989, THE SENATE ADOPTED THE FOLLOWING AMENDMENT:

AMENDMENT NO. 5

Signature of Sponsor

FILED
Date 4-17-8
Time 5:32P
Clerk BLB
Comm. Amds.

AMEND Senate Bill No. 24 House Bill No. 1248

by deleting Section 2 of the printed bill and substituting instead the following as Section 2:

SECTION 2. If any provision of this act or the application thereof to any person or circumstance is held invalid, such invalidity shall not affect other provisions or applications of the act which can be given effect without the invalid provision or application, and to that end the provisions of this act are declared to be severable.

AND FURTHER AMEND by adding a new section to be appropriately designated, as follows:

SECTION ___. This act shall take effect October 1, 1990, the public welfare requiring it.

ADOPTED Y.V.

13302743

85140 18

PREPARED AND DISTRIBUTED BY THE OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE SERVICES OF THE TENNESSEE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, G-20 WAR MEMORIAL BLDG., NASHVILLE 37219.

PLEASE FILE THIS AMENDMENT WITH YOUR COPY OF SB 24 (HB 1248).

HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE AMENDMENT 1

AMENDMENT NO. 1

FILED
Date 5/3/89
Time 1:21
Clerk WDP
Comm. Amdt. 002349

Signature of Sponsor

AMEND Senate Bill No. 24 House Bill No. 1248

by adding the following new sentence at the end of the amendatory language of Section 1:

Provided, further, that any person serving on a school board as of the effective date of this act shall be allowed to continue to serve and to seek re-election or reappointment to one (1) additional term even though such person may not have graduated from high school.

adopted

13494670

28295

O

PREPARED AND DISTRIBUTED BY THE OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE SERVICES OF THE TENNESSEE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, G-20 WAR MEMORIAL BLDG., NASHVILLE 37219.

PLEASE FILE THIS AMENDMENT WITH YOUR COPY OF SB 24 (HB 1248).

Filed for Introduction on 2/1/89

SENATE BILL NO. 959

by

O'Brien

Person

AN ACT relative to the term for public schools and to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 49.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 49-6-3004(a), is amended by deleting the words and punctuation "divided as follows:" and substituting instead the following:

to commence the day immediately following the day observed as Labor Day; however, in school districts which have experienced emergency closings an average of ten (10) or more days for the three (3) immediately preceding school years, the board of education may choose to begin school before Labor Day in order to provide one hundred eighty (180) days of classroom instruction.

School districts may request a waiver of the Labor day opening requirement from the state board of education. The state board of education may grant such a waiver upon a showing of extraordinary circumstances to justify the waiver, presented by the local board of education in a hearing before the state board of education. A waiver of this requirement shall not be granted except in very exceptional or emergency circumstances. Contracts of

employment for certain employees of school districts may require these employees to begin the performance of the contract of employment prior to the first day of student attendance. The term shall be divided as follows:

SECTION 2. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 49-6-3004, is amended by adding a new subsection thereto, as follows:

(f) The length of term selected by a local board, and the length of the school day corresponding to such term shall not affect either the amount or timing of payments made to the local education agency under the Tennessee foundation program or otherwise, if such local education agency operates for the full chosen term. Equally, the length of term and the length of day shall not affect the compensation of any teacher employed for the length of that term.

SECTION 3. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it, and shall apply at the beginning of the 1989-1990 school year.

FISCAL NOTE

TO: Chief Clerk of the Senate
Chief Clerk of the House

FROM: Donald L. Morton, Executive Director

DATE: February 23, 1989

SUBJECT: Senate Bill 959 - House Bill 1197

Senate Bill 959 provides for the school term to begin the day after Labor Day; however, in those districts which have experienced emergency closings an average of ten or more days for the preceding three years, the local education agency may begin the school term before Labor Day in order to provide 180 days of instruction.

School districts may request a waiver of the Labor Day opening requirement upon a showing of extraordinary circumstances. State funding may not be delayed or lessened based on when a local education agency begins classes.

The fiscal effect upon the state and local governments from enactment of this bill is estimated to be minimal.

This is to duly certify that the information contained herein is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Donald L. Morton
Executive Director

SENATE BILL 959 - HOUSE BILL 1197

ON THE 22nd DAY OF MARCH, 1989, THE SENATE ADOPTED THE FOLLOWING AMENDMENT:

AMENDMENT NO. 1

O'Brien - Albright
Signature of Sponsor

FILED
Date 3-16-89
Time 1:58
Clerk
Comm. Amdt.

AMEND Senate Bill No. 959 House Bill No. 1197

in the second paragraph of the amendatory language of Section 1 of the printed bill by deleting the first two sentences thereof and substituting instead the following:

School districts may request a waiver of the Labor Day opening requirement from the commissioner of education. The commissioner may grant such a waiver upon a showing of circumstances to justify the waiver, presented by the local board of education.

