

SENATE BILL 6: A STUDY OF TEXAS' INSTRUCTIONAL
MATERIALS ALLOTMENT AND ISSUES
OF LOCAL CONTROL
DISSERTATION

by

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DEDICATION

To my sweet boys, Casper and Casey.

You are the reasons I fight for public education.

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To my husband, Codie, who has supported me throughout my doctoral work and who has never once complained about a messy house, dirty laundry, or having to watch the kids. Thank you for always believing in me. You really are my hero.

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ABSTRACT

Senate Bill 6 was passed by the 82nd Texas Legislature in the summer of 2011. This bill shifted the procedure for distribution of textbooks from an adoption-based distribution system to an allotment system. The purpose of this study was to document the rapid change in policy, establishing the legislative intent of the bill and analyzing the bill's implementation at the local level.

Four research questions guided the investigation and included: (1) What was the legislative intent of Senate Bill 6?; (2) How were decisions made within three local school districts regarding implementation of Senate Bill 6?; (3) How was Senate Bill 6's intent addressed at the local level?; and (4) How has the Instructional Materials Allotment changed the political climate in schools and communities?

A qualitative case study was conducted using the constant comparative method as first developed by Glaser and Strauss and recently adapted by Boeije. The investigation included a main case study, which represented the intent of Senate Bill 6, and an embedded case study, which represented the bill's implementation in three local school districts.

Theoretical foundations for this study included Wirt, Mitchell and Marshall's theory of political values, which include efficiency, equity, quality, and choice; implementation theory as described by Goggin; and issues of local control from a variety of perspectives.

Four overall themes were established which include: (1) content versus delivery of content; (2) the locals know best; (3) the rapid pace of technology advancement in education; and (4) this is our money. Analysis of these themes indicates that the Texas Legislature chose to surrender control of the textbook selection process to local school district personnel in exchange for efficiency, and left quality and equity to be determined largely by local decision makers.

The closing discussion identifies the nascent struggles associated with the allocation of power, authority and fiduciary responsibility that are an intricate part of implementing Senate Bill 6. The increased politicization of education has made the apportionment of these resources even more poignant, as it simultaneously raises the stakes for both legislators and school district administrators. This study identifies specific implications for both policy makers and local school district leaders as they navigate issues of local control.

CHAPTER I

Introduction To The Study

What do you think about when you hear the word textbook? Is it the gateway to a fascinating land of knowledge or is it an outdated collection of paper that sits on a shelf? When I was a child, I thoroughly enjoyed going to school on the first day, getting my textbooks, and carefully constructing a cover for them made out of paper and tape. This was the beginning of a new topic, a fresh start, and we would all be a little smarter at the end of the school year after having progressed from the front cover to the back.

As I write this chapter, I think about my two sons for whom today is the last day of summer vacation. Tomorrow they will enter the third and seventh grades and their classrooms might or might not have textbooks. Their teachers will construct lessons using a variety of resources, including books, supplemental materials, computer software and even the Internet. The days of scripted textbook lessons are long gone and our 21st-century learners demand a new kind of classroom.

This study is about a dramatic shift in the way Texas school personnel choose instructional materials for their classrooms. It is also about a specific policy, called Senate Bill 6, which was the genesis for that shift. Senate Bill 6 fundamentally changed the decision-making process regarding the instructional materials that will sit on my children's desks tomorrow and I felt it was important to document that change.

Background of the Study

The 2011 session of the Texas Legislature was a game-changer for the state's textbook adoption system. It was also my first session as a lobbyist and I had the

privilege of working closely with someone who had worked in the K-12 education space for the past 40 years. He and I represented the second largest textbook company in the world as they navigated the Texas legislative process. While I knew very little about our client's history, it was obvious that this session would be a game-changer for them because of a specific piece of legislation: Senate Bill 6.

For several legislative sessions there had been quiet conversations among legislators and interested advocacy groups concerning the deregulation of Texas' textbook adoption system (L. Martinez, personal communication, June 6, 2013). Some legislators felt that the major textbook companies had become too powerful, that they were squeezing out smaller providers and stifling innovation (Lain, 2012; F. Shapiro, personal communication, August 15, 2013), and perhaps were even engaged in price-fixing because every major publisher submitted textbook bids that were within pennies of each other (Jobrack, 2011).

In addition, Texas had recently been through two highly publicized revisions of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (the state's extensive list of learning expectations for students) in 2009 for science and social studies that were viewed by many as the state board of education's nod to the extreme religious right (Huval, 2013). This particular Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills revision has since been extensively covered in a Scott Thurman documentary (Silver, Wood & Thurman, 2012), called *The Revisionaries*, which features Kathy Miller of the Texas Freedom Network, Ron Wetherington, an anthropology professor at Southern Methodist University, and Don McLeroy, a former state board of education member.

As we moved toward the 2011 legislative session, the combination of the legislature's unhappiness with the control exhibited by the traditional textbook industry and the state board's ultra-conservative Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills revisions, seemed to present the momentum needed for significant change in the way we selected and distributed textbooks in Texas. However, the traditional textbook adoption model in Texas was deeply rooted and it would take a powerful force to change direction.

What I perceived to be a powerful force for change arrived during the 82nd legislative session, but not in the form of an influential person. It came in the form of a budget crisis—a \$27 billion deficit (Tan & Hasson, 2011)—that had everyone wringing their hands wondering how to fund schools, much less the textbooks that sat on the desks in those schools. Money for textbooks was carved out of a very tight budget, legislators I spoke with felt that Senate Bill 6 produced the deregulated textbook system some legislators never thought they would have, smaller publishers and technology companies were thrilled with the new opportunities they had been given (J. Bergland, personal communication, August 27, 2013), and the state board of education had just begun to realize how much power they had lost (Smith, 2011).

Complicating matters was the fact that Senate Bill 6 had passed during a summer special session and local school districts were given only two months to implement the new laws related to the Instructional Materials Allotment before students arrived for the new school year. Those at the Texas Education Agency immediately began interpreting the newly passed legislation and scheduling a series of informational webinars for school district textbook coordinators. These webinars stressed the importance of a collaborative

effort among school district leadership and staff as they decided how to spend their instructional materials fund.

As the rapid transition occurred from a state-controlled textbook selection system to one of increased local control, our clients in the textbook industry watched closely and sought to be a resource for districts attempting to navigate this new system. At the time, we had no way to know how the new system would perform—whether it would be a success or a disaster. The transition process created by Senate Bill 6, both at the state level and primarily at the local level, is the focus of this study.

Statement of Intent and Guiding Questions

As I began thinking about Senate Bill 6 and the transition toward a deregulated textbook selection system, I decided to investigate the approaches specific school districts used to implement a drastically new system. Would district leaders leave these decisions up to their central office staff or would individual teachers want to become more involved in content selection? Would some districts be unaware of the complexities surrounding the new system and the need to involve more stakeholders in the decision process? Or would some district leaders chose to ignore the new legislation altogether?

For the purposes of this study, I chose to establish the legislature's main areas of intent concerning Senate Bill 6 and then to study and present the unusually rapid shift in policy from a tightly controlled textbook adoption system to a deregulated textbook allotment system. I documented how that shift in policy was interpreted and implemented at the local level. This study did not attempt to address whether increased local control was positive or negative, but to provide an historical snapshot of the intent, interpretation and implementation of a specific piece of legislation, situating this

historical snapshot within a variety of theoretical concepts or lenses. The following questions have served as my guidelines:

1. What was the legislative intent of Senate Bill 6?
2. How were decisions made within three local school districts regarding implementation of Senate Bill 6?
3. How was Senate Bill 6's intent addressed at the local level?
4. How has the Instructional Materials Allotment changed the political climate in schools and communities?

Significance of the Study

As I approached this study, I became especially interested in the intersection of qualitative research and education policy. Because my research emphasis was a qualitative one, I worried that legislators and other education policy experts would not take my work seriously. However, Rist (1994) argued that qualitative research methods are especially well-suited to answer policy and program questions in a meaningful and long-term way because "Social conditions do not remain static . . . qualitative researchers can position themselves so that they can closely monitor the ongoing characteristics of a condition" (p. 552).

Rist (1994) explained that qualitative methods have historically not served legislators well. In fact, these types of methods have created disagreement and confusion, and "the policy maker now confronts a veritable glut of differing (if not conflicting) research information" (p. 545). However, he suggested that because policy making is becoming increasingly complex, requiring time to develop over multiple

legislative sessions, qualitative research methods can provide an avenue for answering questions that are not easily reduced to a pie chart.

In order to inform education policy, researchers must better understand the process of policymaking and how to address policy makers' needs through meaningful research. The process, according to Rist (1994), includes three steps: policy formation, or "how is it that these instructions are crafted, by whom, and with what relevant policy information and analysis?" (p. 548); policy implementation, or "how to use the available resources in the most efficient and effective manner in order to have the most robust impact on the program or condition at hand" (p. 550); and policy accountability "when the policy or program is sufficiently mature that one can address questions of accountability, impacts, and outcomes" (p. 551).

Because of my professional work as a lobbyist, I was able to witness Rist's (1994) policy formation phase of Senate Bill 6 and can, therefore, assist any legislator who wishes to understand the historical development of this particular piece of legislation. As a researcher, though, this study has helped me move toward Rist's interpretation phase of policy implementation, specifically Senate Bill 6, and I hope to use this knowledge to support policy makers as they seek to improve education practices related to instructional materials. While quantitative data are the most prominent form of information presented to legislators during meetings and public hearings, I look forward to sharing the stories of school districts' experiences as they navigate this new deregulated textbook distribution system.

Limitations of the Study

Marshall and Rossman (2011) state that all research projects have limitations, resulting from the study's framework. A presentation of limitations "reminds the reader of what the study is and is not—its boundaries—and how its results can and cannot contribute to understanding" (p. 76).

The design of this case study has allowed me to observe procedures within multiple school districts; however, it was not possible for me to capture the events of over 1400 school districts and charter schools in Texas as they unfolded. The uniqueness of individual districts is both the challenge and benefit of local control, which is a concept prominently analyzed within this study. This is my interpretation of the events in these three districts and may or may not represent every district's experiences (Wolcott, 2009).

The study is also limited by time, because I have chosen to focus on the first two years of Senate Bill 6's implementation at the local level. As stated above, Rist (1994) identified three steps in the policy process: policy formation, policy implementation and policy accountability. Cole and Taebel (1987) supported a similar concept, but with seven policy development stages: problem recognition, agenda formulation, policy formation, adoption, implementation, evaluation, and termination. I have resisted the temptation to investigate the development of Senate Bill 6 in detail and have instead kept my study focused on the legislative intent of the bill and the first two years of implementation. Because some policies take decades to come to fruition, I will leave further implementation and evaluation studies to others (Sabatier, 2007).

This study is also limited by the accuracy of participants' responses. As will be discussed later, I am in a somewhat privileged position as the representative of a large

lobbying firm and also as the daughter of a state legislator. There is a possibility that participants have overstated the success of their district's implementation of Senate Bill 6, although I do not believe this is generally the case. Also, while this case study is bounded by a two-year time frame, participants sometimes had difficulty recalling in detail the initial stages of implementation in their district. I have attempted to confirm their statements through the use of document analysis; both from documents they have given me and documents I received from the Texas Education Agency.

CHAPTER II

Method

The purpose of this study is to document the rapid shift from a textbook distribution system to an instructional materials allotment system and to explore differences and similarities between the intent and implementation of Senate Bill 6 in Texas. Chapter II, which is usually reserved for a review of literature, will explain the methods and procedures for the study as well as my background as the researcher. The traditional review of literature, meanwhile, will be interspersed throughout the study and highlighted again in Chapter V.

As a researcher, I am most comfortably situated within an interpretivist perspective, which Crotty (1998) described as looking for “culturally derived and historically situated interpretations of the social life-world” (p. 67). Interpretive research does not pursue a narrowly defined explanation or truth, but instead seeks to understand and describe complex situations and viewpoints (Cresswell, 2008).

The development of Senate Bill 6 and its implementation at the local school district level present a perfect opportunity to display the merits of interpretive research. My intent is not to decide whether districts have implemented the new system well or poorly, but to “accurately and thoroughly document the perspective being investigated” (Butin, p. 60). It is far too early in the life of Senate Bill 6 and the Instructional Materials Allotment to determine the outcome of the policy shift, but it is a good time to document the process, especially because of ongoing implementation within local school districts.

Case Study Research

A case study is an in-depth study of a person, place, or contemporary event that seeks to answer the question of how or why. According to Yin (2009), the “distinctive need for case studies arises out of the desire to understand complex social phenomena” (p. 4). A case study may be exploratory, descriptive, or explanatory, with some intermingling of the different study intents. Decisions concerning which case study method to pursue should include consideration of the following conditions:

- (a) the type of research question posed;
- (b) the extent of control an investigator has over actual behavioral events; and
- (c) the degree of focus on contemporary as opposed to historical events. (p. 8).

I chose a case study design because of my interest in “insight, discovery, and interpretation rather than hypothesis testing” (Merriam, 1998, pp. 28-29).

Like Yin (2009), Merriam (1998) separated case studies into three categories, but with slight differences based on the underlying intent of the study. First, descriptive case studies are somewhat historical in nature and focus on the details of an event. Merriam described these types of studies as “atheoretical,” yet significant in that they establish a foundation for future theory and sense making (p. 38).

Second, interpretive case studies “illustrate, support, or challenge theoretical assumptions held prior to the data gathering” (Merriam, 1998, p. 38). In other words, they are rich in descriptive characteristics similar to the previous category, but also seek to conceptualize the information gathered within the study instead of simply documenting the events.

The third type of case study, the evaluative case study, involves “description, explanation, and judgment” (Merriam, 1998, p. 39). It is often used upon the culmination of a program and seeks to address successes and failures, while documenting an event for future reference. Case study results are significant in that they offer both stakeholders (those affected by the case) and audiences (those interested in a particular event or program) detailed information and increased understanding of a particular case (Moore, Lapan & Quartaroli, 2012).

For the purposes of this particular study, I chose to utilize an interpretive case study model because I felt there were opportunities to apply existing theoretical concepts to the intent and implementation of the instructional materials allotment. I did not feel that the program had been in existence long enough to utilize an evaluative case study. Sabatier (2007) stated that the policy process “usually involves time spans of a decade or more, as that is the minimum duration of most policy cycles, from emergence of a problem through sufficient experience with implementation to render a reasonably fair evaluation of a program’s impact” (p. 3). Some even suggest that the policy process may span 20 to 40 years. While the idea of the instructional materials allotment had been discussed for several years prior to the passage of Senate Bill 6 (R. Leos, personal communication, June 18, 2013; L. Martinez, personal communication, June 6, 2013), we certainly are not far enough into the implementation of the bill to evaluate districts’ success in implementing the program.

A particular area of disagreement among case study experts is that of theory development. For Yin (2009), theory development is an essential first step for every case study and serves as the backdrop for the study as a whole. He was careful to point out

that this type of theory is not considered “grand theory” (p. 36) but a blueprint. Stake (1995) described this particular type of study as an instrumental case study and viewed the technique as too constricting and detail-focused. He instead preferred an intrinsic case study approach, one in which the “primary task is to come to understand the case” (p. 77). Instead of guiding questions or theories, Stake chose to focus on initial issues and teasing out complex meanings and events. Issues evolve into questions over time and are likely to change throughout the course of the case study.

For the purposes of this study, I considered several existing theories related to education policy development and implementation. However, as I began gathering my data, I felt that the theories I had chosen did not fully explain what I was hearing from my participants. I found comfort in the work of Wolcott (2009), Huberman and Miles (1994), and others who encouraged the developing researcher to ask the question “what is really going on here?” and then to allow him/herself to be directed by the data instead of by a particular theoretical approach.

Wolcott (2009) criticized researchers’ habitual pursuit of theory and stated that “little or no recognition is given to the inherent danger that, in proceeding theoretically, objective reporting is often sacrificed in the grim determination to find what one has been searching for” (p. 75). As a result, Chapter III of this study has become a historical re-telling of the events leading up to Senate Bill 6, followed by Chapter IV, with the bill’s legislative intent compared to the bill’s implementation at the local level.

An important central concept among Merriam (1998), Yin (2009), Moore, Lapan & Quartaroli (2012) and Stake (1995) regarding case studies is the concept of a bounded study—contained through the use of time, issue, or hypothesis. For example, if the

number of people the researcher could interview on a particular topic is infinite, the study is not bounded. Moore, Lapan and Quartaroli explained that “focusing, limiting, or bounding case study efforts allows the researcher to use valuable investigative time for in-depth observations that produce rich and detailed case descriptions. These study limits are necessary given the usual time and resource constraints of any research effort” (p. 246).

The concept of a bounded study was especially helpful to me as I selected a method for my study. The budget of the State of Texas operates on a two-year cycle and the passage of Senate Bill 6 conveniently coincided with the 2011-12 and 2012-13 school year budget cycle. School districts received a portion of their instructional materials funds each year of the biennium and my interviews with districts took place at the end of the 2012-13 school year; the second year of the biennium. The end of the budget biennium served as a time for my case study participants to pause and reflect on their school district’s methods of implementation and to consider ways they could improve their work in the future.

While limiting my study to the first two years of implementation, I chose *not* to limit my study to one school district. Instead, I chose an embedded case study, as described by Yin (2009), which allowed the history and intent of Senate Bill 6 to be the main case study, while each school district served as an embedded case (Figure 1). To better situate the larger case study, I interviewed a variety of policy experts at the state level and then used their interviews to paint an historical picture.

By utilizing the information received through school district interviews and document analysis, I was able to find common themes among my embedded cases and tie

those back to the original intent and interpretation of Senate Bill 6. Huberman and Miles (1994) stated that by looking at similar and contrasting cases, we might better understand our findings, “grounding it by specifying *how* and *where* and, if possible, *why* it carries on as it does. We can strengthen the precision, the validity, and the stability of the findings” (p. 29).

Figure 1. Embedded Case Study

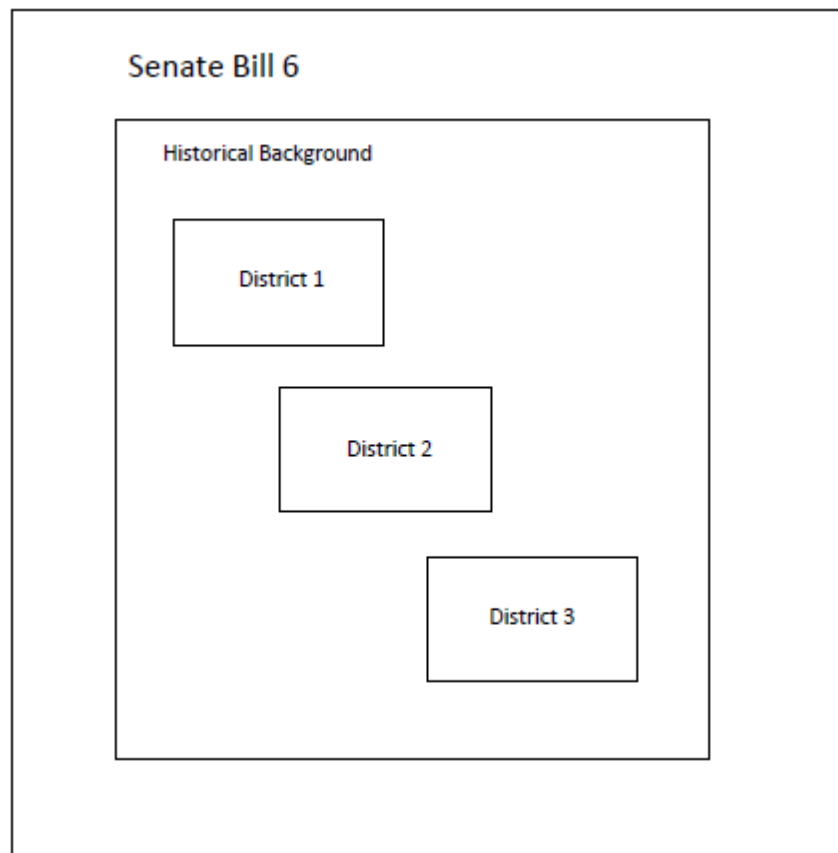


Figure 1. Model for an embedded case study of three school districts.

Interviews

When conducting case study research, there are six common sources of evidence: documents, archival records, interviews, direct observations, participant observations, and physical artifacts (Yin, 2009). By far, one of the most significant sources of evidence

is the interview, which can be informal/conversational, topical/guided, or standardized open-ended (Patton, 2002). Patton (1990) explained that the main reason for the use of interviews is to discover what is in someone's mind:

We interview people to find out from them those things we cannot directly observe we cannot observe feelings, thoughts, and intentions. We cannot observe behaviors that took place at some previous point in time. We cannot observe situations that preclude the presence of an observer. We cannot observe how people have organized the world and the meanings they attach to what goes on in the world. We have to ask people questions about those things. The purpose of interviewing, then, is to allow us to enter the other person's perspective (p. 196).

The most common interview approach, the topical or guided interview, "explores a few general topics to help uncover the participant's views but otherwise respects the way the participant frames and structures the responses" (Marshall & Rossman, 2011, p. 144). The benefits of topical/guided interviews in qualitative research (also called semi-structured interviews) are numerous. They allow for the rapid gathering of large amounts of data, encourage a variety of responses and perspectives, and allow for immediate clarification. However, they are limited by the need to build trust, the possibility of misinterpretation, and the time it takes to process an abundance of data (Marshall & Rossman, 2011).

Similarly, Yin (2010) described the topical interview as a *qualitative interview*, stating that it is by far the most prevalent interview type. The conversational nature of the technique "presents the opportunity for two-way interactions, in which a participant

even may query the researcher” (p. 134). Also, Yin emphasized the use of open-ended questions and the researcher’s desire for participants to explain their experiences in their own words.

As I approached potential participants about my project, I emphasized the concept of a conversational interview. Several participants asked for a list of topics/questions, which I was happy to supply, but the interviews themselves were completely unscripted. I began the conversation with some background information about my study and then invited participants to share their experiences from their unique perspective. All participants agreed to the format and the study is especially rich in personal experiences as a result.

As stated earlier, I separated my interviews into two groups. First, I interviewed a variety of policy experts, textbook specialists, and agency staff to establish the original intent of Senate Bill 6. It was important to create a basis for why Senate Bill 6 and the Instructional Materials Allotment were significant before proceeding with how the new legislation was implemented in various school districts. As discussed above, these interviews were very conversational and open-ended, as each expert participant came to the interview with very different experiences and perspectives. In some cases, I was able to invoke the beginning legislative year and then simply listen as they walked me through the historical path of the related textbook legislation.

