

TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS CONCERNING  
REALITIES AND VISIONS  
FOR EDUCATION REFORM

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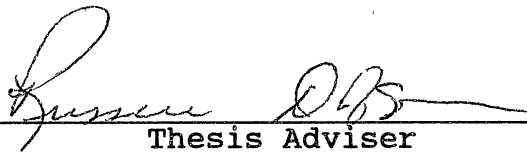
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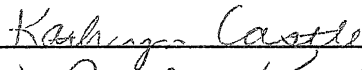
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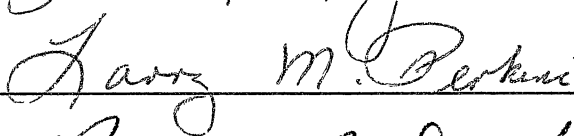
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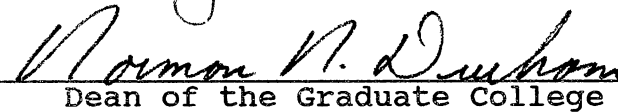
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## CHAPTER I

### RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

#### Introduction

In 1983, Goodlad warned the current education reformers not to repeat the mistakes made by prior reformist of the 1960s.

Our observations in the late 1960s suggested that little of the new in any area of reform had found its way through school and classroom doors.... Ideas developed, refined, and packaged remote from their intended targets do not necessarily flourish in the culture of a school (Goodlad, 1983, p.4).

The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching released in the spring of 1988, a quantitative study on the impact of the reform movement of the 1980's as viewed by teachers. Their study Report Card on School Reform The Teachers Speak (1988) found "the vast majority of teachers - nearly 70 percent - said the national push for school reform deserves a "C" or less. One teacher out of five gave the reform movement a "D" or "F"" (p. 1). The report concludes that the reform movement has been driven largely by legislative and administrative intervention and that teachers believe more concern has been with regulation than renewal.

### Problem Statement

It would seem that education reform leaders of the 1980s did not heed John Goodlad's 1983 warning. Despite strident reform rhetoric and mandated actions, little has changed in classrooms. Reform for the 1980s was "developed, refined and packaged" isolated from the culture of schools. Classroom teachers have been considered part of the problem and generally uninvolved in the decision-making process. Reform leaders have become discouraged and disillusioned (Wall Street Journal, 3/31/89). Teachers have become "demoralized and largely unimpressed" (Carnegie, 1988, p. 10).

Some reform reports and numerous educational leaders have recognized that teachers must be involved in the process of changing education (Maeroff, 1988). The 1988 Carnegie Report asserts "the quality of American education can be no greater than the dignity we assign to teaching" (p. 11). As the decade of the 1990s begins, there may be a possibility that teachers will become contributing participants in addressing the fundamental and problematic issues of education. Yet, little information is available about how teachers evaluate and envision the concept and practices of educational reform.

### Background

Historically much attention has been directed toward education reform.<sup>1</sup> Periodic calls for reform have often reflected shifts in public preferences. Since the early 1950's public schools have been through no fewer than four different eras of criticism and reform (Raywid, 1984).

The most recent reform movement is credited with beginning with the release in 1983 of A Nation at Risk. The report was prepared by a blue-ribbon commission appointed by T.H. Bell, who was then the United States Secretary of Education. The report was produced by university presidents, education experts, and administrators. There was one teacher on the committee. Findings in this report on teaching are all negative. Nine "tools at hand" were identified that should be mobilized for educational reform. Teachers are mentioned only very briefly. For implementation of reform, the report calls for leadership from ten different groups of society. Teachers are not mentioned (Maeroff, 1988).

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1. The review of literature provides an indepth historial review of education reform in American education.

Theodore R.Sizer (1984) recognized the key role of teachers in reforming education, and called for administrative solutions to empower teachers to reform education. The Holmes Group (1986) also recognized the role of teachers for reform, yet again, administrative solutions are suggested. The Holmes Group proposed solutions that focus on certification changes as a basis for reform. Both reports tend to portray teachers as passive recipients of reform initiatives.

Some of the later so-called "second wave" reports have attempted to correct the omission of teachers from active participation in education reform. The 1986 Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy envisions schools where teachers help decide what should be taught and appropriate teaching methods. The Metropolitan Life Survey of The American Teacher (1986) emphasizes teachers as participants in school management (Maeroff, 1988). However, if the 1988 Report Card on School Reform is an accurate representation of teacher involvement in education reform, the role of the teacher in the reform movement has been influenced more by A Nation at Risk than later second wave reports that call for teacher involvement.

### The Purpose

The purpose of this study was to conduct practical curriculum inquiry (Schwab, 1970; Schwab, 1978a; Schwab, 1978b; Schwab, 1983) into the contextual culture of teachers in regard to their views of current education reform efforts and their visions of the "oughts" of education.

### Significance

The teacher is considered a basic component of schooling, yet in many ways teachers have been treated as inanimate classroom objects. Teachers must be a part of the decision making process (Maeroff, 1988). Their knowledge, experiences, values, and their personage must be valued and involved in any successful endeavors to make changes in education. Teachers must be a part of any dialogue concerning changes in education (Goodlad, 1983).

There is much current literature written about the empowerment and/or efficacy of teachers to bring about educational reform and achievement. There are numerous proposals for teacher development that aim to change

teachers which will in turn effect the experiences children encounter in classrooms. Much emphasis has been on remediation of teachers.

The 1988 Carnegie research was conducted within the framework of suggested reforms that were proposed in their 1983 report. The 1988 report presents a quantitative evaluation of the effectiveness of the school reform movement from the perspective of the teachers. This report concludes that teachers are unimpressed with the reform efforts of the 1980's. However, the report does not present a "thick" description as to the reasons teachers are "unimpressed" with the educational reform movement; nor does the report present the alternatives that teachers would have preferred.

Eisner (1988) views schools as an ecological system. He states: "Given a critical mass, what one does in one place influences what happens in another. When the mass is not critical, changes made in one place are returned to their earlier position by the others, almost as a cybernetic mechanism keeps a rocket on a steady course" (p.7). In order to better understand the possibilities of significant changes in education, our schools need to be viewed as ecosystems with mutual interdependence. Therefore, it is significant that this research

will be conducted within one school district. By conducting the research within one school district the research findings will better reflect the mutual interdependence and interaction aspects that influence the views and visions of teachers.

This study will attempt to present the opinions of a representative sample of teachers within a school district as to what they consider appropriate changes in education. If the teacher is a basic of schooling and is a part of an ecosystem, it seems reasonable to desire to identify how teachers view current educational reform efforts and what changes they would like to see implemented within their school.

The presentation of the views of teachers provides the opportunity for insight into the realities of teachers. The information may also promote the possibility for further dialogues concerning issues in education. Through dialogue the complex issues of education can be more fully recognized and hopefully increase the capacity of educators to act morally and effectively in pedagogical decision making (Schubert, 1986). Dialogue is creative and recreative (Shor and Freire, 1987 p.3). The understanding of how teachers view educational reform contributes to a professional knowledge base that has generally been ignored.

## CHAPTER II

### A REVIEW OF EDUCATION REFORM LITERATURE

#### Introduction

We cannot look to history for inspiration or prediction. At the most, and it is a great deal, we can hope for perspective....Perspective is liberating because it teaches us that the place where we stand is a consequence of specific circumstances and not eternal or immutable. It will change, and this is a message of some hope for dark moments. Finally, history offers a liberating perspective in a manner similar to psychoanalysis. Both bring us back to the origins of our problems, and, by some strange chemistry of our nature, it would seem that only by understanding their origins can we begin to overcome them (Katz, 1971, p.2).

The history of American education is punctuated with reports and studies. Studies conducted by leading intellectuals and blue-ribbon panels have periodically outlined improvements in the organization and results of public education. Yet, it would appear that the same or similar issues are addressed repeatedly.

There are numerous reasons for the possible lack of impact reform efforts appear to have. One reason is because "education is a social enterprise, and social



enterprises by their nature defy scientific accuracy error-proof policies and permanent solutions to problems..." (Rubin, 1978, p.198). Another reason further suggested by Rubin is the general lack of consensus on educational aims, and even more confusing aspect of the improbability a consensus can ever be attained. Nevertheless, a better understanding of the complexity of education and the study of the history of education has begun to provide the possibility of better perspectives.

In the 1960s, dissatisfaction with the schools surfaced from many sources. Academic critics worried about basic skills; urban reformers complained about blackboard jungles and dull, repressive classrooms; social scientists documented the schools' inability to promote equality; and civil rights activists found the schools not only segregated but racist. Standard histories could not explain the current state of American education.

[The historical accounts of public education as] the capstone of democracy and the guarantor of equal opportunity made no sense when confronted with the disaster mercilessly described by critics throughout the country....historians began to reconstruct education's past to account for its present (Katz, 1987, p.111).

McClellan and Reese (1988) and others credit Bernard Bailyn's Education in the Forming of American Society: Needs and Opportunities for Study (1960) as being the first historical account written with focus on the study

of the whole process by which culture is transmitted. "...historians would come to have a more complex and more accurate view of the educational past, a vision that made a place for discontinuities, as well as continuities for conflict as well as harmony" (McClellan and Reese, 1988, p. viii).

The more recent historians of education have incorporated current trends in historical scholarship to reconstruct the past. Their findings are generally critical. Katz (1987) writes:

Despite major differences, all [historians] share the view ascribed by Hayden White to the 'exponents of historical realism,' namely that the historian's task is 'less to remind men [people] of their obligation to the past than to force upon them an awareness of how the past could be used to effect an ethically responsible transition from present to future.' By contrast, the old metaphor [Education is as a flower of democracy planted in rich loam that its seeds replenished] and its supporters 'remind men [people] of their obligation to the past' rather than attempting to liberate them for a new educational future (White, 1966; Katz, 1987, p.5).

Katz (1987) believes that the reconstruction of America's educational past can be used as a framework for thinking about the present state of education. The focus of this research is directed toward the accounting of

educational reform primarily in the context of reconceptual historical accounts. To provide a better perspective of current educational reform efforts, the writer will review the concept and value perspectives of reform; present critical views on current reform reports; and various historical aspects of past reform efforts in American education. Because much of the criticism of the educational reform agendas of the 1980s address structural problems, much of this literature review research is aimed toward a better understanding of how education became organized in a bureaucratic model.

This research will not address the reform issue of teacher education. The intent of this review of historical interpretations of contemporary and past reform efforts in American education, is to provide the reader a knowledge base concerning education reform. This knowledge base should better situate the present reform efforts in context and hopefully provide insight to the complexity of education reform.

#### The Value Of Reform Movements

Reform movements have often been considered in the metaphoric term of a swinging pendulum. But, Kaestle

(1985) suggests that the traditional metaphor of education reform as a swinging pendulum is inadequate in describing American educational reform efforts. Kaestle likens education more to a sailing vessel, "rocking a bit from side to side as it attends to one slight current and then to another" (Kaestle, 1985; Presseisen, 1985, p. 137). "Reform periods are times to consider and select options that might influence the ship's destiny" (Presseisen, 1985, p. 138).

As the "sailing vessel" of education rocks a bit with reform movements, some writers view reform efforts critically. Because pressure is generated for immediate improvement, they tend to deplore the attention given reform literature. The improvement of our schools is not amenable to "quick fix" solutions. Ideas and actions must be carefully thought out and researched. Publicity may foster simplistic solutions to complex problems (Presseisen, 1985).

Timar and Kirp (1987) contend that policy solutions to complex problems sometimes overshadow the problems they were intended to solve. The size, complexity, and interdependent aspects of educational organizations make the outcomes of reform difficult to predict. Therefore, efforts to solve one problem may create new ones or

exacerbate existing ones. The results are cross-purpose policies that are not only counter-productive but also create tensions between governance relationships and norms. Reforms then tend to be hit-or-miss propositions.

Timar and Kirp further criticize the most recent reforms as often moving from propositions about excellence to specific policies and finally to educational practices that bear little relationship to excellence. Reform efforts of this decade have focused primarily on the process rather than the outcomes and organization of schooling. Without organizational changes, regulations become a putative link between intent and outcomes, with little regard to how policies are implemented. Yet, for others, reform periods do seem to have some positive aspects.

Levin (1976) identifies the value of debate on the role of schools in our society. This value is in forcing us to consider the nature of our reality. Levin comments: "Such a discussion should enable us to understand better how the present society works as well as assisting us in describing a better society" (p. 46).

Presseisen (1985) identifies three by-products of reform deliberation. These by-products are: (1) better communication among various interest groups in American education; (2) deeper understanding of the history of

American education, especially reform periods; (3) greater understanding of the American nation itself, based on the ways we seek to alter the education of our young.

Presseisen quotes Finkelstein:

For when Americans set about the work of constructing and reconstructing their public schools, they discover, define, and reveal their collective commitments. Indeed, education reform proceeds in a political web of such exquisite complexity and sensitivity that generations of public school reformers, in order to generate political support, have had to discover harmonies of interest among a diverse and contentious people (Finkelstein, 1984; Presseisen, 1985, p. 10).

James and Tyack (1983) acknowledge that education has historically been bombarded with calls for reform yet patterns of classroom instruction have changed little despite numerous efforts to reform. But, James and Tyack suggest two reasons why this latest reform movement may deserve the attention of educators.

The first reason for not dismissing current reform recommendations as empty reform rhetoric is that enormous changes have taken place over the past century in the American political economy, in the scope and social purpose of the high school, in the clientele it has served, in its finance and governance, in the complexity of its bureaucratic structure, and in its links with the careers of high school graduates. Second, the reports

for the general public and for educators the educational implications of such changes in the society and in the school (James and Tyack 1983, p. 400-401).

James and Tyack further suggest that reform reports should be viewed as position papers concerning the continuing debate over the interactive principles of liberty, equality, and efficiency in our rapidly changing society. Such a perspective forces observers to ask questions that focus on the aspirations and anxieties that underlie the reports. Treating reform efforts in this manner goes beyond asking what should be done about problems (especially problems in secondary education) in any particular era. The question becomes: Why has secondary education been considered a problem in the first place and what underlying tensions are generating policy issues?

David Cohen and Barbara Neufeld (1981) provide for James and Tyack (1983) a good argument for current problems in American secondary schools. The problems 'are in good measure the result of past successes'. James and Tyack contend the following:

Surely the school is one of the few U.S. institutions that is genuinely committed to increasing social equity. And, to a limited extent, the school has achieved this goal - admirably in recent years in comparison with earlier eras - but this victory has set up

the conditions of its own defeat. Past a certain point, equalizing tendencies in education run counter to the ethos of competitive inequality that shapes a hierarchical society such as ours. As Cohen and Neufeld point out, when schools press for greater equality at a time when many citizens feel that they are losing private advantages, one result can be a decline in public support, 'equality is at once an achievement to be celebrated and a degradation to be avoided' (James and Tyack, 1983, p. 406).

Reform commissions on secondary education serve a function that goes beyond changing everyday practices in schools. These commissions make social change intelligible by focusing on policy in one institution: the high school. Even though it may be naive to believe major social problems can be solved through education (especially secondary education) the potential is present for desirable social consequences to be able to flow from such a search. James and Tyack (1983) comment:

In this society the school is a familiar and omnipresent institution. By thinking about what consequences today's transformations in society have for education, Americans can think concretely about how to shape the future of their children (p.406).

Even if all problems cannot be solved, we can avoid fatalism and the destruction of public education. We can give consideration to how we want our children to grow up. Memorable reports on the conditions of our schools,



especially our high schools, have been directed "to issues that affect public assent and the morale of educators" (p.406). These ingredients are imperative for a commitment to sustain public education (James and Tyack, 1983).

Another, perhaps more neutral, perspective on reform efforts in education is provided by Slater and Warren (1985). They write:

The apparent impermanence of educational change, even in cases where reform appears most durable, prompts us to wonder whether reform might sometimes take on a life of its own. There are some processes, such as music and education, the purposes of which are not only extraneous to themselves but also intrinsic, "built-in", as it were. Some activities must be approached as much on their own sake as for the sake of something else. Perhaps in institutions having these kinds of activities as their basic processes or functions, reform should be viewed less as a matter of replacing old with new and more as a process of renewal. As an aspect of organizational structure, then, reform here would follow function, and in these cases perhaps Hazlitt was correct: The triumph of reform lies in its never succeeding. (Slater and Warren, 1985, pp.124-125).

Educational reform is frustrating and perhaps harmful when it is approached as an effort to repair the institution once and for all. Education has a unique character that demands a process of growth and renewal.

Slater and Warren consider a permanent fix inappropriate and for the sake of schools it must fail.

The impermanence of reform efforts are considered by Slater and Warren as less threatening than the possibility of losing the intrinsic purpose of education. Educators promote learning, which by its very nature is a process that cannot end. Yet, the process can be "stifled or distorted by methods and structures attempting only to impose learning" (p.125). If, through efforts to find permanent solutions to the problematic issues in education, the intrinsic motivation and purpose of schooling is damaged, students are at risk. Reform is a healthy renewing process if it is not imposed in a stifling, static imposition (Slater and Warren, 1985).

No matter from which perspective one views reform, a key ingredient in examining reform movements appears to be caution. Lazerson (1985) warns educators to be careful. Memory distortions and the tendency to think of the past as a golden age can be dangerous. In reality, many things in our past, including schools, are already tarnished (Lazerson, 1985; Presseison, 1985).

In spite of the cost and benefits of reform, our history has weathered numerous reform cycles that continue to deal with similar issues of conflict yet situated

in historically different cultural, social, economic and political context. Conflict and reform appear to be a part of our society. Socrates suggested, the argument "is not about just any questions, but about the way one should live." MacDonald (1977) expresses the same sentiment with his two fundamental value questions that inform and form the human condition. These questions are: a) "What is the meaning of human life?," and b) "How shall we live together?" (p. 13).

#### The Ethos For The 1980's Reforms

Education is influenced and reflects our society. There were numerous factors in our society that played major and minor roles in the eventual educational reform movement of the 1980s. Such factors include social, governance, political, business and economics, and professionalism. These, and perhaps other factors, acted in concert upon and with education prior to the 1980s. This research examines the above mentioned factors and their contribution to education reform in the 1980s.

#### Social Unrest

Reform efforts tend to appear when there is a general public disenchantment with social institutions (Rubin, 1978) and/or during an economic recession (Tyler,

1982; Presseisen, 1985). Disenchantment tends to peak during times of unusual stress. The late 1970s were stressful times. Stress and disenchantment resulted in calls for education reform. The calls reflected a deeper crisis in American ethos (Yeakey and Johnson, 1985). Yet, schools were and are not the only elements of the social fabric undergoing severe stress. Geske and Hoke (1985) comment:

Society in general was and is in a state of disequilibrium. The impact of "high tech" on industries and businesses was requiring a reevaluation of allocations of resources, job skills, organizational patterns and even philosophies of purpose. The demographic revolution of an aging society was beginning to exert stress and conflict on society. The medical and health care delivery systems began to explore alternative systems such as Health Maintenance Organizations. All these and other social phenomenon were contributing social factors that provided impetus for another educational reform agenda (Geske and Hoke, 1985).

Rubin (1979) describes the mood of our nation as the 1980s reform efforts in education began to emerge:

The mood at the moment is heavily anti-school. People have begun to question not only the worth of education, but also the prospects of human perfectibility. The common presumption is that in an era of stupefying technological prowess, an effective and efficient school system should not be difficult to achieve....

The disillusion has been enlarged by the improvident bravado of some research experts. In contrast to our sweeping promises and assurances of the early sixties, for example, we are now forced to acknowledge that the intervention of the state cannot always eradicate breakdowns in family structure; that compensatory education cannot easily counterbalance social deprivation; and that we have not yet made schooling attractive for all youth. Unemployment and inflation have taken their toll on the public spirit; crime and violence have maligned domestic tranquility; and corruption in high office has weakened the citizenry's confidence in its leadership....

Because of delusions, errors in educational policy habitually provoke resentment and retribution.... Schools are presently being subjected to an extraordinary range of criticism. For those who viewed education as the dominant vehicle to high status vocations and material success, schooling has diminished in importance because a declining job market has restricted vocational opportunities and because blue collar jobs have begun to offer salaries that rival those in many white collar pursuits. Public education is also viewed with contempt by some radicals who see social awareness as the indispensable element in building a better society: Because schools teach orthodox dogma and encourage conformity to prevailing values and beliefs... youth is left with a naive understanding of the way things are and a lack of sophistication regarding the failings of the social system. And for those who basically opposed to universal compulsory education in the

first place, the schools are regarded, not only as unnecessary, but also as a major obstacle to a self-regulating societal order...(Rubin, 1978, pp. 196-197).

Virtually all quarters of society were voicing complaints that the educational system's operating principles (and hence the policies from which these principles stem) were defective. "But for all the liabilities of schools, the ubiquitous delusion remained....Sensible and rational policies could quickly produce problem free schools, and problem free schools would eliminate social disorder" (Rubin, 1979, p. 197).

#### Governance Changes

In 1983, the National Commission on Excellence in Education released their report A Nation at Risk. This report is credited with bringing education to the top of the nations consciousness. Yet Fuhrman (1987) writes:

...there were to be no federal initiatives based upon the report's recommendations; instead, the baton was passed to state and local governments...The federal government would stand by and cheer...[and] would reward excellence in teachers and schools, publish reports of state and local programs, and make research findings about achieving excellence widely available (Fuhrman, 1987, p. 136).

In spite of the popularity of the Commission report and the common belief that reform began anew with its release many state governments had initiated educational reforms prior to 1983 (Fuhrman, 1987). But, Peterson (1985) concluded that the outpouring of commission and task force reports that followed has had a profound effect on the national education debate. "In every one of the fifty states officials have appointed one or more commissions on education. According to the Educational Commission of the States, there are currently 184 such entities busily at work" (p. 126). The reform efforts mark fundamental changes in education governance. The leaders in education policy-making have become the states.

Historically, the federal role in education has been small in terms of funding but important in providing leadership for the establishment of new programs. The funds and the leadership once provided by the federal government diminished in the 1980s. A fundamental change occurred in the relationships among the state legislators and governors toward state boards and education experts in formulating policies pertaining to teaching and learning. Furthermore, local districts began to feel that their autonomy had been severally threatened by reform efforts. A question as to whether local control was

still or ever was a viable concept for public education became an issue.

Fuhrman (1986) accounts for local control in education as a myth.