AND FURTHER AMEND in Section 3 of the printed bill by deleting the figures "1989-1990" and substituting instead the figures "1990-1991".

ADOPTED V.V. AS AMENDED

16152453

28029 430

ORIGIN-

PLEASE FILE THIS AMENDMENT WITH YOUR COPY OF SB 959 (HB 1197).

8a

ON THE 22nd DAY OF MARCH, 1989, THE SENATE ADOPTED THE FOLLOWING AMENDMENT:

AMENDMENT NO. 1 to AMENDMENT No. 1

FILED
Date 3-22-
Time 3:10p
Clerk RTW
Comm. Amdt.

AMENDMENT NO. _____

Signature of Sponsor

AMEND Senate Bill No. 959 House Bill No. 1197

by adding the following new language to the effective date section (original SECTION 3):

The provisions of this act shall cease to be effective after July 1, 1993.

Adopted 31-1-1

15231367

Page 1 of 1

83062

1434

PLEASE FILE THIS AMENDMENT WITH YOUR COPY OF SB 959 (HB 1197).

8

ON THE 22nd DAY OF MARCH, 1989, THE SENATE ADOPTED THE FOLLOWING AMENDMENT:

AMENDMENT NO. 4

Signature of Sponsor

FILED
Date 3-22-89
Time 2:54 PM
Clerk BLB
Comm. Amdt.

AMEND Senate Bill No. 959 House Bill No. 1197

by adding the following new section immediately before the effective date section and numbering the sections accordingly:

SECTION ____. No provision of this act shall be construed to authorize any public school system to maintain a term of less than one hundred eighty (180) days for classroom instruction.

ADOPTED 3-22

16522584

Page 1 of 1

29047
1051
C

PLEASE FILE THIS AMENDMENT WITH YOUR COPY OF SB 959 (HB 1197).

9

ON THE 24th DAY OF MAY, 1989, THE HOUSE ADOPTED THE FOLLOWING AMENDMENT:

AMENDMENT NO. 4

FILED
Date 5/24/89
Time 4:12
Clerk JWDP
Comm. Amdt. NO

Signature of Sponsor

AMEND Senate Bill No. 959 House Bill No. 1197

002758

by deleting from the amendatory language of Section 1 the words and punctuation "to commence the day immediately following the day observed as Labor Day;" and by substituting instead the following:

to commence the day immediately following the day observed as Labor Day and to end on or before Friday of the first full calendar week in June;

AND FURTHER AMEND by inserting the following language between the third and fourth sentences of the first full paragraph of the amendatory language of Section 1:

Local education agencies may schedule school on planned holidays or Saturdays for days missed due to inclement weather or other emergencies.

AND FURTHER AMEND by deleting from the amendatory language of Section 1 the words, figures, and symbols "an average of ten (10) or more days" and by substituting the following:

"an average of seven (7) or more days"

adopted

85332

18054337

ORIGIN

PREPARED AND DISTRIBUTED BY THE OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE SERVICES OF THE TENNESSEE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, G-20 WAR MEMORIAL BLDG., NASHVILLE 37219.

PLEASE FILE THIS AMENDMENT WITH YOUR COPY OF SB 959 (HB 1197).

Prefiled for Introduction on 2/1/89

SENATE BILL NO. 499

by

Haynes

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 50-5-105, relative to employment of minors 16 or 17 years of age to provide for restrictions on hours of employment.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 50-5-105, is amended by deleting subsection (b) in its entirety and substituting instead a new subsection (b) to read as follows:

(b) A minor who is sixteen (16) or seventeen (17) years of age and is enrolled in school may not be employed:

(1) During those hours when the minor is required to attend classes;

(2) Between the hours of 9:30 p.m. and 7:00 a.m., Sunday through Thursday evenings preceding a school day;

(3) More than four (4) hours a day on school days, Monday through Thursday.

SECTION 2. This Act shall take effect July 1, 1989, the public welfare requiring it.

ON THE 3rd OF APRIL, 1989, THE SENATE ADOPTED THE FOLLOWING AMENDMENT:

(Haynes)

SENATE COMMERCE, LABOR & AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE Amend. 1

FILED
Date 3-31-89
Time 3:30
Clerk BB
Comm. Amdt.

AMENDMENT NO. 1

Signature of Sponsor

AMEND Senate Bill No. 499 House Bill No. 365

in Section 1 of the printed bill by deleting in entirety subsection (b)(3).

AND FURTHER AMEND by deleting in Section 1, subsection (b)(2), the numerals "9:30" and substituting instead "10:00".

ADOPTED V.V.