Second, I interviewed administrative personnel in three school districts regarding their experiences with the implementation of the Instructional Materials Allotment. I made initial contact by phone or email, through which interest in the project was confirmed and dates for interviews were scheduled. I also emailed introductory questions

and requests for specific documents to all of the participants so that they would be comfortable and prepared when we met.

Two of the three initial interviews were held at the specific school district offices while the third was held at my work place (the participants were in Austin for a conference). Subsequent conversations with participants took place over phone and/or by email, as needed, to clarify something from our initial conversations, to ask additional questions, or request various documents or data.

Other Sources of Evidence

In addition to the interviews described above, I collected the following types of data:

- documents—policy statements developed during the legislative session by various interest groups, demonstrating a variety of political positions; Texas Education Agency correspondence with school districts; Texas Education Agency records of school district spending; documents at the local level demonstrating use of Instructional Materials Allotment (e.g. traditional textbooks versus technology/teacher training); and
- archival records—video archives of House Public Education hearings, from which I excerpted statements from legislators and those presenting public testimony; Senate Education Hearings; and speeches from the floor of the House and Senate chambers.

Marshall and Rossman (2011) described these types of data gathering as the staples of a researcher's work. They encouraged the researcher to utilize a variety of techniques to inform her inquiry and to gain the trust of the reader through corroboration or

triangulation of the data. Similarly, Yin (2009) stated that multiple sources of evidence are a necessity for the case study researcher and that they allow for “converging lines of inquiry” (p. 115).

Research Participants

The majority of the data for this study was acquired from 13 participants. Eight of the participants were invited to participate for the historical background information they could provide. They consisted of policy experts and representatives from various interest groups. Some participants also provided documentation of their experiences or state level budget information and, in one case, a previous study pertaining to the implementation of the instructional materials allotment.

The remaining five participants represented the three school districts that are part of the embedded case study. In all cases, they are employed or were previously employed at the administrative level either as a superintendent, assistant superintendent, curriculum coordinator, or principal. They provided documentation of their experiences, instructional materials spending reports, and organization documents.

Regarding anonymity, all school districts have remained nameless for the duration of the study. This fact encouraged district personnel to speak freely about their experiences and the decisions in their district. In addition, when speaking to school district personnel about the experiences in other districts, I have purposefully avoided specific school district names to avoid competition or unnecessary tension, and to practice confidentiality.

Most state level (historical) contributors chose to have me use their real names. All are respected within the policy education community based on their extensive

knowledge of the subject and the number of years they have participated in the policy process. One state level contributor requested and received anonymity in this report because of his/her ongoing work at the legislative level. This person provided an honest and often-unseen window into the legislative process.

Sample Identification Process

The school district participants for this study were selected through the use of convenience and criterion sampling (Creswell, 1998). Convenience samples are chosen based on convenience for the researcher and can potentially save time, money and effort. Conversely, these samples are sometimes lacking in useful information and credibility because they are not selected based on specific criteria. I previously knew personnel from two of the school districts chosen for the study through my work. The third I knew through the doctoral program at Texas State University, where I studied. I attempted to contact potential participants whom I did not know personally, but my emails or phone calls were not returned.

I was careful to select my school district participants based on certain criteria: specifically, size and geography. Selecting school districts based on size (one small, one medium, and one large) ensured that there would be a variety of experiences represented. While large school districts often have an abundance of support staff, small school districts must sometimes make decisions with only a handful of personnel. I also chose my district participants based on the criterion of geography. Texas is a very large state and variations owing to geographical location might influence interpretations of policy. Therefore, I wanted to make sure that several areas of the state were represented.

Participants chosen to provide information for the historical portion of the study were selected based on convenience as well as snowball sampling (Creswell, 1998). I knew many of the participants through my work (an example of a convenience sample) and they were also eager to suggest others who might provide helpful information and add to my study. This is an example of snowball sampling in which participants are able to recommend potential interviewees and/or documents that could be a rich resource for the researcher (Patton, 2002).

All participants were told that interviews would be conversational in nature and would last one to one and a half hours. Interviews were held face-to-face in a quiet location free of distractions and were recorded for later transcription. Many participants came to the interview with supporting documents, while others provided documents upon request.

Interview Protocol

Yin (2010) shared advice for interviewing, such as: speaking in modest amounts, being nondirective, staying neutral, maintaining rapport, using an interview protocol, and analyzing when interviewing. Regarding the use of an interview protocol, Yin suggested breaking the study into a subset of topics, and avoiding a specific questionnaire. This allows participants to focus on experiences that are particularly meaningful to them.

Because I knew many of my participants prior to this study, we were able to converse freely about their work, current events and miscellaneous topics, thus putting everyone at ease. I then explained the basic design of the study, after which participants generally launched into a long narrative about the intent or implementation of the Instructional Materials Allotment. I used unscripted probing questions (Cresswell, 2005),

as needed, to expand on concepts introduced by participants and to keep the conversation moving.

As stated previously, I did not cover a specific set of questions with my participants. I did, however, send each of them a set of questions prior to our conversation and these are listed in Appendices A and B as they pertain to my main research questions.

Data Analysis

Dedoose™

As I approached the data gathering/analysis stage of my dissertation, I became more curious about the technological tools that were available to assist me. A plethora of data analysis software programs were available at the time (e.g. NVivo 9, Atlas.Ti 6, HyperRESEARCH), many of which were expensive and required a significant amount of time to master. Along the way, I discovered an online tool called Dedoose™ that was created by Lieber and Weisner at UCLA (see www.dedoose.com).

Dedoose™, originally called EthnoNotes, is a collaborative platform where people can come together online to input, code, and analyze data. The program is web-based, fairly easy to use, purchased by the month, and completely cross-platform, meaning the user can be on a PC or a Mac (King, 2011; Leong, 2011). The creators of Dedoose™ also wanted their program to be able to handle qualitative and quantitative data. The user can import or manually input descriptor files which can then be tied to excerpts and memos pertaining to qualitative data. These qualitative data can be in the form of text, audio, video, pictures or documents.

Among the many benefits of Dedoose™ are the following:

- Data are stored online instead of the computer's hard drive. This allowed me to work on my data at home (on a Mac) or on my work computer (which is a PC).
- The structure of the program allows for a variety of coding techniques and analysis techniques. This has allowed me to dig deeply into my data.
- Dedoose™ is a pay-as-you-go program, costing about \$10 per month, but only in the months the account is accessed. If one takes a break from data analysis, the data are still there.

The only significant concern I saw expressed about Dedoose™ on several discussion boards was the security of online data (Leon, 2011). Some universities require researchers to complete additional paperwork if they plan to store their data online, but I couldn't find any universities that forbid online information storage completely. Some may actually feel that the data are safer in an encrypted online environment than if they were on a laptop which could be lost or stolen.

One feature of the program that I have especially appreciated is the ability to sort codes based on hierarchy. I was able to create parent and child codes and could move them around with great flexibility. Several times during the analysis of my data, I decided to re-sort codes, moving child codes to completely different locations or renaming parent codes. This assisted me in answering the question of "what is really going on here?" and to clarify my groupings as needed.

Constant Comparative Analysis

The constant comparative method (Boeije, 2002) or constant comparative analysis method (Fram, 2013) was primarily developed as an analysis technique within the Glaser and Strauss (1967) grounded theory approach. Like other types of qualitative research, it

includes “all kinds of aids, such as memo writing, close reading and rereading, coding, displays, data matrices and diagrams” (Boeije, p. 391). Recent literature has proposed the merits of a stand-alone constant comparative method, apart from grounded theory, that employs some of the same techniques but with less emphasis on the development of theory.

Fram (2013) described the constant comparative analysis method as an “iterative and inductive process of reducing the data through constant recoding” (p. 3), first, through open coding to establish categories within the data, then through axial coding to identify relationships among the various categories. Corbin and Strauss (2008) challenged the concept of separating these two coding procedures and stated that

“the distinctions made between the two types of coding are ‘artificial’ and for explanatory purposes only, to indicate to readers that though we break data apart, and identify concepts to stand for the data, we also have to put it back together again by relating those concepts” (p. 198).

For the purposes of this study, a constant re-coding of data took place as I re-examined interviews and documents, redefined and reassigned codes, shuffled child and parent codes within the Dedoose™ program and sought to address major concepts that emerged within my analysis. As a result, the theoretical concepts with which I began my study did not (in some cases) remain in place for the duration of the study but were replaced by emerging concepts that better represented what I was hearing from my study participants. Eisenhardt (2002) warned the researcher that “this flexibility is not a license to be unsystematic. Rather, this flexibility is controlled opportunism in which researchers

take advantage of the uniqueness of a specific case and the emergence of new themes to improve resultant theory” (p. 16-17).

Because of the potential complexities associated with an embedded case study, I chose to adapt the five-step constant comparative approach developed by Boeije (2002, p. 395). My adapted approach is as follows:

1. Establishing legislative intent:
 - a. Comparison within a single interview/document;
 - b. Comparison between interviews/documents within the same group;
and
 - c. Comparison of interviews from different groups.
2. Establishing legislative implementation:
 - a. Comparison within a single interview/document;
 - b. Comparison between interviews/documents within the same group;
and
 - c. Comparison between interviews from different groups.
3. Comparison of legislative intent versus legislative implementation.

The Researcher’s Background

My interest in education policy does not have an official start date. When I was a child, my father served on the local school board and I was fascinated by the amount of trouble he seemed to cause. His name was in the newspaper on a regular basis as he gained a strong grasp of the complex issues that were facing our local schools. In addition to my father’s time on the school board, both of my parents served in various city or countywide elected capacities and volunteered at our local church, which appeared

to have a committee for everything. Both my parents owned their own businesses and seemed well respected within our community.

In 2005, my father was encouraged by members of the community to run for an open seat in the Texas House of Representatives. He bravely stuck his neck out there; won an intense race he wasn't expected to win, and began his first term in 2007. He has since served on a variety of committees including, Higher Education, Appropriations, and Public Education.

In 2009, during my first year as a doctoral student, I was an elementary music teacher in Bastrop Independent School District. My experiences during that time, combined with my father's stories from the legislature, and my weekly readings in my doctoral program seemed fundamentally at odds with each other. How was it that my experiences in my daily work as an educator seemed so disconnected from the theoretical readings of my professors and even further away from the education policies being developed by our state legislature? My frustration grew over time and my father was a witness to it.

In the spring of 2010, my father suggested that I visit with a friend of his in Austin who had been in the education business for almost 40 years. Surely, this person could give me some words of wisdom regarding my frustrations surrounding public education. This person turned out to be David Anderson, considered to be a walking history book of Texas education policy. David happened to be looking for an assistant for the upcoming 2011 legislative session and I jumped at the chance to see what education policy development was really about. Since that time, I have been employed as a governmental relations specialist (lobbyist) and I proudly serve a variety of education

clients who I feel truly believe in public education and who work for the success of our students.

My position as a lobbyist and the daughter of a legislator has presented a special challenge for me as I have taken on this study. On one hand, I feel that to accurately report on the activities of the legislature, one must be intimately involved in the process. The relationships and maneuvering of policy work are often so subtle that the outside world rarely perceives them. On the other hand, I recognize that I see the legislative process from a viewpoint influenced by my work, my clients, my previous experiences as an educator, the stories I have heard from my father, and the perspectives introduced to me by my professors. Each of these areas has inevitably influenced my study.

For the purposes of this study, I have tried to step back and let my participants do the talking. I have asked questions to which I thought I already knew the answer and was wonderfully surprised by some of the responses. I have also tried to stick to the facts, especially in Chapter III of this report, although I understand that the facts are sometimes merely my perceptions. The theoretical interpretations near the end of this report are mine, influenced by my personal and professional experiences.

People often ask me why I do this work. The legislature can be an ugly, slimy, dishonest sort of a place. But I sincerely feel that in order to affect change, I have to insert my experience as an educator into the process. The vast majority of policymakers have spent little or no time in the classroom and they depend on the advice of others—some of whom I believe have motives that are not in the best interests of children. I feel that in my own small way, I can be a positive influence on behalf of the five million children in Texas public schools.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I explained the methods and procedures I used for this study and my background. Chapter III will provide an historical perspective of textbook adoptions in Texas and nationally. It will also present a summary of Senate Bill 6 and some related issues, such as technology use in education.

CHAPTER III

The Current Landscape

The purpose of this study is to present an historical snapshot of Texas' rapid shift from a textbook adoption system to an allotment system and to explore the differences and similarities between the legislative intent and the local implementation of Senate Bill 6. Chapter III provides background information regarding textbook adoption history, both nationally and in Texas, and current textbook funding trends in a variety of states. This chapter also includes a description of Senate Bill 6, current information about technology in education, and two examples of emerging industries in Texas as a result of the passage of the legislation.

Textbook Adoptions

A National Perspective

During the late 19th and early 20th century, a shift occurred in the public's confidence concerning local teachers' ability to choose quality instructional materials for their students. Also during this time, publishers were beginning to be seen as unethical salespeople (picture the quintessential traveling textbook salesman) motivated by profit and greed instead of creating a quality product for schools (Altbach, Kelly, Petrie & Weis, 1991). The combination of these two perceptions shifted the conversation from local decision-making toward more centralization in the form of state textbook adoption policies. Reasons for the centralized adoption policies included:

1. the need to ensure that books would be purchased at the lowest price;
2. the dangers of allowing "naïve people" to choose textbooks instead of "experts";

3. the need to lower costs associated with a more mobile population; and
4. the need for a minimum and standard course of study throughout the state.

(Altbach, Kelly, Petrie, & Weis, 1991, pp. 8-9)

Publishers, of course, attempted to counter the accusations made against their work and motives, but progressive reformers throughout the United States called for more efficiency and expert knowledge beyond that of the salesman and local schoolhouse. By the mid-twentieth century, textbooks were being written by what some called anonymous “disinterested experts” (Altbach, et al., p. 9) and, in the opinion of groups like the Thomas Fordham Foundation and Institute (2004), had become so sanitized that textbooks were of little worth to their readers.

As a result of increasing centralization and the call for expert involvement, states began to gravitate toward one of two categories: adoption or non-adoption. Non-adoption states continued to allow local school districts to select their instructional materials through locally-established procedures and criteria, while adoption states selected a smaller number of instructional materials through a statewide process.

By 2004, 28 states were considered non-adoption states and were located mainly in the Northeast and Midwest regions. The remaining 22 states (adoption states but some are in transition, see Appendix C) are mainly in the South and Southwest as well as California and Oregon (Altbach, et al., 1991; Thomas Fordham Foundation and Institute, 2004). California, Texas, and Florida account for as much as a third of the K-12 textbook market, which is currently worth more than \$4.4 billion dollars annually.

Because California and Texas make up such a large share of the K-12 textbook market, they have become somewhat of the default content for publishers (Robelen,

2010). This is referred to by Altbach, et al. (1991) as the California effect and Texas effect—meaning that whatever is approved by the state boards in these two states usually becomes the content in other states’ textbooks as well. Recent changes at the legislative level as well as the Obama administration’s emphasis on the Common Core Curriculum may soon put an end to the California and Texas effect.

Current Trends in Other States

Each year, the State Instructional Materials Review Association (SIMRA), formerly the National Association of State Textbook Administrators (NASTA), releases copies of instructional materials surveys completed by its members. In 2012, textbook administrators from fourteen states responded to the survey, the majority of which are state adoption states. Of these states, eight currently allow print and digital materials. Four others are considering digital adoptions and one, Florida, is moving to *all* digital materials. Regarding adoption schedules, five states are prioritizing English/Language Arts adoptions to coordinate with the new federal Common Core standards. California has suspended the textbook adoption process until July of 2015 awaiting final Common Core decisions.

Interestingly, Kentucky has not reviewed materials since 2009 because of a lack of funding; districts in that state are receiving no instructional materials funds at this time. West Virginia, on the other hand, has transferred its efforts to digital materials and has instructed districts to utilize all instructional materials funds on technology purchases for the next two years. Six states (including Texas) have some sort of state allotment that is set aside for instructional materials purchases while six more utilize only local dollars. Oregon utilizes local tax levies for instructional materials and Indiana charges parents a

rental fee, except for free-and-reduced-lunch students (State Instructional Materials Review Association, 2012).

In general, it appears that many states are in a period of transition. They are shifting adoption schedules and are struggling to find materials that align specifically with Common Core standards. The transition to technology-based content and delivery systems presents a challenge, as many states have reduced their budgets or removed instructional materials funds completely.

A Texas Perspective

Until 1919, Texas school districts had complete control of their community's textbook selection process. In that year, the Uniform Textbook Act was passed, which required the state to purchase textbooks for all students through the State Textbook Program. Soon after, in 1924, the first textbook proclamation was issued and the State Textbook Commission was formed. The new guidelines called for the state to:

select and adopt a uniform system of textbooks to be used in the public free schools of Texas, and the books so selected and adopted shall be printed in the English language and shall include and be limited to textbooks on the following subjects: Spelling, a graded series of reading books, a course in language lessons, English grammar, English composition, oral English, history of English literature, history of American literature, geography, arithmetic, mental arithmetic, physiology and hygiene, civil government, algebra, physical geography, history of the United States (in which the construction placed on the Federal Constitution by the fathers of the Confederacy shall be fairly represented), history of Texas agriculture, a graded system of writing and of drawing books, plane geometry,

solid geometry, physics, chemistry, general history, and Latin; provided that the series of readers adopted by the Commission shall have a full page cut of the manual alphabet as used by the Texas School for the Deaf; provided that none of said textbooks shall contain anything of a partisan or sectarian character, and that nothing in this act shall be construed to prevent the teaching of German, Bohemian, Spanish, French, Latin or Greek in any of the public schools as a branch study, but the teaching of one or more of these languages shall not interfere with the use of textbooks herein prescribed; and . . . nothing herein shall be construed to prevent the use of supplementary books as herein provided (The University of Texas Digital Repository, n.d., para. 1).

At that time there were no curriculum standards and no state administered assessments. One book per subject/per grade level was chosen every six years and districts were required to use the textbook selected for them. (Locally-selected supplemental materials were also permitted.) Because the textbook selection process was so narrow and was situated entirely at the state level, each textbook publisher generally employed only one Texas representative. The state's selection of textbooks was politically driven and often based on relationships between publisher representatives and committee members instead of on textbook quality (D. Anderson, personal communication, July 2, 2013).

In 1949, the well-documented Gilmer Akin Laws passed after a two-year interim study related to broad education reforms. In addition to district consolidation, the determination of the length of a school year, and the restructuring of the State Board of Education, the laws also changed the number of adopted textbooks from one in each

subject and grade to five. The state still maintained the authority to select books (Still, 1950).

In 1950, as the five book list went into effect, Texas rapidly became the standard for textbook selection throughout the United States. Publishers carefully negotiated book prices with the Texas Education Agency staff and 15-18 companies competed for their place on the coveted five book list:

[B]eginning in '50 and lasting until 1984, that five-book list was the standard by which other states looked at instructional materials. For a textbook company salesman to say we're on the list in Texas immediately put them ahead of other companies because Texas was very much a Midwestern state, not a Southern state in terms of the market and what was expected. The companies could build programs for the Midwest and bring them out to coincide with the Texas adoption with a new copyright. If they did well here, they generally did well for the next two to four years (D. Anderson, personal communication, July 2, 2013).

From 1950 until 1984, a more diverse textbook selection committee was in place, which consisted of fifteen members: 13 educators (two of whom usually were superintendents) and two non-educators. Each member of the committee generally worked with five volunteer advisors from his or her area of the state who assisted in reviewing potential textbooks. At the end of a limited contact period between publishers and committee members (four to five weeks) and four weeks of no contact, a vote was cast and the first five companies to receive enough votes from the committee made the list. In 1984, the list was again expanded, from five textbooks to eight, because of the large number of quality materials available to the committee (D. Anderson, personal

communication, July 2, 2013; R. Leos, personal communication, June 18, 2013).

During the 1990s, as Texas moved to a standards-based education system, the textbook adoption system changed as well. In 1995, with the passage of Senate Bill 1, the eight-book list was replaced with a conforming/non-conforming list. A conforming textbook met 100% of the State Board of Education-determined essential elements, while a non-conforming textbook met 50 to 99% (Senate Bill 1, 1995). This represented a shift away from state control of textbook selection. Any textbook that met the board's standards was now simply placed on a list from which districts were able to freely choose:

That was a Bill Ratliff idea. The whole notion there was if we're creating standards for what students should know and be able to do, then we ought to have materials aligned to those standards. If a book matched 100% of the standards you were conforming. If there were 12 books that met the standards, put them all on and let the districts decide what fit best. (D. Anderson, personal communication, July 2, 2013).

Former State Board of Education Chairwoman Gail Lowe expressed concern about the approval of materials that only met 50% of the essential elements:

I think board members probably were disappointed that the threshold was moved to 50%. That's a pretty low threshold for what you expect school districts to be responsible for teaching schoolchildren is the teacher at the school district aware that this textbook meets only 50% of those standards? Where will the teacher find the resources to supplement that material? (G. Lowe, personal communication, August 6, 2013)

The maximum cost concept was also established during the early 1990s. The rising cost of paper around the United States caused a drastic increase in the cost of textbooks, resulting in sticker shock for legislators when it came to paying for textbooks. In response, the Texas Education Agency's textbook director at the time, Robert Leos, began to gather catalogs from each publisher, average the cost of each type of book, and set a maximum allowable cost (R. Leos, personal communication, June 18, 2013). Some viewed this as price fixing, because each of the textbook prices were often within pennies of each other. Others saw it as setting a ceiling, which saved the state a significant amount of money:

[There was] great disagreement between Scott Hochberg in the State Legislature and staff at TEA over what was the responding variable in that equation. Scott felt if you established a maximum cost, all the publishers would push up to within a few pennies of the maximum cost. The TEA perspective was you created an artificial ceiling to keep [publishers] from going above that and I think there was much more evidence to show that while Scott was right—most of the prices were close to that maximum cost—if you looked at catalogs and contracts in other state adoption states or open territory large markets, you found that the prices were above what they were in Texas. So I think it was an effective governor on escalating prices. (D. Anderson, personal communication, July 2, 2013)

The early 2000s saw significant change for the Texas Legislature and for the state's education system. Republicans gained control in the House and Senate and called for a reduction in state spending, including a significant reduction in staff at the Texas Education Agency (R. Leos, personal communication, June 18, 2013). Meanwhile,

textbook prices continued to rise and legislators became frustrated with the ever-growing requested budgets received every two years from the Texas Education Agency (J. Peterson, personal communication, July 2, 2013).