Although states delegate the provision of education to local school districts, the autonomy of local school boards is severely constrained. Boards must comply with state and federal mandates on the one hand and face the pressures of organized teachers, parents, and community groups on the other. Over 80 percent of the typical local budget goes to teacher salaries, which are determined through collective bargaining in most districts, not local board policy per se. The current reforms bring new, more rigorous state standards and considerable state scrutiny, further diminishing local discretion (Fuhrman, 1986, p. 141).

Current education reform is considered a mixed blessing for the local district. Public interest and state appropriations have generally increased. Yet, like state education associations, local board members have had limited input into the development of recent state reforms. Local districts have generally been more reactive and defensive. Local boards have also been considered part of the problems that have had to be addressed in reform.



"Many governors' staffs and legislators have expressed the sentiments that the new state reforms represent school improvements the local districts should have undertaken on their own. Some state policy-makers [have said] they are only creating new standards because locals were not doing their jobs" (Fuhrman, 1986, p. 141).

The new mandated state requirements are often difficult and costly to implement. Rural districts may be affected the most because of the exactness of much of the reforms mandates. Just as school boards and administrators begin to grasp the totality of earlier mandates, second-wave reforms call for more local involvement and a larger role for teachers in reforming education. Local reactions to such diverse approaches surely leave the local districts reeling in ambiguity and lack of direction.

Prior to the 1970s, educators made education policy in most states. Fuhrman (1987) writes:

Since the time when progressive reformers had sought to isolate education from the pernicious influence of politicians, education has had an essentially discrete system of governance in both local and state arenas. In local districts, nonpartisan, separately elected boards chose professional superintendents and turned over to them the running of the school systems....

...education policy issues were [also] decided by educators. The educational interests, led by state department of education staff - for the most part former local educators - came to agreement on the terms of a state aid package or on any other major initiative. If money and, therefore, legislative action was required, the educators presented the package to the legislature and governor who usually deferred to their opinion and ratified rather than shaped the final product. Educators formed a united front; teachers, administrators, boards, and parent groups stood together. Legislatures and governors, who in any case lacked the expertise to question the educators, felt that whatever the educators supported had been compromised out in advance and represented the consensus of the interested parties (p. 138).

School finance reform is identified by Fuhrman as the issue that changed the governance in education.

Fuhrman (1987) comments:

Finance was the education issue that legislators and governors had always cared about the most. Because of their budgetary responsibility, they had to take an interest in finance, even if that interest had stopped at approving the educators' consensus. When finance became the predominant education issue of the 1970s, the assumption of a leadership role by legislators and governors was accelerated (p. 139).

During the 1970s federal and local revenues were diminishing, while state fiscal resources increased. State aid to local districts often doubled, resulting in

the states becoming the single largest funding source for schooling. With increased state financing came an increased interest to assure accountability in the use of state tax dollars. The interest in strengthening the role of the state in schooling was reflected in the growth of state education agencies and the state legislature becoming the predominant education policy maker. In the 1970s state agencies grew by almost fifty percent and became compliance monitors for enforcement of federal regulations. Educational changes began to be initiated by governors and legislatures.

With the matured reform movement of the 1980s, legislators and governors clearly no longer confined their interest to money, but they also became interested in central schooling issues. These issues include what shall be taught, by whom, and in what manner. This interest resulted in legislated mandates directed toward these central schooling issues. States legislation has been introduced and has in many states become law that provides for: (1) a longer school year; (2) minimal competency tests for teachers and students; (3) reliance on standardized tests to measure achievement; (4) state mandated courses or curriculums; (5) use of "blue-ribbon" panels to study education reform; (6) more homework; (7)

calls for a "back to basics" education that reduces electives and vocational courses (Pearman, 1987).

In contrast to the 1970s, State Education Agencies in the 1980s generally began to experience staff reductions. The reductions in staff resulted from reduction and consolidation of federal revenues. The smaller staffs, still were responsible for monitoring and regulating, but were

now expected to develop model curricula for the new state mandated courses; create tests that measure the skills implied by the excellence rhetoric of policy makers; help local districts to design and implement new, complex - and often controversial - teacher assistance programs - and career ladders; and study all of the local changes so they can report back to legislators and governors about whether schools have really improved. [All this was expected, yet,] very little of the new money associated with reform has gone into State Education Agencies; most of it has gone directly to the schools or to the teachers (Fuhrman, 1987, p. 140).

The totality of these governance changes associated with the reform movement are identified by Fuhrman (1987) as likely to have the most long-term effects on education.

Fuhrman (1987) describes the very early Reagan administration as having five "D" governance goals for education: disestablishment (elimination of the U.S. Department of Education), deregulation, decentralization,

deemphasis (reduction of education's position as a federal priority) and, more critically, diminution (reduction of federal education spending).

The Reagan administration had considerable success in reducing federal expenditures for education. Federal spending declined by \$1.3 billion in real dollars between 1980 and 1986. The federal percentage of total public, elementary, and secondary educational costs declined from over 9 percent to 6.4 percent over the same period (Dougherty, 1986; Fuhrman, 1987).

Aid to the disadvantaged and special education revenue cuts were resisted by congress. The Reagan administration was successful in creating block grants that consolidated twenty-eight small categorical programs and lessened the weight of federal regulations through revocation and nonenforcement of certain regulations. The Department of Education was not disbanded, but its staff and programs were sharply reduced.

There seems to be little doubt that the diminished federal role immediately preceded and helped trigger state involvement in education reform and expectations about the role of education drastically changed during the first term of the Reagan administration. Fuhrman (1987) suggests the educational reform of the 1980s may be better understood as a natural accretion of state

leadership that built on several years of increased activity rather than a reaction to the decrease in federal involvement.

### Politics

Kirst (1984) examines the political aspects of education reform efforts. His perspective is focused on agents for change in the political arena. Kirst, suggests that lasting changes are accomplished for political reasons. "Each of the lasting additions is sustained by an organized constituency" (Kirst, 1984, p.9).

Kirst believes that Americans want their school to do almost everything and to do everything with limited instructional time and financial resources. Therefore, educational reform cycles occur that reflect political power shifts.

The former political 'outs' are becoming the political 'ins', and one set of priorities is replaced by another. Each cycle gives way to a new cycle because of shocks external to the schools, shocks triggered by social and economic events: Immigration at the beginning of this century; economic depression in the 1930's; Sputnik in 1957; civil rights in the 1960's; the Vietnam War in the 1970's; and the recession of the early 1980's; as our manufacturing industries lost their competitive advantage over foreign competitors. (Kirst, 1984, p.8)

The reform movement of the 1980s, in Kirst's views, is a reaction to the lack of lobbying power exercised on behalf of academic subjects or the political 'outs'. The point of Kirst's position is that powerful lobbies have organized around each function assumed by schools, and then each lobby has fought for a larger share of school time and budget. The more vigorous and effective lobbies have often come from newer subject areas such as vocational education and driver's education. These newer subjects, which were introduced into the curriculum in the 1920s, have had to rely on state laws in order to gain a secure place in the curriculum.

Standard or traditional subjects such as English and mathematics have never had to use political power to justify their place in the curriculum. They have primarily relied on college entrance requirements to assure their place in the curriculum. College prerequisites were relaxed in the 1970s and because of a lack of organized lobbying for traditional subjects, there has been a diversion of resources of time and money away from the traditional subjects to the newer subject areas that have exercised effective political lobbying.

Kirst (1984) further contends that organized lobbying constituencies have historically clustered around basic values. These values are primarily pragmatic

efficiency, equalitarianism, and individualism, or freedom of choice. There are inherent conflicts among these values.

Efficiency has been a part of our history since the 1800s. The desire for efficiency is a value well reflected in recent reform efforts. Contemporary reformers see central control as a means to efficiency. But, central control by states or the federal government conflicts with the value of freedom of choice. The value of freedom of choice has been ascending in the 1980s, but is still manifested, in some degree, in local control of education by 16,000 separate school districts.

The values of efficiency and freedom of choice are no more an ingrained value than equalitarianism. "Equal education opportunity may be viewed as assurance of equal access to education, or as equal treatment of students, or as equal educational outcomes" (Kirst, 1984, p.61). A minimally acceptable level of local school services is an example of equal access guaranteed by the individual states. Anti-discrimination and desegregation laws are federal examples. For some students equal access is inadequate. Some students need special programs. Equal treatment may then be seen as the state's recognition that learners have widely varying



characteristics and abilities. Specific resources are then required for special circumstances and special students.

A political principle of the 1970s was equality. Equality was conceived as being similar outcomes in student achievement and was measured by scores on standardized achievement tests. The proponents of this view of equality contended that the schools, rather than the pupils, should be held responsible for substandard achievement. This view is well-represented in most reform reports in the 1980s. The value of freedom of choice conflicts with efficiency and equality. Local boards complain when they must cut back on programs preferred by local residents in order to cover the cost of federal or state mandates for handicapped and bilingual education.

It is Kirst's contention that the values of equalitarianism, pragmatic efficiency and freedom of choice (or individualism) cannot politically all be maximized at the same time.

Education policy alternates among these competing values as our national mood shifts toward equity (1964-70) or freedom of choice (1969-74) or efficiency (1978-81)...[yet] the 1983-85 demand for 'excellence' is tending to push all three of the prior competing values into the background. Some of

the policies meant to achieve excellence, such as statewide achievement tests and graduation standards, may prove inefficient and inequalitarian.

They may too greatly restrict local school boards in responding to local conditions and, indirectly, cause disadvantaged students to drop out... [during the 1980's we have been choosing] among competing values, to decide where to place the greatest weight and emphasis. [Political effectiveness has been a factor in the process.] (Kirst, 1984, p.63).

Carnoy and Levin (1986) identify similar political dynamics of education and education reform but use language from the critical theory's framework of conflict.

The conflict pits forces from capitalist reproduction, as seen in the workplace, against forces for democratic participation, as seen in social movements....In public education the social conflict is expressed in the conflict between two types of reforms: Those which reproduce the educational inequalities required for capitalist efficiency and those which equalize opportunities on behalf of social mobility and democratic participation (Carnoy and Levin, 1986, p.39).

It is this conflict between capitalism and democracy that Carnoy and Levin believe determines the nature of education. Education is shaped by undemocratic capitalist production and by social conflict. "The outcome depends in large measure on the shape of that conflict

and the relative political strengths of the groups involved" (Carnoy and Levin, 1986, p.38).

There is a tension between reproducing inequality and producing greater equality that is inherent in education. Carnoy and Levin believe the basis for this tension or conflict is "not ideology as such but ideology as it relates to the concrete reality of social position, material gains, and political power" (p. 40). The reform reports and political mandates of the 1980's reflect these conflicts and shifts of commitment away from equity for bilingual, economically disadvantaged, racially isolated, and handicapped students in favor of a work force that would be more highly qualified to meet the needs of U.S. industry.

The implicit message is that better education is a question of better 'management', better teaching promoted by competition, and greater student discipline. Emphasis is placed on higher standards for preparing students for what is perceived as a workplace requiring higher and higher levels of skills for high technologies. Resources for funding the reforms have not been adequate to the tasks, and the concern for equality in education and the democratic goals of schooling were relegated to a 'benign neglect' (Carnoy and Levin, 1986, p.44).

Even though the political and general public interest have been swayed toward economic interest,

Carnoy and Levin are confident that the struggle between the two forces is still alive. Their reasoning appears to be, that in spite of the equalitarian gains made in education in the sixties and early seventies, many problems persist. The population of undereducated and poor is continuing to grow. This growth will result in the inevitable attention to their plight, even from the perspective of business.

The most important message from Carnoy and Levin is that:

...democratic struggles are important for achieving the types of schools and economy that serve the broadest needs of our society and citizenry. Even under the present circumstances - when the quest for improved educational services for minorities, the poor, and the handicapped is under attack by conservative interest - it is the marshaling of social movements and democratic forces that places limits on retrenchment and makes the battle costly for the other side. But beyond the resistance, the struggle enables the tide of hegemony of the narrower interests of the wealthy to be countered in the courts, at the polls, in the media, and on the streets (p.44-45).

Freire (1985) also views the political aspects of reform from the critical paradigm, but calls for change through consciousness raising. A mythical element of the politics of education is identified by Freire as an element that does not actually forbid people to think,

but makes the critical application of thinking difficult by affording people the illusion that they think correctly.

Propaganda establishes itself as an efficient instrument for legitimizing this illusion, and through it the dominant classes not only proclaim the 'excellent' quality of the social order [or current reform agenda] but also impugn any expression of indignation toward the social order as 'subversive and dangerous to the common welfare'. Thus mystification leads to the 'sacredness of the social order, untouchable, undiscussible' (Freire, 1985, p.16).

The opportunity for changing the dominate ideology, only occurs through critical consciousness raising to a level of "conscientization" where people are invited to grasp the truth of their reality. Freire cautions his readers about reinforcing political illiteracy:

If we don't transcend the idea of education as pure transference of a knowledge that merely describes reality, we will prevent critical consciousness from emerging and thus reinforce political illiteracy.

If our power of choice is really revolutionary, we have to transcend all kinds of education in order to achieve another, one in which to know and transform reality are reciprocal prerequisites.

The essential point to highlight is transcending a domesticating educational practice for one that is liberating. I stress again that it's

impossible in a truly liberating praxis for the educator to follow a domesticating model (Freire, 1985, pp. 104-105).

Thus, from a Freireian framework, education is a political endeavor with the potential to maintain the status quo or to be emancipating. The education model of choice is a critical element for each possibility.

Jeannie Oakes (1986) critically examines the political and economic historical context of current reform agendas in education in regard to equity. "In these times of perceived scarcity, the question that most threatens American ideology surfaces at every turn: If there isn't enough to go around, who gets it? The... trickle-down answer is clear: Those who have, shall get" (Oakes, 1986, p. 60). This question for education has become forced by diminished resources and the withdrawal of public support, and is clearly confirmed with most of the 1980's reform reports.

Political and economic trends have generated changes in rhetoric without addressing the deeply rooted assumptions about student differences and the meritocratic nature of schooling. These trends have also failed to affect the essential nature of schools as social institutions. Prior political and economic straightforward intents to eliminate inequality have been

replaced with rationales for inequality. Yet, Oakes comments:

Current school reform proposals represent for the most part, a tripping away of some of the contemporary guises of traditional schooling content and forms. This is differentiated schooling characterized by Anglo-conformity and meritocracy. Deemed 'excellent' in the reform rhetoric, this mode of schooling has historically restricted both access to education and achievement of ethnic minority and poor children. Well-intentioned, progressive reformers have, at times, succeeded in mitigating the injustice inherent in these forms: even so, the current politics of social conservatism, far from inventing new inequities, appear to be largely capitalizing on endemic ones.

Oakes (1986) attempts to make explicit the prevailing and refined concepts of "separate - but equal" schooling by identifying and enumerating the following points that seem to guide the reform agenda of the 1980s:

1. Educational opportunity, not educational results, must be equal in schools.
2. Equal educational opportunity means equal opportunity to develop quite fixed individual potential (intelligence and ability) to its limit through individual effort in school, regardless of such irrelevant background characteristics as race, class, and gender.
3. Providing equal opportunities to develop individual potential has instrumental value to both individuals and society.
4. Equal educational opportunity does not guarantee equal social economic benefits to all individuals, because the rewards for

various occupations are not equal. Rather it provides a fair competition for occupations and their accompanying unequal social economic rewards. Thus, equal educational opportunities is the means for assuring equal economic and social opportunity.

5. Education provides students with the skills, attitudes, and technical knowledge required for participation in the work force, but, of course, the requirements of different occupations vary greatly. They call for quite different levels of ability.
6. Equal educational opportunity does not require the same educational experiences for all individuals, but rather an equal opportunity to develop oneself for an appropriate future in the work life of the community. This may, and usually does necessitate quite different educational experiences for individuals of varying abilities and future roles. Equal opportunity then, requires the provision of different educational experiences and proper match of these educations to individual ability and suitability for future work. In this way all are served equally well.
7. Publicly supported schooling is a neutral, fair, and meritocratic place to determine who is best suited for various kinds of technical knowledge and skill, to provide appropriate educational experiences toward those ends, and to certify individuals for work roles. Further, school provides immigrant and minority groups opportunities to learn mainstream attitudes, values, and behaviors that are required for successful participation in American social, political, and economic institutions. Schools, with the provision of equal educational opportunity, fairly stages the competition for adult positions in the social and economic hierarchy (Oakes, 1986, pp. 61-62).

Oakes suggests that to understand how schools have arrived at the refined concept of "separate-but-equal"



schools, we should examine the roots of education at the turn of the 20th century. In 1908, the Boston school superintendent asserted the same premise being heard in the 1980s. The superintendent comments: 'Until very recently they [the schools] have offered equal opportunity for all to receive one kind of education, but what will make them democratic is to receive opportunity for all to receive such education as will fit them equally well for their particular life work' (Lazerson, 1974; Oakes, 1986, p. 64).

Schools have a political system that gives the impression that no one is in charge of public education. Schools have a fragmented structure of control. Everyone is in charge yet no one is in charge. This pulling in different directions continues to trigger recurrent cycles of crisis. The too numerous goals for the system that cannot be reached and certainly not reached simultaneously create public discontent with the performance of public schooling.

Nevertheless, American people can control public education in our nation and the people can get what they want. Schools, like other social institutions in the United States, are judged on current expectations and

credit is not given for prior victories. Yet, new problems arise from the solutions to earlier problems (Kirst 1984).

### Business and Economics

Romanish (1987) identifies the driving force behind

A Nation at Risk as economic. Romanish comments:

It [A Nation at Risk] marked a fundamental shift from an industrial to a technological focus...Its purpose was to retool public education in order to meet the corporate demands of emerging economic conditions. The personal needs of students and the democratic needs of our society, which are at risk if education does not tend to them, were of no concern to the National Commission. It failed to connect the school to larger social purposes and to tie educational aims to our great democratic experiment (p. 11).

Corporate influence in American education is not new. Schools have followed the lead of business since the advent of Taylorism and scientific management. The influence of business on education has caused schools to be conservative and to use business ideology in the conduct of education. The business ideology is clearly represented in the language used in education. School personnel speak in terms of "product", "delivery systems", "school plant", "needs assessment" and "time on task." Teachers are "classroom managers" and everyone

is concerned with "quality control" (Romanish, 1987, p. 11).

Carter (1976) offers a rationale for systems or the institutionalization of education and work as they relate to the other social aspects of society. This view is similar to Katz (1987). Carter presents a rationale that "pulls the other institutions of society into line with their motion" (p.52). Education and other institutions follow the lead of labor. Carter's views stem from the observation that a major portion of adult life is spent gainfully employed and the income earned on the job "quantitatively limits the opportunities for non-job activities and thus ultimately (though not directly) determines these as well" (p. 54).

Carter views the structure forms under which production is carried on as not immutable. A transformation has occurred during the last two hundred years from production (small independent farmers, artisans and shopkeepers) employing only family labor to production characterized by large corporations and government bureaucracies employing thousands of wage laborers. Each laborer performs specialized functions that are organized in "pyramidal hierarchies" (p. 54). Today our society is moving or has moved into an information and service

production era, but Carter's rationale still has merit for consideration.

Carnoy and Levin (1976) examine education reform as to what they consider the limits of reform. Their pervasive theme for educational reform is that "reform is limited in its ability to produce social change by the inherent structure of corporate capitalism and because the school system is geared to fulfilling the needs of corporate capitalism rather than changing it" (p.10). The function of schooling is analyzed by what Levin calls the principles of correspondence and contradiction. The principle of correspondence suggests that activities and outcomes of the educational sector generally correspond to those of the society.

...all educational systems represent an attempt to serve their respective societies such that the social economic and political relationships of the educational sector will [correspond or] mirror closely those of the society of which they are a part...educational outcomes are produced in line with desired social, economic, and political outcomes through educational resources, the schools' budget, and the educational processes taking place in the schools themselves. (Carnoy and Levin, 1976, p. 10).

In spite of the limits identified by Carnoy and Levin, they argue change may still occur, but not because of educational policies. Change is created rather "by

the contradictions that emerge within the educational sector, as well as in the economic and social structure of the larger society...the commitment to social change will occur prior to the educational changes" (p. 11).

Levin (1976) applies the concept of correspondence to work and educational reforms by classifying both reforms as micro or macro-changes of either a technical or political nature. "According to the 'correspondence principle', educational reform becomes probable when the existing educational approach and its results are contradicted by changes in the functioning of work organization" (p. 83). Two types of alterations in work are considered by Levin. Each alteration trend has different implications.

The first types of alterations concern aggregate changes in the nature of jobs created by secular trends in an advanced economy. This is a shifting of emphasis from manufacturing and production jobs to service-oriented jobs. There are obvious implications for education in this shifting. Educational requirements for service oriented jobs are different than requirements for manufacturing. The service sector places emphasis on white-collar tasks that require greater formal education than does manufacturing.

The second types of aggregate trends in work is the increasing "proletarianization" of white-collar and professional jobs. The number of self-employed continues to fall while the proportion of workers subjected to hierarchical control rises. "These developments suggest that corresponding educational changes will be oriented to preparing white collar, managerial, and professional employees for increasingly dependent and relatively narrow positions in large bureaucratic organizations" (Bell, 1972; Levin, 1976, p. 88).

This aggregate picture tends to mask contradictions that are arising within work organization. "The tendencies toward narrowing of jobs roles and reduction of independence in combination with increasing educational requirements are creating a variety of work-related problems for government and industry" (Levin, 1976 p. 88). These work related problems include increased worker turnover, absenteeism, wildcat strikes, deficiencies in quality control, controlled substance abuse, and sabotage. The tasks become the seeking of ways for education and work to overcome the contradictions in order to again achieve correspondence. The functionalists use other language to describe this same concept. Equalibrium and disequalibrium are word choices found in the functionalist literature.

Levin (1976) classifies educational reforms and changes in the organization of work using four categories: (1) micro-technical, (2) macro-technical, (3) micro-political, and 4) macro-political. Each successive category tends to be more comprehensive and subsumative of the previous category. This organizational concept allows for the comparison of both work and education along similar political and technical dimensions.

The first category, micro-technical, includes changes that do not require organizational departures from traditional practice. The second category, macro-technical, has widespread implications and can be considered independent of changes in the governance or political control of schools. The third category, micro-political, includes those changes in the internal governance of educational organizations with respect to the rules, regulations, curriculum, personnel selection, and resources allocations, as well as control of the educational process.