12232746

Page 1 of 1

84005 1161

PREPARED AND DISTRIBUTED BY THE OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE SERVICES, G - 20 WAR MEMORIAL BUILDING - 741-3511.

PLEASE ATTACH TO YOUR COPY OF SB 499 (HB 365).

ON THE 3rd OF APRIL, 1989, THE SENATE ADOPTED THE FOLLOWING AMENDMENT:

SENATE COMMERCE COMMITTEE AMENDMENT NO. 2 (Cooper)

FILED
Date 3-31-89
Time 3:31
Clerk AB
Comm. Amdt.

AMENDMENT NO. 2

Signature of Sponsor

AMEND Senate Bill No. 499 House Bill No. 365

by deleting from Section 1(b)(2) figures, letters, and symbols "7:00 a.m." and by substituting instead the figures, letters, and symbols "6:00 a.m.".

Adopted V.V.

17450025

Page 1 of 1

25093 TSS

ORIGINAL

PREPARED AND DISTRIBUTED BY THE OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE SERVICES, G - 20 WAR MEMORIAL BUILDING - 741-3511.

7a

PLEASE ATTACH TO YOUR COPY OF S.B. 499 (H.B. 365).

ON THE 17th DAY OF MAY, 1989, THE HOUSE ADOPTED THE FOLLOWING AMENDMENT:

AMENDMENT NO. 7

Signature of Sponsor

FILED 5-17-89
Date
Time 2:04 p.m.
Clerk
Comm. Amdt. 002630

AMEND Senate Bill No. 499 House Bill No. 365

by adding before the effective date section the following new section and by renumbering the effective date section accordingly:

SECTION___. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 50-5-105, is amended by adding the following new subsection:

(c) The provisions of subsection (b) shall not apply to any minor who maintains not less than a "B" average in the minor's core curriculum courses. Before such minor may be employed under the exemption established by this subsection, the minor's principal shall certify to the potential employer that the minor has the required average. If at the conclusion of a semester grading period, a minor, who is exempt under the provisions of this subsection, has failed to maintain the required average, the minor's principal shall so notify the minor's employer.

adopted

09543630 23261

PREPARED AND DISTRIBUTED BY THE OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE SERVICES OF THE TENNESSEE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, G-20 WAR MEMORIAL BLDG., NASHVILLE 37219.

PLEASE FILE THIS AMENDMENT WITH YOUR COPY OF SB 499 (HB 365).

ON THE 15th DAY OF MARCH, 1990, THE HOUSE ADOPTED THE FOLLOWING AMENDMENT:

FILED
Date 1/31/90
Time
Clerk SV
Comm. Amdt.
003632

AMENDMENT NO. 20

Signature of Sponsor

AMEND Senate Bill No. 499 **House Bill No.** 365

by deleting all language of the bill following the enacting clause and by substituting instead the following language:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 50-5-105, is amended by deleting subsection (b) in its entirety and by substituting instead the following language:

(b) A minor who is sixteen (16) or seventeen (17) years of age and is enrolled in school may not be employed:

(1) During those hours when the minor is required to attend classes; or

(2) Between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m., Sunday through Thursday evenings preceding a school day. Provided however, if the parents or guardians of the minor submit to the employer a signed and notarized statement of consent, then the minor may be employed between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and midnight, Sunday through Thursday evenings preceding a school day; provided further, however, under no circumstances shall such minor be employed between such hours on such evenings on more than three (3) occasions during any week. Each statement of consent shall be submitted to the employer on a carbonized

ON THE 15th DAY OF MARCH, 1990, THE HOUSE ADOPTED THE FOLLOWING AMENDMENT:

FILED
Date
Time
Clerk
Comm. Amdt.

AMENDMENT NO. _____

_____
Signature of Sponsor

AMEND Senate Bill No. 499 **House Bill No.** 365

form provided for such purpose by the department of labor. Upon accepting any such form, the employer shall promptly mail the carbon copy thereof to the commissioner of labor. Any such form shall remain valid until the end of the school year during which it is submitted or until termination of the minor's employment or until the minor reaches the age of majority, whichever shall first occur; and the original copy thereof shall be maintained for the period of its effectiveness by the employer at the location of the minor's employment. At any time, consent may be rescinded by submission to the employer of a statement of rescission, signed by the parents or guardians of the minor.

(c) If the department of labor discovers that an employer has violated the provisions of this section or has violated the provisions of Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 50-5-111, by failing to maintain the required file record, including an accurate time record showing the hours of a minor's beginning and ending of work each day, then the department shall promptly take appropriate actions to

ON THE 15th DAY OF MARCH, 1990, THE HOUSE ADOPTED THE FOLLOWING AMENDMENT:

AMENDMENT NO. _____

FILED
Date _____
Time _____
Clerk _____
Comm. Amdt. _____

Signature of Sponsor

AMEND Senate Bill No. 499 **House Bill No.** 365

ensure imposition of the sanctions prescribed by Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 50-5-112.