In 2003, the “rate of return” concept was introduced by Senator Ogden to safeguard the state's Permanent School Fund, which was established in 1854 to fund Texas public schools. The rule called for the state board of education to determine the percentage of the Permanent School Fund that would be paid to the legislature for textbooks and other education funding. (The rate was re-established every two years.) Many legislators disagreed with the concept, but as one legislative insider explained:

Looking back and seeing some of the budget crunches we have had, it was the right thing to do. And that was Ogden's point. Since we spend the money we need another entity to set the rate. We don't want to somehow damage the [Permanent School] fund just because we need a couple hundred million more.

(J. Peterson, personal communication, July 2, 2013)

The 2000s also brought a significant increase in the use of technology in education. While textbook prices continued to escalate, educators and legislators alike began to wonder if classroom content could be delivered in a more “engaging” and “efficient” way through the use of computers and online information. Various technology companies gained a foothold in the education scene, and Steve Jobs’ biographer, Walter Isaacson, described the combined K-12 and higher education \$8 billion textbook market as one that was “ripe for digital destruction” (Lee, 2013). An education technology fund, distributed to Texas districts since the 1990s as part of Texas'

infrastructure fund, aided districts some in outfitting their classrooms, but the original \$35 per student allotment was never fully funded.

As textbook prices escalated and the state began to consider delivery of instructional content electronically, Robert Leos, who was the textbook director for the Texas Education Agency at the time, was instructed in 2000 to look into an allotment system that would shift the decisions regarding content from a state-adopted textbook list to the local level. This program bore a striking resemblance to the one implemented during the 2011 legislative session, however most people never knew about Leos' earlier work because the allotment concept had been set aside.

In 2003, Leos was instructed by the executive staff of the Texas Education Agency to cease operation of the Textbook Administration's redistribution process. The state's textbook distribution system included a central depository that collected and redistributed textbooks throughout the state, saving millions of dollars. At the time, a small agency staff managed the collection and agency executive staff viewed the closure of the depository as a way to cut costs for the state. Almost overnight, the depository was shut down, many books were re-purchased by publishers or absorbed by school districts and the state lost what Leos and others believed to be a highly efficient central distribution process. When asked his opinion regarding the state's decision to close the distribution depository he stated that:

The initial thought was that you reduce staff immediately by eight to ten people, the salaries, when you downsized. And then the associated cost of supporting those eight to ten people, the cost of renting the facility and whatever expenses associated with the depository. What they were not looking at was the flip side,

the savings that are realized by redistributing [textbooks] rather than buying new.
(R Leos, personal communication, June 18, 2013)

From 2003 onward, textbook adoptions and funding were a constant struggle (L. Martinez, personal communication, June 6, 2013). The state board of education's budget request to the legislature increased with each biennium and tensions between traditional textbook companies and technology groups continued to escalate, as textbook companies sought to protect their part of the market and technology groups worked to break up the instructional materials status quo (J. Peterson, personal communication, July 2, 2013).

During the 2009 legislative session, technology companies pushed especially hard for a more technology-based content delivery system through bills such as HB 4294 sponsored by Texas House of Representatives member Branch that allowed for electronic textbooks and other instructional materials, and HB 2488 sponsored by Representative Hochberg, which allowed for the approval of open-source textbooks (J. Bergland, personal communication, August 27, 2013). Both bills passed during that session. According to Texas Senator Florence Shapiro, who was Chairwoman of the Senate Education Committee at that time, the senator indicated that Texas was about to be left behind regarding technology in the classroom and that it was time to expand the conversation beyond traditional textbooks (F. Shapiro, personal communication, August 15, 2013).

Another bill filed during the 2009 session (which did not pass) was a demonstration of legislators' continued frustration with the State Board of Education. The bill analysis for Texas Senator Seliger's SB 2275 stated the following:

The State Board of Education (SBOE) is an elected board that has the statutory

authority to approve curriculum and adopt textbooks for use in public schools.

The political nature of this 15-member board has resulted in partisan beliefs being injected into the public school curriculum. As proposed, S.B. 2275 transfers SBOE's authority to approve textbooks and curriculum for public schools to the commissioner of education (commissioner). The bill requires the commissioner to consult with teams made up of teachers from each region of the state.

Senate Bill 2275 clearly demonstrated the Texas legislature's increasing frustration with the textbook adoption and curriculum process as maintained by the State Board of Education, and while the bill did not pass in 2009, it set the tone for the 2011 legislative session. That anti-state board of education tone, combined with a wider acceptance of technology in education, set the stage for a bill like Senate Bill 6.

Senate Bill 6

Summary of the Bill

The major instructional materials bill that passed during the 2011 legislative session (during the first special session) was Texas Senator Florence Shapiro's and Texas Representative Rob Eissler's Senate Bill 6 (SB6). The bill called for significant changes to the Texas Education Code (TEC), the first of which was to remove every appearance of the word "textbook" and replace it with "instructional materials." It also called for the abolishment of the conforming and non-conforming list, which meant that proposed instructional materials were no longer required to cover all of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), the curriculum requirements established by the Texas State Board of Education. Districts were now responsible for certifying that whatever

instructional materials they used met 100% of the TEKS (Senate Education Committee, March 29, 2011).

Next, SB 6 called for allowing districts greater flexibility to order the instructional materials they felt best fit the needs of their students. Districts could still choose items from the Commissioner of Education's list and the State Board of Education list, but they could also go "off list" and use their money for most types of technology, hardware/software, and teacher training. Last, SB 6 officially established the Instructional Materials Allotment, which was a specific amount of money distributed to each district to be used for purchasing the materials described above (SB6, Texas Legislature Online, 2011).

This new system presented significant challenges and opportunities. For example, because of recent staffing reductions at the Texas Education Agency, no particular office was responsible for ensuring that all districts met their TEKS requirements (D. Anderson, personal communication, July 2, 2013). This represented a substantial amount of freedom being given to local districts and boards, an issue that will be further explored in the coming chapters.

Another challenge (or, opportunity) was the ability to go "off list." Districts were now able to select the textbooks and resources they felt best fit their student population, however there was a significant amount of responsibility attached to the selection of content. Whereas previously, the State Board of Education was blamed and/or applauded for their philosophical positions on history and science curriculum, as examples; now, many of those instructional materials decisions would now be made at the local level. At the outset of Senate Bill 6's implementation, Alexander (2012) wondered if districts

would continue to order textbooks that had been vetted by the state or choose something different, possibly risking the disapproval of parents and community members.

Finally, we, as lobbyists, recognized that the establishment of the Instructional Materials Allotment came with a significant funding challenge. While the legislature may have funded the new Instructional Materials Allotment at a reasonable amount (D. Anderson, personal communication, July 2, 2013), they eliminated the technology allotment and essentially rolled that money directly into the Instructional Materials Allotment (SB6, Texas Legislature Online, 2011). In the end, districts received about 70% of the funds they would usually expect to receive, but it was impossible to compare current funds with the previous year's unless they had someone who was very textbook funding-savvy in their district (L. Martinez, personal communication, June 6, 2013).

The Challenges of Change Report

Soon after the passage of Senate Bill 6, The Association of American Publishers (AAP) sponsored a study in collaboration with the Textbook Coordinators' Association of Texas (TCAT), utilizing the expertise of 21 Texas textbook coordinators. A similar survey was administered online in January 2012. In all, 130 textbook coordinators participated in the study. Some of the questions posed to participants were as follows:

- How aware were textbook coordinators of proposed changes *during* and *after* the legislative session? What were the primary sources of information?
- How did school districts disseminate information about Senate Bill 6 to staff in order to begin the planning processes?
- To what extent did STAAR influence the school districts' decisions related to expenditures from the IMA?

- Were there any difficulties with the requisitions and disbursement processes?
(Leos, 2012).

This study found that most textbook coordinators had followed the events of the 2011 session and had a basic understanding of Senate Bill 6 legislation. Only 15 percent felt they had a “thorough understanding of SB6 and were prepared for implementation when 2011-12 school year began” (Leos, 2012, p. 2) and 12 percent indicated that they had been completely unaware of the legislation’s development during the 2011 session.

Also, respondents stated that their district had involved a variety of district personnel in the initial Instructional Materials Allotment decision-making process, including the textbook coordinator, technology coordinator, curriculum coordinator, staff from the business office, principals and the superintendent. Seventy-one percent of respondents indicated that parents had not been included in their district’s decision-making process related to the Instructional Materials Allotment. Eleven percent said parents were involved occasionally (Leos, 2012).

Areas of concern for textbook coordinators as expressed in the report included aging textbooks, the need for a better system with which to purchase used materials from other school districts, and the need for increased allotment funding for small districts (Leos, 2012). Participants stated that small districts’ instructional materials allotments were “too small and do not allow them to purchase notebook computers, tablets, and other electronic devices after ordering instructional materials to cover the TEKS” (Leos, p. 26). One participant was frustrated that “small districts would most likely continue using traditional textbooks because of the cost of purchasing and maintaining electronic devices” (Leos, p. 26).

Technology in Education

Senate Bill 6 represented a significant departure from the way textbooks were distributed in Texas but it also greatly expanded opportunities for the purchase of technological equipment, software and training. Senate Education Committee Chairwoman Florence Shapiro indicated multiple times during the 2011 legislative session as well as in previous sessions that Texas was not meeting the needs of its 21st Century students and that it was her desire to free up instructional funds to give local school districts more flexibility (Senate Education Hearing, May 19, 2009; Senate Education Hearing, March 29, 2011).

Christensen, Johnson and Horn (2011) explained that American public schools are not meeting students' needs because the student of the 21st Century looks and acts much different than students did when our political leaders were in school. According to Christensen, Johnson and Horn, students yearn for a more engaging and collaborative classroom instead of a textbook that asks them to regurgitate the facts. They expect to be able to utilize available technological resources and any attempt to force students to “power down” is met with frustration and noncompliance.

Many school districts have responded to students' desires by providing electronic textbooks, interactive software and some have even provided mobile devices for every student (Ash, 2010; Fairbanks, 2013). Publishers and technology companies have developed products to meet these changes. Ash referenced a media and technology coordinator in Merced County, California who stated “we suspect that the textbooks in their current form are kind of like the dinosaurs, making their last migration across the country” (p. 39).

The most significant challenge facing publishers and technology companies is that local distribution of instructional materials looks different in every district. Some districts continue to have a textbook for every student, while others offer a combination of resources. Some teachers require students to watch lessons at home with their own devices (or ones issued by the district) and then come to school ready to participate in a discussion. Jay Diskey, the executive director of the Association of American Publisher's education division, stated that “there's more change going on in this industry in the past two to three years than in the past two to three decades” (Tomassini, 2012, p. 9).

Emerging Industries in Texas

As Texas made the shift to the Instructional Materials Allotment, a variety of new business concepts emerged, two of which are presented here. The Texas Association of School Boards, often creates programs of benefit to Texas school districts as well as to the association. One of these programs is the Texas BuyBoard, a local government-purchasing cooperative that is available to any local government entity. As with any purchasing cooperative, the goal is to negotiate costs with potential vendors as a group instead of as individual entities, usually achieving a savings. With the passage of Senate Bill 6, the BuyBoard was able to add the cooperative purchase of “non-state adopted textbooks, digital content, and other supplemental materials plus technology equipment and services that directly support classroom instruction and student learning” to their long list of available services (Texas Association of School Boards, 2013).

A second business concept that emerged upon the passage of Senate Bill 6 was LearningList.com. The founders of the LearningList saw a gap in the original Senate Bill 6 legislation regarding each district's need to meet the Texas Essential Knowledge and

Skills (TEKS) requirements. If a particular instructional material was not reviewed by the State Board of Education or Education Commissioner, it was difficult for school districts to know how many TEKS it met. The LearningList worked with publishers to review their submitted materials and then charged school districts for the information.

Included in the Learning Lists' review were:

1. The material's alignment to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and to the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS);
2. An editorial review based on customer experience; and
3. Subscriber feedback and ratings on specific criteria in order to solicit constructive feedback about each product. (LearningList, n.d.)

The benefits of LearningList, as explained by its founder, Jackie Lain (formerly of the Texas Association of School Boards), at the 2012 Instructional Materials Coordinators' Association of Texas (IMCAT) annual conference, were that it saved districts time and money, leveraged economies of scale for greater efficiency, supported compliance for local school boards, enhanced capacity, expanded selection and democratized the process, especially for smaller districts. As of this writing, the group is still in the planning phase and is expected to open for business before the fall of 2013.

Summary

The purpose of this chapter has been to present a historical summary of the textbook industry both from the national and the Texas perspective. I have also provided a description of Senate Bill 6, information about the use of technology in education, and two examples of emerging industries in Texas as a result of the passage of Senate Bill 6. Chapter IV will establish the legislative intent of Senate Bill 6 as well as the bill's

implementation by personnel in three public school districts. Afterwards, I will provide a comparison of the legislative intent and the local implementation of the bill.

CHAPTER IV

Field Study Findings

Research Purpose

The purpose of this study was to document the implementation of Senate Bill 6 at the local level and to compare various districts' interpretations with the legislature's original intent. As described in Chapter II, the textbook adoption history leading up to Senate Bill 6 and the legislative intent serve as the main case, while the implementation in three school districts serves as the embedded case in this case study.

Chapter IV will begin by establishing Senate Bill 6's legislative intent, using a variety of resources: video transcripts of committee meetings and of legislators' comments from the Senate and House floor; pertinent text from bill summaries which were created by staff members and approved by the author or sponsor of the bill; and interviews, which provide a more recent reflection based on the observations and experiences of state policy experts and legislative staff.

After establishing the legislative intent of Senate Bill 6, I will present the implementation of the bill at the local district level through the use of participant interviews and written data received from three different school districts across the state. Finally, I will present a summary that compares the legislative intent of Senate Bill 6 with its implementation at the local level.

Establishing Legislative Intent (The Larger Case)

Participants. The participants chosen for the main Senate Bill 6 case (historical background and legislative intent) have provided a rich set of experiences and perspectives from which to draw. Some come from a traditional education background, while others approach the subject from a business or political angle. A short description of each participant is included here, after which the viewpoints of all are combined to establish five areas of legislative intent.

Dr. Robert H. Leos has served in a variety of education-related leadership and advisory roles, such as Associate Director of the Teacher Corps program at the University of Iowa and as program specialist at The University of Texas at Austin Teacher Corps program. He was Texas Education Agency Program Evaluator focusing on pre-kindergarten, special education and bilingual practices and served as Senior Director for Textbook Administration at the Texas Education Agency. He holds a Ph.D. from The University of Texas at Austin with dual emphases in Curriculum and Instruction and Measurement and Evaluation and is the author of a 2011 study called “The Challenges of Change: Implementing Senate Bill 6,” which was sponsored by the Instructional Materials Coordinators’ Association of Texas and the Association of American Publishers.

David D. Anderson began his career in education as a fifth- and sixth-grade history teacher in the Austin Public Schools. He soon became the district’s Instructional Coordinator, after which he spent 18 years in educational publishing, representing a variety of clients. From 1997 to 2003, Anderson was the managing director of the Texas Education Agency Division of Curriculum and Professional Development and oversaw

the implementation of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) among other projects. Since 2003, he has worked as an education lobbyist in areas such as curriculum, instructional materials, assessment and accountability, school finance and Pre-Kindergarten funding.

W. James Jonas has been an attorney at the local, state and federal level since the mid 1980s when he graduated from The University Of Texas School of Law. His areas of expertise regarding policy representation include appropriations, higher and public education, aviation issues, health-related advocacy, state and federal funding, trade issues, environmental law, and gaming. He has represented a variety of publishing and textbook distribution clients, including Gulf and Western (the owners of Simon and Schuster) and has been witness to decades of Texas political activity.

Louann Martinez has served in a variety of governmental relations roles, including assisting Former United States Senator Lloyd Bentsen, Former State Representative Gerald Hill and Former State Representative Cliff Johnson. From 1988 to 2002, she was the Associate Executive Director for Governmental Relations at the Texas Association of School Administrators and then Chief of Staff for the Joint Select Committee on School Finance Studies. Since that time she has consulted for a variety of clients, including large school districts and publishing companies.

Jennifer Bergland is the Director of Governmental Relations for a statewide education technology association. Prior to joining the association in 2010, Bergland spent 32 years in public education, as both a teacher and an administrator in Oklahoma and Texas. She has long been an advocate for the use of technology to transform

teaching and learning and was awarded the Advocate Trendsetter Award by the International Society of Technology in Education in 2009.

Gail Lowe is co-publisher of the Lampasas Dispatch Record, a semi-weekly newspaper. She served on the Texas State Board of Education from January 2003 through December 2012 and was the board's chairperson from July 2009 to May 2011. Prior to her election to the board, Lowe served on the Lampasas Independent School District Board of Trustees from 1999-2002, volunteered for fourteen years in local classrooms and worked primarily with elementary school children in need of additional reading and math assistance.

Florence Shapiro is a former member of the Texas Senate who specialized in a range of education issues, such as school finance, incentive pay for teachers, college readiness and accountability standards. In addition, she was a school teacher, a member of the Plano, Texas city council and mayor of Plano, Texas. She holds a bachelor's degree in secondary education from The University of Texas at Austin and has received numerous awards from groups such as the Texas Association of Realtors, the Girl Scouts of America, and Independent Colleges and Universities of Texas.

Joe Peterson (pseudonym) is a high-ranking legislative staffer who works with state leadership on a daily basis. Peterson specializes in education policy and has asked to remain anonymous because of ongoing policy work that relates to Senate Bill 6. An additional high-ranking staffer had originally agreed to participate in the study but felt unable to continue because of controversy surrounding recent events related to a particular curriculum alignment system.

Emergent Themes. The major areas of legislative intent identified within this section include: local flexibility, innovation and technology, teacher and community engagement, efficiency, and decreased State Board of Education authority. These areas were established through analysis of video transcripts of committee hearings and staff-generated bill summaries from the 2011 legislative session as well as recent interviews conducted with the legislative staff and policy experts described above.

As introduced in Chapter III, the main sections of Senate Bill 6, as passed, were as follows:

- to remove every appearance of the word “textbook” and replace it with “instructional materials”;
- to remove the conforming and non-conforming textbook list;
- to allow districts to order adopted or non-adopted instructional materials;
- to make districts responsible for certifying that they have met 100% of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills; and
- to allow districts to use their instructional materials allotment for items other than traditional textbooks including computers, iPads, software licenses and technology-related teacher salaries.

Local Flexibility. The Senate Bill 6 objectives listed above were discussed at length during the legislative session in both the Texas Senate and the Texas House of Representatives. As with all proposed bills, Senate Bill 6 was introduced and referred to a committee (in this case the Senate Education Committee), and on March 29, 2011, the bill's author, Florence Shapiro, introduced the bill with the following statement:

I think we are all aware that we have passed the era where print is the main delivery mechanism for delivery of instructional materials and what this bill will do is provide districts with flexibility to provide the print materials if they choose to do so, or if their preference is to move down the path where technology is integrated into the educational process. (Texas Senate Education Committee, March 29, 2011)

Senator Shapiro's statement clearly demonstrated that she was looking for increased local flexibility as districts chose materials for their students. In fact, the second paragraph of the bill analysis for Senate Bill 6 states that:

the instructional materials allotment will provide maximum flexibility for school districts to best meet the individual instructional needs of students. The Instructional Materials Allotment may be used to purchase printed instructional materials, electronic instructional materials, technological equipment, or training on the appropriate use of instructional materials and technological equipment. (Senate Bill 6, Senate Education Bill Analysis, Texas Legislature Online, 2011)

The House version of Senate Bill 6 similarly states that:

Interested parties believe that it is essential for school districts to have the flexibility to purchase materials and technology to deliver the curriculum to prepare students for the new assessment system and contend that districts currently lack the flexibility to purchase additional materials or technological equipment to deliver instructional materials. (House Bill 6, House Public Education Bill Analysis, Texas Legislature Online)

Regarding the impetus for Senate Bill 6, Peterson indicated that:

A key piece of SB6 was local control. At the end of the day, a district didn't have to buy off the state approved list. They can mix and match and use their funds as they see fit as long as the local board would certify they are covering all the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills. (J. Peterson, personal communication, July 2, 2013)

Technology/Innovation. Innovation and the increased use of technology was a second area of legislative intent. Previous to the 2011 legislative session, a separate technology allotment was given to school districts in the amount of \$30 per student. During the session, the technology allotment was eliminated and rolled into the Instructional Materials Allotment. The combining of the two funds was a strong indication that the legislators' way of thinking about delivery of education materials had shifted from primarily print materials to a combination of print and electronic. Peterson stated that the merger of textbook funds and the technology fund was the key to encouraging district personnel to think differently about delivery of content. Peterson said:

the legislature wanted [school districts] to . . . be innovative. They wanted them to be able to try new things for their kids. We clearly intended for them to be able to buy software, hardware, online stuff, online subscriptions...and I think over time you're going to see that more and more. (J. Peterson, personal communication, July 2, 2013)

As Senate Bill 6 came to the full Senate for debate, Senator Van de Putte described the bill as a "bellwether changer" and expressed concern that districts were going to spend the majority of their funds on iPads, laptops and other technology (Texas

Senate, June 3, 2011). Shapiro sought to ease Van de Putte's concerns by stating that:

there's content and then there's distribution of that content. Currently instructional materials, when you use that terminology, people just think that it's interchangeable with the textbooks. For generations we have called the content “textbook.” That's actually the distribution of the content. What we're hopeful of is that first and foremost what will be used in the allotment, the first things the school district will look for is content. (Texas Senate, June 3, 2011)

This statement was seen by some observers as Shapiro's attempt to address the concerns of the major publishers who had already designed and produced materials for the upcoming Proclamation 2011. These proclamation materials had been approved under the old conforming/non-conforming textbook rules and, therefore, the vast majority of materials were ready to distribute in print format. Publishers could potentially lose millions of dollars if districts were allowed to use their new instructional materials funds primarily for items such as smartphones, tablets and software. Senate Bill 6, as finally passed, required districts to prioritize Proclamation 2011 materials and continuing contracts, thus finding a compromise between the textbook and technology communities (J. Peterson, personal communication, July 2, 2013).