While overall control of schools may still be vested in boards, as well as government agencies, the internal decisions are normally made by teachers and administrators in traditional schools. Changes in the micro-political category refer to changes in the

distribution of decision-making power among the groups with interest. The fourth, final and most comprehensive category conceptualized by Lein is macro-political. The embracing nature of modification of the category, not only changes external governance and control of schooling organization, but would also profoundly effect the micro-political and technical characteristics of schooling. This category includes modifications designed to give workers/teachers a greater measure of control and participation in the work/school enterprise as a whole, rather than just within a unit of the organization/school (Levin, 1976).

### Excellence

Timar and Kirp (1987) declare that the taxonomy of excellence is necessarily value-laden and suggestive. Yet, prevailing reform approaches to public policy rely on rational and legal norms which are easier to enforce and observe. There is tension created between formal and substantive rationality, between rules and ends and between ends and means.

Since 1983, there have been more rules and regulations generated by the states than in the previous twenty years. These rules and regulations have pertained to all aspects of education. Over 700 statutes have been



enacted nationally that affect some aspect of the teaching profession. The school reform movement has resulted in whole new sets of rules governing the behavior of teachers, students and administrators.

There are rules for teachers regarding career ladder placement and eligibility for merit pay. There are rules that pertain to teaching methods and content. There are rules for students concerning participation in sports and other extracurricular activities. There are rules about how much and what kinds of homework must be done, about how many times they may miss school before failing their courses, what kinds of courses they must take, how much time will be devoted to each course per day, and what topics will be covered in each class. There are rules for local boards and administrators requiring their participation in training programs, and even when and how often announcements may be made over the school intercom system.

In some states there are rules that permit state officials to place schools deemed unsatisfactory in receivership and to dismiss school administrators and possibly school boards. These bureaucratic endeavors focus on rules and regulations rather than results. The

initiative is stifled at the local level; and regulations "become rough proxies for excellence" (Timar and Kirp, 1987, p. 69).

Timar and Kirp (1987) further contend:

that excellence cannot be achieved by regulations and the danger is that it becomes very easy to systematically confuse rigor with the 'basic' success, with test scores, standards with hours spent in the classroom or doing homework. None of this would necessarily be objectionable if it were understood that there is a real difference between kinds of homework, that make-work is self-defeating, and that longer classroom exposure to a teacher contemptuous of literature of history or mathematics is worse than no exposure (Timar and Kirp 1987 p.69).

The tension created between increased state regulation and the need to maintain local flexibility advocated in later reform proposals poses a fundamental dilemma for the pursuit of excellence in American schools. This dilemma is rooted in the nature of excellence itself (Timar and Kirp 1987).

Excellence cannot be coerced or mandated. Rather it is a condition to which individuals may aspire. Aspirations to excellence generally arise from subtle and pervasive qualities: A love of learning, a sense of history, a command of analytical skills, an appreciation of humanistic values and the like. For teachers and administrators, excellence means caring about students; being sympathetic to the needs of students with diverse

educational and, often, personal problems; demonstrating a commitment to learning. It also includes a host of other attitudes, such as excitement about one's subject matter and a commitment entails a dedication to a way of life that is rooted in a historical tradition of cultural enlightenment (Timar and Kirp, 1987, p.68-69).

### Commission Reports

We draw upon what we know, what is familiar to us, even as we seek reform...it is often difficult - if not impossible for a society to see itself and its institutions in ways that are new and liberating....The acceptance of ideas is contingent upon the version of reality that prevails at a certain time and place...<sup>1</sup> (Romanish, 1987, p. 9).

The election of Ronald Reagan in 1980 as president of the United States set a politically and socially conservative, pro business and militaristic agenda for our nation. There was a hearkening for a time when life and our society was thought to have been much simpler. Reform became the watchword for education in the 1980s.

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1. Romanish cites Rifkin (1983) to make his point. Rifkin suggests that "Darwinian thinking was received as well as it was in the 19th century because industrial capitalism had been established by then and its competitive nature had become a social reality. Had Darwin offered his views even 200 years earlier, they would have met a different end" (Rifkin, 1983; Romanish, 1987, p. 9).

Education was expected to play a major role in the implementation of the "right" agenda.

In 1983, A Nation at Risk: The Imperative of Education Reform was released. The report was prepared by a blue-ribbon commission appointed by T. H. Bell, who was then the United States secretary of education. With the release of this report "excellence skyrocketed to first place among the goals of public education" (Katz, 1987, p. 130) and set the tone for the debate on school issues that has continued through the decade.

In A Nation at Risk it was declared that if any other nation had imposed upon us the poor conditions we now associate with our schools, this country would have considered it an act of war. Ginsberg and Wimpelberg (1985) comment: "[The] war analogy is especially enlightening, because it implies the need for a response to a crisis situation"... (p. 115). Presseisen (1985) identifies the main motivations behind this report are "to remove the federal presence, introduce religious and other private concerns, and increase local and corporate activity in pre-college education" (p. 138).

American education, especially since World War II, has experienced episodic waves of public interest followed by periods of neglect. Timar and Kirp (1987) attributed this phenomena to the pragmatic, instrumental

value given to American education and rooted in our cultural values. American education has no generally accepted intrinsic value but is valued for what it can do. "As long as education is regarded as an instrument, its value in American culture will most likely vary with the social, economic, or political demands of the day" (Timar and Kirp, 1987, p.98).

The instrumental value of education accounts for the reason a crisis mentality has so often pervaded educational policy.<sup>2</sup> The sudden appearance of Sputnik in 1957, shook our nation's confidence as the leader in technological development. Our nation's attention to domestic issues concerning social and economic equality in the 1960s, and the faltering of our nation's economy in the 1980s, each have contributed to the instrumental reform agendas in education. None of these reform efforts was "promoted because education, like virtue, is its own reward, but [they were promoted] because the reforms would make the nation economically more productive, efficient and responsive." (Timar and Kirp, 1987, p. 98).

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2. Timar and Kirp (1987) do not discount the use of mass education in a democratic society for the appreciation of its instrumentality. They merely point to this value as an explanation of sporadic public commitment to education.

The reform reports and proposals of the 1980s have been divided into "waves". There are at least two reform waves clearly identified in the early 1980's professional literature. Several writers recognize third and fourth waves as the 1980s drew to a close. With some exceptions, none of the commission studies in education reform address the most difficult conceptual and political issues. "Instead they re-assert what is well-known, make exaggerated claims on flimsy evidence, pontificate on matters about which there could scarcely be agreement, and make recommendations that either cost too much, cannot be implemented, or are too general to have any meaning" (Peterson, 1985, p.138).

Peterson (1985) lays "blame" for the dubious value of the reports to the organizational and political realities of commission decision-making. Peterson suggests that commissions are ill-equipped to perform the tasks assigned to them. Commissions are usually asked to address broad public problems that have no easy solutions. They usually consist of distinguished citizens from broadly diverse backgrounds and interests. "They are expected to produce reports expeditiously and with unanimity" (Peterson, 1985, p. 139). The only power commissions usually have is derived from their own col-

lective prestige, and for their report to have impact, their findings must be widely discussed and disseminated. The researcher will now present an overview of reform "waves" of the 1980s and intertwine critical analysis.

### The First Wave

"First wave" reform reports, which includes A Nation at Risk," set out to raise standards, increase accountability, lengthen school days and years, and generally raise the rigor of American public education" (Michaels, 1988, p.3). These reports brought the public's attention to problems in education and to the need for major investments of time, money and effort to improve schools. Teachers were sharply criticized and considered part of the problem. The reform agendas proposed were developed from a bureaucratic top-down management model, which excluded teachers from the decision making process (Maeroff, 1988). Problems and improvements were generally defined and measured "in terms of decline from earlier standards....[The first wave reports] have unwittingly chosen to face backward..." (Carnegie Report, 1986; Michaels, 1988, p.3).

Peterson (1985) describes the gist of first wave commission reports as "notable for the similarities

of their analysis and prescriptions" (p.127). These commissions found the future of our country at stake, schools failing to perform their traditional role adequately, and deep erosion of confidence in schools by the general public. Yet, Peterson states "the information offered in support of the claims that American schools have failed is patchy, dated and not nearly as dramatic at the rhetoric employed....The commission would have had a sounder basis for proposing reforms if they had limited themselves to the claim that schools were no longer improving as rapidly as in prior decades" (p.129, 130).

Peterson's major complaint about the commission reports is "that by exaggerating weaknesses, they fail to pinpoint the real problems" (p. 130). (Peterson believes major problems exist in the large comprehensive high schools.) Peterson further decries the perhaps latent message of the numerous reports. "...very little needs to be done differently, despite their claims that school systems have deteriorated, the commissions evidently believe that with only the slightest organizational modifications these systems can correct themselves. All that is needed is more money, more public confidence, and more exhortation from on high" (p.139).

The mandating of "first wave" reform efforts for



our public schools have become in varying degrees dominated and driven by a conception of educational improvement that Barth (1986) call "list logic". "List logic" includes the intention of one state legislature to identify competencies of effective principals through research and develop training, certification, selection and compensation procedures that recognize and support these competencies (Barth, 1986,). Barth identifies several assumptions on which "list logic" is built.

1. Schools do not have the capacity to improve themselves; improvement must therefore come from sources outside of schools, such as universities, state departments of education and national commissions.
2. What needs to be improved about schools is the level of pupil performance and achievement, best measured by standardized tests.
3. Schools can be found in which pupils are achieving beyond what might be predicted. By observing teachers and principals in these schools, we can identify their characteristics as 'desirable'.
4. Teachers and principals in other schools can be trained to display the desirable traits of their counterparts in high-achieving schools. Then their pupils will excel, too.
5. School improvement, then, is an attempt to identify what school people should know and be able to do and to devise ways to get them to know and do it.

"The list logic of educational change seems simple, straightforward and compelling. Its only flaw is that it doesn't seem to work very well" (Barth, 1986, p.294).

Two good reasons, however, are provided by Barth for the perseverance of list logic as a driving force in education reform: "First, it is logic thus is defensible in solemn presentations before school boards and state legislatures. Second, it enjoys face validity...list promises change, legitimacy and accountability to an enterprise in need of all three" (p.295).

Gardner (1984) well represents the consensus of the professional literature reviewed as to the positive and negative aspects found with A Nation at Risk and similar reform proposals. Though basically critical, Gardner does find some merit with the report. "[A Nation at Risk] will likely be the most influential of its genre because it is readable, timely, and superbly promoted. It has succeeded in drawing considerable (albeit negative) attention to education after several years of neglect by policy makers" (p. 15).

Gardner (1984) grants that A Nation at Risk, the bench mark for "first wave" reports, has "substance and style" (p.13) but more of the latter. Gardner is "astonished at the lack of critical analysis addressed in [the report]" (p. 13). Three major aspects are identified by Gardner as deficient in the report. The first aspect is the underestimation of the contributions made by public

education to our society. The second aspect deficient in the report is that the commission may well have identified the wrong problem. The third aspect, Gardner identifies as deficient in A Nation at Risk is the prescribing of simple solutions to complex problems.

The central theme of the commission report is the mediocrity of public education. Salvation of public education is to be found through more and harder subjects. "Unfortunately, there may be more basic underlying problems" (Gardner, 1984, p. 14). Gardner cites Torsten Husen (1983) to support his point.

Husen has studied comparative achievement in the schools of developed countries and his research findings indicate a remarkable similarity in the problem sets faced by secondary schools in western Europe and North America (Husen, 1983; Gardner, 1984). Husen submits that lower standards are not the most serious problem with public schooling in the United States nor in other countries with comprehensive structures and high retention rates. Solutions to real educational problems "involve far more than a reconsideration of educational standards" (Gardner, 1984, p. 15). Standards can be raised by making a system more selective. Husen identifies the real and more serious problem as:

the way formal education relates to a highly technical society - and the institutional contradictions and goal conflicts that beset the school operating in a highly competitive society where formal schooling increasingly influences social status and life changes....

[Husen further suggests] that the most serious problem faced by schools on both sides of the Atlantic is the rise of a new educational underclass...What characterizes the 'new' underclass is that it consists of those who from the very beginning tend to be school failures...[or] less equal than others....A formal equal treatment in a competitive milieu does not lead to greater equality of outcomes' (Husen, 1983; Gardner, 1984, p. 10).

Yeakey and Johnson (1985) supports Husen's concern. They, too, identify the most serious shortcoming of most of the reports as "their blatant and callous disregard for the crisis facing our enlarging group of educationally and economically disadvantaged students" (p.160). Simple solutions are recommended for complex problems. Gardner (1984) comments on the prescribing of simple solutions to complex problems as follows:

The commission's recommendations to remedy low achievement may, in fact, confuse rather than resolve the issue faced with what is perceived to be intolerably low achievement, Risk insists that all students study more subjects and study them more (e.g., do more homework)....Problems [in education] cannot be addressed simply by

demanding more from students. Other things must change as well....The obvious point is that level of simply making things more difficult for the students.

Further, the curriculum recommendations have a hollow, incomplete ring. There's no hint of what the commission sees as appropriate content for the mathematics or English or social studies courses....Also, the recommendations suffer from a lack of attention to the broader context of schooling, the need for structural change...

[If Husen is correct]...a basic strategy to involve the 'underclass' would aim at some social stratification goals and necessitate both social and educational elements - first, the recognition that the schools cannot go it alone, that other of society's institutions must change, and, second that (as Husen suggests) schools must increasingly stress goals of self-fulfillment and social education.... (Gardner, 1984, p.15).

Gardner's basic point is not that A Nation at Risk and other reports in the same mind set are without merit. A concern is, that if followed without critical analysis, the recommendations are likely to be damaging. "...we could adopt the commission's recommendations and mislead ourselves into thinking that much has been accomplished when little has" (Gardner, 1984, p. 15). Our zeal for excellence reflect values and problematic issues.

### The Second Wave

The "second wave" of reform is distinguished not by chronology but by markedly different agendas. The "second wave" stresses the individual school as the unit of decision-making; collegial, participatory decision making; flexible use of time; increased personalization of the school environment with emphasis on trust, high expectations and fairness; curriculum focus on the "why" as well as "how;" and emphasis is on higher-order thinking for all students (Michaels, 1988).

The second wave or generation of reform reports differ in tone from their predecessors and suggest new strategies for improving what happens in the classroom. This second wave is perhaps more open to less bureaucratic concepts of education reform. They clearly recognize the importance of the classroom teacher in initialing changes in our schools.

Even though Michael (1988) and Timar and Kirp (1987) laud the "second wave" reform agendas, both writers express concern for the possibility or perhaps probability of schools being unable to demonstrate, in some fashion, such goals without actually achieving significant change from status quo. Michael (1988) makes his point with the following examples: In the

past, schools have added ten minutes to a homeroom period and called their schedule flexible; teachers have taken turns lecturing to large groups of students and called it "team teaching"; one-week units on basic set operations have been called "modern math". These measures are external compliance that do not result in real change.

Timar and Kirp (1987) also identify several common strategies that can be used by organizations, including education to circumvent reform efforts and, therefore, prevent real changes. One such strategy is to simply substitute objectives that can be obtained for those considered unattainable. "Organizations replace objectives whose achievement depends on variables either unknown or outside their control, with objectives that can be attained by manipulating the instruments that those groups do control" (Original source not provided; Timar and Kirp 1987 p.70).

The conditions that give rise to reform are not addressed. Specific reform policies and strategies are transformed into organizational goals. Policy means become policy goals by assuming a life of their own independent of the purpose they were intended to serve.

Another manifestation of organizational retreat from unattainable objectives, identified by Timar and

Kirp, includes the replacement of external objectives with internal procedures. Therefore, outputs become equated with effort rather than results. This translates into success being defined by numbers that are under control of the organization. Examples are: In education, success becomes longer periods, longer days, long years and more of everything controlled by the school. Incentive-based pay become higher achievement tests scores, even when the practice is theoretically weak. There has been no reliable connection established between teacher quality and student achievement.

Other strategies for shifting from unattainable objectives to attainable objectives are "metamorphosis" clients and paper compliance. When policy objectives cannot be attained with one set of clients, another set of clients are used that provide a better "fit" for policy. In schools the redefining of a grade or the omission of remedial students is not uncommon for testing purposes (Timar and Kirp, 1987).

Carlson (1987) is also skeptical and provides a more theoretical critique concerning the role of teachers in the more recent reform reports. Carlson critically comments: "I suggest while some recent reform commissions have accurately appraised the importance of



changing the role of the teacher in order to achieve 'excellence' in education. Severe limits exist on the extent to which change is possible within the parameters of corporate state schooling" (p. 130).

The optimism of the second wave reforms and more recognition of the importance of the role of the classroom teacher in promoting education reform may be ill-founded. Carlson (1987) elaborates:

[The reports] lack an analysis of the impediments that stand in the way of the humanistic and teacher-empowering types of reform they propose. It implies that given enough political leadership and popular support, nothing stands in the way of reorganizing the schools along radically new lines. Yet...the organization of the schools is powerfully constrained by the role they serve in reproducing the structured inequalities and ideologies of domination typical of advanced capitalist society. Reproduction work necessitates a great deal of top-down control, including the bureaucratic subordination of teachers (p. 130).

The paradox of reform under current conditions, according to Carlson (1987), is, that to seek "excellence", teachers and students will have to be given more control over the process of schooling, and be given additional economic support. Even if these concessions of teacher control and adequate financing were made, there is no assurance that teachers and students would

define "excellence" in ways that are consistent with business and state goals.

A democratic "left" perspective could insist that the system can be more humanized under current political and economic conditions. Yet, there would always be strong pressure to reassert top-down bureaucratic control and disempower teachers.

We will need to move beyond the priorities and social organizational forms of U.S. industrial capitalism in order to implement more basic changes. A single institution like the schools cannot be restructured at will independent of a restructuring of other important institutions - including the economic and political (Carlson, 1987 p. 132).

#### Other Reform Waves and Possibilities

There have been additional approaches to education reform during the decade of the 1980s. First wave reform focused on state regulations and mandates for national security. Second wave efforts continued to focus on national interest but abandoned state mandates and turned toward more local collaborative efforts. Equity, as well as excellence, were part of the dialogue. The next, or third, wave of reform efforts focused on the economic necessity for reforming schools. All reform efforts have focused on the instrumental value of education.

Mary Hatwood Futrell (1989), immediate past president of the National Education Association, suggests that all these well-intended efforts have lost "precious years by failing to ask the basic question: Education for what? We Americans simply accepted the idea that the purpose of education is to serve the national interest, however that interest might be defined at a particular moment in time" (p.12).

Futrell is hopeful that our nation is preparing to enter a fourth wave of reform. Fourth wave reform would re-examine the mission or missions of education and define education as having both instrumental and intrinsic values. Fourth wave reform would address both economic and moral imperatives that serve national interests as well as the common interests of all humankind. Perhaps during the 1990s this possibility will exist. But, American education is entrenched in bureaucracy. The possibility of significant changes in education may be limited.

A historical perspective of how American education became so mired in bureaucratic organization, leadership, language and thoughts can possibly provide insight into the current views and possibilities for education in America.

## The Concept of Systems of Education

Between the Revolution and the Civil War, Americans dramatically transformed the ways in which they educated their young. The major results of this transformation was to increase enormously the significance of schooling in both the life of the child and the life of the society. The change began quietly and did not initially alter the configuration of institutions that had educated colonial Americans. Between 1780 and 1830, parents simply began sending their children to schools and colleges more often. After 1830, a continued growth in enrollments was accompanied by a noisy campaign to create a system of public education to replace the mixture of pay schools and charity schools that were characteristic of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries....(McClellan and Reese, 1988, p. 61).

By the latter part of the 1800s, the organization, scope and role of schooling had been fundamentally transformed. The emergence of systems of public education was a major development of the nineteenth century. In most cities true educational systems developed. These systems were "carefully articulated, age graded, hierarchically structured groupings of schools, primarily free and often compulsory, administered by full-time experts and progressively taught by specially trained staff" (Katz, 1988, p. 93). School systems became formally designed "to

play an important role in the socialization of the young, the maintenance of social order, and the promotion of economic development" (Katz, 1987, p. 6). It was these early systems of education that are the true progenitors of the school systems we know today.

The origins of public educational systems coincided with critical developments that reshaped American society during the first three quarters of the nineteenth century. Katz (1987) identified these critical developments as: (1) the emergence of a democratic politics; (2) industrialization, urbanization, and the formation of a working class; (3) the state's assumption of direct responsibility for some aspects of social welfare; (4) the invention of institutions as means for solving social problems; and (5) the redefinition of family. These developments are interwoven with the development of school systems.

A distinctive form of democratic politics emerged in America in the first half of the nineteenth century. Four features of this form of democratic politics are especially important. These features are: (1) early universal white male suffrage; (2) the formation of a party system through which political activity was channeled; (3) the mobilization of political activities in

cities by local machines; and (4) widespread participation in politics. (Political participation measured by high rates of voter turnout.) 'American public education assumed its unique form partly because of the coincidence of its birth with the origins of this system of democratic politics' (McCormick, 1985; Katz, 1987, p. 7).

During the same time, urbanization, industrialization, and immigration reshaped the society and the economy. Out of this setting came the formation of a working class. There was a clear and critical temporal connection between social development and the creation of public educational systems.

#### Alternative Systems Concepts

##### For American Education

Katz (1987) writes:

The early institutional history of public education is not the story of an inexorable march toward bureaucracy. Rather, it is a more complex and more interesting tale of competition among alternatives, each passionately believed to be singularly appropriate to America's policy and social structure....

The creation of institutions preoccupied early nineteenth century Americans. Whether they were building

banks or railroads, political parties or factories, hospitals or schools, Americans confronted the inappropriateness of traditional organizational arrangements and their attempts to find a suitable fit between the form and context of social life stimulated a prolonged national debate....yet the arguments of these practical men over the external features of institutions frequently represented a fundamental clash of social values. The task of appropriately arranging public activities formed an intimate part of the larger task of building a nation, and alternative proposals embodied different priorities and aspirations for the shape of American Society (p.24, 25).

Katz identifies this early nineteenth century debate as primarily centered around characteristics of the structure of institutions. The primary structural questions related to size, control, professionalism, and finance and are similar to the questions under current debate. Katz writes:

Each proposal concerning one of these organizational characteristics rested on social values which, though often remain[ed] implicit, had enormous emotional significance....at the same time, values often explicitly enveloped the debate, especially when proponents raised questions of organizational purpose. And here the issue most frequently contested became the degree of standardization desirable in American institutional forms, behavior, and cultural values (Katz, 1987, p. 25).