SECTION 2. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 50-5-111(1)(C), is amended by deleting the semi-colon ";" and by substituting instead the following:

" or Section 50-5-105;".

SECTION 3. If any provision of this act or the application thereof to any person or circumstance is held invalid, such invalidity shall not affect other provisions or applications of the act which can be given effect without the invalid provision or application, and to that end the provisions of this act are declared to be severable.

SECTION 4. This act shall take effect July 1, 1990, the public welfare requiring it.

Adopted

13204518

25244

PREPARED BY LEGISLATIVE SERVICES, G-20 WAR MEMORIAL BLDG.

2 PLEASE FILE THIS AMENDMENT WITH YOUR COPY OF SB 499 (HB 365).

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

APPENDIX C

Interview Schedule

1a. Please describe how the Labor Day Bill developed.

a. Who was instrumental in the development of the bill and what do you think was their motivation?

b. What was your part in the development of the bill?

c. What were some problems to be resolved?

d. How has the bill changed since it began? What was the purpose of the amendments?

1b. Please describe how the Youth Work Bill developed.

a. Who was instrumental in the development of the bill and what do you think was their motivation?

b. What was your part in the development of the bill?

c. What were some problems to be resolved?

d. How has the bill changed since it began? What was the purpose of the amendments?

1c. Please describe how the High School diploma bill developed.

a. Who was instrumental in the development of the bill and what do you think was their motivation?

b. What was your part in the development of the bill?

c. What were some problems to be resolved?

d. How has the bill changed since it began? What was the purpose of the amendments?

2. How was your decision regarding the bill affected by

a. Your own values or beliefs?

b. Information you had (or did not have)? Research either from outside sources or staff?

c. Personal relationships?

d. Prior laws or constitutional restraints?

e. Lobbyists?

f. Political loyalties?

3. Can you tell me about an issue where your feelings are/were different from your constituents? Do you feel people want you to vote your judgement even if they do not agree with you?

4. What organizations or individuals outside the legislature do you feel give you the most reliable information about education?

5. What group or individuals inside the legislature do you look to for leadership on educational issues?

6. Is there anyone with whom you always discuss educational issues?

7. Is there anything that I have not mentioned that usually affects your decisions on educational issues?

8. Is there any source you wish would contact you regarding educational issues?

Background Information

Occupation_____ Age_____

Religious affiliation_____

Highest level of education_____

Political party affiliation_____

Area of Tennessee represented_____

District represented

Type_____ Economic level_____

Length of service

Legislature_____ Education Committee_____

Political orientation (from strongly conservative to liberal)_____

APPENDIX D

RESOURCE RATING SCALE FOR LEGISLATIVE DECISION MAKING

APPENDIX D

RESOURCE RATING SCALE FOR LEGISLATIVE DECISION MAKING

On the attached sheets are presented several terms referring to potential sources of information and guidance for decision making on legislative issues. They are arranged in pairs, separated by a line divided into spaces. Would you please indicate which of these potential sources of assistance you feel are the most valuable and important for defining and resolving issues before the legislature. Indicate your feelings by placing an x on the line to indicate which element in each pair of resources is the more critical. Mark the space closest to the end of the line if one element is much more important than the other; mark the space closer to the center of the line if an element is only somewhat more important or useful.

(In some pairs, both items may seem important, while for others both may seem trivial. Please try to give a comparative estimate for each pair, however. Your overall views will become clear when we aggregate your answers for all items.)

Insight provided by interest group lobbyists	_____ _____ _____ _____	Negotiations among legislators
Reaching legislative consensus through study and discussion	_____ _____ _____ _____	Balancing budget demands of various groups
Deliberations within the legislative committees	_____ _____ _____ _____	Support from influential groups
Maintaining established legal principles	_____ _____ _____ _____	Developing mutual interests through close working relationships
Giving priorities to important goals	_____ _____ _____ _____	Discussions with friends or colleagues

Reaching consensus among interested parties	____	____	____	____	Adopting a reasonable policy
Technical adequacy of proposals	____	____	____	____	Giving priorities to important goals
Support from influential groups	____	____	____	____	Interpretations provided by executive agencies
Understanding constituency interests	____	____	____	____	Balancing budget demands of various groups
Giving priorities to important goals	____	____	____	____	Providing for orderly and manageable change
Providing for orderly and manageable change	____	____	____	____	Technical adequacy of proposals
Knowing what effects a law will have	____	____	____	____	Being committed to basic values
Pressure from the governor's office	____	____	____	____	Relying on adequate staff work
Discussions with friends or colleagues	____	____	____	____	Providing for orderly and manageable change
Consistency with existing law and practice	____	____	____	____	Listening to those with expert knowledge
Being committed to basic values	____	____	____	____	Developing mutual interests through close working relationships
Reaching political accommodation through compromise	____	____	____	____	Understanding constituency interests