After the passage of Senate Bill 6, Texas Education Agency staff presented a webinar to school districts regarding the prioritization of particular areas of content during the first year of the instructional materials allotment (further clarifying the intent of the legislature). In order of importance, the areas established by Texas Education Agency staff during the webinar were:

- Adopted Instructional Materials:

- Proclamation 2011 (included Pre-Kindergarten, English Language Arts, Spanish Language Arts, English as a Second Language, Handwriting, Spelling, English I-IV, and Commissioner's list of electronic textbooks);
- Supplemental Science materials (included Grades 5-8, Biology, Chemistry, Integrated Physics and Chemistry, and Physics);
- Continuing Contracts (included consumable materials and additional materials due to student population growth);
- Off-List items:
 - Instructional materials not on the adopted list;
 - Technology services;
 - Technological equipment. (Lopez, 2011).

While the Texas Education Agency's presentation clearly indicated the priorities established by Senate Bill 6, no specific plan was put in place by the legislature or the Texas Education Agency to ensure the purchase of prioritized materials by local districts.

Teacher/Community Engagement. Teacher and community engagement was a third area of legislative intent. Throughout the 2011 legislative session, the House Public Education Committee and Senate Education Committee heard from individual teachers, teacher associations and students regarding the desire to move to a less prescriptive system of content delivery. One high school student in particular, John Fuller, indicated that he was the editor of his school newspaper and that the journalism textbook at his school was so outdated it didn't even mention the internet. As a result, he relied on other resources (often online resources) to inform him about current topics in journalism. He encouraged the House Public Education Committee to embrace the

instructional materials allotment concept and to allow local districts to engage in the decision-making process (House Public Education hearing, March 22, 2011).

Peterson approached the topic of teacher and community engagement from the teacher's perspective, indicating that the state legislature was not the best group to decide what materials were best for each student. Peterson stated:

And honestly that's not our role. From Austin we can't delegate. [Sally] needs acceleration. [Sam] needs remediation . . . We don't know, but the locals do. So the thought was if you give them the money and let their local communities [decide] . . . let the teachers have some input Let them spend that money . . . and get instruction more modified towards the student. (J. Peterson, personal communication, July 2, 2013)

Jonas viewed the teacher/community engagement topic from an organizational perspective. He said that:

The good news is [Senate Bill 6] will probably expand the level of stakeholders. It will probably expand the level of people making the decisions. It won't centralize the power because the safety is in *not* centralizing the power. And you can see that in any number of other human resources or human services or other policy areas. (J. Jonas, personal communication, June 18, 2013)

Lowe expressed concern that parents might actually experience a loss of engagement because of Senate Bill 6 if a local district chose to deliver the majority of their instructional content using computers. She expressed her concern like this:

I think [a shift toward devices] has the potential to harm students or certainly create a greater disparity between types of students. It's not what race they are,

it's more their socioeconomic background and involvement of parents. I think an active, involved parent from a poorer home can really overcome many of those disadvantages if they're active and involved. But we can't mandate involvement of parents either. That's sort of my worry. That the greater shifting to technology potentially creates a greater disparity because of the home life and involvement of the parent in what the child's doing. (G. Lowe, personal communication, August 6, 2013)

Efficiency. Efficiency was a fourth area of intent emerging from my interviews with various staffers and policy experts. While the topic did not appear as often in public hearings I reviewed from the 2011 legislative session, the statements below demonstrate that it was on people's minds as they considered Senate Bill 6.

Leos explained that prior to the instructional materials allotment, the agency sought to lower costs by gathering textbook costs from around the United States and setting a maximum cost that Texas was willing to pay per item. Leos stated that “this is the most the state’s going to pay for it. If that textbook costs more than the state maximum, the school district would pick up the difference. What actually happened was the publishers waived that difference” (R. Leos, Personal communication, June 18, 2013).

With inflation and the increasing costs of producing textbooks, textbook prices rose each year and the Texas legislature became frustrated by the State Board of Education's increasing textbook budget requests each biennium. In addition, in prior years, districts were allowed to order textbooks for up to 110% of their student enrollment (to allow for growth, replacements, etc.). According to Leos, “[districts] routinely ordered up to the maximum quantities allowed. So there was no incentive for

them to look at the cost” (Personal communication, June 18, 2013).

The idea of pursuing greater efficiency was also supported in the House Public Education bill summary of House Bill 6 which read that, “these parties further contend that with the state providing instructional materials directly to school districts, there is little incentive for the publishers of instructional materials or school districts to consider cost” (Texas Legislature Online, n.d.).

Similarly but from the publisher perspective, Jonas explained how:

The things that are going away are the buying of extra books [school districts] didn’t really need in the first place. The publishers themselves knew that and had they been more thoughtful they would realize that if you’re selling a product and your customer is buying it just because they can and they can’t spend the money anywhere else you should really be thinking about ‘What could I be selling them that they could use?’ as opposed to ‘What can I sell them of what they have to buy?’ I don’t think enough thought has gone into that but now there is no choice.

(J. Jonas, personal communication, June 18, 2013)

With the final passage of Senate Bill 6, districts had the flexibility to order fewer textbooks, perhaps as few as a set per classroom, and then use those savings to purchase other materials. Peterson confirmed that this was indeed the legislature's intent by stating:

The way budgeting in state agencies tends to occur is you get your budget and if you don’t spend it all, whatever is left is taken away. And then next cycle you get the lesser amount for your budget. You’re doing good, are thrifty and efficient, but then you get penalized because you lose money. We actually had this type of

discussion, and members did not want to do that to [districts]. (J. Peterson, personal communication, July 2, 2013)

Peterson used an example of how an Austin-area district wanted to start an iPad initiative with 3rd graders and add a grade level each year and explained:

That costs money and it's probably more than in their allotment. But if they can, I wouldn't say pinch and save, but . . . instead of buying all the books, maybe you save some of your money to do this big purchase. We just said, "If you don't spend it, it rolls forward. It's in your account and you can save it for big purchases." (J. Peterson, personal communication, July 2, 2013)

According to Anderson, the legislature's desire to decrease textbook costs as well as a move toward increased technology in the classroom created a situation during the 2011 legislative session in which legislators and school districts were ready for a major shift. He painted a picture of how:

A lot of people began to scratch their heads and say, 'You know, couldn't we be doing this for less and in a more efficient manner in terms of delivery than buying all of these eight, nine, ten pound textbooks for kids to carry around?' That was an argument that became more serious with each session from 2003 to 2005 to 2007 to 2009. You had people concerned about prices. People concerned about "were we still doing 20th Century technology in the 21st Century learning environment" and you had all the people who had electronic products and services and support who looked at that money and said, "I sure would like to get my hands on some of that." So one looked up and the normal, the usual supporters of the textbook industry on funding, they weren't there. The superintendents were

thinking about alternative delivery methods. They were seeing that the system forced them to order books they weren't using that were only taking up space at the warehouse. What had been a very efficient system in the '50s to '90s all of a sudden looked old and cumbersome in the first decade of the 21st Century. (D. Anderson, personal communication, July 2, 2013)

Decreased State Board of Education Authority. The last area of legislative intent is one that is a bit more challenging to firmly establish using transcripts and study of documents. It's one that I've identified through interviews and analysis of legislation from previous sessions: that is, the legislature's desire for decreased State Board of Education authority.

In Chapter III of this study, I presented a historical snapshot of the changing role of the State Board of Education regarding textbook adoptions. The politically-charged, one-book list of the 1920s exemplified complete state board control. Twenty-five years later, there was a shift to a five-book list, then to an eight-book list in 1984 and finally a conforming/non-conforming list in 1995. This last change allowed those in districts to choose textbooks that met as little as 50% of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills.

Additionally, during the 2009 legislative session, House Bill 4294, introduced by Representative Branch called for the commissioner to “adopt a list of electronic textbooks and instructional material which were “reviewed and recommended to the commissioner by a panel of recognized experts in the subject area of electronic textbook or instructional materials experts in education technology” (HB 4294 bill analysis, Texas Legislature Online, 2009). Bergland stated that even though HB 4294 didn't receive a large amount of attention during the 2009 session, it opened the door for Senate Bill 6 in 2011 and was

perceived by many legislators as a logical progression toward decreased State Board of Education control (J Bergland, personal communication, August 27, 2013).

When asked if the State Board of Education realized how much control had been lost with Senate Bill 6, Anderson stated that:

I don't think many board members knew what was happening in [Senate Bill 6], particularly the line in there that allows districts to use the instructional materials funds for just about any other instructional material they want. And it will take a little while for that to play out. But I don't think the board realized it. I think some board members were shocked when they looked at that at the end of the session and said, "oh my god, they passed what?" (D. Anderson, personal communication, D. Anderson, July 2, 2013)

State board member Lowe's mixed opinions about Senate Bill 6 were clearly demonstrated in our conversation when she stated that

Senate Bill 6, like most anything else that comes out of the legislature, has good points and bad points. And often I think when the legislature attempts to solve a problem, it does presumably, unintentionally create other things that can be problems down the line. That's not unique to [Senate Bill 6]. (G. Lowe, personal communication, August 6, 2013)

She further explained that Senate Bill 6 was a positive change in that it established a dollar amount to be dedicated to textbooks instead of simply handing an amount of money to the legislature to be distributed as they saw fit. It also provided more flexibility for local districts which Lowe supported throughout the interview.

Lowe's main concern was the fact that Senate Bill 6 made it more difficult to ensure that districts were meeting 100% of Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills established by the State Board of Education. "So it was the advantages of more local control balanced with the loss of a sort of state assurance for materials and content that I think disturbed State Board of Education members" (G. Lowe, personal communication, August 6, 2013).

The Embedded Case

The embedded Senate Bill 6 case includes the experiences of those in three Texas school districts as they implemented a new piece of legislation over the course of two years. As described previously, I knew two of the districts through my governmental relations work while the third surfaced as a result of a connection made through my doctoral program. Before presenting these data, I will provide a brief overview of the Texas education system.

The State

Just prior to the passage of Senate Bill 6, Texas public schools educated 4,824,778 students. Of those students, 14% were African American, 33.3% were White, 48.6% were Hispanic and 59% were classified as economically disadvantaged. The state's student dropout rate for 2010 was officially listed as 9.4% and 47% of students were considered college ready (Table A1.). It is, however, important to note that the last two percentages are sometimes contested as political constructions.

During the 2009-10 school year, there were 1,030 school districts and 207 charter school operators in the state of Texas, with a total of 8,435 campuses. The seventeen

largest school districts in the state accounted for 28.4% of the total student population.

Table 1 shows the breakdown of district sizes.

Table 1

School District Sizes in Texas

District Size	Number of Students	Number of Districts	Percentage of All Students
50,000 and over	1,369,046	17	28.4
25,000-45,999	1,062,775	30	22.0
10,000-24,999	805,199	51	16.7
5,000-9,999	501,587	71	10.4
3,000-4,999	344,291	89	7.1
1,600-2,999	265,158	121	5.5
1,000-1,599	182,305	144	3.8
500-999	178,108	251	3.7
Under 500	116,309	563	2.4
Total	4,824,778	1,237	100.0

Note. Classification of Texas school districts by numbers of students.

Participants

The participants selected for the embedded Senate Bill 6 case (implementation of the bill at the local level) provided hours of interviews and many valuable documents related to their implementation of Senate Bill 6 and the Instructional Materials Allotment. They patiently described the experiences of their districts and shared their insights as to how they saw this new distribution system unfolding in the near future. Their information is presented by district below and then summarized in comparison to the legislative intent of the bill.

District A

Background. District A is a small school district in south Central Texas, situated two miles from a major interstate highway. During the 2009-2010 school year, the district had 263 students and was listed as 1A by the University Interscholastic League. The town for which the district was named served as a railway stop from the late 1880s until 1950, and was significant for its cattle industry and poultry production. The town's population began to decline during World War II and continued that decline when a new state highway was built two miles outside of town. According to ProximityOne, an online demographic database, the total population of District A's geographic area in 2010 was 1,649 people. The median age was 49.2, the median household income was \$34,013 and 6.9% of citizens held a Bachelors degree or higher.

Of the 263 students in District A, 18.6% were African American, 3.4% were White, 77.9% were Hispanic and 88.2% of the student population was classified as economically disadvantaged. A detailed comparison of standardized test scores is included later in this study but of particular interest, District A's students scored an average of twenty points lower on standardized tests than the state average. The district's student dropout rate for 2010 was 16.7% and 10% of students were considered college-ready, while the state average was 47%. The amount of 2010 state dollars received for each student was \$5,066 for a total of \$9,246 per student when local dollars were included.

District A had one campus that served all students Pre-Kindergarten through twelve. The district's leadership (See Appendix G) included the superintendent, business manager, principal and assistant principal. The principal, Mr. Hernandez (pseudonym)

joined the district in 2009 and moved into his current position in 2011. Because the district was small, many teachers served in multiple roles and taught multiple grade levels. This presented unique challenges for district personnel as they worked to comply with the state and federal directives.

Prior to the instructional materials allotment. When Mr. Hernandez joined District A as assistant principal in 2009, the district was almost exclusively using a scope and sequence curriculum system called CScope. Mr. Hernandez expressed his concerns to the person serving as principal at that time regarding the need for additional resources and the two of them began to sift through their existing textbooks looking for usable instructional materials. He recalled how:

We started going through textbooks and there wasn't anything. There were old editions of some adopted materials and some recent editions and that was about it. So I said, "Well, how do we order textbooks?" She's like, "I'm not too sure. We haven't ordered in who knows how long." So I called TEA . . . (Hernandez, personal communication, June 11, 2013)

The district worked with the Texas Education Agency through the Educational Materials (EMAT) system and began receiving the needed textbooks. According to Mr. Solis (pseudonym), currently serving as the district's assistant principal:

One of the things that was great about the way it was [before the Instructional Materials Allotment] . . . if there was an excess, you could turn that back in or give it to another district that requested it Definitely in the older system if you weren't quite sure about what programs or what you're going to implement . .

. you just ordered those books and they came. (Solis, personal communication, June 11, 2013)

Prior to and during the transition to the Instructional Materials Allotment, an instructional leadership team (ILT) was added to the organizational structure in District A. The team met once a week and included representation from Kindergarten/1st grade, 2nd/3rd grade, 4th/5th grade, middle school, and high school, as well as the assistant principal and the principal. The meetings included a “check in” with members, a professional learning community (PLC) discussion, a book study, and discussion of any pressing organizational issues.

Instructional materials allotment. District A received \$25,923.00 in Instructional Materials Allotment funds the first year of implementation and \$11,109.30 the second year, for an average of \$127.52 per student for the biennium. Of the amount the district received the first year, 71.3% was spent during that school year. At the end of the biennium, 15.9% of District A's total funds remained and were rolled to the next biennium.

In the first year of implementation, District A personnel chose to spend 82% of their Instructional Materials Allotment Funds on textbooks, 18% on software and licenses, 0% on technology infrastructure and 0% on salaries (see Table 2). Other technology needs and technology-related salaries were provided using general funds.

Table 2

District A Spending on IMA

	Year 1	Year 2	Biennium
Technology	0%	0%	0%
Software	18%	12%	15%
Salaries	0%	0%	0%
Textbooks	82%	88%	85%

Note. Percentages allocated to specific items.

District personnel prioritized materials based on the Texas Education Agency's list (described earlier) as well as specific subject areas that required attention in order to meet state accountability targets. For example, the district's science scores had been low the previous year and the instructional leadership team indicated this as an area of priority for purchases. The team (as well as teachers at large) also requested test-building materials as they moved away from CScope designed assessments. Mr. Solis, the assistant principal stated:

What they were looking for was help on building tests. So even within [the science] search, what are the tools we have for assessment and building assessments? . . . Sure everybody's got pretty pictures and whatever content-wise but the top thing on the list at that time is we needed something to help us build tests. (Solis, personal communication, June 11, 2013)

In the second year of the implementation, personnel in District A chose to spend 88% of their instructional materials allotment on textbooks, 12% on software, 0% on technology, and 0% on salaries. Technology and technology-related salaries were provided using the district's general funds. One example of technology purchased outside

of the district's Instructional Materials Allotment was Achieve 3000, an online differentiated instruction program, which was too expensive to purchase with their existing instructional materials funds.

During the second year, instructional material expenditures were once again prioritized based on tested subject areas; this time, social studies. The new State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) and End of Course (EOC) tests had recently been developed by the Texas Education Agency and those in District A found that their existing instructional materials did not compliment the new tests.

Additionally, Mr. Hernandez and Mr. Solis were frustrated by the perceived lack of available instructional materials from publishers in certain subject areas. Mr. Hernandez said "That's been part of the frustration...now we had the choice and the funds were there to back it up. But it was—and again we're talking about mainly social studies—there was just nothing to choose from" (Hernandez, personal communication, June 11, 2013). He explained that the reason for the lack of available social studies materials was because

It hadn't been tested. The thing is, it had never been tested in 8th grade and at the high school. So there's stuff on US History, that's not a problem, a little bit on World History and you can find a little bit on 8th Grade but nothing elementary and nothing in between that, especially the World Geography for 9th Grade.

There was nothing but one publisher. (Hernandez, personal communication, June 11, 2013)

Although Mr. Hernandez and Mr. Solis were frustrated by the lack of available social studies materials, they were also optimistic about the opportunities the

Instructional Materials Allotment would offer their district in regard to choice. Mr. Hernandez specifically stated that the Instructional Materials Allotment has

helped us in the sense that it opens up a couple doors where you can go and just shop yourself and say, “I know the curriculum,” especially with teachers.

Because we're so small, we can say, “Alright, so you know your TEKS, you know your curriculum. What do you need to supplement it?? Where in the past, I remember [prior to the Instructional Materials Allotment] when I ordered I said, “This is what's on the adoption list. This is what you're going to get.”

(Hernandez, personal communication, June 11, 2013)

A topic that came up several times during our discussion was the district's efforts to fulfill the state's Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) requirements. With the passage of Senate Bill 6, districts were now required to certify (through their local school boards) that they had met 100% of the TEKS requirements using their locally selected instructional materials. Those in District A purposefully selected materials from the State Board of Education approved list because the district lacked the resources to review the materials themselves (Solis, personal communication, June 11, 2013). Additionally, because their staff was so small, they were able to work closely as a team to ensure that they were meeting their TEKS requirements and creating a streamlined curriculum. Mr. Hernandez, the principal, said:

That's when the scope and sequence really comes into play. Over the summer we spent some time revising our scope and sequence just to make sure that one, you're teaching everything and two, that you have resources to support it. But as

far as the school board, it's just pretty much make sure we're in compliance and that's about it. (Hernandez, personal communication, June 11, 2013)

After materials were selected by the principal and teachers, the principal notified the local school board that the TEKS were being met and the board signed off on the required Texas Education Agency form.

Mr. Hernandez and Mr. Solis's overall opinion of the Instructional Materials Allotment and the Texas Education Agency's implementation of this new program seemed positive. They expressed that their district's current allotment amount was sufficient to meet their district's needs during the first biennium and that the Instructional Materials Allotment had allowed them to make better decisions about the materials they purchased on behalf of their students. They also stated that the Texas Education Agency had kept them informed of the transition to the new allotment system, but they expressed frustration that dollar amounts for the next year's Instructional Materials Allotment had not been publicized with less than three months until the new school year was set to begin.

Mr. Hernandez expressed concern that the amount of Instructional Materials Allotment funds received in future biennia might not be enough to cover traditional textbook purchases as well as technology needs. This is consistent with conversations I have had with school district personnel from other districts as they have reflected on the first two years of this new system. Some felt that small districts had not received enough funds to purchase needed materials/equipment, medium sized districts had received a fairly sufficient amount, and large districts might have received more money than they really needed based on economies of scale.

Table 2 indicates that District A's spending over the biennium was fairly consistent. There were no major changes made between the first and second year regarding textbook and software purchases and no Instructional Materials Allotment funds were spent on technology or salaries. This is consistent with the 2011 Challenges of Change report (Leos, 2012), which predicted that small districts might not have enough funds in their allotment to purchase significant amounts of technology equipment.

District B

Background. District B is a mid-sized school district in west Texas, situated in a bedroom community of a major city. During the 2009-2010 school year, the district had 7,294 students and was listed as 4A by the University Interscholastic League. The district's administration building is located within a town that consolidated with two other small towns in 1935 to form the current school district.

In large part, as a result of the construction of the Panhandle and Santa Fe Railway in the early 1900s, the area was officially established in 1916. By 1950, the town had incorporated and acquired water, sewer and street paving services. According to ProximityOne, the total population of District B's geographic area in 2010 was 38,548 people. The median age was 27, the median household income was \$46,525 and 33.6% of citizens held a Bachelors degree or higher.

Of the 7,294 students in District B, 5.4% were African American, 59.4% were White, 31.9% were Hispanic and 38.4% of students were classified as economically disadvantaged. A detailed comparison of standardized test scores is included later in this study but of particular interest, District B's students scored above the state average in each subject area and 11% higher than the state average overall. The district's student

dropout rate for the class of 2010 was 1.4% and 60% of students were considered college-ready, while the state average was 47%. The amount of 2010 state dollars received for each student was \$4,368 for a total of \$7,828 per student when local dollars were included.

In 2012, District B had six elementary schools, three middle schools, one high school and one alternative campus. The district's leadership (See Appendix G) included the superintendent, director of public relations, director of athletics, assistant superintendent of curriculum and instruction, assistant superintendent of administrative services, chief financial officer and executive director of business administration. The person with whom I primarily communicated for the purposes of the study, Mr. Dollenger (pseudonym), is currently the assistant superintendent of curriculum and instruction and has been with the district for 25 years.

Prior to the instructional materials allotment. Prior to the Instructional Materials Allotment, District B relied on both textbooks and technology to provide instructional content for their students. With the 2009 arrival of their current superintendent, innovation and collaborative learning was highlighted and the state's technology allotment was a much-appreciated resource. Also, because the district's student enrollment was growing by as many as 700 students per year, District B consistently ordered the maximum number of textbooks allowed by the state.

While central office personnel made final decisions about district-wide textbook adoptions, each campus had its own textbook committee. These committees reviewed materials, made recommendations for which textbooks to adopt at the district level, and

selected materials to be purchased with campus resources. These committees met twice a year, additionally as needed.

Instructional materials allotment. As those in District B received word about the coming Instructional Materials Allotment, they began asking broad questions such as “What are the strings attached? How do we use it? What are the reporting requirements? You know, anything you do when the state says here's the money for something” (Dollenger, personal communication, June 19, 2013). Areas of concern were the loss of the technology allotment funds and the actual cost of textbooks, which district personnel had not been required to calculate previously. Next, personnel researched what subject-area proclamations would be coming from the Texas Education Agency in the next few years as well as any Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills revisions, while also keeping in mind that the state's plans could change at any time. Last, district personnel focused on the organizational aspect of the Instructional Materials Allotment such as new rules, school board policies, the inclusion of certain decision makers, and any new committees that needed to be formed.

