Long-Serving Rural Superintendents of Western Pennsylvania: A Descriptive Case Study of the Factors That May Influence Their Longevity

Shawn Lewis Kovac

Indiana University of Pennsylvania

Follow this and additional works at: http://knowledge.library.iup.edu/etd

Recommended Citation
http://knowledge.library.iup.edu/etd/907

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by Knowledge Repository @ IUP. It has been accepted for inclusion in Theses and Dissertations (All) by an authorized administrator of Knowledge Repository @ IUP. For more information, please contact cclouser@iup.edu, sara.parme@iup.edu.
STUDENT HAS RESTRICTED ACCESS TO FULL TEXT OF THE DISSERTATION.

ONLY COVER PAGES AND ABSTRACT ARE AVAILABLE AT THIS TIME
LONG-SERVING RURAL SUPERINTENDENTS OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA: A DESCRIPTIVE CASE STUDY OF THE FACTORS THAT MAY INFLUENCE THEIR LONGEVITY

A Dissertation
Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies and Research
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Education

Shawn Lewis Kovac
Indiana University of Pennsylvania
May 2013
Indiana University of Pennsylvania
School of Graduate Studies and Research
Department of Professional Studies in Education

We hereby approve the dissertation of

Shawn Lewis Kovac

Candidate for the degree of Doctor of Education

________________________________________
Cathy Kaufman, PhD
Professor of Professional Studies, Chair

________________________________________
George Bieger, PhD
Professor of Professional Studies

________________________________________
Joseph Marcoline, DEd
Professor of Professional Studies

ACCEPTED

________________________________________
Timothy P. Mack, PhD
Dean
School of Graduate Studies and Research
Title: Long-Serving Rural Superintendents of Western Pennsylvania: A Descriptive Case Study of the Factors That May Influence Their Longevity

Author: Shawn Lewis Kovac

Dissertation Chair: Cathy Kaufman, PhD

Dissertation Committee Members: George Bieger, PhD
Joseph Marcoline, DEd

The state of Pennsylvania comprises 500 school districts. Each district is required to have a superintendent of schools. Now, more than ever, the work portfolio of U.S. school superintendents is increasingly diverse. In an occupation enjoying very little security, having fewer benefits than similar jobs in the private sector, and facing increased criticism in addition to greater complexities (J. Byrd, C. Drews, & J. Johnson, “Factors Impacting Superintendent Turnover: Lessons From the Field,” 2006), it is no wonder that qualified superintendent candidates are becoming fewer in number. Many times, these positions go unfilled or are filled with acting superintendents due to the lack of qualified candidates willing to apply for open positions. Those superintendent positions that are filled face a dreary national statistic of remaining on the job for less than 5 years (P. Senge, *A Fifth Discipline Resource: Schools That Learn*, 2000). However, there are those rare superintendents that manage to keep their position for 15 years or more. This research identifies the common variables, such as leadership attributes, actions during critical career moments, personal and professional growth patterns, and superintendent/board relations patterns that may contribute to their longevity.