Reaching legislative consensus through study and discussion	____	____	____	____	Understanding constituency interests
Legislative leadership priorities	____	____	____	____	Deliberation within the legislative committees
Negotiations among legislators	____	____	____	____	Pressure from the governor's office
Interaction among legislators	____	____	____	____	Interaction with constituents and interest groups
Concern with the public good	____	____	____	____	Listening to those with expert knowledge
Consulting with prominent and influential people	____	____	____	____	Consistency with existing law and procedures
Technical adequacy of proposals	____	____	____	____	Discussions with friends and colleagues
Interpretations provided by executive agencies	____	____	____	____	Legislative leadership priorities
Consistency with existing laws and procedures	____	____	____	____	Concern for the public good
Legislative leadership priorities	____	____	____	____	Support from influential groups
Listening to those with expert knowledge	____	____	____	____	Consulting with prominent and influential people
Reaching legislative consensus through study and discussion	____	____	____	____	Reaching political accommodation through compromise

Maintaining established legal principles	____	____	____	____	Being committed to basic values
Legislative factors	____	____	____	____	Legitimate public interests
Balancing budget demands of various groups	____	____	____	____	Reaching political accommodation through compromise
Vigorous public leadership	____	____	____	____	Behind the scenes work
Insight provided by interest group lobbyists	____	____	____	____	Pressure from the governor's office
Analysis of the issues	____	____	____	____	Achieving a politically acceptable solution
Technical considerations	____	____	____	____	Political considerations
Knowing what effects a law will have	____	____	____	____	Maintaining established legal principles
Relying on adequate staff work	____	____	____	____	Insight provided by interest group lobbyists
Consulting with prominent and influential people	____	____	____	____	Concern for the public good
Relying on adequate staff work	____	____	____	____	Negotiations among legislators
Developing mutual interests through close working relationships	____	____	____	____	Knowing what effect a law will have
Deliberation within the legislative committees	____	____	____	____	Interpretations provided by executive agencies

Source: Mitchell (1981, pp. 191-195)

APPENDIX E

PHRASES REPRESENTING FACTORS OF THE RESOURCE RATING SCALE

APPENDIX E

PHRASES REPRESENTING FACTORS OF THE RESOURCE RATING SCALE

Authority scales
- Values
  - Concern for the public good
  - Being committed to basic values
  - Giving priorities to important goals
- Expertise
  - Listening to those with expert knowledge
  - Knowing what effects a law will have
  - Technical adequacy of proposals
- Legality
  - Consistency with existing law and procedures
  - Maintaining established legal principles
  - Providing for orderly and manageable change
- Friendship
  - Consulting with prominent and influential people
  - Developing mutual interests through close working relationships
  - Discussions with friends or colleagues

Reference group scales
- Insider
  - Legislative factors
  - Interaction among legislators
  - Behind the scenes work
- Outsider
  - Legitimate public interests
  - Interaction with constituents and interest groups
  - Vigorous public leadership

Decision style scales
- Analysis
  - Analysis of the issues
  - Adopting a reasonable policy
  - Technical considerations
- Bargaining
  - Achieving a politically acceptable solution
  - Reaching consensus among interested parties
  - Political considerations

Decision mechanism scales
- Inside Analysis
  - Relying on adequate staff work
  - Deliberations within the legislative committees
  - Reaching legislative consensus through study and discussion

Outside analysis
Insight provided by interest group lobbyists
Interpretations provided by executive agencies
Understanding constituency interests

Inside bargaining
Negotiations among legislators
Legislative leadership priorities
Reaching political accommodation through compromise
Outside bargaining
Pressure from the governor's office
Support from influential groups
Balancing budget demands of various groups

Source: Mitchell (1981, pp. 70, 71)

APPENDIX F

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE FORM

APPENDIX F

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE FORM

Senator/Representative _____, I am a graduate student at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. As a part of my doctoral thesis project, I am conducting a personal interview with all members of the Education Committee of the Legislature and with several leaders of each House. The project is a study of legislative decision making as related to education in the Tennessee State Legislature in order to determine how issues develop and are defined in the Senate/House, and to find out how problems are resolved. The study does not deal with voting records nor with your support for or against an issue.

I will ask some questions about specific bills that were discussed during the legislative session this year and some questions of a general nature relating to educational issues. In addition, there will be a few personal questions for background information and a Decision Resource Rating Scale comparing decision orientations. All of this will take us about 45 minutes to 1 hour.