While retaining the campus textbook committees described above, leaders in District B added a district Instructional Materials Allotment committee, consisting of a representative from the business office, a principal or assistant principal from each school, the technology director, textbook coordinator, director of curriculum, assistant superintendent of curriculum, and the assistant superintendent of administrative services. Dollenger commented that the committee proceeded:

cautiously and wisely We realized this money isn't given to us to see what we can put into our savings account. How can we use these funds to meet the

resource needs of our schools? And that range was broad. In other words, it wasn't just reading, math, science, social studies. It was also the bilingual program, ESL program, potentially library, computers, software updates. Just a variety of things. (Dollenger, personal communication, June 19, 2013)

District B received \$787,462.00 in Instructional Materials Allotment funds the first year of implementation and \$337,483.73 the second year, which came to an average of \$153.76 per student for the biennium. Of the amount the district received the first year, 70.6% was spent within that school year. At the end of the biennium, 4.6% of District B's funds remained, which rolled over into the next biennium.

In the first year of implementation, District B personnel chose to spend 27% of their Instructional Materials Allotment Funds on textbooks, 31% on software and licenses, 42% on technology infrastructure and 0% on salaries (see Table 3).

Table 3

District B Spending on IMA

	Year 1	Year 2	Biennium
Technology	42%	55%	50%
Software	31%	31%	31%
Salaries	0%	0%	0%
Textbooks	27%	14%	19%

Note. Percentages allocated to specific items.

Materials were prioritized based on the Texas Education Agency's prescribed priority list as well as district-wide technology products that were previously purchased using the state's technology allotment. These included Eduphoria, an online resource for teachers and students; Windows 7; and Microsoft Office. Next, principals were asked to

communicate with their teachers to find out which instructional materials were actually being used and which ones were sitting on a shelf. This created a meaningful conversation regarding efficiency, which had not always been the case when the district would order the adopted materials from the state, with no knowledge of the item's price.

In some cases, campus educators could not come to a district-wide agreement regarding which materials to select, at which point campuses had to provide their own funds for the particular item they wanted. In other cases, teachers approached colleagues at other campuses to discuss the item in question, to promote the item's quality, and to encourage overall agreement so the item could be considered for district-wide purchase.

In the second year of the implementation, District B personnel chose to spend 14% of their instructional materials allotment on textbooks, 31% on software, 55% on technology, and 0% on salaries.

As evidenced by Table 3, District B increased its technology spending from 42 to 55% during the second year. While they continued to purchase textbooks from the State Board of Education approved list, some of the technology items of interest had not been reviewed by the state. The district committee's review of potential technology and software materials intensified during the second year of implementation and required a larger number of contributors (Dollenger, personal communication, June 19, 2013).

Instead of going directly to the district coordinator for advice, Mr. Dollenger requested that each of the school principals ask for product information from their campus teachers. In this case, the topic was STEMscopes™, an online science resource that was developed by Rice University. “So we said, ‘Go and find out what did they know about STEMscopes™. What's their passion for it? . . . What's everything they know about it

and report back at the next meeting” (Dollenger, personal communication, June 19, 2013). After two weeks, the principals returned having learned new information about the product. Then, the subject-area district coordinator and technology coordinator were brought it to discuss how the product would be implemented throughout the district. As a group, the Instructional Materials Allotment Committee decided this was a meaningful item on which to spend their state-allotted funds.

Table 3 demonstrates that for the biennium, District B spent 19% on textbooks, 31% on software, 50% on technology and 0% on salaries. Mr. Dollenger felt that these percentages would stay mostly the same for the next four to five years, after which he expected student content to be delivered electronically instead of with printed textbooks. This statement is reflective of the district's overall technology initiative.

Regarding technology-related salaries, Mr. Dollenger did not expect the district to shift any of their Instructional Materials Allotment to this area because of the uncertainty of future allotment funding. He said:

We're a growing district and because we're growing, we're not going to create a position [and] say “Oh, we don't need it anymore.” Not only are we going to need that position, in two years we're going to have to add a second position of technology support and what have you. We just felt like we don't know what the future of this money is to tie someone's salary to it . . . (Dollenger, personal communication, June 19, 2013)

Also regarding the future of the Instructional Materials Allotment, Mr. Dollenger worried that there would not be enough funds in future years to supply both major textbook adoptions and meet technology needs. In previous years, the State Board of

Education placed pressure on the legislature for increased textbook funding, usually in specific subject areas (math, science, etc.) With the passage of Senate Bill 6, the amount of money received by districts was 50% of the money moved from the Permanent School Fund to the Available School Fund. This dollar amount would stay more stable over time, whereas, previously, the subject area dollar amount requested by the State Board of Education to the legislature tended to rise with each request.

A specific area of pride demonstrated by Mr. Dollenger during our conversations was his ability to negotiate with software and technology companies on behalf of his school district. While textbook prices would remain fairly consistent, technology-related contracts sometimes fluctuated significantly and Mr. Dollenger was able to work with various companies to significantly lower the cost of services and products. In one example, the district wanted a particular 8th and 9th grade math program that was significantly outside of their price range. Dollenger visited with the company representative and told her,

I can't afford this. As much as these people I respect a great deal in my district like this program, it's something I can't even consider. You're asking me to buy a Ferrari and I don't even have a place to drive it. What can you do? They said "We'll work with you on the price." That simple. They know, yes, I can afford something. I just can't afford that. (Dollenger, personal communication, June 19, 2013)

District C

Background. District C is a large school district in east Texas and is generally considered a mid-urban district, situated just outside of a major city. During the 2009-

2010 school year, the district had 103,897 students and was listed as 5A by the University Interscholastic League. The district was constituted through the consolidation of two separate districts in late 1939, after which a massive high school building project was approved by the combined voters of the two districts.

The area that makes up District C has a significant agricultural background in rice and dairy production and is part of Stephen F. Austin's fifth colony. After the Texas war for independence, German settlers began moving into the area. A post office and railroad connection were established in 1856. According to ProximityOne, the total population of District B's geographic area in 2010 was almost 420,000 people. The median age was 32, the median household income was \$70,931 and 34.5% of citizens held a Bachelors degree or higher.

Of the 103,897 students in District C, 16.5% were African American, 35.5% were White, 38.9% were Hispanic, and 43.2% of students were classified as economically disadvantaged. A detailed comparison of standardized test scores is included later in this study but of particular interest, District C's students scored above the state average in each subject area and 6% higher than the state average overall. The district's student dropout rate for the class of 2010 was 3.4% and 58% of students were considered college-ready while the state average was 47%. The amount of 2010 state dollars received for each student was \$4,414 for a total of \$7,058 per student when local dollars are included.

In 2012, District C had 52 elementary schools, 17 middle schools, 11 high schools and four special program facilities. The district's leadership (See Appendix G) included the superintendent; the general counsel; the director of internal audit; the associate

superintendent of business and financial services; the associate superintendent of governmental relations, the communications and chief of staff; the associate superintendent of technology and school services; the associate superintendent of human resources and student services; the associate superintendent of curriculum and instruction and accountability; and the associate superintendent of school administration and leadership development.

For the purposes of this study, I communicated with two participants from District C. First, Ms. Collins (pseudonym), served as the Associate Superintendent for Governmental, Community, and Planning Initiatives during the first year of the Instructional Materials Allotment. Previously, she had also served as the district's Director of Instruction. I also communicated with Mr. Evans (pseudonym), the district's Director of General Administration who had been with the district 33 years. He took over the implementation of the Instructional Materials Allotment during the second year of the biennium.

Prior to the instructional materials allotment. Prior to her work as District C's Director of Instruction, Ms. Collins served as the district's social studies coordinator. She explained that District C had a procedure in place for many years that actively involves teachers in the textbook selection process and applies to all subject areas. The procedure included “committees of teachers that were representative of all of the schools within the district. Multiple teachers could choose to participate . . . but at least one teacher from every team that taught that particular content area was represented” (Collins, personal communication, June 17, 2013).

The various committees worked within a district-created structure, evaluating each of the textbooks being considered for adoption. While they formally adopted all of the textbooks being considered (in case a specific teacher requested a particular book), the committee members voted for the one textbook that best fit the district's needs and then took that decision to the school board for final approval. The textbooks were then ordered from the Texas Education Agency, using the state textbook ordering system.

As an interesting side note, textbook committee members from District C also became actively involved in various subject area councils at the state level. These councils reviewed textbooks and provided public testimony before the State Board of Education. This was done to counter what was perceived to be a one-sided public testimony being presented by various individuals such as Mel and Norma Gaebler (Martin, 1982) during state board meetings during the last few decades of the 20th Century.

Prior to the Instructional Materials Allotment, District C provided one textbook for every child to take home, as well as a classroom used at school. Sometimes this resulted in a surplus of books and the district was therefore required to participate in the state's virtual textbook warehouse system. According to Evans, the district was required to:

find out who had the extra books. Pull those books in. Of course that's all transportation cost, whoever had to pick them up from the schools. Bring them back to the warehouse, gather the amount we're going to have to send out, package and send them. We sent a lot of books out those first couple of years

when we were required to do that. (Evans, personal communication, June 17, 2013)

Instructional materials allotment. District C received \$11,171,987.00 in Instructional Materials Allotment funds the first year of implementation and \$4,787,993.96 the second year, which came to an average of \$150.77 per student for the biennium. Of the amount the district received the first year, 47.1% was spent within that school year. At the end of the biennium, 13.7% of District C's funds remained, which were rolled over into the next biennium.

In the first year of implementation, District C chose to spend 77% of Instructional Materials Allotment Funds on textbooks, 13% on software and licenses, 0% on technology infrastructure and 10% on salaries (see Table 4).

Table 4

District C Spending on IMA

	Year 1	Year 2	Biennium
Technology	0%	7%	3%
Software	13%	12%	12%
Salaries	10%	52%	28%
Textbooks	77%	29%	57%

Note. Percentages allocated to specific items.

Materials were prioritized based on the Texas Education Agency's suggested list and the district continued to purchase their printed materials almost entirely from the State Board of Education approved list. Additional materials that Ms. Collins and Mr. Evans described as supplementary were purchased outside of the approved list and generally included online interactive programs for students and printed subscription services. Ms.

Collins saw this flexibility to order either on or off the approved list as a benefit to students because it allowed “teachers and curriculum coordinators to purchase pieces of things that are far superior to a standalone textbook or electronic textbook” (Collins, personal communication, June 17, 2013).

During the first year of implementation, the leadership of District C recognized that this new allotment-style system would require increased planning and a careful balancing of priorities, as compared to the old textbook adoption system. Ms. Collins said:

One of the things that happened was there was the opportunity to spend this amount of money. And we knew that because we are a fast-growing district and a large district, we had some special challenges in trying to manage that. We also knew that we were going to have to balance. We knew we were no longer getting the technology allotment, so we knew we were going to have to balance the needs we had been addressing through the technology allotment with the needs of the instructional materials....What we decided was that we needed a kind of an impartial process . . . (Collins, personal communication, June 17, 2013)

The district created a technology committee and an instructional materials committee. The instructional materials committee was actually the previous textbook committee (which continued to operate in the same way—with significant teacher input) and a central office technology specialist led the technology committee. While these two teams began their initial meetings, District C’s central office staff worked with the Texas Education Agency to get answers to their long list of questions. Afterward, a main committee consisting of the curriculum associate superintendent, the technology associate

superintendent, someone from the business office, and Ms. Collins and Mr. Evans began the complex task of balancing the requests of the various groups, while considering the district's future textbook and technology needs.

In the second year of the implementation, those at District C chose to spend 29% of their instructional materials allotment on textbooks, 12% on software, 7% on technology, and 52% on salaries.

Under the leadership provided by Mr. Evans, the instructional materials committee and technology committee merged. The new group consisted of the technology representative; curriculum representatives from elementary, middle and high school; representatives from the business office and central office staff. As described by

Mr. Evans:

So we kind of come up with the numbers and say, “this is how much we project we're going to have to spend that we know we have to spend for either growth or for new adoptions” We project the cost of that and say, “Okay, this is what we have left. How are we going to spend this amount of money?” So it's a committee decision. (Evans, personal communication, June 17, 2013)

When asked about the significant use of instructional materials funds for employee salaries during the second year of the biennium, Mr. Evans explained that:

All of the IMA money that was used for salaries was for Technology Helping Teachers and Technology Support Positions. These positions are either in the classrooms/labs or in direct support of the classroom/lab technology. I was not directly involved in the decision to use the IMA for these salaries, and our Associate Superintendent of Technology who made the decision at the time has

retired. In previous years, when the district received “Technology Funding,” these salaries were covered under that budget. When this fund was merged with IMA it created a loss of budgeted funds to cover these vital positions. (Evans, personal communication, August 21, 2013)

When asked if the district plans to spend a similar amount of their instructional materials funds on salaries during future years, Mr. Evans said that he was not sure.

Table 4 demonstrates that for the biennium, District C spent 57% on textbooks, 12% on software, 3% on technology and 28% on salaries. When asked if they thought the amount of money received for the Instructional Materials Allotment was sufficient for the needs of their district, Ms. Collins and Mr. Evans explained that because they were no longer ordering a textbook for every student (they instead ordered a classroom set in most instances) they were able to find savings not available to them under the prior textbook adoption system. This savings allowed them to purchase supplemental materials and technology that they would otherwise not have been able to afford because of the discontinuation of the state’s technology allotment.

While parents were initially concerned about their students not bringing home textbooks for every course (unless requested in writing by the parent), Ms. Collins explained that the move to a classroom set of textbooks

was one of the greatest advantages of the IMA . . . That one to one is not the way school is taught now or should be taught now. It's not from cover to cover of a textbook and so being able to be more judicious about not purchasing one to one for everyone, I think, was one of the greatest advantages. (Collins, personal communication, June 17, 2013)

Additionally, because the district personnel did not order as many textbooks, they spent less time and money warehousing, buying and selling surplus textbooks.

While a textbook for every student was no longer a requirement in District C, there were a few specific areas where the district chose to focus their Instructional Materials Allotment funds. For example, the district purchased a textbook for every student enrolled in a dual credit course. While some other districts require students to purchase their own materials for these types of courses, District C recognized this as an area of need for their high poverty community.

Also, District C was able to utilize their instructional materials funds to purchase additional copies of a software program that was previous only provided to Title One campuses through a federal grant. The district recognized that this particular program had been beneficial to a certain group of students and wanted to expand this opportunity to all students within the district. The new allotment funds provided that opportunity.

One topic that was of particular importance during my conversations with Ms. Collins and Mr. Evans was the need for checks and balances in the district's selection of instructional materials. As described above, District C worked to balance the requests of teachers in various grade levels and subject areas. They also implemented a system to ensure that potential orders went through the proper channels. If a teacher recommended a particular book or piece of software, it had to be approved by his/her coordinator, then the associate superintendent, then Ms. Collins and Mr. Evans and then sent to the purchasing office. Every dollar of the new allotment system was precious to the district and their purchasing procedures underscored this fact.

Summary

In this chapter, I have sought to establish five areas of legislative intent behind Senate Bill 6 and to describe the bill's implementation at the local level. However, this presentation would not be complete without combining the two sections to answer one of the guiding questions of this study: How did Senate Bill 6's intent translate at the local level?

In order to answer this question, it is important to look at the three districts together, rather than in isolation. Although, as stated in Chapter II, this study isn't meant to be representative of all Texas districts' implementation experiences, I do feel that there are lessons to be learned in comparing the legislative intent and various districts' implementations.

The first area of legislative intent, increased local flexibility, was enacted by districts in a variety of ways. District A used the flexibility extended to districts by Senate Bill 6 to purchase supplemental materials that were not on the state-approved list. Also, they used some of their funds to create a more comprehensive Pre Kindergarten instructional program and to address standardized testing concerns by purchasing additional materials. Personnel in District B were focused primarily on technology needs and they chose to use a significant amount of their Instructional Materials Allotment on innovative content and delivery—a decision that would have been much more challenging under the old textbook system. Similarly, District C used the local flexibility given under Senate Bill 6 to discontinue the purchase of a textbook for every student and instead used the funds for other items, principally software and teacher salaries related to technology. District C also used their allotment funds to expand the purchase of

supplemental materials, which had contributed to student performance in Title I schools, to all its campuses.

The second area of legislative intent, increased use of technology and innovation, was not significantly addressed in District A through its use of Instructional Materials Allotment funds. While the leaders in the district did purchase a large software system outside of the allotment, the majority of their allotment purchases were more conventional in nature. Meanwhile, one of the main concerns for those in District B after the elimination of the technology allotment was not which textbooks to order, but how to address their technology priorities within the new allotment system. The district leaders sought to reinvent content delivery within their district and were excited about the intent of the legislation. Those in District C took a more pragmatic view of the legislative intent regarding technology and innovation and stated that without the removal of the one to one textbook ratio, they would have been unable to continue with their purchase of technology, as they had in the past. Also, they were concerned that large textbook adoptions in the coming biennium would reduce or even eliminate funds available for technology.

The third area of legislative intent, increased teacher and community engagement, emerged out of interviews with legislative staff and policy experts. They seemed to indicate that teachers, not the state, were the best people to decide the most appropriate content delivery method for students, if we move to a more individualized, technology-focused delivery system. This theme was prevalent in conversations with school district representatives, as well, when I asked who in their district was making sure that 100% the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills standards were being met. In

each of the districts, teachers (or committees) were involved in instructional materials selection and several interviewees specifically indicated that teachers would most certainly let the district know if a certain academic element wasn't being covered to the teachers' satisfaction by the selected instructional material.

Specifically regarding community engagement, all district participants indicated that parents and students hadn't yet been involved (or been invited to participate) in the selection of instructional materials. An occasional parent complaint might surface about a certain literature book selected by a teacher and several parents had recently become concerned about their district's use of the controversial regional education service center-developed CSCOPE materials, which had been made a lightning rod issue by certain conservative state politicians and interest groups.

The fourth area of legislative intent, increased efficiency, emerged as a significant topic throughout the study. With the passage of Senate Bill 6, districts no longer had to participate in a virtual textbook warehouse system which required them to locate, package and ship unused books to other districts. This saved precious time and resources for districts, but new challenges emerged. Under the new system, prices for non-adopted instructional materials had to be negotiated with individual companies; districts were now responsible for some shipping costs, which were often exorbitant; and districts wishing to sell used materials to other districts had to work with districts directly and notify the Texas Education Agency of any transactions. A district's ability to find savings was dependent upon the time, efforts and cleverness of specific personnel, a role some had not been asked to play before.

Also related to efficiency (and somewhat related to the previous discussion of teacher engagement), District B found new efficiencies by asking committee members to research potential purchases with their staff. This required teachers and committee representatives to become familiar with the instructional materials and to decide if the items would be of significant benefit to students. The collaboration among teachers and committee members ensured that the district's funds were well spent and materials were being used to their full potential instead of simply sitting on a shelf.

The last area of legislative intent, the decreased authority of the State Board of Education, is not specifically addressed at the local level but is evident in districts' daily implementation of Senate Bill 6. Because districts can now order materials outside of the board approved list, spend their money on software, technological devices, and technology-related teacher salaries, and involve their local teachers and communities in the selection of content, they have been able to side-step the control of the State Board of Education in a way previously unseen in Texas.

CHAPTER V

Research Findings and Data Analysis

My original reason for choosing Senate Bill 6 as a topic of study was my curiosity as to how districts would implement a piece of legislation that represented a significant departure from Texas' nationally-influential textbook adoption system. Almost immediately, I began viewing the situation within an organizational and micropolitical framework, because I expected to find significant changes at the district level concerning how decisions were made. In my mind, these changes might consist of the involvement new stakeholders, greater teacher engagement in the selection of materials, and possibly even the involvement of parents and students.

As I began my interviews with various school district personnel and policy experts, I discovered that Senate Bill 6 had influenced stakeholder involvement somewhat, but that the Texas textbook system as a whole had been altered in a much more profound way. I felt that I needed to step back and look at Senate Bill 6 holistically, which required gathering data not only at the local level but at the legislative level as well. Cresswell (2009) stated that "qualitative researchers try to develop a complex picture of the problem or issue under study. This involves reporting multiple perspectives, identifying the many factors involved in a situation, and generally sketching the larger picture that emerges" (p. 176).

Ultimately, I chose to set aside my initial organizational and micropolitical framework and follow the data trail presented through a comprehensive history of textbook adoptions in Texas, the shift toward the Instructional Materials Allotment, the

legislative intent of Senate Bill 6 and as three local districts' interpretations. And while the study has been primarily descriptive thus far, as suggested by Merriam (1998) and Wolcott (2009), I feel it is now appropriate to borrow from several existing frameworks as I interpret my findings. As Sabatier (2007) stated, the "knowledge of several different perspectives forces the analyst to clarify differences in assumptions across frameworks, rather than implicitly assuming a given set" (p. 6).

Research Purpose

The purpose of this study has been to establish the legislative intent of Senate Bill 6, to describe the implementation of the bill in three school districts, and to explore areas of similarities and differences. The four guiding questions surrounding this topic were as follows:

1. What was the legislative intent of Senate Bill 6?;
2. How were decisions made within three local school districts regarding implementation of Senate Bill 6?;
3. How was Senate Bill 6's intent addressed at the local level? and
4. How has the Instructional Materials Allotment changed the political climate in schools and communities?

In earlier chapters I sought to establish the history of the textbook adoption process in Texas, leading up to Senate Bill 6, through existing literature and conversations with policy experts. I have also described what I believe to be the legislative intent of Senate Bill 6 using legislative documents, video transcripts and interviews with policy experts. Afterwards, I presented how Senate Bill 6 was implemented in three school districts using interviews with school personnel and analysis of district documents. Finally, the

bill's legislative intent and district implementation were compared for similarities and differences.

The purpose of this chapter is twofold: first I will establish four overall themes which have emerged during the study that were identified using data from both the overall case study and the embedded cases. Each theme will be supported using statements from various participants. Second, I will apply the relevant literature to these themes, including researchers' views on overarching policy values, policy implementation and local control. It is not my intent to develop new theory or themes or to situate the study within a single theoretical concept. Instead, I have sought to present the early implementation of a legislative bill, situate the findings within several theoretical frameworks and to leave the more formal analysis of Senate Bill 6 to others as the implementation progresses.