Four major organizational models are identified by Katz that competed in the first half of the nineteenth century. These system models were found in the urban areas but they eventually effected the organization of schooling nationally. The models are: paternalistic voluntarism, democratic localism, corporate voluntarism and incipient bureaucracy. "Real and fully developed examples of each existed, but most organizations had features of more than one model, although usually one feature dominated and defined them" (Katz, 1987, p. 24). A description of each of the models follows:

#### Paternalistic Voluntarism

The purpose of the paradigm of paternalistic voluntarism in educational organization was to provide education opportunities to the poor children that did not receive an education through a religious society. The New York Free School Society in 1805, offered poor children literacy and morality.

By 1825, the Society had reversed its goals and then argued it was inappropriate for a republican institution to allow any portion of public money to be spent



by the clergy for the support of sectarian education.<sup>3</sup> The Society became convinced for a need to establish one nonsectarian educational agency for the city to prevent strife and jealousy while preserving harmony.

Parental dissatisfaction and a generally low quality of private schools bolstered the Society's desire for a major reorganization of education in New York City. The Society became the New York Public School Society. The legislature gave the Society the responsibility of disbursing virtually the entire public monies for elementary education in New York City.

Voluntarism was the underpinning of organization for both phases in the history of the Society. The schools were administered by an unpaid self-perpetuating board of citizens. The board members sought to contribute to the benefit of humankind but would not participate in politics. Voluntarism rested on the honesty and zeal of talented amateurs. They denounced the need for elaborate organization, state control or a professional staff.

Voluntarism was a class system of education that provided a means for one class to civilize another class. Thereby society would be ensured to remain tolerable,

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3. Katz (1987) proposes two reasons for the reversal: (1) alleged misappropriation of educational funds and (2) interdenominational bickering.

orderly and safe. The Society not only provided schools for the children but also instructed parents in the virtues of the values of the dominate social class.

The Society offered mass education in well-ordered groups using the monitorial system. Children were taught using mechanistic drills for pedagogy. Shame enforced discipline. Desirable working class traits were implicit in the pedagogical arrangement. Students were to be alert, obedient, and attuned to discipline through group sanctions. Competition within the school setting insured noncohesiveness among the children and prevented the formation of a threatening class force. The system was not designed for the children of the members of the Society nor for their friends. Social order was the agenda; achieved through the socialization of the poor in cheap, mass schooling factories.

Three defects are identified by the critics of paternalistic voluntarism. These defects are: (1) The system delegated to a private agency an important function of government. There was no direct or immediate responsibility to the people. The system was undemocratic by violating the basic democratic principle of self determination. (2) The system was not voluntary in

the fullest of the meaning, because it assumed exclusive control of children without parental participation. (3) Paternalistic voluntarism ignored the variety of American life by imposing cultural bias upon a diverse citizenry. This criticism was often observed in religious differences, but reflects larger cultural differences of which religious differences are a symptom.

This dilemma attests to the culture sensitivity of schools that touch areas of irreconcilable differences. This is especially true with religious differences. An inverse relationship results between the size of the school system and the degree of satisfaction possible for the clientele. Critics argued that country school districts had the advantage of relatively homogeneous groups that could control and shape the local schools to reflect preferences. Because of the scale of the New York City operations, the various publics could never be satisfied. This defect is not systemic to the Public School System but is 'necessarily inherent in every form of organization which places under one control large masses of discordant materials, which from the nature of things, cannot submit to any control' (Bourne, 1974; Katz, 1987, p. 30).

Through organizations like the New York Public School Society free education, public education and the

monitorial system all became identified with lower socio-economic class education. This is evident when, in the 1820s, a monitorial school for children of all classes was opened in New Jersey and failed. Attempts to dissociate public and pauper education continued to fail, and a call for radical reorganization was recognized as necessary to escape the legacy of paternalistic voluntarism. It was hoped that radical organizational changes would remove the conception of public education as pauper education. Reorganization seemed necessary to provide an education for the children of proud parents with limited economic means (Katz, 1987).

#### Democratic Localism

The first alternative was democratic localism. The sponsors sought to adapt an organizational form found in rural areas to the city. The rural concept operated schools by local districts where the control of education remained with the local people. Proponents envisioned a simple remedy of making each political ward of the city an independent school district. Nothing in this plan prevented a district with a Catholic majority from hiring Catholic teachers or choosing textbooks that reflected their religious beliefs.

Orestes Brownson formalized the concept of democratic localism with a theory of governance for American society.

According to Brownson the individual State, as well as the Union, should be a confederacy of distinct communities, 'in which each vital interest remained within the smallest possible unit. The smallest of these units would be the district, which should always be of a size sufficient to maintain a Grammar School.' In education the district should remain always 'paramount to the state,' and each individual school should be 'under the control of a community composed merely of the number of families having children in it.' Although Brownson pointed out that education, like other governmental affairs, would be 'more efficient' in proportion to the degree of 'control' by 'families specially interested in it,' efficiency was not his primary objective. Nor was it the paramount concern of other democratic localists who subordinated both efficiency and organizational rationality to an emphasis on responsiveness, close public control, and local involvement (Brownson, 1839; Katz, 1987, pp. 33-34).

Democratic localism was resistant to both paternalistic voluntarism and centralization in education. In the resistance to bureaucracy, however, antiprofessionalism emerged as a strong point of contention for democratic localism. Brownson and other localist were hostile toward the establishment of Normal Schools. They were concerned that schools would soon be denied

employment of teachers not trained in the Normal Schools. Democratic localist leaders scorned the idea of professional instruction for teachers. The attitude was: 'Every person, who has himself undergone a process of instruction, must acquire, by the very process, the art of instructing others' (Dodge, 1840; Katz, 1987, p. 34).

The point of view held by the localist rested primarily on a theory of the process of successful institutional innovation and faith in people to choose wisely. Katz, 1987, described the theory as follows:

The imposition of social change would never work; changes in society, in habits, and in attitudes came only from people themselves as they, haltingly, but surely exercised their innate common sense and intelligence. By being left to their own devices, by perhaps being encouraged, cajoled, and softly educated, but not by being forced, would the people become roused to the importance of universal education and of the regular school attendance of their children (p.35-36).

The proposal for urban education to be organized using the concept of democratic localism flourished for only a short time. Katz (1987) suggests its failure for urban education was predicted from the start. Proponents ignored critical differences between rural and urban contexts, and the possibilities of less than democratic principles in giving free rein to all local majorities.

There was a lack of congruence between the intellectual construct and a real situation. Intellectually democratic localism offered simple explanations and cures for feelings of powerlessness and dislocation produced by the rapidly changing society of the 1830s and 1840s.

Though intellectually soft, democratic localism at its best provided a "compelling alternative vision; it embraced a broad and humanistic conception of education as uncharacteristic of nineteenth - or of twentieth century schools and schoolmen"...(Katz, 1987, p. 37).

#### Corporate Voluntarism

The third model for a system of education was corporate voluntarism. It was found primarily in secondary and higher education, academies and colleges. Corporate voluntarism was combined with bureaucracy in the early twentieth-century and has remained the fundamental organizational form of higher education. The concept viewed schools as "individual corporations operated by self perpetuating boards of trustees and financed either wholly through endowments or through a combination of endowment and tuition (sometimes with help from the state)" (Katz, 1987, p. 37). Corporate voluntarism was the social-welfare counterpart to the

business corporation, which began to control commercial activity during the same era.

The Norwich Free Academy, established in 1856, is the clearest example of a well financed, carefully planned, and educationally progressive model of corporate voluntarism. The academy provided a practical demonstration of the virtues offered by endowment and essentially private management. Men of great wealth were focusing on education and using endowments to lift education out of politics and assure its competency.

The distinct theme of corporate voluntarism was "congruence between the flexibility of essentially private institutions and the variability of American conditions" (Katz, 1987, p. 40). Proponents of corporate voluntarism and democratic localism assumed that education systems ought to be wisely suited to the character and conditions of the people among whom they are introduced.

Katz (1987) suggests the argument for corporate voluntarism was in two parts. First, literacy institutions should be free from governmental interference. This freedom was underscored by parental rights in selection of their child's education. This right enabled the establishment of various types of academies to suit varying preferences. The second argument



related to the individuality of the American character to the varied degree of civilization across the nation. An education system was needed that "could reflect sensitivity and provide for personal and cultural idiosyncrasies" (p. 40). The academies were able to be flexible. They accepted a wide range of students, charged low tuitions, taught a broad array of subjects and usually accepted women into their schools.

Corporate voluntarism seemed to combine the virtues of paternalistic voluntarism and democratic localism. Katz (1987) describes the virtues as follows:

Without the stigma of lower-class affiliation, it offered disinterested, enlightened, and continuous management that kept the operation of education out of the rough and unpredictable play of politics. At the same time, by placing each institution under a different administrative authority it retained the limited scope essential to institutional variety, flexibility, and adaptation to local circumstances. Moreover, this corporate mode of control matched contemporary arrangements for managing other forms of public business. As states turned mercantilist regulation of their economies, their new liberal stance identified public interest with unrestricted privileges of incorporation and the removal of regulations governing economic activity. The argument that autonomous, competing corporations, aided but not controlled by the state, best served the public interest extended easily from finance, transportation, and manufacturing to educa-

tion. Academies, for instance..., were educational corporations (p. 40-41).

The demise of corporate voluntarism as public policy in secondary education began with the emergence of a new definition of "public school." The new definition viewed public school as being established by the public and chiefly supported, controlled and accessible to the public upon terms of equality, and without tuition charges. It became apparent that public educational institutions would be financed by the community or state and controlled by community or state officials. "Both paternalistic and corporate voluntarism were doomed" (Katz, 1987, p. 41).

### Incipient Bureaucracy

Incipient bureaucracy triumphed among the competing organizational models. According to Katz (1987), promoters of this model perceived schools as the key agency for improving the quality of city life. Schools were to create an artificial family environment using female teachers. This environment was to diffuse the negative aspects of poverty, crime, and immorality that were present in urban and industrial areas.

Incipient bureaucracy is described by Katz (1987) as a carefully constructed system of education. Social

change is viewed as flowing from the top-down with the function of government to lead and educate. Schooling was to be compulsory and supported with tax dollars.

Taxation represented a 'solemn compact between the citizen and State'; the citizen contributed in order to protect his 'person' and secure his 'property'. The 'State compelling such contributions, is under reciprocal obligation' to compel attendance at schools. Thus compulsory education became 'a duty to the taxpayer' (Board of Public Charities of the State of Pennsylvania, 1871; Katz, 1987, p. 51).

Katz (1987) and Carnoy (1976) give much credit to the professional educators for the adoption of the incipient bureaucracy as the organizational model for American Education. Horace Mann, Barnard and other first generation urban education leaders considered the goals for education to be the uplifting of the quality of public education by standardizing and systematizing the structure and content of schools. Their plans called for one centralized board of education.

To achieve the goal of centralization it was necessary to break the hold the small districts and school teachers had over the schools. The Massachusetts Board of Education under the leadership of Mann, set about their agenda by establishing and promoting public high

schools with administration cutting across district lines.

The reformers argued that the high school promoted mobility, contributed to economic growth and communal wealth, and saved the towns from 'disintegrating into an immoral and degenerate chaos' (Katz, 1970; Carnoy, 1976, p.124).

The reform movement began in the 1820s and continued into the 1880s and 90s. The reformers were supported by the bourgeoisie. The bourgeoisie had the same vision for society and the same solutions to the problems.<sup>4</sup> The high school was perceived to be the vehicle through which industrial growth would be achieved. Industrial growth would be fostered in the high schools by increasing communal wealth and creating a skilled labor force that replaced the apprenticeship.

The high school would simultaneously promote social growth by "civilizing the citizenry" and providing "guidance" to children from working-class families. Therefore, the resulting centralization reforms were the results of a majority consensus that was a symbol and reality of the first major school reform in America.

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4. The bourgeoisie helped Mann, but Mann also helped the bourgeoisie. "Horace Mann helped push through the legislative bills supporting and assisting railroad construction" (Katz 1970; Carnoy 1976 p. 152).

This reform effort represented a victory for the professional educators and the industrialists over the local power structures which had their support based in the rural areas and the wards of larger towns. The reformers, through the establishment of the high school, effectively imposed their views of what Massachusetts and the rest of the industrial North would be like in the coming generations.

As other states industrialized and urbanized, they, too, developed high schools. "The high school accompanied the need to combat the destruction of preindustrial, agrarian social structures by large-scale capitalist enterprise" (Carnoy, 1976, p.125). The reformers had promised that the high school would promote social mobility and civilized communities. It did neither. It exacerbated divisions in the community by serving the prosperous and failed to overcome problems of poverty and crime which plagued industrial towns (Carnoy, 1976).

The force of professionalism that had its impetus in this initial reform efforts is identified by Kirst (1984) as having a very powerful and enduring influence on the organization of the structure and pedagogy of American education. The establishment and growth of professionalism standards for administration, curriculum, testing and other elements essential to the system were

drawn together during the final decades of the last century. Kirst Comments:

Experience drawn from the testing of a jumble of ideas, ideas transmitted through new professional journals and new training for the emergent profession, did far more than the political system or the common school movement to impose a striking uniformity of American instructional practices. In this movement toward centralization, the value of pragmatism played a large part, together with a closely associated value in efficiency. (Kirst, 1984, p.31).

Professional educators were drawn to the large industrial corporate organizational model that were rapidly emerging in the turn of the century economy. During the period from about 1910-1930, conservative progressives were in vogue and their agenda which included efficiency and management by "experts" was appealing to educators. The centralized power of the superintendent, comparable to that of the plant manager, was supposed to overcome the tangles and inefficiencies of school board subcommittees.

This sensitivity toward efficiency is attributed to superintendent's susceptibility to the strength of "business ideology" in American society during this period and to the extreme weakness and vulnerability of school men [in that era.] School superintendents must, if they did nothing else, appear to be forward looking, change oriented, and knowledgeable about good

educational and managerial practice  
(Callahan, 1962; Winpelberg and  
Ginsberg, 1985, p.197).

The appeal of the industrial model was reinforced by the social class and status of the reformers. The financial and professional leaders who deplored the politics and inefficiency of the decentralized ward system had another reason for disliking that system. The system empowered members of the lower and lower-middle classes, many of whom were recent working-class immigrants. Reformers wanted "not simply to replace bad men with good; they proposed to change the occupational and class origins of the decision-makers" (Kirst, 1984, p.33).

These changes resulted in professional managerial board members. The board delegated many of their formal powers to professionals in education. Thus, educators had the discretion to shape schools, and they did. They shaped schools to meet the needs of an industrial society as defined by the prosperous, native-born, Protestant Anglo-Saxons. The results were a consensus on school policy and a limited set of functions for schools.<sup>5</sup> This board was desirable, yet politically difficult,

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5. The policy did not reflect American pluralism. Only 16 percent of the population graduated from high school in 1920.

therefore, the reformers developed an interim measure. They established high schools to control the content of grammar school instruction and modify local autonomy through entrance requirements.

With the development of the bureaucratic model education content presented a two-fold problem. There was the need to honor "minority sensibilities while inculcating the norms requisite for upright and orderly social living" (Katz, 1987, p.46). Schools were proclaimed religiously and politically neutral in order to avoid minority conflict. Yet schools did not become neutral. Protestantism continued to be involved in common education.

"The class bias of education was as pervasive as its tepid Protestant tone" (p.46). Mid-Victorian moral and culture values permeated textbooks and educational objectives. Sublimation became one goal of public education. Children were to learn 'that present self-denial is the price at which future good is often to be obtained and that present suffering and toil are rewarded by subsequent enjoyment' (Original source not identified, 1851; Katz, 1987, p. 46). Yet, schoolmen thought they were promoting a neutral and classless education. Educators were unwilling to examine cultural biases inherent in their educational concepts and activities.



Cultural bias was not incidental to the standardization and administrative rationalization of the bureaucratic model.

The rejection of democratic localism was only partially aimed at inefficiency and the violation of parental prerogative. It stemmed equally from a fear of the cultural divisiveness inherent in the increasing religious and ethnic variety of American life. "Cultural homogenization played counterpoint to administrative rationality. Bureaucracy was intended to standardize far more than the conduct of public life..." (Katz, 1987, p. 48). Common education was to forge social unity by eradicating cultural distinctiveness. Cultural difference implied inferiority, and inferior was how schoolmen perceived lower-class children.

During the antebellum period of incipient bureaucracy, proposals for classroom conduct and reform pedagogy were not, as one might expect, mechanistic. The reformers called for a softer pedagogy that reduced interpersonal competition and corporal punishment. They called for the "arousal of interest, affection for the teacher and the internalization of a desire to learn..." (Katz, 1987, p. 49).

The bureaucratic reformers had one other crucial concept that was different from the traditional bureaucrats. They did not adopt the bureaucratic ideal of personality. The model for the educational administrator comes from evangelical religion, not business or the military. Katz (1987) writes:

It was not by accident mid-century reform was called, even at the time, the educational revival. It was to be a secular evangelism. To Horace Mann, educational reform was not a task or merely a necessity; it was - and this word permeates his published and unpublished writings - a 'cause'.... Not only were the impulse and the language evangelical, so was the style. For these educational revivalists saw their mission as converting the populace, if need be town by town, to the cause of salvation through the common school....The educational revivalists retained from their religious counterparts the evangelical ideal of a moral and spiritual regeneration of American society through the moral and spiritual regeneration of individual personalities. This goal lay at the center of the new soft, child-centered pedagogy. It was to be a pedagogy that recognized the sterility and even the danger of purely cold and intellectual education....Like evangelical religion, education had to awaken and shape the affective side of personality by delicately stimulating and cultivating the emotions (p. 50).

Katz's systems models of educational organization provide an enlightening historical perspective regarding the history of competing views of how best to structure

public education. The concept of education becoming structured systems is rooted in nineteenth century and urban education. The structure of education, as we know education in the 1980s, is fostered by the conflicting values that are problematic with the four educational models systems Katz presents. The change within the structure of education has not altered significantly since the general adoption of the incipient bureaucracy model, but reform efforts continue to reflect certain elements of other models. The bureaucratic model is also referred to by numerous other names. Functional, normative, positivist, rational, etc. are also labels for this predominant organizational model of American education.

Changes in education or educational reform in American education has been within the given structure of systematic education. This is the essence of continuity in American education over the last century. Certain features of public education have been firmly fixed in the concept of public schooling.

Educational structure is more than a form of organization; it is the crystallization of particular values and communicates particular norms. The learning of the values and norms of the organizational structure takes priority to the learning of skills. American

education has inherited the values and norms of education being: "universal, tax-supported, free, compulsory, bureaucratically arranged, class-biased and racist" (Katz, 1971, p. 106).

Much of what American education is and is not is related to education as a well organized bureaucratic system. Public education in all regions of our nation is very similar in philosophy, organization, presentation, and evaluation. Even though each child experiences education uniquely, all children are presented with basically the same model or concept of public schooling. Thus, many of the virtues and problems of American public education and the reform movement of the 1980s is bound with education, as a well structured bureaucracy and rooted in our history.

Early Reform Reports. There were numerous committee and commission reform reports beginning in the 1830s and continuing over the next four decades that not only contributed to the dominant organizational model for education, but also the rational curriculum that still dominates public education. (See the American Annals of Education and Institutions, 1831; National Convention for the Promotion of Education in the United States, 1840; Convention of the Friends of Public Education, 1849; Brooks, 1864). The recommendations from

these and other similar committees supported making schools more efficient and more effective. This era was of nascent social science and the call was for efficient, rational modes of organization.

Such a rational order called for graded classrooms, supervision of the faculty by principal teachers, a common curriculum offered in all schools within a state, and hierarchically arranged roles and functions of school personnel. Teachers were to be appropriately trained and familiar with pedagogical methods and materials that had been proven to be successful. The effective schools were those where students mastered the common curriculum. The social benefits of effective schools depended on the availability of the school to all children (Slater and Warren, 1985).

The Committee of Ten on Secondary School Studies 1893, is the best-known educational report of the nineteenth century. It was established by the National Educational Association and chaired by Charles W. Eliot, President of Harvard University. Slater and Warren cite Edson, 1983, for pointing out the striking similarities between the proposals of the Committee of Ten and proposals of the 1983 report of the National Commission on Excellence in Education.

Recommendation from the Committee of Ten proposed that high schools follow an enriched curriculum of basic studies, including four years each of English and foreign language, and three years each of science, mathematics, and history or social studies. As proposed in 1983, all students were to complete a common course of study. 'Every subject which is taught...should be taught in the same way and to the same extent to every pupil so long as he pursues it, no matter what the probable destination of the pupil may be, or at what point his education is to cease' (Edson, 1983; Slater and Warren, 1985, p.122).

The Committee of Ten were offering a nineteenth century version of the effective school. The inclusiveness of Eliot's effective high school was inclusive only to the extent that all students could compete academically with the brightest of students. The 1980's version of this concept is offered in a different historical context by opposing heavy investment in the education of groups of students that may have limited potential. Both proposals have survival ideology as key components to their vision of public education.

Eliot's and the Committee of Ten's recommendations concerning the purpose of education were not

enacted. They were swept aside by the changing demographics of the American high school, the forces of new job market conditions and progressive educators seeking to renew schools by making them more responsive to diverse populations won out. High schools became popular institutions rather than elite. The views of Eliot and his peers did not prevail in making high school elitist in purpose, but the Committee of Ten did contribute to the triumphant bureaucratic organization structure (Slater and Warren, 1985).

The common school movement prevailed in that reform era. John Dewey in 1895 "observed that the high school must, on the one hand, serve as a connecting link between the lower grades and the college, and it must, upon the other, serve not as a steppingstone, but as a final stage for those directly entering the life of the society." (Dewey, 1895; James and Tyack, 1983, p.402). The impact of the current reform recommendations and mandates will be judged by how the changes hold up over time (Presseisen, 1985) and who benefits and who does not benefit from the impact of current reform efforts (Dobson, Dobson and Koetting, 1983).

### Summary

In this chapter, the researcher has presented an over-view of the complexity of the history and issues involved in education reform. The focus for the review has been on the revisionist and critical historical interpretations of education reform in American education. The intent was to situate current reform efforts in historical context.

The researcher examined the use and value of commission reports in education. First, second, and additional reform wave agendas were discussed. Much emphasis was placed on the role played by the commission report A Nation at Risk in setting the parameters for the education reform debate for the 1980s. The differences and similarities, among the reform waves were examined in-depth.

