

School Principals Have Much Authority, PSBA Study Shows

The Pennsylvania School Boards Association's executive board, meeting recently in Hershey, reviewed the results of a pilot project that examined how decentralized decision-making, especially by building principals, affects

the management of Pennsylvania public schools. Joseph V. Oravitz, PSBA's director of management services, told the 23-member board that while specific areas of management operation vary widely among school districts,

building principals generally exercise a high degree of discretionary authority and operational responsibility.

The two-year study, focusing on five school districts of varying size, found that building principals:

- are significantly involved in collective bargaining, including grievances and strategy-planning.

- have a high degree of authority in employe hiring and direction.

- are prime movers of educational programs.

- have virtually complete authority over students.

- are substantially involved in money and budgetary functions.

Oravitz said PSBA did the study because school management has undergone rapid change in the past

decade. "Collective bargaining and taxpayers' revolts, demanding greater accountability and results, along with reorganization of school districts have required a restructuring of management objectives," he said. Since 1963, Pennsylvania school districts have been reduced from over 2,000 to 505.

Superintendents Contracts

In further business of the executive board, PSBA President Alvin N. Kenney noted that Pennsylvania school superintendents, working under a new law allowing flexible contracts with local school boards, were most successful in gaining five-year contracts, according to a survey conducted by the Pennsylvania School Boards Association.

Kenney said that: "Based

on a 72 percent response of the state's 505 school districts, our survey found overwhelming movement to five-year contracts - more than three to one over three-year contracts."

Prior to the passage of Act 1 last January, all superintendents' terms were four years and were renewable at the same time. Now local boards can enter into three, four or five-year contracts with chief administrators.

"Also the survey found that there were very few firings of superintendents," Kenney added. "Of the 362 responses, only 17 districts said they are seeking other candidates. Another 43 districts indicated their

superintendents were retiring. Eighteen school districts said the superintendent either resigned, took another job, or was only 'an interim superintendent'."

Kenney said it is evident that the previous law's "musical chairs" effect which took place when all top posts became vacant at the same time has been corrected.

"It also seems likely that superintendents will achieve longer job security with the extended contract feature of the act," he added.

In further business Nevin Shultz, Hanover, was appointed to the executive board to fulfill the unexpired term of Dr. Gilbert Lyons, Lancaster, who resigned due to an accident.

He will serve Region 9, which includes school districts in Lancaster County.



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How to Save Fuel on Your Boat

Anyone who has a boat is wondering if there will be enough fuel to run it this summer.

Marina owners have been promised from 75 to 85 percent of last year's fuel allocations. How this will affect the average boater will depend on where you are when your fuel gauge registers near empty.

The Pennsylvania Boating Association, in its publication, "The Voice of Boating," offers these tips on saving fuel:

1. Tune engines to deliver optimum performance. Fouled spark plugs are gas drinkers.
2. Keep boat bottoms clean and slick as possible to reduce drag.
3. Keep bilges pumped and dry.
4. Balance loads to keep boats in best cruising attitude.

5. Don't overload and thereby sink the boat below her designed waterplanes.

6. Check propellers to make sure they are best size and pitch to match hull power.

7. Reduce warmup idling at dock to a minimum.

8. Find the boat's optimum cruising speed and stick to it.

9. Pay attention to winds, tides and currents and use them to your advantage. Fuel consumption rises sharply with head winds, currents and seas.

10. With outboard motors, get the boat on a plane quickly, using full power if necessary to get "over the hump;" then throttle back as the boat levels off to the point where it is just able to maintain itself on plane. Spectacular savings will result.

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