The interviews will be anonymous and strictly confidential. However, members of the education committees and leaders will be identified as the groupinterviewed. Generalized findings will be reported and any reference to individual findings will be unidentifiable as to source.

Do you have any questions or concerns about participating?

I understand the explanation of this study and agree to participate.

Signature _____

APPENDIX G

INTERVIEW CODING FORM

APPENDIX G

INTERVIEW CODING FORM

1000 Friendship
- 1100 family
  - 1110 family in education
- 1200 friends
  - 1210 friends in education
- 1300 political friends (colleagues) with similar philosophy
- 1400 not important or not an influence

2000 Expertise
- 2100 government
  - 2110 state (governor)
  - 2120 local (commissioners)
- 2200 political
  - 2210 legislative
    - 2211 leaders of Senate
    - 2212 leaders of House
    - 2213 knowledgeable or senior colleagues
    - 2214 committee members
    - 2215 sponsor
    - 2216 staff
    - 2217 little staff for study
    - 2218 negative impact of certain legislators (personality or philosophy)
- 2300 education
  - 2310 state education agencies
    - 2311 State Board of Education
    - 2312 State Department of Education
    - 2313 THEC
  - 2320 local administration
    - 2321 superintendents
    - 2322 school boards
    - 2323 principals
  - 2330 national or southern organizations/reports
    - 2331 National Council of State Legislatures
    - 2332 Southern Regional Education Board
  - 2340 college and university representatives
- 2400 information/study or research
  - 2410 not available
  - 2420 not reliable
  - 2430 not important
- 2500 personal study

3000 Values
- 3100 beliefs and philosophy
- 3200 experience and background
- 3300 good of society or education
- 3400 not important

4000 Legality
- 4100 rely on the attorney general or staff lawyers
- 4200 took an oath to uphold the constitution
- 4300 discussed but not an issue/not important
- 4400 fiscal or budgetary considerations

4500 Individuals
- 4510 teachers
- 4520 parents
- 4530 constituents (hearing from back home)

5000 Lobbyists
- 5100 special interest groups
  - 5110 depend on them for information/information source for both sides
  - 5120 effective
  - 5130 not effective
  - 5140 credibility lost if not truthful
  - 5150 have a negative impact
- 5200 business and industry (tourism or labor)
- 5300 education
  - 5310 TEA
    - 5311 information source
    - 5312 does not represent teachers
    - 5313 only interested in money, not education
    - 5314 often TEA and State Board represent opposite sides of an issue
    - 5315 have split with TEA
    - 5316 local organization
  - 5320 TSBA
- 5400 media or press

6000 Political loyalties
- 6100 party
  - 6110 very important
  - 6120 sometimes/depends on issue
  - 6130 not very important
- 6200 regional caucus (East/Middle/West)
- 6300 rural/urban
- 6400 political caucus of similar philosophy
- 6500 legislators
  - 6510 discussion for support
  - 6530 deals and debts with other legislators
  - 6530 have to get along
- 6600 not important
- 6700 those who supported me
  - 6710 don't ask for much
- 6800 Speaker controls through appointments to committee

7000 Role orientation
- 7100 good for society or conscience
- 7200 represent constituents

7300 what will get me elected
7400 Stay in touch but they may not know all of an issue/explain my voting

7500 Always discuss with: no one

8000 Desired sources
- 8100 constituents
- 8200 teachers
- 8300 educators
- 8400 organizations
  - 8410 educational
  - 8420 business and industry
  - 8430 federal information passed along
- 8500 parents
- 8600 no one
- 8700 wish they were aware and came earlier
- 8800 they don't think it will do any good

Demographics

Occupation
11 professional
12 educator
13 farmer
14 businessman
15 retired
16 unknown

Religion
21 protestant
22 Catholic
23 unknown

Education
31 high school diploma
32 attended college
33 college degree
34 advanced degree
35 unknown

Party
41 Democrat
42 Republican

Age
51 Below 50
52 50 and above
53 unknown

Experience
61 one year
62 5 years or less
63 more than 5 years

Type of district
71 urban
72 rural
73 suburban
74 mixed urban and rural
75 upper economic
76 middle economic
77 lower economic
78 mixed economic

Region
81 east
82 middle
83 west

Position
91 Senator
92 Representative

Political orientation
scale of 1 (strongly conservative) to 5 (liberal
6 depends on the issue

Note: All general categories represent a positive or neutral response. All tabulations are independent and mutually exclusive.