The structuring of American education into systems of education was also reviewed. Katz's (1987) research presents an interpretation of historical events that provide insight into how American education became such a subsuming bureaucratic system for educating our children. Three other concepts that were possibilities were also reviewed.



The intent of this chapter has been to historically situate for the reader the realities of the teachers that participate in this study. One of the assumptions for this study is that to better understand the present human condition, one can do this best by examining the historical influence on the present condition. It is to this end that this chapter has been written.

In the next chapter the review of literature continues. The focus moves away from the history of educational reform. Chapter III is a review of literature regarding the views and visions of classroom teachers.

## CHAPTER III

### TEACHERS SPEAK ON TEACHING AND REFORM ISSUES

#### Introduction

No one stands over the surgeon at the operating table with instructions to cut a little to the left or to the right....Unfortunately, professionalism for teachers is still not a question of the right or wrong thing to do but, rather, of who has the power to tell whom what to do (Shanker, 1985; Wangberg, 1987, p.80).

The following articles and dissertations were reviewed to present a representation of literature directed specifically toward the voices of teachers in relation to teaching and related reform issues.

#### Voices of Teachers

Barth (1985) expressed astonishment at how silent teachers have generally been in relation to the significant proposals being considered and often legislated during the current reform movement. He comments:

It's astonishing to me that the voices of teachers and principals are not more audible in the current discussions and debates about school improvement. It's unthinkable that any

other profession, undergoing the same scrutiny, would allow all the descriptions of practice, analysis of practice, and prescriptions for improving practice to come from outsiders looking in. Where are the voices of the insiders? Why can't we walk into a school and see and hear the mission of that school conveyed with clarity and conviction?....What will allow teachers and administrators to take their own visions seriously - and act on them? (Barth, 1985; Dombart, 1985, p.71).

Dombart (1985), a classroom teacher, responded to Barth by affirming that classroom teachers do have a vision for education, but agreed that the voices of teachers are not being heard. It is the visions of university or foundation-based researchers that are reported. The gap exists not because teachers have no insights to share "but because they are too busy creating learning centers or grading essays and because publishing brings no reward to the public school teacher" (Dombart, 1985, p.71).

Harry N. Chandler (1983), also a classroom teacher, responded to A Nation at Risk by applauding the attention brought to education, then expressed concern for issues ignored by the Commission, and yet, acquiesced to the agenda. Mr. Chandler wrote:

The Commission chooses to ignore one fact that teachers cannot forget: We are members of a larger society, and,

although we like to think that we have great influence on student - and, through them, on U.S. culture - we face stiff competition for children's time and attention. But we teacher will try to implement as many of the Commission's recommendations as we can, since A Nation at Risk reflects the mood of the country and we teachers are experts at responding to the country's mood. Indeed, we teachers will have to change, because educational philosophy in the U.S. (what little we know of it) is so fragmented that we have no shared professional ideal with which to stave off even the most idiotic suggestions for reform; because educational psychology (what little we understand of it) is so at odds in its findings that we have no proven methodology to fall back on in the face of attacks; and because our own craft (carried out independently in isolated cubicles) has given us few strong bonds beyond our unions, which are too absorbed in internecine warfare to defend us.

Therefore, we will try to change, even though by robbing Peter to pay all we will end up weakening education in other disciplines or at other grade levels. We will once again rush headlong into ill-conceived but widely advertised innovations that will hang like millstones from the curriculum long after the Commission and its report have been forgotten. Because we are teachers and we really do want to teach well, we will also spend long hours in stuffy rooms with stuffy committees trying to decide whether we have done what is best (Chandler, 1983, p.182).

## Research Surveys and Studies

### National Reform Issues Surveyed

This research is coupled with the line of questioning found in the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching study, Report Card on School Reform: The Teachers Speak (1988). In the 1988 Carnegie Study, more than 13,500 teachers were surveyed to find out how they evaluated school reform efforts. The framework for the 1988 study was the earlier 1983 Carnegie study that proposed a significant number of reforms. The majority of teachers that responded to the survey graded the national push for school reform with a "C" or less. "A close examination of all data covering a wide range of issues - from school goals to the working conditions of teachers - reveals a mixed report card" (Carnegie, 1988, p.1).

During this reform period in American education, the majority of teachers surveyed believe that there is a growing consensus about school goals; the leadership role of the principal has been strengthened; many students show improvement in achievement level; and a significant partnership with business and universities has been launched. Much more is being required of students in

academic units and testing. The Carnegie report concludes more must be done to promote thinking creatively.

Nationally, teachers salaries have improved and so has in-service education. Yet, "half of the teachers [surveyed] believe that, overall, morale within the profession has substantially declined since 1983" (Carnegie, 1988, p.11). The Carnegie survey reflects teacher disenchantment in spite of significant reform efforts. (See Appendix A for information regarding research methodology, questions and quantitative results.)

In May, 1984, the Educational Research Service conducted an educator opinion poll. Their survey was directed toward six recommendations that were being discussed or implemented across the nation. Teacher and principals supported career ladders that paid higher salaries to teachers who assumed additional responsibilities. Fewer teachers and principals supported incentive pay for performance criteria. Yet, 50.8 percent of the teachers and 67.1 percent of principals did support the concept of incentive pay.

Teachers and principals also agreed that teachers should be tested in methods and subject area content before certification. Teachers split evenly on their opinions concerning the testing of experienced teachers,

while six in ten principals supported the recommendation. Less than one-fourth of the teachers and principals supported paying teachers in areas of critical supply higher salaries.

A survey of 1,789 elementary and secondary teachers was conducted by Bacharach and other (1986). The purpose for their research was to assess the degree to which four factors - job resources, decision making, communication with building level administrators, and correlates of teacher satisfaction and career commitment - affected the teachers' professional performance.

The researchers believed the message this report conveys is clear. Our nation must be willing to do something about school working conditions or we will make little progress toward meaningful educational reform. "Reforms that seek to motivate teachers to perform better addressed the wrong issues. We must allow teachers to reach their potential by first removing the barriers to the effective performance of their job" (Bacharach, 1986, p.80).

#### National and State Reform Issues Surveyed

The effect of recent reform legislation on teachers in Texas was studied by Bahler and Roebach (1987).

Teachers' self-image, job satisfaction, emotional support in work setting and student attainment of learning goals, all registered a significant decrease since the implementation of reform legislation in North Central Texas. The testing of teachers and procedures for career ladder advancement were perceived by the teachers as the most harmful of the fifteen reform elements identified.

Frank Lutz and James Madderalo (1988) have also investigated the views of Texas teachers concerning teacher burnout as related to reform. These researchers mailed questionnaires to 3,000 Texas educators seeking information that would describe the effects of certain Texas education reform policies and teacher burnout. The focus was on determining the effect of mandated teacher-required paperwork and student achievement testing on teacher burnout. The results of the study indicated that: (1) paperwork was a factor in teacher burnout in Texas; (2) educators were not totally opposed to the mandated testing of students, but that teachers were concerned about the misuses of testing; and (3) mandated .patesting and the associated paperwork may reduce teaching effectiveness and contribute to teacher burnout.

In 1987, the New Jersey Education Association conducted a telephone survey of their membership to



identify problems affecting the education of children in the urban districts of New Jersey and to seek recommendations for improvement. The study identified the following major problems: (1) large class size; (2) no reasonable limits on the number of students with special needs placed in regular classrooms; (3) inadequate number of guidance counselors, substitute teachers and classrooms; lack of support from parents for teachers' efforts; (5) large number of students from problem home environments with lack of basic skills; (6) high failure rate of students on standardized tests; and (7) frequency of student absenteeism.

#### A Curriculum Issue

Bullough, et al. (1982) interviewed twenty teachers from a specific school district as to their perceptions of a new curriculum management system. They asked the teacher to share how the system had affected their teaching. The researchers studied the teachers' responses looking for indications of alienation or non-alienation. The theme that ran through what the teachers had to say about the curriculum management system

is that they do not want to decide about goals - instructional or larger - they do not want to engage in normative struggles. Partly this

occurs because the teachers do not feel they are knowledgeable enough to do this. They take it as right, proper, and desirable that these decisions are to be made by others, by experts removed from the classroom teacher...from the teachers' perspective the only serious issue is the technical one of methodology. If teachers think they are free to choose methods of presenting materials they seem to think of themselves as exercising optimum freedom of choice.... Because teachers do not reflect on the goals of education at any level, from the classroom to the university...they do not realize that dictation of goals or ends necessarily creates limitations on means, on the beloved methods of teaching (Bullough, et al., 1982, p.137).

### In-Service Education

In-service teacher education has received much attention in the reform movement. Glassberg (1981) reported that Joyce, Howey and Yarger's (1976) massive national review of in-service teacher education found such programs to be "weak, impoverished and relative failures. In-service programs typically expose teachers to new ideas or teaching strategies through lectures, courses or skill development workshops. The results are episodic and largely ineffective" (Glassberg, 1981, p.59-60).

The researcher further reviewed two dissertations and one national survey concerning the views of teachers

in regard to continuing or in-service education. M. Uhlich (1985) used a questionnaire to determine the perceptions of New York Public School teachers with regard to staff development practices in the district where they work. Uhlich sought the opinions of teachers in relation to the value of "what exists" versus what "should exist" in staff development.

The findings of Uhlich's research point to the conclusions that the surveyed teachers view their present staff development programs as ineffective and lacking benefit for their professional growth. The teachers overwhelmingly supported a research base program such as Readiness, Planning, Training, Implementation, and Maintenance (RPTIM) Model of school-based staff development (Wood and Thompson, et al., 1981; Uhlich, 1985).

Watts' (1986) dissertation study sought to identify sources and conditions for professional growth which teachers had viewed as helpful in the past. Watts identified four sources of professional growth and three major facilitating conditions. Sources of professional growth most frequently mentioned by the teachers were, learning from other teachers, learning from experience, learning from life (biography) and learning from in-service

programs. The major facilitating conditions were time, self-determined goals and autonomy, support and encouragement (Watts, 1986).<sup>1</sup>

### Job Satisfaction

Responding to the serious crisis in teaching sounded in reform reports, Raschke, et al. (1985) investigated job satisfaction with three hundred K-6 public school teachers. Their mail survey inquiry was directed toward identifying specific factors that elementary teachers deemed most responsible for both job satisfaction and dissatisfaction and to elicit the suggestions of teachers for improving their school's overall environment.

The teachers surveyed indicated the lack of time to be the greatest impediment to job satisfaction. Disruptive students ranked a close second and student disinterest or uninvolved involvement in academic learning was also a

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1. There is a body of research not addressed in this literature review that promotes teacher development through personal development (See Glassberg & Oja, 1981). This concept would be congruent with the paradigm from which the focus of this research is conceptualized. Such opportunities for growth would be site specific, teacher centered and directed and promoting the opportunity for teachers to separate conventional wisdom and practice from personal and professionally articulated value systems. As teachers come to understand themselves better, they become more congruent with their educational practices and their personal values. Reflective and empathetic teaching becomes a by-product of teachers that have self-understanding and are self-actualizing.

major concern. The disinterest is especially alarming since almost 45 percent of the kindergarten and first-grade teachers ranked disinterest as one of the five most stressful items.

The fifth most stressful factor, with 49 percent of the teachers, was dealing with various ability levels. It is noteworthy that the teachers did not identify financial concerns among the three major sources of job dissatisfaction. The survey indicated that three-fourths of the respondents indicated that they derived their primary satisfaction from intrinsic benefits accrued from working with children. The teachers called for less paperwork, extra non-teaching duties, and support and encouragement from building principals.

M. Cohn, et al. (1987) conducted research that focused on the views and voices of teachers concerning factors which discouraged them from staying in the classroom and from recommending the profession to others. Cohn interviewed 73 randomly selected teachers in Dade County Public Schools in Miami, Florida, during the 1984-85 school year. The research findings revealed that one of the leading factors which discourage teachers from remaining in the classroom was that the students and

parents were less cooperative than in years past. Students are viewed as unwilling partners. The teachers account for the disinterest of students to various social conditions ranging from changing family structure, drugs, and changed social values.

A second factor revealed in Cohn's study concerns professionalism. Teaching seems less "professional" than ever. Most of the teachers perceived their autonomy and decision making as having diminished significantly while paperwork had increased significantly and curriculum decisions were being more centralized. Low salaries continue to be recognized as a problem and was coupled with low status.

The third factor voiced by the teachers was the absence of some basic services, yet expectations were clear that the teachers were expected to function in situations where the physical set-up was substandard. The absence of basics in terms of physical conditions seemed to have a definite effect on the attitude of teachers.

Just as there were considerable variation in physical settings, the quality of leadership of the building principal varied. Unsupportive administrators have caused some teachers to want to leave teaching while

supportive administrators had helped teachers maintain a high level of commitment. The team at the top of the school can make a difference.

Wangberg (1987) has also conducted research aimed at identifying factors that teachers indicate lead to job dissatisfaction. By identifying these factors, Wangberg proposed "that policies and programs could be developed to better meet the needs of teachers, and in turn, benefit students, the teaching profession, and society" (p.76). A Likert teacher stress scale was developed by Wangberg and given to approximately six hundred teachers. Six factors of teacher job dissatisfaction were identified. These factors are: (1) Burnout; (2) Other control; (3) Work rewards; (4) Work overload; (5) Physical environment; (6) Classroom management.

#### Recommendations from Wangberg

Wangberg made several recommendations for improving the conditions of teaching as a profession and to increase job satisfaction. Wangberg's recommendations are representative of the reviewed literature that focused on teachers as professionals. Her recommendations were in addition to improving salaries and benefits. They are as follows:

### Reduce Burnout

- ~Improve the image of the teacher.
- ~Develop recommendations for reform with input from teachers.
- ~Emphasize the educational (rather than the custodial) function of our schools.
- ~Increase administrative support of teachers.
- ~Increase the possibility for teachers to interact positively with students and with each other.

### Increase Involvement

- ~Recognize teachers as curricular and instructional experts.
- ~Increase teachers' decision-making authority at all levels and in all areas that affect them.
- ~Emphasize building level and classroom level decision making wherever possible.
- ~Encourage innovative, creative, higher-level teaching.

### Offer Work Rewards

- ~Design and implement programs to increase parent and community support and involvement in the schools.
- ~Design and implement programs to give teachers individual recognition, both tangible and intangible.
- ~Design and implement opportunities for job mobility and promotion within the teaching profession.



### Curtail Work Overload

- ~Examine ways to reduce and consolidate paperwork.
- ~Provide computers and/or aids to assist teachers with necessary paperwork.
- ~Keep class size manageable.
- ~Use aids or volunteers to release teachers from non-teaching duties.

### Improve Physical Environment

- ~Improve the appearance of school buildings.
- ~Furnish school buildings with appropriate, comfortable furniture.
- ~Repair run-down school buildings.
- ~Air-condition schools in regions where this is necessary.
- ~Keep building temperatures at reasonable settings.
- ~Reduce noise levels where they are unreasonable.
- ~Provide adequate instructional materials.
- ~Provide adequate programs for security.

### Improve Classroom Management

- ~Provide teachers with effective management in-service. Emphasize classroom management in teacher education programs.
- ~Involve parents in classroom management.

~Provide teachers with seminars on self-concept building for themselves and for their students (Wangberg, 1987, p. 79-80).

### Summary

The purpose of this chapter has been to present to the reader an overview of research regarding the views and visions of teachers. Much of the reviewed research has been focused directly toward the perceptions of teachers in relation to the reform proposals of the 1980s. The researcher found that most of the research has been conducted as surveys using a structured questionnaire format.

This researcher concludes from the reviewed studies that teachers have generally been supportive in the "raising of standards" for students and have been less supportive of "remediation" of teachers. It is hoped that the research finding presented in Chapter V of this study will provide insight into the views of teachers that are reported in the studies reviewed in this chapter. In the next chapter, a description of this study sets the stage for reporting the contextual views and vision of classroom teachers that participated in this ethnographic study.

## CHAPTER IV

### DESCRIPTION OF STUDY

#### Introduction

In this chapter the researcher presents a description of the research. The research components are described in the following sections: The theory and methodology that guided the study; the setting for the study; the source of the data; the procedures for collecting and analyzing the data; the reporting of the data; interpretations; the hypothesis and research questions; the terms used in the study; the assumptions concerning the study; the scope and limitations of the study; and the trustworthiness of the research. The last section of the chapter is a statement of professional integrity. In this statement the researcher identifies personal biases that influenced the research.

#### Theory and Methodology

Whether stated or not, all research is guided by some theoretical orientation. Good researchers are aware of their theoretical base and use it to help collect and analyze data. Theory helps data cohere and enables research to go beyond an aimless, unsystematic

piling up of accounts.... (Bogdan and Biklen, 1982, p. 31).

The theoretical base for this research is located within the interpretive paradigm. The interpretive paradigm is focused by a concern to understand the world as it is and to understand the fundamental nature of the social world at the level of subjective experiences. Research conducted from the interpretive paradigm seeks explanations within the reality of the individual's consciousness and subjectivity. The frame of reference is that of the participants, not the observer (Burrell and Morgan, 1979).

This research, as well as all qualitative research, reflects a phenomenological theoretical perspective. This perspective affirms that multiple ways of interpreting experiences are available to each of us through interactions with others. It is the meaning of our experiences that constitutes reality (Green, 1978; Bogdan and Biklen, 1982).

While this research is phenomenological in orientation with emphasis on the subjective there is no denial or support of a reality "that stands over and against human beings, capable of resisting action toward it....Reality comes to be understood by human beings only

in the form in which it is perceived....We live in our imaginations, settings more symbolic than concrete" (Bogdan and Biklen, 1982, p. 32).

This research was further developed on the theoretical premise that teaching is a "personal activity shaped by individual perceptives and judgments and that teachers, like other adults, bring to their work a sense of self, the preservation of which is a prime importance to them" (Nias, 1987, p.1). Yet, as mentioned in Chapter I, the decision to conduct this study within one school is important. Eisner's (1988) theoretical perspective that is cited in Chapter I suggests schools should be viewed as ecological systems that foster mutual interdependence was used in this study. "...the individual is made and in turn makes himself in community" (MacDonald, 1977, p.11).

This descriptive qualitative research used educational ethnographic methodology which theoretically recognizes the contextual value of culture. The purpose of educational ethnographic methodology is to "provide rich, descriptive data about the contexts, activities, and beliefs of participants in educational settings." (Goetz and LeCompte, 1984, p.17).

Qualitative research rests on the presupposition that one 'should proceed as if they know very little about

the people and place' to be studied. Fully accounting for the procedures used can best be 'described in retrospect,' constructed as 'a narrative of what actually happened written after the study is completed' (Bogdan and Biklen, 1982; Butler, 1984, p.4).

The design for this research emerges from the study as it was conducted. The research plan evolved. Design and data analysis were constructed as the study unfolded.

The research systematically collected, analyzed and interpreted interview data to present an interpretation of the views and visions of teachers as related to the 1988 quantitative research findings of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. (See Appendix A for methodology used in the 1988 Carnegie research.)

### The Setting

The setting for this study was a rural independent Oklahoma school district located on the outskirts of a rural town. The population of the neighboring town is approximately 15,000-20,000. The enrollment of the school is approximately 600. Forty-six students were graduated in 1989.

The students in this school represent a cross-section of the socio-economic segments of society. There are students whose parents are well-educated and have high incomes, but the majority of students are from

lower middle or upper lower socio-economic levels. Approximately 24.5% of the student body qualifies for free lunches, with an additional 4% qualifying for reduced priced lunches. There are no black students in the school and it has been only in recent years that the number of Native American students has increased. Seventeen to eighteen percent of enrolled students consider themselves Native Americans.

The entire school system is located on one campus with basically five instructional areas. All buildings are located in close proximity. The newest building addition was completed in 1974. A bond issue to provide additional classrooms was defeated in the mid-1980s.

The cleanliness and maintenance of the buildings varied. The junior/senior high building was the newest building and very clean. The janitor for the high school was the president of the school board when the high school was originally built. His name is on the cornerstone.

The elementary school is in two wings. Both wings have extended roofs, which allow covering for wide walkways. Each classroom has a door that opens to the outside. The building was not very clean and in need of repair.

The building that is the oldest, dirtiest and most in need of repair is across the school parking lot and houses the remedial, special programs, and pre-school and kindergarten classes. There are no sidewalks in this area, and each time the researcher was on campus, mud was hard to avoid.

Two vocational buildings, a cafeteria (in which the superintendent's office is located), a baseball field and a large elementary playground are also a part of the campus. More details regarding the school are provided when the participants describe their work environment.

The selection of the school was determined by the willingness of the administration to allow the researcher to come into the school district to conduct research, willingness of teachers to participate and geographic proximity to the researcher. The paradigm from which qualitative research originates considers all social settings as idiosyncratic. Therefore, neither the school nor the participants for this study are necessarily considered typical or atypical (Burrell and Morgan, 1979).

#### Data Source

The teachers that participated in this study were all employed within the same school district. Thus, the



study is contextual rather than global. There are forty-one teachers and five administrators employed in this small school system. The average enrollment is approximately six hundred students in grades PK-12. There are fourteen teachers in the elementary (PK-6) school; there are twenty-one junior/senior high school teachers; and six special programs teachers. All of the teachers and administrators are white. Sixteen of the teachers were interviewed. The participants were:

three	K-2 teachers
two	3-5 teachers
six	junior/senior high teachers
two	9-12 teachers
three	special program teachers (K-12)

The teachers ranged in age from late twenties to mid-fifties. The majority of the teachers were in their late thirties to early forties. There were four male teachers (all junior/senior high) and twelve female teachers, all of whom were married. Most of the teachers held master degrees; a few participants were currently attending graduate classes; and three of the participants had never enrolled in graduate school. Two participants were certified as elementary principals and another was working toward an administrative certification. The participants' teaching experiences totaled approximately two hundred years. The years of experience ranged from

three to more than twenty. The average number of years of teaching experience was approximately fourteen.

The researcher asked and received permission from the superintendent to conduct this study. The researcher met with the school's teachers at a general faculty meeting in January, 1989. The researcher explained the purpose of the study and gave each teacher a letter requesting their participation. Attached to each letter was a form to be filled out and returned to the researcher. (Appendix B contains a copy of the letter and participation form.)