Overall Emergent Themes

Content Versus Delivery of Content

When Senator Florence Shapiro presented Senate Bill 6 on the floor of the Texas Senate, one of her colleagues from San Antonio asked for clarification regarding the legislature's shift in terminology from textbooks to instructional materials as it related to districts' increased use of technology. She asked the senator to “tell us the difference in how much the emphasis is really on the content, no matter what methodology and technology is used to deliver it” (Senator Leticia Van de Putte, Senate Floor, June 3, 2011). Shapiro explained that

there's content and then there's distribution of that content. Currently, instructional materials, when you use that terminology, people just think that it's

interchangeable with the textbooks. For generations we have called content textbooks. That's actually the distribution of the content. What we're hopeful of is that first and foremost what will be used in the allotment, the first things the school district will look for is content. (Senate Floor, June 3, 2011)

Previously, Shapiro had stated during a Senate Education Committee hearing that “we have passed the era where print is the main delivery mechanism for delivery of instructional materials To provide districts with flexibility, to provide the print materials if they choose to do so, or if their preference is to move down the path where technology is integrated into the educational process” (Senate Education Committee, March 29, 2011).

Shapiro's statements represented a dramatic shift in the way legislators and policymakers talked about content in Texas. The district personnel who participated in this study described their various pre-Senate Bill 6 experiences in terms of books, warehouses, unused materials and the logistics of shipping and receiving materials among districts. After the transition to the Instructional Materials Allotment, participants spoke in terms of class sets of textbooks (as opposed to a textbook for every student), the use of supplemental materials to address certain areas of content, software licenses and the mixing and matching of content from various sources and delivery systems.

For example, District B combined general district funds with Instructional Materials Allotment funds to create more collaborative learning environments in 8th and 9th grade math classrooms. The district's assistant superintendent of curriculum and instructiona, Mr. Dollenger noted how:

We're putting [IMA] dollars into things that are going to change. For now, 8th and 9th grade math classrooms, and in the future it's going to be all classrooms in the district where we have very much an engaging kind of classroom setting in math where kids are going to be doing research in math and Skyping with math people in the world (Dollenger, personal communication, June 19, 2013).

Quite suddenly, the conversation had shifted from “which textbook series should our district choose” to “what materials do we need to combine to meet our Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills requirements in a way that will best engage our learners?”

The Locals Know Best

The second overarching theme that has emerged from this study is the concept of local decision makers as the best people to make decisions on behalf of students. This first appeared in my conversation with a legislative staffer who indicated that

“We basically put the control with the administrators, teachers and parents because they know what is best for their students . . . what is needed to make them successful and learn what they need to be prepared for the next level and beyond that, going to college or a career, whatever their choice is” (J. Peterson, personal communication, July 2, 2013).

Similarly, House member Rob Eissler stated on the floor of the House that Senate Bill 6 “provides maximum flexibility for school districts. Districts are able to use the annual allotment to best meet the instructional needs of individual students” (House floor debate on Senate Bill 6, April 6, 2011). Also, the bill analysis created by legislative staff for Senate Bill 6 indicates that Senate Bill 6:

(c) Requires the board of trustees of a school district or the governing body of an open-enrollment charter school to distribute printed instructional material to students in the manner that the board or governing body determines is most effective and economical (Texas Legislature Online, n.d.).

By stating that locals know best, legislators and staff were perhaps indicating that state government doesn't always know best or that they no longer wanted to be burdened by the ramifications of the State Board of Education's decisions. Several individuals with whom I spoke indicated that legislators had grown tired of the constantly increasing costs of textbook adoptions and the negative national attention paid to Texas regarding newly revised History and Science Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills, a process many viewed as overtly ideological.

Rapid Pace of Technology

The third overarching theme to emerge from my research is the rapid pace of technology advancements and the need to structure systems that can respond. Historically, Texas textbooks were reviewed and adopted on approximately a ten-year cycle. While districts could request state-adopted textbooks at any point during those ten years, the content would not be significantly improved or updated until the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills were reviewed or revised and additional procedures were followed.

Typically, a proclamation would be issued, textbook companies would develop materials, the state would review and adopt textbooks, ask the legislature for the appropriate funds and, finally, supply school districts with materials. This system was seen by many as antiquated and not able to match the performance of the various new

technologies. Initial legislative steps were taken for the Commissioner of Education to approve technology-based materials more quickly but Senate Bill 6 signified a distinct departure from a board-established timeline for selection of instructional materials (J. Bergland, personal communication, August 27, 2013).

District A chose to use part of their instructional materials allotment to continue purchasing from the State Board of Education approved list. They also selected a product called STEMscopes™ which, according to the company's website, is

a K-12 comprehensive online science curriculum program that provides hands-on inquiry activities, assessments, problem-based-learning, intervention tools, acceleration materials, and teacher support resources. Our program is **100% aligned to the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS)** [emphasis in original] and meets the rigor and depth of both the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) and high school End-of-Course (EOC) assessments (STEMscopes™, n.d.).

STEMscopes™ was developed at Rice University and had been reviewed and approved by the Texas Education Agency's 2014 Proclamation Review Panel as having met 100% of the science Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for each grade level. This means that the developer must abide by TEA rules and not alter any content within a year of TEA approval (and only with written approval after that). But because this product is online, there is an opportunity to adjust content on a regular basis to better meet the needs of students.

This is Our Money

The final theme that emerged through this study is based on a statement I heard multiple times at the local level: this is *our* money. Previous to Senate Bill 6, districts selected from a list of state-approved materials, which were sent to them free of charge by the state. If the district wanted to make off-list purchases related to instructional materials, they could use their general funds.

Then, with the implementation of the Instructional Materials Allotment, a specific amount of money was allotted to districts to use as they chose, within guidelines. Even though these funds came from the state's Available School Fund and were administrated by the Texas Education Agency, districts began to refer to the funds as “ours.” This created a shift in the way local decisions were made and resulted in previously untapped efficiencies.

As stated by Mr. Dollenger, “We take that very sincerely and we are going to use this [money] for what is needed . . . It's not like we spent the state's money. We spent this money on it. It came out of our pocketbook” (Dollenger, personal communication, June 19, 2013). Similarly, Mr. Solis in District A discussed the need to consider whether something was really needed by teachers:

But now, when it's your own money and you're buying it, “Oh, hold on. Do we really need it?? And so it really made you focus on what exactly do we need and what are we going to use, because if we're going to purchase it, now that money is gone. (Solis, personal communication, June 11, 2013)

A critical piece of this increased perception of local ownership is the ability for districts to keep their money and roll it over into future biennia. As Peterson explained,

districts now had the opportunity to roll their funds forward and seek out new efficiencies, which reinforced the feeling that the money belonged to the local districts. They were not seeking out these efficiencies to save the state money but to benefit their local communities and students (J. Peterson, personal communication, July 2, 2013).

Application of Relevant Literature

Policy Values

For several decades now, researchers have worked to classify the various stages of policy development. For example, Rist (1994) included three stages: policy formation, implementation and accountability. Similarly, Cole and Taebel (1987) referenced seven policy development stages: problem recognition, agenda formulation, policy formation, policy adoption, policy implementation, policy evaluation and policy termination. Regardless of the number of stages, many researchers agree that the amount of time leading up to a significant change in policy and the realization of that new policy can take 20 to 40 years.

Researchers also agree that the policy development process is complex, ever changing, and involves a number of participants “with potentially different values/interests, perception of the situation, and policy preferences” (Sabatier, 2007, p. 3). Participants in the development of Senate Bill 6 included elected officials from the Texas House of Representatives and Senate, legislative staffers, educators, students, textbook company representatives, technology organization representatives, members of the State Board of Education, as well as others. Lingard and Ozga (2007) described this work as “suturing together different interests to achieve apparent consensus and legitimacy” (p. 2).

The political values and interests represented by study participants have been similarly categorized by scholars and include efficiency, equity, quality and choice (Febey & Louis, 2008; Mitchell, 2011; Norton, Webb, Dlugosh, & Sybouts, 1996; Sergiovanni, Burlingame, Coombs, & Thurston, 1992; Stout, Tallerico & Scribner, 1994). Guthrie explained that:

The way people prioritize the major values is crucially important; in the real world of limited choices and resource constraints, one cannot pursue all the values at the same time. Rather, policy advocates must emphasize a few central values, ignoring or at least downplaying the others. Because all the values cannot be pursued simultaneously with equal vigor, the set of dominant values behind education policy changes cyclically over time. (as cited in Fowler, 2013, p. 103)

Fowler cautioned that because certain values are naturally in conflict with others, “a central goal of sound education policymaking is therefore to establish a *balance* among the most important values so none is seriously compromised” (p. 104).

Of the four political values established in the literature, what are the most important values when analyzing educational policy? Perhaps none is more significant than the others but are simply emphasized by policymakers at a particular point in time. Stout, Tallerico and Scribner (1994) argued that the issue of conflicting values is fundamentally unresolvable within a “pluralist democratic system” and suggested that these “tensions have surrounded public schooling since its invention in the United States” (p. 5).

Not surprisingly, each of the four political values emerged during my initial data analysis. Some received emphasis from policymakers while other values were inevitably

set aside. In a similar study by Wirt, Mitchell and Marshall (1988), the educational policies of two states (Illinois and Wisconsin) were studied, looking at efficiency, equity, quality, and choice. The project concluded with a helpful comparison of opposing and reinforcing values, which I have replicated here. But first it would be helpful to present each of the political values in isolation.

Efficiency

Wirt, Mitchell and Marshall (1988) explained that the concept of efficiency is two-fold when considered as a political value. First, “efficiency has an *economic* form, that is, the effort to minimize costs while maximizing gains in order to optimize program performance” (p. 273). Second, “efficiency also has an *accountability* form. This is the mandating of those means by which superiors in an authority system can oversee, and hence control, their subordinates’ exercise of power and responsibility” (p. 273). Fowler (2013) indicated that efficiency is the primary driver in public education today and that “policymakers are extremely concerned about the cost of education and about whether various policies are worth the financial outlays they entail” (p. 100).

In the case of Senate Bill 6, school district participants indicated that they were able to find efficiencies through class sets of textbooks instead of buying a book for every child. With the savings, they purchased materials and technology they had previously been unable to afford. In some ways, however, the system seems to have become less efficient, as personnel in each district are now responsible for making sure they have met the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills requirements, resulting in replicated tasks across thousands of school districts. Previously, this task was primarily handled at the state level, as the State Board of Education approved textbooks that had met 100% of the

requirements. Now, school board members in every local district are required to certify that their district has met 100% of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills standards.

Equity

Equity is defined as “assuring that policies have an equitable effect on the citizens that they affect” (Mitchell, 2011, p. 20). Mitchell describes the political value of equity as a redress instead of an address value, meaning that equity is often the last value to be addressed—sometimes by our state and federal court system. Wirt, Mitchell and Marshall (1988) similarly explained that, “in the policy world, Equity usually means the use of public resources to redistribute public resources to satisfy disparities in human needs” (p. 273).

The crafters of Senate Bill 6 were interested in achieving equity by distributing the same per student allotment throughout the state, but some study participants indicated that the allotment created an unexpected disparity. When looking at the allotment system as a whole, small school districts seemed not to have enough instructional materials funds, mid-sized districts seemed to have about the right amount, and large districts seemed to have more than was needed because of economies of scale.

Of even more concern was former State Board of Education member Lowe’s statement regarding economically disadvantaged students who have limited access to technology at home. As districts move to electronic delivery of content, some families will require additional assistance from the school district to provide electronic devices for students to use at home. Often, these are the same districts that no longer purchase a textbook for every student, meaning that economically disadvantaged students would have neither a book nor a computer to complete their homework. Additionally, parental

involvement in the learning process may be limited if the parent is unable to explain a particular academic concept to their child or assist with electronic devices (G. Lowe, personal communication, August 6, 2013).

Quality

The political value of quality is possibly the most complex of the four values established in the literature. Fowler (2013) explained that educational quality is most often presented as an economic concept with “higher, more intellectually demanding standards in schools” (p. 102). Alternately, quality can be associated with a utilitarian philosophy that “stimulates creativity and autonomous learning” (p. 102). Similarly, Wirt, Mitchell and Marshall (1988) described quality as “instrumental for another and more basic social and political value, namely, the belief in the crucial importance of education for the future citizen’s life chances. As means, Quality policies can provide the norms and resources to improve those life chances by preparing the citizen for a complex world” (p. 274).

Senate Bill 6 addresses the value of quality in that it allows school districts to customize instructional materials on behalf of local students’ needs while continuing to meet the state’s curriculum and testing requirements. This, of course, assumes that the district has the appropriate resources for review of materials and the ability to negotiate with individual vendors. Senator Shapiro indicated her belief that Texas was quickly falling behind in regard to technology use in the classroom and that an allotment system was the quickest way to incentivize districts’ movement to such a system (F. Shapiro, personal communication, August 15, 2013).

Choice

The political value of choice can be broadly defined as “the presence of a range of options for action, as well as the ability to select a preferred option” (Wirt, Mitchell & Marshall, 1988, p. 272). Fowler (2013) similarly described this concept as individualism, which is the heart of American culture:

The very structure of the system, with its thousands of small local school districts, is an expression of individualism; resistance by Americans to policies such as national standards, curriculum and examinations can be understood as a desire for individualistic rather than group-oriented policies. (p. 95)

The concept of choice is especially prevalent in Texas education, through the use of locally-elected school boards that are ultimately responsible for hiring a superintendent and staff, managing locally collected property taxes and, now, selecting instructional materials that meet the expectations of their local community while also certifying that Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills requirements have been met.

Regarding Senate Bill 6, the legislature created many new opportunities for local choice—such as selection of instructional materials, determining how the district’s content would be delivered to students (electronic versus textbook), and whether funds would be completely spent or saved for larger purchases in later years. In our conversation, Senator Shapiro was quick to point out that Senate Bill 6 was not intended to change the selection of content in any way, but to provide opportunities for districts to change their delivery mechanism if they wished (F. Shapiro, personal communication, August 15, 2013). While all districts are still required to meet the same Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills, might not the freedom to choose different materials

unintentionally result in varying quality of content? This might include varying degrees of instructional complexity, accuracy of information or the conservative/liberal leanings of a particular community or interest group.

Value Conflict and Balance

As stated previously, all political values cannot be emphasized all of the time, equally (Fowler, 2013). Inevitably, some values conflict with each other, which may result in a particular value being eclipsed temporarily. Other values, however, complement or reinforce each other. Wirt, Mitchell and Marshall (1988) indicated that “Choice inherently opposes all values, Efficiency reinforces all but Choice, and Quality opposes all but Efficiency” (p. 280).

Based on the data collected for this study and the interpretations offered in relation to the legislative intent of Senate Bill 6, I concur with Wirt, Mitchell and Marshall’s (1988) statement regarding the opposition between choice and efficiency. Further, I propose that the Texas Legislature had become so frustrated with rising textbook costs and the State Board of Education’s tendency toward grandstanding that they traded the power of choice (specifically the state’s control of instructional materials) for efficiency.

By establishing a fixed instructional materials dollar amount (a percentage of the Available School Fund to be distributed to the Instructional Materials Allotment each biennium), the members of the legislature removed themselves from an ongoing financial negotiation process with the State Board of Education regarding textbooks, thus achieving greater efficiency for the state. Additionally, they specified that school district personnel could use their allotted funds to purchase materials both on and off the board’s

approved list which expanded choice for district personnel.

School districts now have an increased ability to choose materials that best fit the needs of their students. But at what cost? The fact that districts now spend more time evaluating potential instructional materials, negotiating with vendors, and paying their own shipping costs (if they purchase items outside the board approved list) means a less efficient system overall than when the state directly negotiated with publishers.

Participants in District C indicated that part of the reason the district stopped providing a textbook for every student was because they needed to find efficiencies so they could still afford to purchase technology-related items (Collins, personal communication, June 17, 2013).

Fowler (2013) indicated that the current emphasis on choice and efficiency began in the early 1980s, with the publication of *A Nation at Risk* (The National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983). The report called for “a wide-ranging package of reforms including school choice, proficiency testing, merit pay for teachers, a national curriculum and tests, and up-to-date technology” (Fowler, p. 103). Keywords included “educational freedom . . . more bang for the buck and greater productivity” (p. 103). According to Fowler, the report represented a pendulum swing away from the value of equity, which had resulted in progress for minorities, women, and the handicapped during the 1970s, toward efficiency.

Not surprisingly, equity isn’t emphasized in Senate Bill 6. Districts are required to prove that they are covering 100% of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills, but there is no state-mandated safety net for students if a district decides to provide instructional content in a format that is not easily accessible by students in all situations.

Former board member Lowe expressed clear concern for students who don't have access to technology at home or who share a device among numerous siblings:

I don't worry so much for the kids who come from homes like mine, with engaged, involved parents, two of them, who want to help their children succeed. But fewer and fewer children come from those kinds of families anymore. It involves technology that's available only in their classroom that they don't have access to at home and don't have a parent who could help them with that. I think the divide grows. (G. Lowe, personal communication, August 6, 2013)

Ms. Lowe also proposed that a lack of printed materials at home could firmly establish the school as the keeper of knowledge:

I also worry we're removing the parent from the ability to help guide with homework. It can either be intentional, because you don't want parental oversight or involvement, or because the parent doesn't have the education level or ability, the tech savvy to assist Beyond the experienced classroom teacher, it's the involvement of the parent in the student's education that has always shown to be the biggest factor in how well a student does. (G. Lowe, personal communication, August 6, 2013)

In contrast, Senator Shapiro explained that it was the job of the local district to ensure that all students and families had equal access to materials because legislators were not in the best position to make detailed decisions for the state's five million students. She also indicated that Senate Bill 6 presented opportunities regarding partnering with local businesses to provide technology for students in challenging financial situations (F. Shapiro, personal communication, August 15, 2013).

Another value not emphasized by Senate Bill 6 was quality. For decades, Texas' textbook adoption system was regarded nationally as the gold standard for educational content; what was worthy of selection in Texas was worthy elsewhere as well (D. Anderson, personal communication, July 2, 2013). Now, with the implementation of Senate Bill 6, it is uncertain whether publishers will continue to participate in the state's rigorous approval process or simply market directly to school districts.

Fowler (2013) explains that quality is inevitably decreased when efficiency is emphasized:

Upholding academic standards requires up-to-date teaching materials, well-educated teachers, relatively small classes, and much teacher preparation time Pressures to cut expenditures lead to reductions in all these areas, often causing such increased workloads for teachers and administrators that they change their goal from achieving quality to meeting minimum standards (p. 106).

While there was some indication during the conduct of this study that participants equated technology with quality (such as with District B's prioritization of technology and collaborative learning), it may not be possible for districts to attain true quality because they receive a finite amount of funds from the legislature each biennium.

Policy Implementation

Every educator has, at some time, played the game with his/her students called Telephone where someone whispers a message in another person's ear, who repeats it to the next child, and so on until the last person gets a completely different message than was originally presented. Some might say that new legislative policies are enacted or implemented in much the same way as they move from the legislature, through various

agencies, and into the local arena. Spillane (2004) explained that local officials work hard to put policy into action and that they don't often attempt to undermine policies established by others: “The story is morphed as it moves from player to player This happens not because the players are intentionally trying to change the story; it happens because that is the nature of human sense-making” (p. 8). Similarly, Ball, Maguire and Braun (2012) stated that:

Policies rarely tell you exactly what to do, they rarely dictate or determine practice, but some more than others narrow the range of creative responses. This is in part because policy texts are typically written in relation to the best of all possible schools, schools that only exist in the fevered imaginations of politicians, civil servants and advisers and in relation to fantastical contexts. These texts cannot simply be *implemented*! They have to be translated from text to action—put 'into' practice—in relation to history and to context with the resources available. (p. 3)

So what can we learn from the literature in relation to the implementation of Senate Bill 6? First, it is important to understand that the study of policy implementation was identified as such in the 1950s and has changed significantly over time. Pressman and Wildavsky's (1973) *Implementation* set the stage for the first generation of implementation studies focused primarily on “rais[ing] awareness of the issue in the wider scholarly community and in the general public” (Pulzl & Treib, 2007, p. 89). Fowler (2013) explained that the primary lesson presented within most first generation implementation studies is that most policy implementations fail: “In education, many contemporary policy implementations—perhaps most—continue to make the same

mistakes that were made . . . in the late 1960s, which is why the first generation of research is still relevant today” (p. 245).

The second generation of policy implementation studies is often referred to as the top-down and bottom-up approach and generally focuses on why some policies fail and some succeed. The emphasis is on empirical study and a “much more sophisticated and consciously theoretic” approach (deLeon & deLeon, 2002, p. 469). Pulzl and Treib (2007) found that “top-down models put their main emphasis on the ability of decision makers to produce unequivocal policy objectives and on controlling the implementation stage” while “bottom-up critiques view local bureaucrats as the main actors in policy delivery and conceive of implementation as negotiation process within networks of implementers” (p. 90). As with the first generation of implementation studies, the top-down and bottom-up approaches to policy implementation are still very much alive and have produced strong recommendations for school leaders regarding the best approaches for new policy implementation. (Fowler, 2013)

The third generation of policy implementation studies seeks to explain “why behavior varies across time, across policies, and across units of government and by predicting the type of implementation behavior that is likely to occur in the future. In a word, the objective of the third-generation research is to be more *scientific* . . . (Goggin, 1990, p. 171). Through a variety of third generation theories, scholars explain that there is no best implementation procedure and that the specifics of the situation must dictate the actions of implementors. Additionally, the research calls for a “strong social infrastructure for implementation”—such as mentors, coaches and support networks to facilitate success (Fowler, 2013, p. 255).

In addition to emphasizing the three generations of policy implementation studies, the literature also demonstrates several overarching themes related to policy implementation. The first is that the various steps of policy development do not occur in isolation, which is why I ultimately decided to include a section on the legislative intent of Senate Bill 6. Any study that attempts to arbitrarily separate policy development, implementation and evaluation fails to recognize the complexities of the process. Jann and Wegrich (2007) noted how:

implementation research has played a crucial role in preparing the ground for that critique; implementation studies revealed that a clear-cut separation between policy formation and implementation is hardly reflecting real-world policy-making, either in terms of any hierarchical or chronological sequence (first formation, then implementation), nor in terms of the involved actors. (p. 55)

Second, the literature makes clear that organizations do not implement policy, people do. This was an important concept for me to consider as I reflected on my interviews with participants, each of whom had an effect on the implementation of Senate Bill 6 at the state, agency or local level. McGlaughlin (1991) borrowed a term from Weatherly and Lipsky (1977) in explaining how it is that “at each point in the policy process, a policy is transformed as individuals interpret and respond to it. What actually is delivered or provided under the aegis of a policy depends finally on the individual at the end of the line, or the ‘street level bureaucrat’” (p. 189). The concept of the street level bureaucrat reflects back to the second generation bottom-up approach and emphasizes the point that the policy development process does not end with a mandate

handed down from the national or state level, but continues as the policy is further implemented and massaged at the local level.