APPENDIX H

TOTAL RESPONSES OF INTERVIEW DATA BY FREQUENCY

APPENDIX H

TOTAL RESPONSES OF INTERVIEW DATA BY FREQUENCY

Category	Frequency
Friendship	10
Family	11
Family in education	8
Friends	13
Friends in education	13
Political friends (colleagues) with similar philosophy	8
Not important or not an influence	10
Expertise	2
Government	0
State (governor)	6
Local (commissioners)	5
Political	0
Legislative	13
Leaders of Senate	1
Leaders of House	3
Knowledgeable or senior colleagues	20
Committee members	23
Sponsor	19
Staff	12
Little staff for study	9
Negative impact of certain legislators (personality or philosophy)	6
Education	20
State education agencies	3
State Board of Education	10
State Department of Education	13
THEC	11
Local administration	12
Superintendents	22
School boards	19
Principals	3
National or southern organizations/reports	6
National Council of State Legislatures	3
Southern Regional Education Board	5
College and university representatives	10
Information/study or research	47
Not available	9
Not reliable	2
Not important	1
Personal study	9
Values	9
Beliefs and philosophy	53
Experience and background	34
Good of society or education	29
Not important	0

TOTAL RESPONSES OF INTERVIEW DATA BY FREQUENCY (Cont.)

Category	Frequency
Legality	20
Rely on the attorney general or staff lawyers	17
Took an oath to uphold the constitution	3
Discussed but not an issue/not important	17
Fiscal or budgetary considerations	5
Individuals	7
Teachers	47
Parents	16
Constituents (hearing from back home)	33
Lobbyists	9
Special interest groups	8
Depend on them for information/information source for both sides	29
Effective	10
Not effective	5
Credibility lost if not truthful	15
Have a negative impact	4
Business and industry (tourism or labor)	51
Education	12
TEA	52
Information source	8
Does not represent teachers	4
Only interested in money, not education	5
Often TEA and State Board represent opposite sides of an issue	0
Have split with TEA	4
Local organization	6
TSBA	27
Media or press	6
Political loyalties	3
Party	3
Very important	1
Sometimes/depends on issue	11
Not very important	17
Regional caucus (East/Middle/West)	10
Rural/urban	10
Political caucus of similar philosophy	9
Legislators	1
Discussion for support	2
Deals and debts with other legislators	4
Have to get along	2
Not important	9
Those who supported me	3
Speaker controls through appointments to committee	4
Role orientation	0
Good for society or conscience	20
Represent constituents	31

TOTAL RESPONSES OF INTERVIEW DATA BY FREQUENCY (Cont.)

Category	Frequency
What will get me elected	6
Stay in touch but they may not know all of an issue/explain my voting	18
Always discuss with: no one	13
Desired sources	0
Constituents	2
Teachers	9
Educators	6
Educational organizations	2
Business and industry	1
Federal information passed along	1
Parents	12
No one	10
Wish they were aware and came earlier	4
They don't think it will do any good	1
Demographics	
Party	
Democrat	23
Republican	11
Age	
Below 50	16
50 and above	17
Unknown	1
Experience	
1 Year	6
5 Years or fewer	8
More than 5 years	20
Region	
East	9
Middle	15
West	10
Position	
Senator	10
Representative	24

Note: All general categories represent a positive or neutral response. All tabulations are independent and mutually exclusive.

APPENDIX I

RRS SUBSCALE SCORES BY DEMOGRAPHICS

APPENDIX I

RRS SUBSCALE SCORES BY DEMOGRAPHICS

TABLE I-1

Decision Orientation by Position
RRS Subscale Scores

	Senators (n=10) Mean	S.D.	Representatives (n=24) Mean	S.D.
Authority Mode				
Expertise	-2.80	2.90	-0.04	3.78
Friendship	-3.60	6.04	-2.92	4.05
Legality	-1.80	3.65	-5.50	4.94
Value	8.20	4.49	8.46	3.98
Reference Group				
Inside	-1.30	1.83	-2.46	1.79
Outside	1.30	1.83	2.46	1.79
Decision Style				
Analysis	0.30	3.16	0.50	2.83
Bargaining	-0.30	3.16	-0.50	2.83
Decision Mechanism				
Inside Analysis	6.20	5.96	5.29	4.04
Outside Analysis	-2.00	3.37	1.50	3.76
Inside Bargaining	0.10	5.11	0.29	4.58
Outside Bargaining	4.90	6.48	-7.08	4.74

TABLE I-2

Decision Orientation by Party
RRS Subscale Scores

	Democrats (n=23)		Republicans (n=11)	
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.
Authority Mode				
Expertise	-0.87	4.06	-0.82	3.09
Friendship	-2.65	5.14	-4.09	3.36
Legality	-4.57	4.77	-4.09	5.26
Value	8.09	3.70	9.00	4.88
Reference Group				
Inside	-2.04	2.03	-2.27	1.49
Outside	2.04	2.03	2.27	1.49
Decision Style				
Analysis	0.26	2.97	0.82	2.79
Bargaining	-0.26	2.97	-0.82	2.79
Decision Mechanism				
Inside Analysis	4.83	4.86	7.09	3.78
Outside Analysis	0.22	3.94	1.00	4.10
Inside Bargaining	0.70	3.59	-0.73	6.48
Outside Bargaining	-5.74	5.83	-7.36	4.25