Junior/senior high and special programs teachers that were willing to participate returned their forms promptly. The researcher had to approach most of the elementary teachers individually to request their participation. It did not seem that elementary teachers were unwilling. It seemed to be more a matter of having not taken the time to return the forms or "paperwork". Six elementary teachers refused to participate. One refused because she was "too demoralized to present a balanced viewpoint." Others refused to participate because their family obligations were too demanding or just said they did not have time.

Junior/senior high teachers were more willing to participate. The difference between the responses seemed

to be due to the fact that the junior/senior high school teachers could schedule the interviews during their fifty-five minute planning period. All the elementary teacher participants felt they had to schedule the interviews after school hours. Their planning period was too short and they had too much to do during those few minutes to schedule the interviews. Therefore, interviews with high school teachers were on school time while all elementary and special programs teachers were interviewed after school hours. The one exception was the gifted education teacher. Her interview was during a weekly extended planning time.

The researcher attempted to interview a cross-section of teachers. Therefore, some teachers that were willing to participate were not interviewed. A disproportionate number of special programs and high school teachers that taught electives were willing to participate.

#### Data Collection and Analysis

The researcher conducted audiotaped interviews with each teacher. The number of interviews varied with the teachers' schedules and the length of time needed to address reform issues. Some of the participants provided

lengthy descriptive interviews while others were more direct and less verbose in sharing of their views.

All teachers that participated were interviewed from one to three hours. Most of the interviews were approximately two hours in length and usually conducted during two or three sections. The researcher had expected to interview each teacher at least twice, with additional interviews focused toward clarification. When the researcher examined the scripts, the need for clarification interviews was determined unnecessary. The researcher did make contact with four of the participants for clarification of their responses.

The interviews were semi-structured and related to the questions asked of teachers in the Carnegie Foundation's 1988 Report Card on School Reform The Teachers Speak. Unstructured follow-up questions and additional participants' remarks generally accompanied most responses. (See Appendix D for an example of a scripted interview.) During interviews there was a quest for an understanding of the views and visions of the participating teachers. The researcher was seeking to engage the teachers in reflective thinking about their views regarding educational reform efforts and their visions of what "ought" to constitute appropriate changes in public education, in general and in their school specifically.

The researcher chose the interview method rather than a questionnaire for the same reasons as Bullough, et al. (1982). The researcher first wanted teachers to have the opportunity to provide some of the structure for their responses. The researcher also hoped to get more of the teachers' actual views rather than what the teachers might have considered acceptable ways of responding. Interviews further provided the opportunity for clarification and probing for an elaboration of the participants' views.

This research method requires social interactions and is referred to as "participant observation" (as defined by McCall and Simmons, 1989) in the form of indepth interviews. However, the participants did not share equal control of the setting. The use of semi-structured indepth interviews was intended to give the participants the opportunity to provide more direction. Yet, by using questions from the 1988 Carnegie study, the researcher guided the process.

The field work began in January, 1989, and was completed in April, 1989. The researcher collected data from participants until the researcher was not learning anything new. This sampling methodology is consistent with the recommendations of Agar (1980).

While the field work was in progress the researcher began to script the audiotapes. The scripting of the tapes was completed in late May, 1989. Organization of data was begun in May and completed in early August, 1989.

For organizational purposes, three photocopies of each interview were made. The data was cut into topical subject categories that emerged from the data. The photocopies provided three opportunities for cross-referencing. There were, initially, thirty topics that emerged from the data. The topics were then reorganized into thematic topics that loosely corresponded to the fourteen Carnegie questions. Not all of the data "fit" with the focus of the reporting of the study and were, therefore, not used. "No study uses all the data that are collected" (Taylor and Bogdan, 1984, p.12)

In May, 1989, the researcher began to study the data that had been organized into the fourteen topics. Language and content of all scripts were carefully studied in order to provide a thoughtful interpretation of the views of the teachers. This process was completed in August of 1989. All assertions that were developed were checked for validity by seeking confirming and disconfirming evidence. The evidence is found in the

voices of the teachers. For this reason numerous paraphrases of the voices of the teachers are presented to the reader.

### Reporting of Data

The voices of the participating teachers are paraphrased. The researcher changed the words of the teachers only to provide clarity, context and brevity. The paraphrases are numbered within each heading. The numbers are for referencing.

Numerous examples of the teachers' voices are used in this study. The researcher could have summarized the views of the teachers more, but it seemed important that the words of the teachers be heard. The researcher carefully selected examples that seemed to best present the voices of consensus and the voices of dissent. Redundancy is used to emphasize the pervasiveness of particular views, and also the uniqueness of even similar views.

### Interpretations

It is the task of the qualitative researcher to describe and interpret culture behavior. The "native"

views of the teachers in this study are directly represented by their own voices. But, according to Spinkler (1987), it is rare that the voices of the researched can provide a comprehensive understanding of their own culture. We must apply concepts, models, paradigms and theories from our own professional discipline. Spindler explains:

Culture is not lying about, waiting patiently to be discovered; rather it must be inferred from the words and actions of members of the group under study and then literally assigned to that group by the anthropologist. 'Culture,' as such, is an explicit statement of how the members of a particular social group act and believe they should act, does not exist until someone acting in the role of ethnographer puts it there.... (Spindler, 1987, p.41).

Each of the participating teachers have their own theories of their "micro-culture." Goodenough (1981) refers to these personal theories as "propriospects." It was the task of this researcher to attempt to illuminate the collective propriospects from the micro-culture of the entire group. The researcher attempts to make the familiar strange (Erickson, 1977), and to offer cultural interpretations, not as "facts" but as possibilities for consideration and for promotion of dialogue among those involved with education and education reform. "Interpretive accounts, above all, provide a perspective and, in



doing so, achieve the goal of enhancing human discourse" (Noblit and Hare, 1988, p.18).

### Hypothesis

The statement of this hypothesis is for presentation of the researcher's bias. In qualitative research the hypothesis is intended to sensitize the researcher to biases or phenomena previously not understood. The hypothesis for this research is: Teachers will primarily envision educational changes within the same paradigm as proposed in the reform movement of the 1980's. This paradigm is the Essentialist/Behavioral paradigm as described by Dobson and Dobson (1981).

The researcher attempted to demonstrate the plausibility of the hypothesis. The researcher did not test or prove this hypothesis. The hypothesis could have been modified or even discarded as data was collected and analyzed. A new hypothesis or hypotheses could have been generated from the research (Bogdan and Taylor, 1975). The research interviews did not present the researcher with information that caused the hypothesis for this study to be altered. Additional hypotheses did emerge from the study and are presented in the last chapter as conclusions.

### Research Questions

The research questions that guided the semi-structured interviews are from Report Card on School Reform The Teachers Speak (1988). This study is quantitative research conducted by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. (Again see Appendix B for sample letter, Carnegie research questions and participation request forms that were given to the teachers in the participating school.)

This study was seeking clarification, understanding and "thick" ethnographic descriptions in regard to the participants views on recent educational reform efforts and their ideas and/or visions of what "ought" to constitute educational reform in their school. The researcher endeavored to present an understanding of the human conditions of the participating teachers.

### Definition of Terms

Terms are defined as follows:

Carnegie Foundation of  
the Advancement of  
Teaching

as used in this study is a  
non-profit education research  
organization sponsored by the  
Carnegie Foundation. Ernest L.  
Boyer is the director.

Culture	is the totality of knowledge, attitudes and habitual behavior patterns that are shared and transmitted by members of a particular group (Jacob, 1987).
Curriculum	as used in this study is the totality of all experiences for which the school assumes responsibility.
Educational ethnography	Educational ethnography is used for evaluation, descriptive research and for theoretical inquiry. Education ethnography is an ethnographic approach to studying problems and processes in education (Goetz and Le-Compte, 1984).
Education reform	as used in this study, is the improvement of education by alteration, addition, deletion or correction.
Essentialist/Behavioral	is a paradigm that is "psychologically couched in Behaviorism and philosophically based in Essentialism. Behavioristic investigation is limited to objective, observable phenomena, and to the methods of natural science. Essentialism, a philosophical position, mediated between the Realist and Idealist extremes" (Dobson and Dobson, 1981, p.15).
Ethnography	as used in this study is a holistic, empirical, naturalistic, eclectic, process research model used to study human behavior.
Ethnomethodology	is the study of how individuals go about seeing, explaining, and describing order in the world in which they live (Bogdan and Biklen, 1982).

"Ought" of education	as used in this study is the desired organization and practices in education as opposed to the reality of organization and practices. The "ought" is dependent on ones paradimic views.
Paradigm	as used in this study is an organizational method for conceptualizing the commonality of perspectives.
Participant observation	is a general research approach that requires social interaction on the scene. The subjects themselves are a part of the data-gathering process (McCall and Simmons, 1989).
Practical curriculum inquiry	as used in this study is a conceptual framework that is immersed in the curriculum setting for the purpose of seeking understanding of curriculum problems so that there is an increase in the capacity to act morally and effectively in pedagogical decisions (Schubert, 1986).
Problematic	as used in this study is having the nature of uncertainty or advantages and disadvantages.
Qualitative research	is "an empirical, socially located phenomenon, defined by its own history, not simply a residual grab-bag comprising all things that are 'not quantitative'.... (Kirk and Miller, 1986, p. 10).

Research interview	is a "two-person conversation initiated by the interviewer for the purpose of obtaining research relevant information, and focused by [the researcher] on content specified by research objectives of systematic descriptions, predictions or explanations" (Cannell and Kahn; Cohen and Lawrence, 1985, p. 291).
Teacher development	as used in this study is the growth and maturing of the professional educator.
Thick description	is the "detailed reporting of social or cultural events that focus on the 'webs of significance' (Geertz, 1973) evident in the lives of people being studied" (Neblit and Hare, 1988, p. 12).

### Assumptions

The assumptions in this study are as follows:

1. Teachers are a basic to schooling and changes in education (Goodlad, 1983).
2. The Carnegie Foundation Report Card on School Reform The Teachers Speak presents a quantitative assessment of the views of American teachers.
3. Education is problematic and laden with values.
4. The school is an ecological system.
5. Qualitative research provides the opportunity for a deeper understanding of the human condition of teachers and the views of teachers.
6. To better understand the present human condition one must examine the history of the condition.

7. The researcher is an instrument.

### Scope and Limitations

Ethnographic approaches can provide more precise estimates of treatment. At the same time, those who take into consideration the findings from ethnographic research must be willing to accept the fact that contrasting methods can generate contrasting and conflicting findings (Fetterman, 1986, p. 218).

This study was confined to the views of the participating public school teachers, within one school district. The research used qualitative methods as an inquiry process which was guided by a point of view derived from the research setting itself (Erickson, 1977). The intent was to conduct practical curriculum inquiry by rendering a "thick" description of the current views of the participating public school teachers as related to school reform and their visions for education.

Any attempt to generalize the research findings are hypothetical and for the purpose of generating further dialogue concerning the views of the reality and the "oughts" in education that are held by teachers. Universal findings are not appropriate for qualitative studies, but gives way to multifaceted images that vary from situation to situation. This study is just a small part

of the complete picture. Generalizability for this research is limited to the extent to which comparable studies with comparable groups can be found and analyzed for similarity (Goetz and LeCompte, 1984).

Maeroff (1988), Ashton and Webb (1986), Freire (1970), Apple (1982), and other education writers recognize factors that prevent teacher empowerment or efficacy. The researcher expected these same factors to influence how teachers envisioned educational changes. These restraints were recognized but no attempt was made to address the degree of influence of such factors.

#### Trustworthiness of Research

Standards for establishing the "trustworthiness" of naturalistic/qualitative research are not shared by all members of the research community and may be "somewhat primitive." Nevertheless, Guba (1981) has proposed four constructs that appear to be valuable in assessing qualitative inquiry (Guba, 1981) that guided this research. Guba's constructs are credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. The methods for establishing these constructs are dynamic but are grounded in the researcher's statement of biases, the research process, the thick descriptions, and other similar research projects. The constructs were established in

process and by reflecting on the data (Butler, 1984). To a great extent, the trustworthiness of this research rests in the researcher as the instrument.

#### Statement of Professional Integrity

The reader of this research must be aware that "research is not above politics, it is a part of politics. The selection of a theory and a method is a political act" (Fetterman, 1986, p. 219). The researcher and the researched are neither politically nor morally neutral. The choice of research topic and research method are value laden.

This research, along with most all educational research, is conducted with an underlying assumption that education needs to change or improve. To change education, we must seek to better understand the realities of classroom teachers. The researcher not only wants to promote a thicker description of the realities of teacher, but the researcher desires that public educators become more thoughtful and reflective about educational issues and practices. The researcher further desires that teachers find and use their voices in local, state and national education dialogue, and that we as a nation of diverse people will begin to examine all educational



decisions or reform issues as to their problematic aspects (Dobson, Dobson, and Koetting, 1987).

## CHAPTER V

### THE VOICES OF TEACHERS AND AN INTERPRETATION

#### Introduction

Ethnographic findings are not privileged, just particular: another country heard from. To regard them as anything more (or anything less) than that distorts both them and their implications...The reason that protracted descriptions...have general relevance is that they present the sociological mind with bodied stuff on which to feed...By realizing that social actions are comments on more than themselves; that where an interpretation comes from does not determine where it can be impelled to go. Small facts speak to large issues... The important thing about [these] findings is their complex specificness, their circumstantiality. It is with the kind of material produced by...[qualitative study] in confined contexts that the mega-concepts with which contemporary social science is afflicted...can be given the sort of sensible actuality that makes it possible to think not only realistically and concretely about them [the researched], but what is more important, creatively and imaginatively with them [the researched] (Geertz, 1973, p.54).

The research findings presented in this chapter are presented by the researcher with a desire that dialogue about and with teachers, administrators, political leaders, parents and other interested persons be "creatively

and imaginatively" stimulated in order to better understand the lived realities of teachers. For it is teachers who have the direct privilege and responsibility for nurturing children while in the school setting. It is teachers who can effectively and affectively influence children in the present and for the future. If society desires education to improve, the more we understand about the culture of teachers, the more likely change can be meaningful.

The organization of the voices of the classroom teachers that participated in this research is presented in fourteen parts. The researcher organized the data to correlate with the fourteen research questions addressed in the 1988 Carnegie study, Report Card on School Reform The Teachers Speak. A summary of the results of the 1988 Carnegie study is found in Appendix A.

The voices of the teachers presented in this study, are intended to provide a rich, contextual descriptive understanding of the more global data presented in the Carnegie study. The interpretations given to the voices of the teachers are intended for the promotion of dialogue, possible generalizability and to further the quest of a better understanding of classroom teachers and their views. The voices of the teachers concerning education reform and the researcher's interpretations follow:

### Reform Movement

The contextual data for this study was gathered during the spring of 1989. This was almost a year after the 1988 Carnegie study was released. The Carnegie study found that most teachers that participated in their study graded the reform movement with a C or less. A C- was the most common grade assigned to the reform movement by the teachers that participated in this qualitative follow-up study. The teachers varied the degree of harshness in assigning a grade, but were more similar in their reasons. A few of the teachers never assessed a letter grade to the reform but spoke freely about their opinions. Representative comments are:

1. It depends on which aspect of reform I am to grade. But basically we haven't done enough.
2. I would grade the reform with a C because I don't think I've seen that much real change.
3. I feel some of the ideas are good but reactions are slow in coming....
4. Lots of things are attempted to appease the public. It makes them think the government and education are trying to change some things.
5. I don't see that reform has affected rural schools much. I like some of the things done but locally I haven't seen much change. It has been mostly lip service.
6. I don't think our state has followed through with much of anything. When they do, it is not things that really matter. Lots of talk, like smaller classes, but nothing comes about.

7. I think we have more or less been forced to do what the legislature has told us to do. I think there are a lot of things teachers would do differently. We don't have the money to do it.
8. From a teacher's standpoint, I don't think we have been able to do what the teachers want.

Comment #6 seems to best represent the consensus of these teachers. It would seem that perhaps the teachers were cautiously optimistic. They seemed to hope that because of the public attention education was receiving significant change would occur. Yet, as the decade of the 1980s has drawn to a close, major reform has not occurred.

The major issues with the teachers seem not to be the philosophic underpinning or direction of the reform agenda but more with the issue of more rhetoric than action and the overriding issues of underfunding. When the teachers expressed concern about the direction of the reform agenda, it was most likely that the concern was with more expectations and more paperwork being mandated for teachers. Teachers commented:

9. I think our state is trying to get its act together. More has been accomplished as to what teachers are doing as compared to what students are doing.
10. I'd rather not get a raise than to have more "stuff" put on me to do. I have all I can handle now.

An elaboration of the reasons for the grades given educational reform will unfold in the reporting and interpretation of data concerning specific reform issues in the pages that follow. The first section focuses on the goals of the school.

### School Goals

Much of the reform agenda for the 1980s has called for clearer goals for education, an increase in academic expectations for students and a stronger leadership role for the administration, especially the building principals. The 1988 Carnegie study found that national school goals are more clearly defined, academic expectations are higher and the leadership role of the school principal has improved.

The focus on these areas has been influenced by the business community, and their management by objectives model. In this section the researcher will present the views of the participating teachers in regard to the clarity of educational goals, academic expectations, and the leadership of school administration.

### Clarity of Goals

The 1988 Carnegie study found a growing consensus about the goals of education. They call for the nation

to "reaffirm equality of opportunity, unequivocally and give it meaning in every classroom....the goal should be quality for all" (p.2). The teachers in this research were rather diverse about whether the goals in their school have become clearer. Some participants thought that the reform efforts have resulted in clearer goals.

They speak:

1. I think so. My overall goal, and I think every teacher's overall goal, is to give the students a good education where he can make a choice. He can either go on to college and be prepared or go out in the job market and be prepared. They need to be able to read, write and do the math - just basic living skills. I think we pretty well understand that to be our major goal. We must prepare them to go to college or go to work. I think everyone sees that here. [Q] ...I think it is pretty well understood with any school what the goals are. We are to give students the best education we can and prepare those for college. (high school teacher)
2. Yes, there have been some changes. We are striving for higher academics....emphasis is not all on sports. There is a different feel in the school with the new administration. Probably more an attitude difference. (elementary teacher)
3. I think we are trying to diversify the school as a whole - so more kids can feel successful. We are trying to do that statewide even. We are emphasizing college or further education and we are seeing more achievement. We have also implemented a self esteem program. We are just beginning to deal with the issue of self image. (special programs teacher)
4. Yes, our goals are clear. We are here to educate the students. I think we are becoming

more academically orientated. At least more stress is being put on academics. [Q] Well, we sat down and wrote out the goals for our classes. (elementary teacher)

5. The goal for the school I sometimes think is to pass everybody and keep everybody happy. (high school teacher)

One junior/senior high school teacher believes that some of the goals are in conflict.

6. Sometimes I think some of the goals are conflicting....it is a fact - I get papers coming over here to lower the grading scale for certain students. I don't agree but I go along because that is the way it works. You pass some students who can't read because they are labeled L.D. [learning disabled]. They go over there [to L.D. lab] to take tests and are given notes, or whatever, to use with the test. Then people ask how did they ever graduate from high school. There are too many loop holes in the system. It could be real simple, if it was the same way across the board, - no slow or fast class. You master this and you graduate. Real simple.

Several high school teachers considered the goals of their school to be very clear. Yet, just as the goals mentioned in the Carnegie study are vague, the goals of the participants in this study were difficult for the teachers to articulate. The teachers used nebulous words like "good education", "best education", "higher academics", "cover curriculum", "preparation for college", etc. When the researcher sought clarification, the teachers responded with equally nebulous terms and/or personalized the goals for the school in terms of goals for their



classes. It would seem that the teachers that do see the goals clearly see them in terms of getting through a maze of discreet courses that are a preparation for other goals.

Other teachers see the clarity of the goals of the school differently. They commented:

7. If you mean the superintendent, yes. No, if you mean the individual grade school teachers. Yes, if you mean the high school teachers. I don't know if the reason elementary teachers don't have a clear picture of the goals of education is because of who the teachers are or because they have been in the same position for so long. High school teachers know what is needed for college. They seem to have a better sense of purpose as to what the kids need to know. [What would be the goals of a high school or elementary teacher?] Probably cover the curriculum that the kids would need to know to go on to the next level. (special programs teacher)

Goals are viewed in terms of preparation. The specific preparation for college was often mentioned and clearly valued by all the teachers. Nevertheless, only about 35 percent of the high school graduates are expected to attend college and only twenty percent are likely to graduate. This data was provided by the school's counselor/administrator.

Elementary teachers generally agreed with this special programs teacher as to their not having a clear understanding of the goals of education, but perhaps for different reasons. One commented:

8. I don't think goals are specifically clear at all. Hit here today and there tomorrow. We do not stay on track with our objectives for education in our state. I think we are going to stick with this and get it ironed out. Then before I know it we have bounced up against something else. [Example?] Class size - One year at another school the first grade teacher had 32 students and I taught 42 sixth graders. They got away with it, because the first grade teacher had an aid and the principal took the better math students out of my class everyday for forty minutes. It was an awful year. I had two board members children. They could not do anything about the size of the classes because of money. Yet, all year the media talked about reduced class sizes across the state....Now it is testing. I'm not a test person. I really am not. One or two tests doesn't prove the performance of a child. So why do they spend all that money on testing? Tests make kids apprehensive and parents competitive....I have two boxes of tests back there waiting. I spent two hours getting them ready to go....Those tests are not going to prove anything. We are testing them to death.

Other elementary teachers expressed their views:

9. No, our goals are not clear, but we have been working on them much longer than since 1983. We have put them down on paper several times. They call it by different names every time. [What happens to your work?] It disappears, probably to go to the heavenly school of paper-work.

[There is no purpose?] No purpose, no follow-up. Being aware of it, putting it down in black and white may be the purpose. It's just been done over and over and over. [Just another cycle? How do you feel about that?] That it is a lot of paperwork, a lot of wasted manpower hours that could have been useful hours in some other way. But, even if or when I implement something, I don't know if there is any continuity in the next grade. We don't know if anybody else is doing anything.

10. No, our goals are not clear. [Why not?] Lack of leadership. Changes in administration. No follow through, no accountability required by the school board....I don't think they have any idea what teachers want. I don't know if they care. We are in the lowest echelon. Now, we have had input in the past. We have had something written on paper because of committee work. Yet, as far as the input showing up on the documents I don't know. [What happens to the documents produced?] Probably filed and pulled for state department inspection. I can't recall the last time I saw one.

These teachers speak of alienation from goal setting. They speak of isolation and work that never influences what happens in the school. There is media hype and teacher compliance to paperwork. The reality of the teachers does not match the reality presented by the media, State Department of Education, etc. A high school teacher expressed well that there is no consensus on school goals but that teachers do have their own goals.