Last, the literature on policy implementation includes the dual concepts of capacity and will. McGlaughlin (1991) touched on these issues in describing how:

the overarching, obvious conclusion running through empirical research on policy implementation is that it is incredibly hard to make something happen, most especially across layers of government and institutions. It's incredibly hard not just because social problems tend to be thorny. It's hard to make something happen primarily because policymakers can't mandate what matters. We have learned that policy success depends critically on two broad factors: local capacity and will. Capacity, admittedly a difficult issue, is something that policy can address. Training can be offered. Dollars can be provided. Consultants can be engaged to furnish missing expertise. But will, or the attitudes, motivation, and beliefs that underlie an implementor's response to a policy's goals or strategies, is less amenable to policy intervention. (p. 187)

In Chapter IV of this study, I presented five areas of legislative intent related to Senate Bill 6 which included local flexibility, innovation/technology, teacher/community engagement, efficiency, and decreased State Board of Education authority. The findings from the embedded case studies of three local school districts demonstrated varying levels of local capacity and will as districts implemented Senate Bill 6 and the Instructional Materials Allotment.

For example, District B had both the organizational capacity and the will to pursue a large amount of technology for use in their classrooms. In fact, leadership in

this district had already been pursuing the goals supported by Senate Bill 6. This is consistent with the work of Fuhrman, Clune and Elmore (1991) and their assertion that:

many local districts are going far beyond compliance; they are responding very actively to state reforms. In over half of our local districts, administrators saw opportunities in the state reforms to accomplish their own objectives, particularly as the state reforms provided significant funding increases. Local districts are actively orchestrating various state policies around local priorities, strategically interacting with the state to achieve local goals. (p. 209)

Senator Shapiro told me how the heart of Senate Bill 6 was flexibility for local districts as they implemented a bill that was a dramatic departure from the state's textbook distribution system. While her goal was to increase the use of innovative materials in all schools, her conversations with local school personnel—especially small districts—helped her realize that districts would need to implement Senate Bill 6 in their own time and according to the capacity and will of their local community. (F. Shapiro, personal communication, August 15, 2013)

Issues of Local Control

My overarching interest in SB 6 and the Instructional Materials Allotment has always been its emphasis on local control. While many federal and state education policy mandates emphasize centralized control (Fowler, 2013), Senate Bill 6 calls for a system that requires increased local engagement and decision-making on behalf of local communities. The contrast between Senate Bill 6 and more centralized policies begs the question: which educational issues are best dealt with at the federal/state level versus the local level?

Tyack's (2002) introduction to *School Districts and Instructional Renewal* specified three tasks that are "particularly important . . . for district leaders intent on preserving what is valuable and fixing what is not in their local schools" (p. 22). These include:

- competence in performing the everyday tasks that seem redundant and unimportant but are critical to the basic functioning of the school;
- serving as mediator between innovators, teachers, and parents while also making sure that new innovations are directly applicable to the local situation; and
- ensuring that the community develops a "sense of the common good as represented in the education of children." (p. 23)

Interestingly, the issue of selecting appropriate instructional materials on behalf of one's district seems to fit quite naturally within all three of these tasks, which leads me to believe that curriculum selection and management is best handled at the local level.

Also concerning federal, state, and local control, Mintrom (2009) described the need to strike a delicate balance between communities (and school districts) and the larger society's goals. Mintrom warns that by leaning too far toward a model of federal/state control, we remove the democratic element that makes our education system what it is. However, by leaving decision making entirely to local control, we run the risk of not addressing certain social issues.

A third idea pertinent to the issue of local control is referred to as the zero-sum concept (Fuhrman & Elmore, 1990; Malen, 2011; Mintrom, 2009; Timar, 1989).

Fuhrman and Elmore (1990) suggested that the relationship between the state and local school district is not a "zero-sum game," meaning that more influence from one group

does not necessarily equal less influence from another group. The authors noted how there are resources at the local level that are not being used adequately to influence state policy. These include district superintendents who know how to work well with task forces, commissions and lobbyists to affect policies; the use of media and public opinion to affect policy; and local leaders who “know how to use state and federal mandates as leverage” (p. 93).

A final common thread in the literature related to local control is the concept of responsibility. Allen and Mintrom (2010) explained that responsibility “is manifest when representative actors face choices, understand the broader consequences of those choices, and choose options that are likely to produce good and fair outcomes” (p. 439).

Timar (1989) touched on the issue of responsibility within his discussion of improving organization competence, which he described as enabling districts to competently adjust curriculum, allocate resources and assist in the skill development of district personnel. However, while the district is the focus of Timar’s discussion on responsibility, it is also the “responsibility of state-level policymakers, professional educational organizations, schools of education, civic organizations, and local parents, teachers, and administrators” (p. vi) to provide the flexibility needed for district leadership to demonstrate responsible decision-making.

On July 30, 2012, Dr. Andreas Schleicher, head of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development’s (OECD) Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), provided invited testimony for the Texas Joint Committee on Public School Finance (Joint Committee on Public School Finance, 2012). His presentation touched upon a large variety of topics but one in particular caught my attention. It was

his comment comparing the United States' interpretation of local control with higher performing nations. Dr. Schleicher stated that:

When you look at the United States, the first thing people will say is that the United States is a country of local control. That's true at the district level, but actually if you look at the relative discretion that individual schools have, you have a lot less discretion than many high performing nations. (Joint Committee on Public School Finance, 2012)

He went on to say that local control at the state or district level does not necessarily create positive outcomes, while control at the point of delivery, the local school, does create positive outcomes.

Dr. Schleicher's presentation and international data on student performance (OECD, 2010) demonstrate a concern I have had throughout this study, which is the lack of a clear consensus regarding the definition of local control. Throughout the study, policy makers' statements indicated that they thought of local control in terms of school district administrators and, in some cases, teachers. In their opinion, local administrators were in the best position to make the best instructional materials decisions for their district. Similarly, study participants who were school district administrators did not give any indication that they intended to include parents or students in the decision making process over instructional materials, therefore they also reflected the belief that administrators are the best people to make decisions related to materials.

Ms. Lowe was the only participant who expressed a concern about the potential lack of teacher and parent involvement in the decision-making process. If those in a district decided to deliver their instructional content primarily through the use of

electronic devices or they purchased a significant amount of materials that had not been reviewed by the State Board of Education, the burden would fall on teachers to “ensure all of [the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills] are covered. I think sometimes they reach the point where they realize maybe the materials they have don’t cover every critical concepts well” (G. Lowe, personal communication, August 6, 2013).

Also, if the majority of instructional materials were online and parents did not have Internet access at home, it would be more difficult for parents to engage in decisions about the use of particular instructional materials. The former State Board of Education member believe that:

Sometimes the “not wanting the parent to know or to find out because I [the teacher] am the expert and they shouldn’t be able to tell me how to do it,” that does happen. Maybe more than I’m comfortable with. There ought to be a means for a parent to check up on those things. Our education code still affords a parent the right to see all instructional materials used in the classroom. (G. Lowe, personal communication, August 6, 2013)

By not involving parents in the decision-making process regarding instructional materials or by making it more difficult for parents to view instructional content, there is an inevitable erosion of trust on the part of the parent as well as potential legal issues for school districts and the state.

Summary

As I’ve thought about Senate Bill 6 in relation to my overall policy experiences with the Texas Legislature, I have begun to think about the topic of educational decision making in relation to trust. At the federal and state level, when legislators feel that

schools are failing, trust is lost and legislation becomes more controlling and precise (Tyack, 2002). At the local level, the superintendent may lose trust in his/her staff, replace the existing school leadership, and implement a top-down program for improvement. All of these actions have the potential to discourage principals, teachers, parents and students, further exacerbating the problem and creating a lack of local engagement and responsibility (Allen & Mintrom, 2010).

The actions of the State Board of Education during the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills revision of social studies and science standards in 2009 eroded the Texas Legislature's confidence (and the public's confidence) in the board's ability to make sound curriculum decisions. It will take time (and wise decisions on their part) for the board to regain that trust. Meanwhile, there is a lack of trust of the legislature on the part of school districts regarding whether the state will continue to fund instructional materials at a reasonable rate and increase that amount over time as needed. It will take several budget cycles for leaders of school districts to trust that the legislature intends to provide these funds long term.

And finally, district leaders will need to make wise decisions about their instructional materials funds over time to retain the legislature and general public's trust. A significant number of study participants expressed concern that a few districts might: make a big mistake. Somebody's going to spend millions of dollars either ill-advised or truly illegally. It's going to either be a reflection of corruption or incompetence (J. Jonas, personal communication, June 18, 2013); Invariably, you know it. There are going to be growing pains. Some district is going to learn the hard way . . . lessons learned and we expect that. But when

you're talking about a thousand plus districts plus 300 charters, someone is going to unintentionally screw something up (J. Peterson, personal communication, July 2, 2013);

I think if there was a major problem at a major district you'd hear about it. I think it would take that for something different to happen with SB6 [For example], at a major district, they run out of money and for a year can't provide enough science books for all students and they're scrambling to make ends meet (G. Lowe, personal communication, August 6, 2013);

If districts implement Senate Bill 6 well, the legislators should allow the instructional materials allotment and the local control of content to continue. If mistakes are made, and as Hess and Kelly (2011) indicated, "as soon as the cycle of implementation begins, the cycle of lawmaking does too—the partisan and policy brawls spill out of the corridors of the Capitol" (pp. 52-53). Lawmakers will quickly retract the local control given to districts just a few years ago (p. 52-53).

Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was to present the overall emergent themes from the study as a whole and to connect these to the relevant literature on policy values, policy implementation and issues of local control. My analyses and interpretations are not:

derived from rigorous agreed-upon, carefully specified procedures, but from our efforts at sense-making, a human activity that includes intuition, past experience, emotion—personal attributes of human researchers that can be argued endlessly but neither proved nor disproved to the satisfaction of all (Wolcott, 2009, p. 30).

The final chapter of this study will summarize procedures, findings and conclusions and suggest implications for future practice, theory and policy. It is my hope that the information within this study, especially concerning policy values and issues of local control, will provide helpful information for future scholars and politicians who, like me, are looking to make a positive difference in public education.

CHAPTER VI

Discussion

In no other social institution are notions of hierarchy and equality and democracy and authoritarian control forced to co-exist in quite the same proximity.

-Svi Shapiro

We are at a crossroads in public education. This is a time of rapidly changing technology, a time of media and public scrutiny of educational practices (Malen, 2011; Tyack, 2002), and a time of increased corporatization of education and educational practices (Waite & Waite, 2010). Every day, we, as educators, are bombarded with new ideas, reforms, new educational products and services, and common core ideals that threaten to shift instruction away from the traditional concept of local control (Malen, 2011).

While it is important to note that issues of local versus federal/state control are cyclical in nature (Tyack & Cuban, 1995), this time it feels different to some of us in the policy arena. The media's penchant for sensationalism has resulted in shocking stories of poorly maintained facilities and corruption at every level of school leadership (Williams, 2005). Some education reformers are crying out for stronger accountability measures (Smith, 2012) while others call for increased school choice and a more permanent departure from any type of governmental control through the use of vouchers (Hess, 2010).

The public education crossroads referenced above is this: will the people of the United States continue to support the idea of government-run schools or will they subscribe to the idea that public education is irremediably broken? This may seem like a

far-fetched question but it is one that is being considered in the halls of our federal and state capitols (Holley & Fikac, 2012).

Legislation like Senate Bill 6 is a testing ground for the concept of local control. It is a broad statement of trust that indicates that the state legislature is willing to shift control of instructional materials selection to educators and communities, as they know their students best. It is an opportunity for districts to engage in a dialogue with teachers and their local communities, to broaden the decision-making process beyond the central administrator's office, and to draw attention to the benefits of local decision-making.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to establish the legislative intent of Senate Bill 6, to describe the bill's implementation in three Texas school districts, and to explore similarities and differences between legislative intent and district implementation. In my comparison of legislative intent versus district implementation, I found four overarching themes and situated those themes within several theoretical concepts. The research questions used to guide the study were:

1. What was the legislative intent of Senate Bill 6?;
2. How were decisions made within three local school districts regarding implementation of Senate Bill 6?;
3. How was Senate Bill 6's intent addressed at the local level?; and
4. How has the Instructional Materials Allotment changed the political climate in schools and communities?

Study participants included an elected official, legislative staff, policy experts from a variety of backgrounds, a former State Board of Education member, and local school

district personal. Each participant provided a unique viewpoint and increased the richness of the study through his/her participation.

Four overarching themes were established within this study and each theme was situated within several theoretical concepts. The themes were: content versus delivery of content, the locals know best, the rapid pace of technological change, and this is our money. The theoretical concepts selected for this study were drawn from existing research related to policy values, policy implementation, and issues of local control.

Interpretations and Conclusions

Through the analysis of the data, I found that local districts had generally met the five areas of legislative intent of Senate Bill 6, which were: local flexibility, innovation and technology, teacher and community engagement, efficiency, and a decreased state board of education authority. For example, those from each district expressed satisfaction regarding the amount of control they had been given over selection of instructional materials. Two of the three districts utilized allotment funds to increase the use of technology in their districts and District B planned to move to a textbook-free district within the next five years. Regarding teacher and community engagement, districts sometimes utilized the expertise of teachers in decision-making but did not include the community. Two of the three districts pursued greater efficiency by reducing the number of textbooks purchased and last; the decisions made within all three districts were evidence of the reduction of State Board of Education control.

While the districts did meet the five areas of established areas of legislative intent, I do not believe districts made a conscious decision to address each of these areas. Instead, districts were responding to the intricacies of the new policy as crafted by the

legislature. Fowler (2013) indicated four types of legislatively-developed education policies which include *mandates*—a required behavior with consequences for non-compliance; *inducements*—the transfer of money or services in exchange for certain behaviors; *capacity building*—an investment in the improvement of a group or organization; and *system change*—which is the transfer of authority from one group to another. Interestingly, Senate Bill 6 seemed to borrow from each of Fowler’s policy types, in that the bill laid out what was required of districts (mandate), involved the transfer of money for certain desired behaviors (inducement), encouraged investment in new technologies (capacity building), and transferred authority from the State Board of Education to local districts (system change). What Senate Bill 6 didn’t address were the specifics of local implementation. The legislature ceded control of policy implementation details for a more efficient system, the possibility of increased technology in the classroom, and the reduction of control by the State Board of Education.

One of the most important things to take away from this study is the concept of policy values. Fowler (2013) indicated that the way people prioritize values, in this case efficiency, equity, quality and choice, is critical to the discussion of policy development. Inevitably, some policy values conflict with some others, and a balance among the four is crucial for the continuation of a healthy public education system. The construction of Senate Bill 6 favors efficiency in exchange for control (and possibly quality and equity) which Wirt, Mitchell and Marshall (1988) indicate are philosophically-opposed values.

The recent controversy surrounding the State Board of Education and the ever-increasing cost of textbooks encouraged the legislature to cede the selection of

instructional materials (choice) in favor of a set dollar amount to be distributed to districts each biennium (efficiency). Additionally, quality of instructional materials was potentially reduced because of state's loss of control over what textbooks would be used in local districts. Equity was also potentially reduced through the emphasis on technological devices as opposed to printed textbooks for every student.

Implications

Two areas of implications have emerged from this research: implications for education policy and implications for school districts. First, this research has implications for education policy as legislators and other policy experts consider future education legislation. State senators and representatives come to the Capitol with ideas about how to solve specific problems, but sometimes their best efforts create other unexpected problems in the process because of their lack of knowledge concerning the policy-making process or for some other reason. A greater awareness of their proposed solutions within the framework of the four stated political values (Wirt, Mitchell & Marshall, 1988) would help identify their foundational priorities and answer the question of who will benefit from their proposed legislation.

Taylor, Rzvi, Lingard, and Henry (1997) explained that a policy isn't just text. It is a statement about values and desired outcomes and is continuously modified throughout the policy-making process and beyond based on the desires of the author and other interested parties, especially those intended to implement such policies. The values demonstrated in a policy determine which voices are heard or silenced, a concept often overlooked by legislators. Some legislators see their policy simply as "right" without asking the hard questions about who wins and or loses.

This research also has implications for education policy as it relates to the amount of time needed to implement a new policy. The literature indicates that a complex policy may take as many as 20-40 years to reach the final stages of evaluation. While Senate Bill 6 is not as complex as some other education policies, it is very much in its initial implementation phase. This case study represents the first two years of local district implementation and all district participants indicated uncertainty about how they would spend their Instructional Materials Allotment funds in future years. They even expressed concern as to what monies would be made available in future years.

Additionally, local school administrators recognize the significant number of moving parts regarding school funding, ongoing Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills revisions, the laborious task of reviewing instructional materials, and the rapid pace of technological advancements. It would be impossible for anyone at the local, agency, or state level to determine the long-term ramifications of Senate Bill 6 at this time.

This research has implications for education policy as legislators consider changes to the Instructional Materials Allotment in future legislative sessions. There is a specific concern among local school district personnel related to economies of scale. It is unclear whether districts receive enough allotment funding to meet instructional materials and technology obligations, especially in small school districts. A weighted allotment based on student enrollment may be one solution to consider.

This research has implications for school districts as they enter the second biennium of the implementation of Senate Bill 6 and the research points to the power of people. While early implementation studies focused on top-down approaches and asked why new policies were not being successfully implemented, bottom-up implementation

studies indicated that it's the everyday people within an organization that determines the success of a new policy. As indicated by McGlaughlin (1991), "organizations don't innovate or implement change, individuals do" (p. 189). While a school district can certainly approach Senate Bill 6 from a top-down approach and make decisions solely from the central office, the conversations with teachers, and perhaps community members, are what will produce innovative ideas and engagement at multiple levels.

It is important to note that the word "power" has not always been positively perceived in the education arena. Sarason (1996) explained that historically, education was kept separate from issues of power and politics. Schools were "places where youth would be educated by personnel whose sole concern was what was best for students and, in discharging their responsibilities, were insulated from the more seamy aspect of partisan politics" (p. 331); locally elected school boards and the state agencies would manage the more tedious political issues of educational standards and funding. The 1960s and 70s, however, brought with them "militant unions, busing, and racial conflicts" and public education faced a new reality (p. 333).

Since that time, public education has been bombarded with issues of power, politics and change. Sarason (1996) cited such examples as mandated community involvement, education foundations complete with "outsider experts," site-based management teams, cooperative learning, increased rights for handicapped students, vouchers and privatization, as a reminder of how much public education has changed over the past few decades. Interestingly, many of my fellow teachers do not consider their profession to be political despite the fact that every part of their day, from the length

of the school year to the types of food served in the cafeteria, are the result of state or federal political machinations, in the form of legislation.

My point regarding power is this: the research points to a meaningful conversation that includes a variety of stakeholders including administrators, teachers, and other community members. The implementation of Senate Bill 6 is a perfect opportunity for dialogue regarding change in local districts and new ownership of decision-making. Sarason (1996) stated that “the problem of change is the problem of power, and the problem of power is how to wield it in ways that allow others to identify with, to gain a sense of ownership of, the process and goals of change” (p. 335).

This research also has implications for school districts related to the need for successful implementation of Senate Bill 6. Time after time, study participants indicated the inevitability that a school district somewhere in Texas would severely mismanage its newfound local control of the instructional materials selection process. I do not disagree. This is, however, an opportunity for districts to be especially savvy in the handling of state funds and to seek out innovative ways to meet the needs of their local communities. Fuhrman, Clune and Elmore (1991) called for implementers to use opportunities such as this to “seize policy opportunity, coordinate and expand state policies to meet their needs, and anticipate and actively shape state policy” (p. 218).

Recommendations for Further Research

The vast majority of research brought before the legislature is quantitative in nature. Sometimes it is commissioned by one or another governmental body, while at other times, it is presented by outside researchers. It is my observation as an audience member during many education committee hearings that legislators are especially skilled

at quickly dismissing the findings of quantitative reports based on flawed or misinterpreted data or perhaps simply because a legislator disagrees with the findings. Conversely, it is hard to dismiss the experiences of a real interviewee and that is why I believe there is merit in the use of qualitative research when presenting information to the legislature.

This research was focused on the intent versus the implementation of Senate Bill 6, especially as it relates to policy values, implementation theory, and issues of local control. Similar studies could be undertaken to determine the overarching policy values of the Texas legislature over time or perhaps to address which types of education issues are best addressed at the local level. There is also an opportunity for future study of Senate Bill 6, in particular, as researchers determine the success of the bill and to identify trends in local district spending priorities over time. This type of research would be of interest to policy makers, legislative staff, scholars and local educators and would broaden conversations regarding why certain policies are prioritized over others and who benefits from decisions made at the state and local level.

APPENDIX A

QUESTIONS FOR HISTORICAL PARTICIPANTS

1. Describe in general terms the textbook adoption system in Texas leading up to Senate Bill 6 in the 82nd session (based on the last 10-20 years).
2. Describe your involvement in the textbook industry during that time.
3. Describe your involvement in state politics during that time.
4. What do you think were the main reasons legislators wanted to move to the instructional materials allotment?
5. What were your client's/boss's opinions about moving to the instructional materials allotment?
6. Has the move to the instructional materials allotment been a positive or negative experience for your client?
7. What changes do you think we'll see in the coming years regarding textbook funding in Texas?
8. What changes do you think we'll see in the coming years regarding control of content at the state level?