TABLE I-3

Decision Orientation by Experience
RRS Subscale Scores

	1 Yr (n=6) Mean	S.D.	More than 1 yr but fewer than or = to 5 yrs (n=8) Mean	S.D.	More than 5 yrs (n=20) Mean	S.D.
Authority Mode						
Expertise	-2.00	4.15	0.625	3.78	-1.10	3.60
Friendship	-2.00	3.03	-3.375	3.07	-3.35	5.57
Legality	-7.33	5.47	-4.375	4.27	-3.55	4.78
Value	11.33	3.83	7.125	4.29	8.00	3.81
Reference Group						
Inside	-2.33	1.86	-2.250	1.39	-2.00	2.08
Outside	2.33	1.86	2.250	1.39	2.00	2.08
Decision Style						
Analysis	0.67	3.27	0.875	2.17	0.20	3.12
Bargaining	-0.67	3.27	-0.875	2.17	-0.20	3.12
Decision Mechanism						
Inside Analysis	7.33	3.56	4.625	2.97	5.40	5.37
Outside Analysis	0.33	5.05	2.750	2.60	-4.00	3.86
Inside Bargaining	1.00	5.83	-0.875	4.05	0.45	4.70
Outside Bargaining	-8.67	5.09	-6.500	4.47	-5.45	5.76

TABLE I-4

Decision Orientation by Age
RRS Subscale Scores

	Under 50 yrs (n=16)		50 yrs or older (n=17)	
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.
Authority Mode				
Expertise	-0.81	4.18	-1.29	3.02
Friendship	-3.38	5.00	-2.94	4.55
Legality	-4.50	5.89	-4.12	3.90
Value	8.69	4.44	8.35	3.79
Reference Group				
Inside	-1.88	1.50	-2.29	2.20
Outside	1.88	1.50	2.29	2.20
Decision Style				
Analysis	1.06	2.62	-0.29	3.06
Bargaining	-1.06	2.62	0.29	3.06
Decision Mechanism				
Inside Analysis	5.12	4.88	5.88	4.58
Outside Analysis	0.62	4.51	0.18	3.54
Inside Bargaining	0.94	4.12	-0.12	5.16
Outside Bargaining	-6.69	5.44	-5.94	5.58

TABLE I-5

Decision Orientation by Region
RRS Subscale Scores

	East (n=9) Mean	S.D.	Middle (n=15) Mean	S.D.	West (n=10) Mean	S.D.
Authority Mode						
Expertise	-1.22	3.63	-1.13	4.12	-0.10	3.45
Friendship	-3.44	5.50	-2.53	4.60	-3.70	4.24
Legality	-3.56	4.88	-4.67	5.29	-4.80	4.57
Value	8.22	4.44	8.33	4.72	8.60	2.91
Reference Group						
Inside	-3.11	1.90	-1.67	1.59	-1.90	2.02
Outside	3.11	1.90	1.67	1.59	1.90	2.02
Decision Style						
Analysis	0.11	3.44	0.33	3.31	0.90	1.60
Bargaining	-0.11	3.44	-0.33	3.31	-0.90	1.60
Decision Mechanism						
Inside Analysis	5.33	3.94	5.87	4.91	5.30	5.12
Outside Analysis	1.33	3.46	0.00	4.32	0.40	4.20
Inside Bargaining	0.56	5.88	0.47	4.12	-0.40	4.70
Outside Bargaining	-7.12	3.63	-6.33	6.32	-5.30	5.44

Vita

Nancy Collins Keese was born in Florence, S. C., on November 22, 1940. She graduated from McClenaghan High School in June 1958. In May 1962, she received a Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology and Mathematics from Winthrop College, Rock Hill, S. C. She taught mathematics in Florence, S. C., from 1962 to 1966. The University of South Carolina awarded her a Master's of Mathematics degree in 1969. From 1969 through 1987, she taught mathematics in schools in Smyrna, TN. During this time, she earned a Specialist in Education degree from Middle Tennessee State University, which was awarded in August 1980.

In the fall of 1987, she entered The Graduate School of The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, and received the Doctor of Education degree in August 1990. Her major was Curriculum and Instruction. Presently, she is an Assistant Professor in Education at Middle Tennessee State University.

The author received the Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics Teaching in 1985. She was a 1986 participant in the Woodrow Wilson Mathematics Institute held at Princeton University. She has been active in the Tennessee Mathematics Teachers Association, having served as Vice-President for Secondary Schools and President. Other organizations in which she holds membership are National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, American Educational Research Association, and Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.