11. No, our school goals are not clear. It is whatever you think your goal is for your class. We don't talk much about goals unless it is a general goal of how to get them through high school and prepare some to go to college.

The individual teachers do have goals for their classes. Their voices express goals for their content or grade level of instruction.

12. Yes, I think the goals are clearer. We have had to sit down and list our goals. That helps. [high school teacher]
13. Yes, to a small degree. When all this improvement came around I could see where you were

more goal orientated in your classroom. I can see teachers trying to set their goal with the tests. The Learner Outcomes<sup>1</sup> and the MAT (Metropolitan Achievement Tests) have made goals more clear. (junior/senior high teacher)

14. A couple of years ago all the junior/senior high school teachers in my content area had to sit down and more or less write down where we wanted to go. We worked out how far each teacher would take the students so we wouldn't be repeating one another.

[Did you find this useful?] Oh, yes. [Are you glad you did it?] Yes, yes, yes. [Would you have done it without being told you need to do it?] Yes, we had already talked about it. We just formalized it on paper and told them what we were doing. That helped a lot. When students tell me they have never...I know they had it. I don't have to worry and say well maybe they didn't. I know they have had it.

This teacher, and most of the other teachers in this study, seems to equate the presentation of information with learning, or perhaps equate presentation with purpose of schooling. Learning seems to be secondary or at least separated from opportunities to learn. If students "had it" in another class then there seems to be an assumption that the students must "know it" or at least had the opportunity to learn. Therefore, the teacher is free to build on "prior exposure to knowledge" as if exposure was equal to learning. The teacher did not seem

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1. Learner Outcomes are suggested behavioral objectives produced by the State Department of Education in regard to grade and/or subject area academic goals and objectives for schools in the state.

to feel any responsibility to reteach for students that did not learn material in another class. The teacher's goal is to present material deemed appropriate for her class regardless of any breakdown with prior exposure and prior knowledge that might be needed. The goal is "cover" the material.

Other teachers define their goals:

15. For me personally, my goal is for every kid that walks out of my class to make 25 or above on the ACT. That has always been my goal and most make it. If they can't [score 25+] and they have completed my four year program then I haven't done my job. [Do you worry about achievement test scores?] I don't teach for achievement tests. I use the ACT. (high school teacher)
16. I would hope my goals are clear. I talk a lot about expectations - especially at the beginning of the year....I talk about goals with my [elementary] class and that things we do can be used in later life and in high school. I talk to them about certain things that I consider important and I tell them about former students I have worked with and about seeing them graduate and go on to college....(elementary teacher)
17. My goals for students are different. For some, it is to get ready for college; for others just make sure they can function when they reach the outside world - write a letter, file for unemployment, fill out job application...my goals are to see that at the end of the nine weeks or semester that the students have mastered certain concepts. I try to go beyond the "when" in history to "why". (junior/senior high school teacher)
18. Putting it down on paper makes me more aware of what exactly my goals were that I was accomplishing anyway. Now whether it helped me or

not would be debatable because I was doing it anyway. (elementary teacher)

19. My goal for education is to produce responsible individuals who can work to their potential. To me education is to prepare children to become adults and carry on society. But I'm not so sure that we are so much into educating as we are into testing well or...covering material. I don't know if a lot of teachers have goals or if it is just a job. [Do you see first grade as preparation for second grade, etc.?] Not as much as in some schools. [Is that what the goals should be?] Oh, yes. (special programs teacher)

20. I feel my goals are clearer. [Why?] Because more emphasis is being put on education. I try to work harder with students and I'm trying to get it to take effect. The reform movement has made me have to look more closely at education. Fifteen years ago I just taught my class and I didn't worry about anything else. Now I think a little bit more about the goals that are set and what they are trying to reach. I look at the [achievement] test scores and see where they might have fallen down and cover that material more closely next time. (junior/senior high teacher)

The voice of a special programs teacher:

21. Some of the stuff required by the State Department of Education is nonsense and busywork. I don't see a curriculum review for special education as helpful. I just see it as something else I am required to do and not given the time to get it done. Once we get it done it won't be a big deal but it is just more paperwork. No one will look at it, except when the State Department comes down and we can show it to them. [Will it make any difference in what or how you teach?] No, I write an Individual Education Plan already. My long term goals are on it. My goals have always been clear to me. It may prove helpful to write it out. Our special programs supervisor seems to think if we write it down it will be more defined.

Lack of communication and leadership coupled with compliance behavior of "doing" paperwork are perhaps reasons these teachers appear to have given little or no thought to how what they do in their classrooms contributes to an overall educational experience for children. It would seem that if the teachers have difficulty defining and articulating inclusive school goals it is no wonder that many students have no real understanding about why they are in school, and how what they are learning "fits" together for a conceptual whole.

Several teachers were aware of problems that result from poorly communicated school goals. Therefore, because of, or in spite of, a lack of clarity of school goals, the teachers seemed to focus closely on the goals for their classrooms. The consensus of the teachers found value in the paperwork of identifying their goals. These goals are clearly the transfer of knowledge from teachers to students for future use and value. These goals are for academic achievement measured with normed referenced tests and are in philosophical agreement with the reform movement agendas of the 1980s. Only one of the sixteen teachers readily identified her goals for education in human qualities with present and future value.

22. I know it is like living in a fantasy world but I would like to see every boy and girl achieve what he/she is capable of doing. Not on paper - but in just being happy and all together as a student and in years to come.

[So you see education as more than teaching reading and writing] Yes, definitely. Some of these kids need to know that somebody cares about them - that somebody has time for them (elementary teacher).

The teacher articulated the goals of education in language that suggests humanistic goals for education. She considered humanistic goals to be a "fantasy." Perhaps this is because she recognizes the rhetoric and ethos of the school to often be less than a nurturing environment. Perhaps the environment is not very supportive and conducive to the opportunities for the discovery and enhancement of the personage of students.

### Academic Expectations

A second component of goal setting explored during the interviews was academic expectations. Many of the teachers seem to agree that academic expectations have increased. Yet, several see changes more as paper compliance.

The high school teachers adopted the mind set of the reform agenda for the 1980s by requesting that the school board raise the high school grading scale. An "A" was 90-100. It is now 93-100; below 63 is an "F".



Raising standards was viewed as raising expectations. The state has also raised "standards" by increasing the number of credits required for graduation and the number of courses in specific content areas.

Seven Class Periods. State mandated increases in academic requirements have resulted in a seven period school day. Classes were six periods and 55 minutes in length. There are now seven, forty-five minute periods.

Several of the junior/senior high school teachers coupled student expectations with the seven-period day. Some of the teachers like the shorter periods, especially if they taught junior high classes. Other teachers did not like the shorter periods because they could not cover the same amount of material.

23. I lost 30.2 class periods when they took off my ten minutes. I lost a chapter and a half of what I taught.

This concern about a lack of time for a broader scope of subject matter was voiced by all the classroom teachers that were interviewed that taught upper division academic courses, or vocational courses. The teacher paraphrased in Comment #23 would rather have taught a longer school day. She speaks further:

I would rather they have lengthened my day rather than to have shortened my class periods. The seven-period day is a "joke". It is merely a way to get in more credits.

The problems of replacing external objectives with internal procedures is addressed in the reform literature and is critiqued by Michael (1988) and Timar and Kirp (1987) elsewhere in this study.

No-Pass/No-Play. Another reform mandate, the no-pass/no-play rule, was coupled with academic expectations by the teachers participating in this study. The state has mandated a no-pass/no-play rule and an attendance rule. The no-pass/no-play rule limits extra-curricular activities to those students that maintain a "D" grade average in all courses. The attendance rule stipulates that if students have an excess of absences, they automatically fail. The teachers' comments were primarily concerned with no-pass/no-play.

The state's no-pass/no-play mandate is viewed as demanding higher academic achievement by some teachers, having no effect by others and actually detrimental to achievement by a few other teachers. Voices concerning no-pass/no-play:

24. It is really hard to make an "F". To make an "F" you just absolutely do nothing. Most teachers say if you do your work - turn in everything - and made something above 20 on a test, you can pass. (high school teacher)
25. There is enough busy work in education that everyone can hold on and pass. (high school teacher)

26. No-pass/no-play is a good rule, but basically it isn't the ones that fail that are participating. I bet none of the ones I turn in are in sports or any of the other activities. It is the kids that aren't involved that are identified as not passing their courses. Occasionally I have one or two - but seldom. Kids in sports and other activities are usually the better students.
27. I think kids are coming around on the no pass no play rule.
28. No-pass/no-play is the worse thing I've seen implemented. We spend so much time averaging grades [Most of the high school teachers spent about 2 hours each week on no-pass/no-play paperwork.] We are going crazy. It is the cumulative average for no-pass/no-play. Yet, we keep grades by nine week periods. It may catch one or two but not many. The nonparticipating kids are usually the only ones that are caught.

To me if a kid is good at something, praise that kid and let him do it....All no-pass/no-play has done is keep a few kids from doing something they are good at, and punishing a few that stretch themselves by taking something that is real hard for them. They could choose the easy way and take a course they know they can pass....

This teacher had a student with a 61% grade average that was taking her course as an elective, higher level academic course. The student did not have the opportunity to participate in an interscholastic meet in a field where she excelled because of the one low grade in the high level academic course. The teacher did not think this was fair to the student. She believed that the rule

does not encourage students to attempt courses that are perhaps considered more academically challenging. She speaks further:

Just let the legislators come down here and tell one of these students they can't participate because that have a 60% instead of 63%. Let the kid cry to them and see how they feel then about no-pass/no-play!

A sterner, more structured teacher viewed the ruling differently and represented the consensus view:

29. I think a "C" instead of a "D" is better [for no pass, no play], because I think the pendulum must swing clear to the extreme before we bring students and parents back in line with a focus on education. [Some kids get smashed in the middle.] Yes, but isn't that true with everything in life?....

When we accept a "D" it says to the kids "all you have to do is the bare minimum that is required and that is fine." When you say that is all we expect, many students will give only what is expected<sup>2</sup> (high school teacher)

A high school coach expressed his views on no-pass/no-play:

30. I know I surprise a lot of people, but overall it has taught a lot of these kids responsibility. [You see some good coming out of it then?] You bet, I see some wonderful things come out of it. There is one drawback. There are a couple of kids we lost. We tried to help them...everybody gave as much as they could without breaking the rules and they could not cut it. We lost them. So we sacrificed a few

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2. This teacher's position on minimum academic expectations becoming the maximum is voiced by the critics of the 1980s reform philosophy and is reviewed elsewhere in this study.

to save the majority...[The teacher reported that these two students are still attending school.]

This coach and the previous teacher, as well as other teachers, expressed a willingness to "sacrifice" a few to save the majority. The teachers who were willing to sacrifice some students did not broach the issue as to which groups of students were more likely to be sacrificed, the value of extra-curricular activities nor other philosophical and ethical issues involved in the no-pass/no-play mandate. The coach continues:

There are some kids that come to school only because of sports...I wish they could achieve something for themselves other than sports. [Do you see some possible reasons why sports have present value to them where what they learn, in say English, seems to have no value to them?] Probably it is the way it is presented. I don't think it would be any different if we sat them down and taught them the game out of a book. There would be the same reaction. They are actively involved in something, they move around and participate. [What are the reasons for not presenting all aspects of education in a more meaningful way?] I guess teachers don't know how.

The researcher considers this teacher to have spoken profoundly when he recognized the reasons there are differences in student interest and achievement in sports as compared to classroom activities. The researcher wonders why more teachers do not recognize these

possibilities and respond with changes in teaching methodology. Do teachers really not know how to provide opportunities where learning is active rather than passive?

Perhaps teachers and students are so conditioned to education as traditionally "delivered and experienced" that change in this school is not a possibility at the present time. Much of the effective teaching research takes the position that the traditional "teacher-talk" teaching format will not change and has therefore focused on how to improve on the status quo. (See Gage, 1985, and Hunter, M., 1979.)

Other Academic Expectations. The following excerpts from the research data address other views of teachers concerning changes in academic expectations.

31. Yes, I think the teachers are expecting more because they've gotten a boost from the general public. Education is worthwhile and the kids are expecting that they will have to do more.  
(high school teacher)

Academic expectations are viewed by this teacher and other participants as "doing more." Students are to turn out more work. Expectations are a product produced by students upon the demand of the teacher. Gardner (1984) is critical of this view and his views are reviewed in Chapter II of this study.

32. Teachers expect more and so do the kids. They expect more of themselves. (high school teacher)
33. I think we are seeing more of our students going on to college. (special programs teacher)
34. I feel I have an obligation to make sure that the students that leave my classroom and decide to go to college can walk in and hold their own. Because of that I have to maintain a certain level or standard of work. I think I allow for those not going on to college....
35. My relative came to visit from Boston. He was amazed that my college math was what he did in high school. That is scary. We may be country people, but if we start early enough we can do just as good. I think you get what you expect. I like that we are expecting more. I'm just concerning for those without the ability... So there are two sides to the issue.
36. I expect the student to learn the material.
37. Yes, there is a difference. I pace my students faster. The MAT Test drives the pace of my class unit after the test date in March. Content is not that different, but the pace is more hectic, more frustrating. I expect the kids to keep up. (elementary teacher)
38. Teachers probably expect a little more, but I see a difference in how much students are willing to give. There are also so many loop holes for kids to get through.
39. I have lowered my academic expectations. Time is the factor. There is just not enough hours in a day and the kids and parents are so busy after school. Parents don't have the time to help they once did. I say I expect less, but I now require eighteen book reports. I use to require nine. If they want an award they must read twenty-five. (elementary teacher)
40. I think academic expectations have dropped. All the things about the students will succeed - If the students can't succeed we drop our

expectations and they will succeed...Lets face it, not all students are capable of working on the twelfth grade level. Kids use to drop out in the 8th grade. Now we say all kids are capable of a high school education. They are not. Why do we have all these basic skills classes if all kids are capable of a high school education? Let's go to different certificates for students who graduate from high school.

41. When we mainstream we have to modify the expectations. Teachers often look, at this as a cop out. Legally we have to justify failing grades at their ability level. There is often a fine line between motivation and ability.
42. I think if they are going to require more math, science, English, etc. the expectations will have to be watered down. Or, make the students choose a college or vocational track. (elementary teacher)
43. Yes, we are expecting more of our students. Society is expecting more of teachers and schools. So, yes, I expect more. [Are you getting more from your students?] Well, some more, not a lot, but some. [What is the difference?] Probably it is that I am trying to force kids to do more. As long as we try to educate every kid for twelve years and kids don't want to learn or be in the classroom, you pretty much have to make them do it.

I've had two or three kids come this year and I would ask "Where is your book?" They say, "I don't know. Flunk me." What can you do with an attitude like that?...Out of thirty maybe seven or eight care about their grades. [Do you have problems with your better students, too?] Yes, pretty much so. In my general classes I may have 100 students and maybe five are willing to work. I have to make the 95 do the work. (junior/senior high school teacher)

Several teachers consider the attention focused on education in recent years to be advantageous to academic



expectations. Academic expectations are seen as synonymous with academic requirements. They seem to agree that by raising the expectations or requirements many students have responded by increasing their production of academic "stuff." Learning was referred to as making grades.

The curriculum is being controlled and paced for students by teachers as they endeavor to meet their external expectations of demanding more production. At first this seems to be consistent with a self-fulfilling prophecy. But it seems appropriate to question if producing more work or raising the production quota is equal to an increase in academic expectations. They are synonymous from the point of view of several teachers and the philosophy of educational reform of the 1980s. Nevertheless, teachers did not see students as innately capable or motivated to be able to meet these expectations.

Some teachers view academic expectations of students as an increase in work quota with students responding with a worker slowdown and the production of an inferior product.<sup>3</sup> The researcher interprets this phenomenon as passive aggressive behavior on the part of

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3. (See Apple's 1975, 1982, and 1987, work for more information on schools as factories and implications of the technical control model.

students. Most students comply with the demands, but they comply with an inferior product that meets minimum standards.

The description of the students that the teachers provided was one of student alienation from the purpose, process, and the functionalist product being required of them. The teachers are well aware of the non-involvement of the students but seem to accept this non-involvement as the norm of the times in which we live. Teachers see the problem as a separate issue from what students experience in school. The teachers do not consider themselves nor the school curriculum a part of the problem.

#### Leadership of Administration

The role of the school administrator, from the perspective of the reform agenda for the 1980s, calls for strong, assertive, decisive administrators. The superintendent is to manage the school using "good business" procedures. These procedures call for accountability for "profits" in the form of achievement score gains. The principal is considered mid-management and again requires

"good business" procedures but also requires the principal to be an "instructional leader."<sup>4</sup>

The teachers in this study were aware of the focus on changing roles in administration, but did not believe their administration had changed. The teachers did not see any real "procedural" changes in spite of mandates requiring "more" from principals. "More" ranges from teacher observations and evaluations to curriculum changes. The teachers did not think their principals had adequate knowledge nor time to meet the intent of these instructional leadership-type changes. Furthermore, the teachers did not see the need nor the possibility for the role of school administrator to change.

With the exception of one or two teachers, the participants liked and accepted the status quo of traditional roles for the principals. There was acceptance of the lineal, top-down management structure without serious question of other possibilities of organization. Those teachers that implied a desire of different possibilities did not think change could ever occur nor could they

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4. The administration for the school in this study is composed of one male superintendent, three male principals, and a female special programs administrator/counselor. All four male administrators are, or were, coaches. The junior high and elementary principals are teaching principals. They both coach basketball and assume administrative duties. The elementary principal does not have an administrative certificate nor a Master of Education degree.

articulate a description of organization from other than functional ways of viewing the roles of teachers and administrators. When they spoke of change, they basically called for more support in discipline and more input in promoting a school that was highly structured and highly control orientated in dealing with students. This seemed to be acceptable, even though, the teachers now formally negotiate with administration and school board.

The teachers' voices that follow address their views concerning the superintendent. They generally spoke with hope for fairness and honesty from their new superintendent. They also spoke of a desire for recognition by the superintendent of them as individuals. It was important that their superintendent know them by name and that he visited their building fairly often. They comment:

44. I can't say much about how it is now. I've seen the man [the new superintendent] three times all year at teachers' meetings. [I get the feeling that in this school the teachers want to see the superintendent around the school. Is that right?] I like to see a superintendent pass down the hallways. I like his presence known as an authority figure within the school for the students. I like to think he is interested. For me to know this, he has to talk to me. The morale could be greatly increased if he would come over more and interact with the teachers and the students, too. I don't want him involved in my classroom any more than he would want me involved in his office. I don't want to be his

buddy, that would undermine the system. I need to know he has a hand on the pulse of what is happening in the school.

45. I have no objections to bargaining. But it came into our school out of conflict with the previous superintendent. With our previous superintendent we made decisions but nobody paid any attention to the decisions we made. It was infuriating! Now nobody asks us our opinions. [Q] If teachers assume more of a leadership role in education it will be with the blessing of the administration.
46. I definitely think there has to be a line of order. It is in all walks of life and something we might as well learn to live with. It doesn't bother me that I am down the line.
47. If I need to know something I go to the principal and then he goes higher. I don't go to the superintendent.
48. [...Do you see decisions always being dictated to teachers?] Oh yes, probably so. It seems that is the natural order of things. I could be wrong. Maybe someone could think of a better or different way. But, I don't see any big changes.

The teachers also spoke about the reform mandate regarding teacher evaluation and the role of the principal:

49. The state has a suggested teacher evaluation model. Well, most schools don't go to the trouble to develop their own. We use the state model.  
  
[Do you learn anything about your teaching from the evaluation?] No, there is no feedback.
50. [Do you learn anything from the evaluation your principal does?] No, not really. Well, I guess you learn if you are doing a good job or not.

51. Teacher evaluations rake me the wrong way. I've never gotten a bad one, someone walks into my room and in twenty minutes says "Hey, you're okay." For some reason that bothers me.

I don't mind someone observing me. I know I'm not perfect but I'm not ashamed of my job. [Do you like the teacher evaluation model used in your school?] Yes, it doesn't bother me...I looked over mine real quick. I liked what was marked down the little line, so I just signed it and gave it back before he changed his mind.

I've had better evaluations at this school. I don't know if it has to do with the administration or what. I haven't improved that much. The only area that I was marked down in [at previous school] was playground. I was always on time, I never had disruptions. I never understood why he marked me down. I told him to tell me what needed to change. He said not to worry about it. I would have really been upset if it had been my teaching.

52. I think the principal should be an evaluator. If the principal doesn't do it who will? The principal needs to know what you're doing, and tell you if you're not doing what you should. I'd like for them to be in and out of the classroom all the time. They need to keep up with what is new. I've had instructional leaders and it makes a difference. In another state we had a faculty meeting every week and we talked about what we were doing and what we needed to do...It was everybody's school. He was our leader, but we made decisions together. Here it is traditional. The administrators do it all.
53. In most cases principals don't know about what is going on instructionally in the classroom. They don't have time. The principal needs to be a disciplinarian. He can't come in and tell me how to teach. How would he know if I know my material...Instructional leader? Where are they going to lead us?

54. No one says I want it done this way. There just isn't much administrative guidance.
55. If the principal is to really be an instructional leader he will have to have help. There is a lot to keeping a school going. From what I see instructional leadership is not a very realistic expectation.
56. I appreciate our principal. He has a heart of gold for boys and girls. He hurts with them. But he doesn't work with children very often.
57. It seems that I don't really know what the role of the principal is to be. I really think with all these changes, principals don't know what their role is anymore. They are so busy with paperwork they don't have time to paddle kids. It isn't all their fault. I love our principal. I think they are overloaded and lost just like we are.

The teachers in this study basically accept the traditional, functionalist view of the role of administrators. Everyone knows their job and their "place." There is a certain level of comfort found in this well-defined organizational model. Yet, much of the frustration the teachers voiced is directed toward administrative decisions that have been imposed upon them. It is as though they recognize their "lot" and accept it, yet receive some sense of satisfaction from complaining about imposed decisions. Perhaps this is a way of justifying their alienation from their profession and their unwillingness to accept part of the responsibility for many of the problems confronting their school.

The teachers are aware there is some reform rhetoric about shared decision making. But, they do not see a possibility of this organizational model ever being a reality in their school and probably not a real possibility for other schools. Perhaps other models are interesting theory but they are not a part of their realm of possibilities for implementation.