APPENDIX B

QUESTIONS FOR SCHOOL DISTRICT PARTICIPANTS

1. In what ways were guidelines regarding Senate Bill 6 transmitted to and interpreted by three school districts by the Texas Education Agency and/or other organizations?
 - a. What were your feelings regarding the movement from a textbook adoption to an allotment system?
 - b. What kind of information did you receive from TEA regarding the IMA?
 - c. Was the information you received from TEA helpful?
 - d. Was the information you received from TEA timely?
 - e. How did you feel about the transition timeline to IMA?
 - f. Describe the timeline for purchase of materials.
2. How were decisions made within three local school districts regarding implementation of Senate Bill 6?
 - a. Describe the textbook adoption system prior to IMA.
 - b. Who was responsible for making decisions regarding textbooks prior to IMA?
 - c. What were your priorities as a district before IMA?
 - d. Who was responsible for instructional materials distribution prior to IMA?
 - e. How much technology was present within the district prior to IMA?
 - f. Who was involved in initial conversations regarding moving to IMA?
 - g. What were your main concerns moving into a new system?
 - h. How did the district decide on materials? Was it a smooth process or one with indecision/conflict?
 - i. How do you anticipate purchases changing in the future?
 - j. What have been your greatest challenges during the process?
3. How has the Instructional Materials Allotment changed the political climate within schools and communities?
 - a. Who was actually involved in the IMA process, what were they roles, how did their roles change over time?
 - b. Were there new participants during the decision making process and when did they enter the conversation? Did anyone try to insert themselves into the conversation?
 - c. How much did you involve your board in ensuring that the TEKS are met?
 - d. How would you change the process, if allowed?

- e. Has this been a helpful process for your district organizationally for staff and students?
- f. Do you feel your district has the capacity to make materials decision on behalf of students?

APPENDIX C

CURRENT ADOPTION STATES

Table C1

Current Adoption States

State
Alabama
Arkansas
California (K-8 only)
Florida
Georgia
Idaho
Indiana (1-12 only)
Kentucky
Louisiana
Mississippi
Nevada
New Mexico
North Carolina
Oklahoma
Oregon
South Carolina
Tennessee
Texas
Virginia
West Virginia

APPENDIX D

DISTRICT DEMOGRAPHICS

Table D1

Student, Teacher and Staff Demographics

	District A	District B	District C	State
Ethnicity Percentages				
African American	18.6%	5.4%	16.5%	14.0%
White	3.4%	59.4%	35.5%	33.3%
Hispanic	77.9%	31.9%	38.9%	48.6%
Risk Factors				
ED	88.2%	38.4%	43.2%	59.0%
At-Risk	56.7%	27.8%	41.0%	47.2%
LEP	11.4%	2.8%	16.6%	16.9%
Dropout Rates	16.7%	1.4%	3.4%	9.4%
Teacher Seniority Rates				
Beginning	30.9%	3.7%	6.4%	6.0%
1-5 Years	47.3%	32.1%	36.3%	31.0%
11-20 Years	2.8%	27.3%	23.4%	24.4%
20+ Years	18.9%	19.6%	13.5%	18.3%

(Table D1 continued)

	District A	District B	District C	State
Teacher Experience (Years)				
District	4.3	6.9	6.7	7.6
Career	5.9	11.7	9.9	11.3
Staff Breakdown				
Teachers	52.2%	57.9%	52.3%	50.5%
Campus Admin	3.6%	3.0%	2.7%	2.8%
Ed Aides	12.1%	10.6%	12.4%	9.8%
Central Admin	4.9%	1.0%	0.6%	1.0%
Auxiliary	27.1%	17.8%	24.4%	27.0%

Note: All data are from 2009-2010, (Texas Education Agency, 2010).

Table D2

Expenditures by District

	District A	District B	District C
Spending (\$s/year)			
Academic	5,066.00	4,368.00	4,414.00
All	9,246.00	7,828.00	7,058.00
IMA Biennium per Student	127.52	153.76	150.77

(Table D2 continued)

	District A	District B	District C
IMA Year 1			
Textbooks	13,647.60	107,144.28	4,937,151.24
Software	3,096.75	125,944.05	788,960.00
Technology	0.00	169,580.84	0.00
Salaries	0.00	0.00	656,238.79
IMA Year 2			
Textbooks	11,627.94	83,590.90	1,376,311.63
Software	1,521.80	185,669.33	546,700.00
Technology	0.00	323,954.86	334,821.80
Salaries	0.00	0.00	2,470,552.92
IMA Biennium			
Textbooks	25,275.54	190,735.18	6,313,462.87
Software	4,618.55	311,613.38	1,335,660.00
Technology	0.00	493,535.70	334,821.80
Salaries	0.00	0.00	3,126,791.71
IMA Biennium by			
Level			
Elementary	18,066.33	360,384.94	4,954,688.46
Middle	4,119.10	312,199.78	2,043,493.14
High	7,708.66	349,593.35	4,112,554.77

Note: Spending data are from 2010 (Financial Allocation Study for Texas, 2010); IMA calculations based on information received from individual participant districts.

Table D3

Academic Measures (Percentages)

	District A	District B	District C	State
College Ready English & Math	10	60	58	47
TAKS by Subject				
Reading ELA	80	96	93	90
Math	67	92	88	84
Science	77	92	89	83
Social Studies	99.9	97	98	95
All Tests	57	88	83	77
TAKS Commended by Subject				
Reading ELA	18	32	39	33
Math	7	30	36	29
Science	14	28	38	28
Social Studies	16	57	61	47
All Tests	5	14	21	15
TAKS by Race				
White	67	93	92	87
Hispanic	60	80	76	71
African American	41	84	72	66
Asian/Pacific I.	Unavailable	98	94	93

(Table D3 continued)

	District A	District B	District C	State
Native American	Unavailable	77	88	80
All	57	88	83	77
TAKS Commended by Race				
White	0.1	30	30	23
Hispanic	5	13	12	10
African American	5	15	10	8
Asian/Pacific I.	Unavailable	41	38	38
Native American	Unavailable	19	23	15
All	5	24	21	15

Note: All data are from 2009-2010, (Texas Education Agency, 2010).

APPENDIX E

TEXTBOOK APPROPRIATIONS

Figure E1. Textbook Appropriations

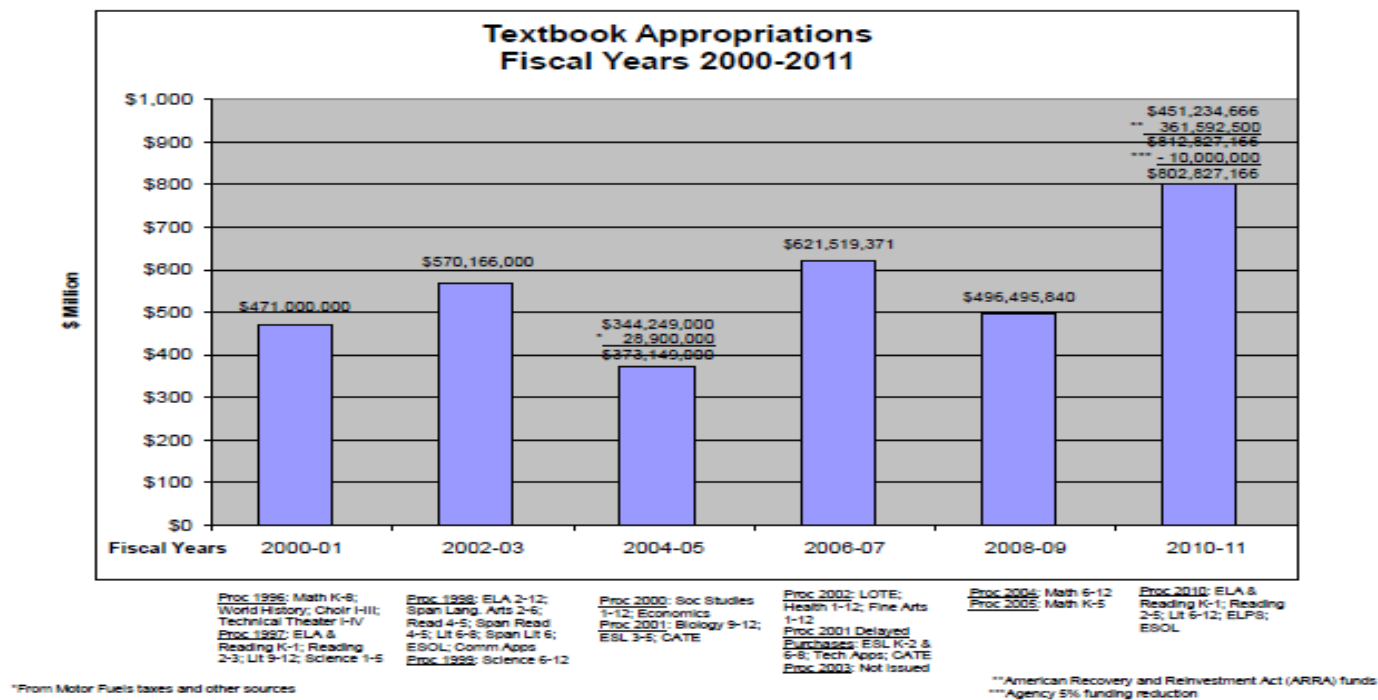


Figure E1. Textbook appropriations for fiscal years 2000-2011.

APPENDIX F

SUMMARY OF TEXAS EDUCATION AGENCY PRESENTATION

Presented by John Lopez, Managing Director
Summer of 2011

SB6

- Creates an instructional materials fund
- Creates a per-student instructional materials allotment (IMA) to be determined by the commissioner with adjustments for high enrollment growth
- Changes “textbooks” to instructional materials
- Retains the SBOE Review and Adoption Process
- Creates an instructional materials account for each district in the EMAT system
- Requires each district to certify IMA funds have been used only for authorized purposes
- Combines conforming and non-conforming materials into one list
- SBOE determines % of TEKS covered by materials
- Revises the requirements for the adoption cycle and establishes priorities for the adoption cycle
- Instructional materials are the property of the district
- District may sell or dispose of instructional materials
 - Out of adoption
 - Before out of adoption and notify commissioner

Priorities for Adoption Cycle (instructions for the State Board of Education)

- Foundation TEKS with substantial revisions and required assessments
- Foundation TEKS with substantial revisions
- Other foundation curriculum subjects
- Enrichment subjects
- No more than one-fourth of the foundation courses each biennium
- Proclamations issues 12 months before scheduled for adoption and include open-source as an option

Repeals the following:

- Textbook credits
- Maximum cost for materials
- Requirement for a budget-balanced cycle
- Requirement for a depository
- Technology allotment
- Classroom set requirement

Instructional Materials Allotment may be used for:

- Instructional materials from the SBOE approved list
- Instructional materials from the Commissioner approved list
- Instructional materials not on the approved lists
- Consumable materials, including workbooks
- Supplemental instructional materials
- State-developed open-source instructional materials
- Technological equipment
- Training of educational personnel directly involved in student learning in the appropriate use of instructional materials and technological equipment
- Salaries of employees providing technical support for technological equipment

Key Points

- A district's allotment can be carried over to the next biennium
- A district's allotment is held at the Texas Education Agency. TEA is responsible for subtracting purchases from each district's account.
- Braille and Large Type materials remain the property of the state and are not counted against a district's allotment
- The Commissioner of Education determines the method for calculating additional funds for high enrollment districts

Appropriations during the first biennium of the Instructional Materials Allotment

- Supplemental Appropriations (materials that had previously been adopted and were midcycle)
 - \$60 million – supplemental science
 - \$39 million – Pre Kindergarten
 - \$85 million – Continuing contracts
 - Total = \$184 million
- Instructional Materials Appropriations
 - \$608 million

Factors that Impact District Allocation (funds used at the state level)

- Braille and Large Type
- Freight
- Insurance (flood/natural disasters)
- Technology Lending Program
- State-developed open-source materials

Priority Considerations for Districts

- Instructional materials (beginning with assessed subjects)
- Continuing contracts

- Ongoing technology services
- Technological equipment

Texas Education Agency recommendations for decision-making

- IMA Decision Team
 - Members: superintendent, business office and principals
 - Focus: student, teacher, classroom, campus and district needs and goals
- Fiscal Team
 - Members: business office and principals
 - Focus: District budget and needs, provide recommendations on expenditures
- Instructional Materials Team
 - Members: curriculum coordinator, textbook coordinator, teachers
 - Focus: provide recommendations on instructional materials
- Technology Team
 - Members: technology coordinator, textbook coordinator, teachers
 - Focus: salaries, service needs, equipment needs

Summarized from TEA powerpoint presentation by John Lopez, Managing Director of Instructional Materials and Educational Technology, Summer 2011

APPENDIX G

CODING SYSTEM

- Change
 - Aging textbooks
 - Changing roles for publishers
 - Changing textbook markets
 - Emerging industries
 - Increased expectations from state
 - Individualization of content delivery
 - Shift to Technology
 - Textbook end
- CSCOPE
- District Implementation
 - Challenges
 - Community engagement
 - EMAT
 - Inevitability of decision errors
 - Meeting TEKS
 - No more 1:1 textbooks
 - On list versus off list
 - Planning for future years
 - Prior to Senate Bill 6
 - Prioritizing purchases
 - Quick shift for districts
 - Role of service centers
 - Savings for districts
 - School board approval
 - Spend it or lose it
 - Texas Education Agency
 - Teacher engagement
 - Timing of spending
 - Warehousing of books
- Future questions
- Great Quotes
- IMA Cons
- IMA Pros
- Policy
 - Bureaucracy
 - Confusion

- Control of content
- Decentralization
- Efficiency
- Implementation
- Local Control
- Micropolitics
- Organizational structure
- SB6 in future
- Shift of power
- Stages
- Senate Bill 6 historical
- Textbook History
 - Other states
 - Overall budget
 - Politics of textbook spending
 - Publisher/state negotiations
 - State Board of Education
 - Textbook adoptions
 - Textbook content
 - Textbook Spending

APPENDIX H

DISTRICT ORGANIZATION CHARTS

Figure H1. District A Organizational Structure

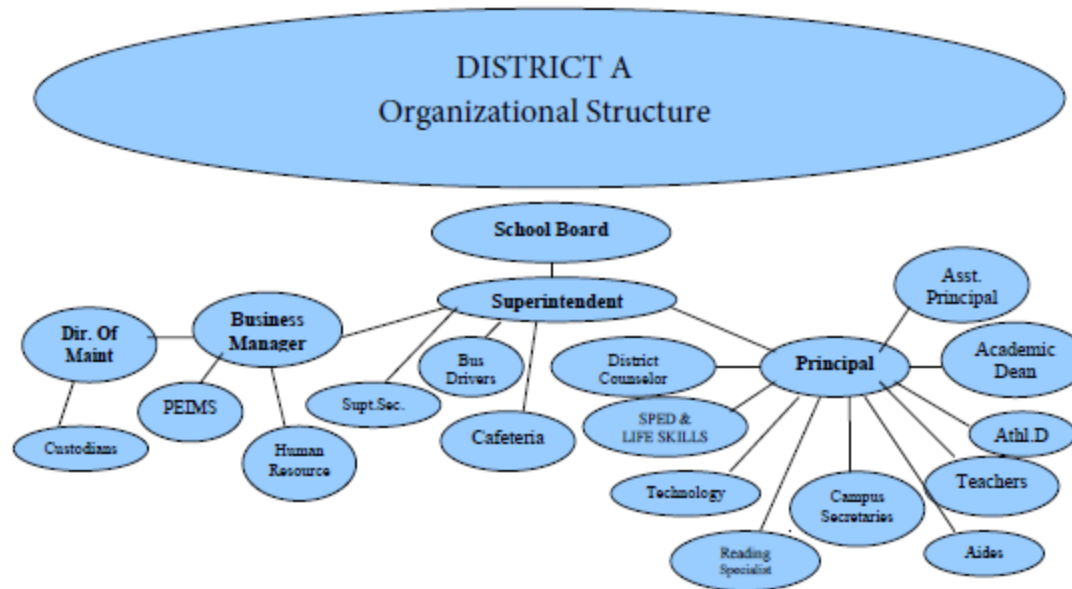


Figure H1. Organizational structure of school district A.

Figure H2. District B Organizational Structure

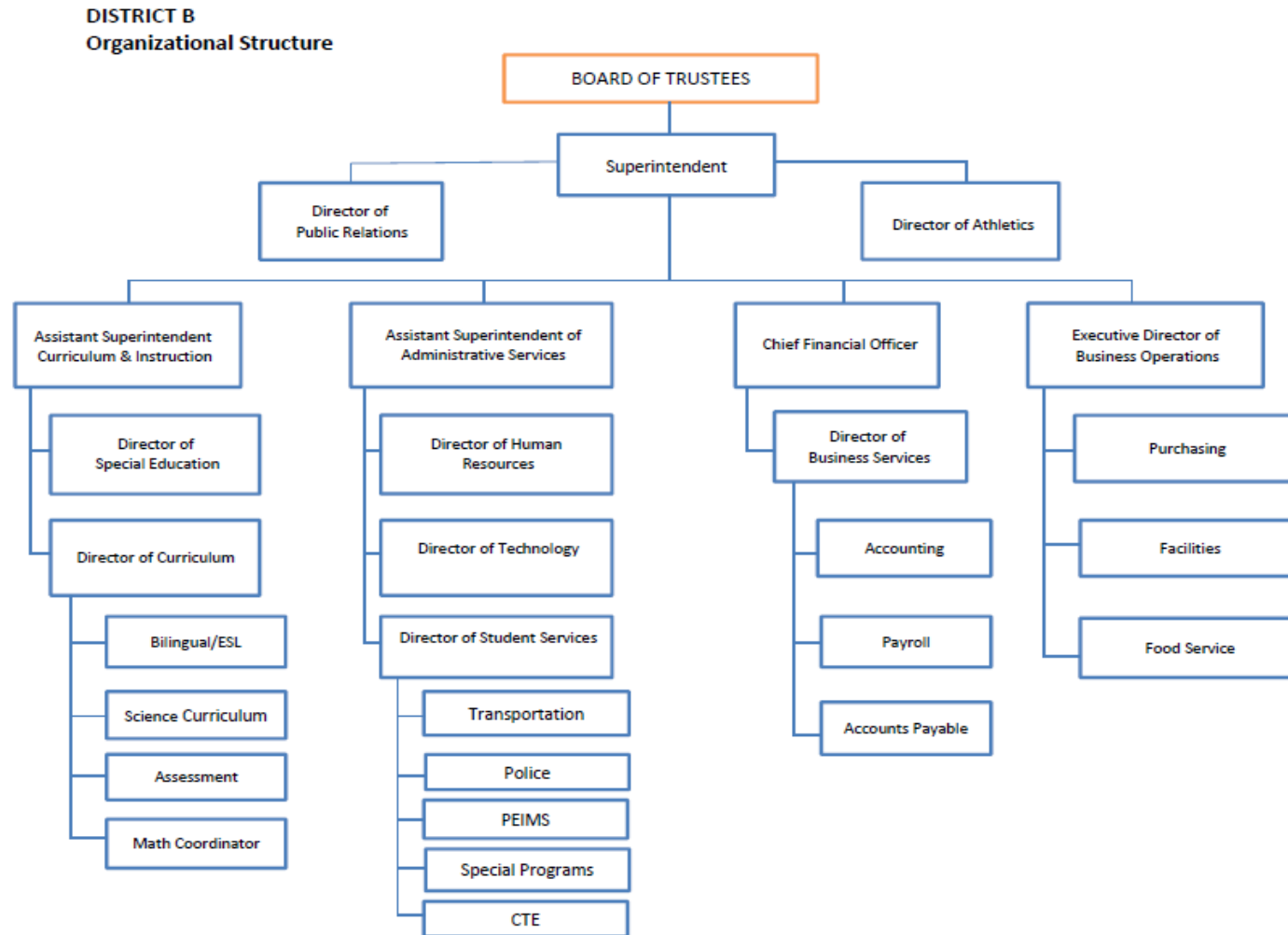


Figure H2. Organizational structure of school district B.

Figure H3. District C Organizational Structure

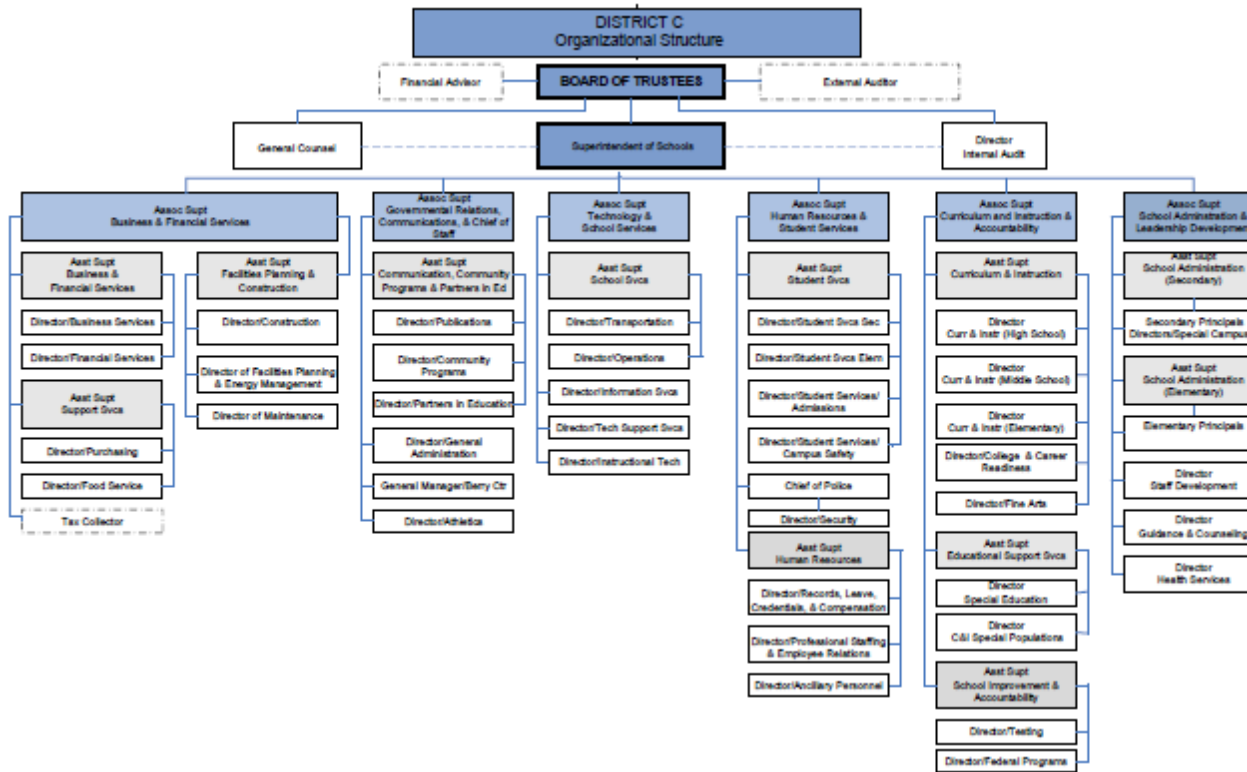


Figure H3. Organizational structure of school district C.

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