### Summary

In this section the researcher has presented the voices of teachers in regard to school goals. The section was divided into three parts and addressed the clarity of goals, academic expectations, and the leadership of administration. Goals are (1) ill-defined and viewed as preparation for future needs. Goals are seldom conceptualized beyond the classroom doors. (2) Academic expectations are primarily expressed as production of work with external objectives replacing internal procedures. (3) Administrators are not viewed as instructional leaders, but viewed more as custodians of order and control and they are patriarchal leaders.

Student achievement is the next reform topic presented in this study. It seems that when the participating teachers speak of student achievement further



credibility is given to the possibility that these teachers experience alienation, helplessness and the unwillingness or inability to accept their share of responsibility for the state of education currently experienced by children.

### Student Achievement

Almost all aspects of the reform agenda for the 1980s have revolved around the business concept of achievement being education's "bottom line". The "bottom line" or achievement is viewed as one dimensional and quantitatively measurable on standardized, norm referenced tests. The state has mandated standardized achievement testing for grades 3, 7, and 11. The school where this study was conducted has given achievement tests in all grades for numerous years.

The Carnegie study specifically examined the views of teachers in regard to achievement in the specific content areas of math, reading and writing skills. The researcher in this study did not ask the teachers about achievement by subject area. The research chose to ask the teachers about student achievement in the general sense. The teachers usually answered the inquiry by

citing achievement in terms of skill areas, and identifying factors outside the school that influence academic achievement.

In broaching the subject of student achievement the teachers reported that generally they felt that the expectations for students were higher and that student achievement was generally considered constant or not as high as in previous times. Scores on achievement tests were considered to be better, but daily performance in academic work was not considered to have improved. The exceptions were computer skills and, perhaps, math computation skills.

Computer skills are relatively new to this public school. Much emphasis has also been placed on math computation through the use of computers. The teachers speak on student achievement:

1. Yes, I see a difference but it seems we work on one subject and drop in another. Two steps forward and one back. Our math scores were lower so we started a computer math program and their computation skills are better. (special programs teacher)
2. Well, not a whole lot of difference. I don't see it. Students have had problems ever since I can remember. To me, things haven't changed a lot. (high school teacher)
3. Scores have improved. I think I see improvement with most of my L.D. kids from year to year. [Are achievement tests an adequate

assessment?] I don't go by one test score. I don't think teachers are naive enough to think one score tells them everything....

Sometimes we do like to get standardized test scores to see how our special students do in a large group situation as opposed to a one on one situation. It makes an interesting comparison...I hate to say it, but I do see teaching to the test. It would have to be that. There is no other explanation for some of the scores. (special programs teacher)

The practice of teaching to the test is common, especially with elementary teachers. This may account for increased scores that are not necessarily reflected in the students daily work. The researcher asked an early elementary teacher about the relationship between academic achievement and the curriculum being pushed down. Her response:

4. Yes, I do think we are pushing the curriculum down more. [Is that okay?] It is okay with me. Our little people's minds are more open to learning than they were once. They are exposed to so much more. [Do you think some of the children are ready and some are not?] Yes, just because you are a certain age doesn't mean you are ready to grasp all this. [Do you see any solutions?] No, I don't. I guess they could go back to levels. [Do you support leveling?] No, I do not. I think kids learn from osmosis. I do not group in my class, we just switch around.

The teacher's position that students learn from each other and the negative effects of grouping is well supported in the professional literature. This researcher wonders why a teacher would assume that humankind has

evolved to the point of being able to intellectually grasp the meaning of academic content simply because they are exposed to more information at an earlier age?

Other teachers speak concerning environmental and hereditary factors that they believe are involved in academic achievement:

5. It seems to me their skills are worse. I think their spelling skills are poor. Their reading skills are probably poor, too. They make lots of mistakes when using subtraction. We still have good students - but there are more lower students than when I first started teaching. [To what do you attribute this difference?] There has to be something in the genes - at least part of it. Poor students marry poor students and their children are less intelligent than their parents. There is probably some drug abuse, too. We have lots more kids in special education, too. [Why?] They test out of regular classes and go to special education and pass. We can't fail them if they make an effort. (high school teacher)
6. I see a great deal of difference in writing and other skills. In one of my CVET classes, half cannot pick out a subject from a verb nor write a correct sentence. One reason is that there are a large number of low income students in this school. I see lots of one parent families. In my previous school, the standard of living was higher - not just in money. There were books in the homes. Around here kids play in the street 'till 9:00 p.m. There is just a lot of difference in life style. [What can the school do?] You can't do anymore than what we do. You plead and beg. You offer extra help. It doesn't make any difference. Schools are helpless...[Do you see any solutions?] A little more discipline at home - not school. (junior/senior high teacher)
7. I think the students have better computation skills. We are seeing more thinking skills in

our math text and even the reading text. I think the group of students that can handle thinking skills are in the minority. They don't want to do things that require thinking.

I see for our school poor spelling and writing skills. I don't know what it is - but when I first started teaching here the children were better spellers and they used their spelling in their writing. They could really spell.  
(elementary teacher)

The general consensus of these teachers is that perhaps overall academic achievement is poorer. The reasons they identified are social, environmental and hereditary factors. None of the teachers gave any indication that part of the problem could be with the curriculum or with pedagogy. The total problem again lies outside the realm of the school and teachers. This possibility is supported by a teacher's voice as follows:

8. I've been teaching for several years. When I first started teaching my classes gave me an enthusiasm for learning. I see this enthusiasm diminish every year. In my first years of teaching the students would do anything I wanted them to do and do it with enthusiasm. Now, the students are too cool. [Are you teaching today's students the same way you taught your students from earlier years?] Yes, I'm teaching the very same way...Students have a lot more going on in their lives today. They don't care about learning.

There are social and environmental factors that are different today than in previous years. Perhaps the teachers are perceptive to hereditary factors caused by parental use of drugs and alcohol. If the teachers

recognize these changes then perhaps it would also be appropriate to seek curriculum and pedagogy that could be more appropriate for the students that are currently in the classroom.

Let us assume the teacher is accurate in her recollection of previous students' willingness to "do anything [she] wanted them to do and do it with enthusiasm," and current reluctance of students to respond so eagerly. Is this necessarily a negative aspect of today's students?

It would seem that today's students are aware that the American dream may no longer be a possibility no matter how enthusiastically they respond to the demands of an academic structure designed only for utilitarian purposes. Perhaps educators should explore other reasons why students could benefit from the content offered from the subject matter of schools. Perhaps teachers could discover and construct more meaningful and appropriate curriculum and pedagogy. Perhaps students could discover new reasons to learn and learn with enthusiasm. Perhaps there is intrinsic value in learning that teachers and students can cooperative create. Compliance behavior and passive aggression can perhaps be replaced with more positive behaviors if teachers explored viewing school through the eyes of their students.

### Summary

In spite of better or at least stable achievement test scores the teachers expressed views that suggest that students are not demonstrating expected achievement in their classrooms. The problems again are believed to lie outside the school and primarily with students.

Teachers recognize the problem of students that do not have parental and community support, but seem to demand that students value and conform to the expectations deemed appropriate by the school. The teachers see at least a partial solution to lack of achievement with additional state mandates. Additional requirements are considered an appropriate method for demanding that students learn. The following section explores the views of the participating teachers with regard to additional academic requirements.

### Academic Requirements

The reform efforts of the 1980s have called for an increase in academic requirements as the method for increasing student achievement. The fourth segment of this research addresses this issue. The topic is again taken from the Carnegie study, but not divided into distinct

sub-parts. Distinction is made more between the views of junior/senior high and elementary teachers.

The following comments were made by elementary teachers concerning the increase in core requirements. The first comment is made from a parental perspective, the second reflects an attitude of state pride and the third comment well reflects the more general and overriding perspective of the elementary teachers. This perspective conveys a more parochial, segmented view presented by the participants. Perhaps there is a tendency for teachers to have tunnel vision when they contemplate educational issues. The teachers speak:

1. Since I have a child/children, I do think about changes in core requirements for graduation. I think about it not as an elementary teacher, but as a parent. In our system we require more hours to graduate than the legislature has required for some time. If a student is having trouble in graduating they will transfer to a school that requires less. I know it hurts some children, I don't know that it is bad, but I know it does hurt some.

[Do you see any solutions?] In a free country that has education for everyone you are always going to have some people who cannot attain certain goals. They just can't do it but they are given the chance.

The researcher would question the reality of the equality of opportunity that this teacher proposes is available. Another teacher speaks:

2. I really agree [with the increased requirements]. Now I know some can and some can't do



it. I think if other states can do it, we can, too. Our kids are just as smart as kids in other parts of the country.

3. I hear about it [changes in core graduation requirements], but I haven't concerned myself with that. I do talk to the kids and say that when they get to high school they will have to take this and do that.

Junior/senior high teachers were more opinionated about the changes, and spoke of academic requirements exclusively in terms of discrete course offerings. There is concern that courses will be "watered down" to make allowances for students who generally do not perform well academically. Throughout the study the teachers frequently mentioned that their school required more credits for graduation than required by the state. It was clear that the teachers considered additional requirements as evidence of academic rigor. To require more courses is better than to meet state minimums. Teachers do not seem to be reflecting on what was being learned in the courses.

4. I think it is okay to raise the requirements but I don't think it will solve the problem. [Will it cause more kids to not graduate?] No, I don't think so. They have the vocational programs to compensate for those kids who can't take the hard core subjects. But, classes will be watered down more.
5. I think the increase will help, if they don't raise them too high. What we have at our school is about right. We have always required more than the state minimum.

6. Yes, I do support an increase in requirements. I graduated from high school and went all the way through college with having to take only general math - that isn't right.

Teachers that teach elective courses expressed some concern about the possibility of any additional increases in core requirements. They supported the current level of requirement increases, but any additional changes would affect their programs. They all felt that what they taught contributed to the total education program and they would hate to see their programs dismantled because of more "basic" requirements. One of the vocational teachers commented:

7. No, I don't want my program deleted. I think it would be a terrible mistake. Kids say, "I take algebra, but what good does it do me?" In my class we use it. We do net worth, inventory and summary sheets, etc. They see a use for basic skills.

The school offers Spanish as a foreign language, and considered a satellite program that offered German but decided not to participate with this option. The number of students expressing interest did not justify the cost involved.

The school system has one music teacher. She teaches all the elementary and junior high students. High school students enroll in music as an elective. The following comments concern aesthetic education:

8. I wish we had foreign language for the elementary. I guess as long as we have a money crunch there is no possibility. We use to have an art teacher. But we don't anymore. The music teacher is retiring this year and we will be surprised if they hire a replacement.<sup>5</sup> Some of the teachers are more "arty" than others. So our art program depends on whether individual teachers do much art in their classrooms.
9. Because I lean toward the arts and humanities I see the absence of the humanities in our school as a "total absence of sensitivity to the oils of civilization." I think it is so important for self esteem. You find so many children that can do well in art that may not excel in academics or athletics.  
  
[Do you see the possibility for change in this absence of certain knowledge?] No, I don't think the administration, school board nor the community has an appreciation for the arts. [Could the teachers assume a leadership role in implementing more aesthetic education in your school?] We had an art teacher financed by an art education grant for a while and we have had some "artists in residence" for a while. I guess we didn't get the grants refunded. But generally our school has not emphasized the arts.
10. I'm not sure I want my child/children to go to a school that doesn't offer any art or music.
11. I don't see any solutions until we have the money.

The integration of aesthetic knowledge into the general curriculum was not mentioned. The teaching of aesthetic knowledge was considered to be dependent on the employment of additional teachers and unlikely to happen because of funding priorities. The teachers viewed

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5. A music teacher was hired to replace the retiring teacher.

themselves as basically helpless in this situation and are generally accepting of the status quo.

### Summary

Like almost all public schools, the school in this study emphasizes objective, rational knowledge almost exclusively. Academic expectations were conceptualized as discrete courses. Increased academic expectations were viewed as requiring more courses to graduate. The teachers are aware of the emphasis on the "hard" knowledge and generally accept this as the norm for schools facing financial stress. Evidently the decisions concerning which programs are kept and which are dropped is strictly an administrative decision that is accepted by the teachers. The views of teachers in regard to the role of new programs that may or may not be present because of an increase in academic requirements (requiring more courses) follows in the next section.

### New Programs

Education Reform in the 1980s has called for additional programs for schools. This section presents the views of teachers in regard to programs offered in their school. The researcher focused on an overview of the

school's programs, and the teachers broached the issues of special programs, and the bureaucratic aspects of educational programs. The research is presented along organizational patterns presented by the participants. The researcher also presents the participating teachers' views regarding several guidance issues that were addressed by the teachers. The first sub-section addresses the overview of school programming.

#### School Programs

The teacher in this study believed that in recent years few new programs had been added to their curriculum and some programs had been cut or eliminated. However, the perceptions of the teachers were not accurate concerning new programs. The budget did indicate some programs had been eliminated. However, the school has added a CVET program, expanded the vocational agriculture program to include horticulture, added more college prep classes and joined a new county vo-tech program. The school had also implemented a four-year-old pre-school program. The real funding problem concerns the under-funding of almost all programs.

The local school district is dependent on state revenues for funding. Funding level is dependent on a

state formula. This school receives funding approximately as follows: 22% from the local tax base, 75% from the state and 2-3% from the federal government. The school has experienced a decrease in total funds over the past several years.

While many parts of the nation experienced economic recession in the early 1980s, the sun belt was in an economic boom in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Since 1983, the state has been in an economic recession at best and a depression at worst. In either case funds for schools have decreased during some years and increased only in token amount during other years. Many schools, including the school in this study, have been struggling to regain a level of funding for programs previously provided.

The desires expressed by the teacher interviews and conversations with the administration reflect a goal of regaining financial ground. The financial losses are real losses in dollars, but there are perceived losses in morale and initiative that are just as real to these educators. These less tangible losses are addressed later in this study.

The researcher asked most teachers about all the programs mentioned in the Carnegie study. The researcher attempted to ascertain the teachers' perspectives on the

value and the role of special programs in the curriculum. Programs for the pre-kindergarten and after school care did not strike a chord of particular interest with the teachers. They acknowledged that either they had the programs or needed them, but elaborated little on the valuing or devaluing of such programs and their place in the school's curriculum. The teachers seem to generally accept such programs if funded as contributing to the total education program. Yet, the teachers do not seem to consider early education programs as factors that influence what happens in their classrooms. Hence, little or marginal interest was expressed toward these programs.

This lack of interest also seemed to be true about additional course offerings at the high school level. The following comments were typical:

1. We have started a debate class, speech competition program and we have added some upper division math, science and computer classes.

But, I'm not for sure how well the students are taking an interest in these new classes. I know the math teacher was concerned about her classes making. [Do you think these additional programs and courses are beneficial to the students?] Sure, the more they know the better off they will be. (high school teacher)

2. We now have a four-year-old program. I think it was seen more as a need for the community rather than a reform issue.

### Special Programs

In the elementary school the presence or value of the "pull-out" programs did not appear to be an issue. The programs were just accepted as part of elementary schooling. The teachers did respond with negative comments concerning the scheduling of the pull-out programs and how they had to schedule their entire day around the coming and going of these students. The elementary teachers were not critical of the concept of special "pull-out" programs but were in general agreement that they could handle "most" remedial, learning disabled, and gifted students in their own classrooms if they had fewer students.

1. You are going to think I'm tacky, but if I had fewer kids I wouldn't have to send any kids out for special help. I firmly believe that. [How many could you realistically teach?] Nice to have sixteen. There are just lots I could do with a small group. I just get started good with something and I have to stop because it is time for certain students to leave and then I have to have certain subjects while they are gone. They aren't gone thirty minutes. They spend a lot of time coming and going. I'm not putting down the program but I do think they would do better if they stayed in the room.
2. We have a remedial reading program and a basic skills math program. They help. When the slower students are out of the room there is more "me" to go around.
3. I think [pull-out programs] can be over done. Thank goodness, I don't have thirty children



and have to work with all their needs. I like them to a certain extent but I think there are a lot of things about special programs that could be different. I don't know that I have the answers about what could be different - but I don't like how some of it is done.

One elementary teacher explained how the programs are scheduled.

4. In the remedial math they do the same thing as the rest of the class. They just get more individual help. In reading the students get a "double dose." They have classroom reading and then go to remedial reading during spelling and handwriting. The remedial reading teacher tries to work in some spelling and they make up the handwriting in class.<sup>6</sup>

In one primary class the remedial reading students are gone while the remainder of the class works with reading enrichment and reinforcement in the form of games. The teacher does not like to see the remedial students miss these activities. She thinks all her students would benefit. But, the scheduling for remedial class forces her to decide what they will miss from her class.

It seems very probable that the teachers had not given much thought to the reasons certain programs were or were not in their school. The fact that the programs

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6. This teacher says she doesn't feel responsible for the remedial math students math skills because she doesn't give the grade but she does feel responsible for their reading because she gives the students their reading grade.

were either mandated and/or funded through special grant moneys were justification for the programs presence or absence in the school. No one raised the issue of priorities for moneys available or who should decide which programs should be funded and how programs should be organized and implemented. Programs were usually viewed as intact and separate from their grade level or content area.

The exception to this interpretation was the learning disabilities program and to smaller degrees the CVET program and the gifted program. There is a real conflict of ideas present in the school concerning student and teacher expectations and roles in association with these programs. The researcher will focus on the gifted program and then explore the deeper conflict surrounding the program for learning disabled students.

Gifted Education. The gifted education program started in 1982 as a half-time program. It was mandated by the state, and, in the participating school, is currently a pull-out program serving grades 2-6. The teacher is responsible for all twelve grades. There has been a large increase in the number of elementary students eligible for the program, therefore, the teacher does a "little advising" for grades 7-12. She also teaches 30 minutes per class of computer each week to elementary

students and a self-image enhancement class for the eighth graders.

In previous years the older students had participated in a mentorship program within the community. The program was considered very successful by everyone involved. The teacher of the gifted students was very proud of how well the mentorship program had been received by the community and the students. She would like to see the program started again.

Two primary teachers like or at least accepted the idea of a program for "gifted" students but felt that their students were too young to participate. One commented:

5. My students are missing time out of my class that they need. We try to schedule around everything, which is impossible so they miss certain subjects at certain times. They are missing basic skills that they aren't born knowing.

None of the elementary teachers interviewed expressed concern about the problematic issues of elitism and labeling with gifted programs and remedial programs that are often addressed in the professional literature.

Learning Disabilities Classes. Nowhere in the school was there an issue among faculty members that caused raised voices of conflict any greater than the

subject of learning disabilities. Some elementary teachers appreciated the programs, but did not like the pulling of students from their classes. One teachers adamantly preferred that L.D. students not be taken from her class. She preferred to take care of these problems in her classroom.

Junior/senior high teachers discounted the number of students in need of special L.D. classes. These teachers considered the program a "cop out" for lazy students. Junior/senior high teachers further did not like having to use a different grading scale for L.D. students. The classroom teachers speak:

6. I know special programs were designed to help kids but they just don't seem to be working.
7. I don't think there are fifteen kids in one school with dyslexia. I think there are some kids who just haven't done their work and they have let them slip through.
8. Because of state mandates there are more students in special education programs than five years ago...We can't fail them if they make an effort.
9. I'm not saying there isn't a place for gifted and special education programs. There is. But I do think the program is being abused. It is a standing joke among the kids that if you don't want to do the work go over and ask to get into special education. There you don't have to work.

Of course, if you haven't had any training in reading - all these years - and no one has made you do math homework, no one has made you do the English, no one has made you think. Then

those tests are going to show a deficiency. But they have been doing the same work as the other. Yes, at times it is difficult.

10. I think we make jobs and then justify programs in order to keep jobs.

Learning disabilities/special education teachers respond:

11. PL 92-142 was the reform movement for special education. Risk was for general education.
12. I feel the price of the L.D. label is worth it. Most people think L.D. kids are retarded so a label isn't going to do anything other than putting a name with it and giving them help. I work hard on self image. In my class they are not allowed to say they are dumb.
13. [Are you basically satisfied with what happens with special needs students at your school?] Yes, for the most part I am now.

The last special education teacher resigned, because they were so out of compliance. She refused to have her name of the reports. When the EMH [educable mentally handicapped] teacher quit they simply said we won't have the program. So on annual reviews kids simply improved so much that they went to the L.D. program. There was no secondary program. Everyone was cured in sixth grade....

Some teachers still refuse to comply. We still have teachers that put L.D. on report cards. We level kids so teachers who can't stand to give a kid a decent grade can show the level. The time and effort has been extensive in getting teachers to comply. Some still refuse.

It would seem that both factions of this argument have strong positions of merit. It would appear, however, that the one model approach of a pull-out lab for all students labeled L.D. should be discussed. Perhaps, L.D.

programs do create dependency and excuses. Perhaps, also, classroom teachers, especially secondary teachers, need to reflect on why production of work is required and on the value of grading.

Gerald Coles (1987) urges educators to look beyond labels to classroom practices and curriculum to explore reasons that have contributed to the increased labeling of students as learning disabled. It would seem that teacher and curriculum development in this school could be enhanced by efforts to defuse the conflict and seek what is moral and just for a large number of students that are caught in the bureaucracy maze.

#### Placement and Bureaucracy

Bureaucratic paperwork and special placement were issues often mentioned by teachers in regard to special programs. Several of the elementary teachers had made requests for testing of certain students for special placement. Not all of these students had been tested. The following is the voice of one teacher, but the researcher heard the same sentiment several times.

14. I've asked that he be tested. We have seven weeks of school left and he still has not been tested. That is the bureaucracy...We need an elementary counselor.

The researcher asked a special programs teacher about the comments concerning delays in testing and placement for special services.

15. They may have just told the special programs director. We get lots of those kinds of referrals. They probably have not filled out the paperwork.

The researcher broached this possibility with those teachers that had "referred" students for evaluation. They seemed confident that they had completed the required paperwork. It appears that there are probably communication problems resulting in students being "lost" in the paper shuffle and the letter of the law. Where is the spirit of the law? Are these examples of paper compliance at the expense of children? Would it make a difference if they had been "tested" and "placed" in a special program?

Another teacher speaks:

16. I have another student. He spent two years in kindergarten and a half year in special education. He is in my room now and without any special help. He can't go to remedial reading. It is against the law. He just stays in here and takes a lot of my time. I have another one in the same boat. They both need psychological help desperately. Yet, it is more testing and writing up papers. We are missing the whole thing. All I can do is what I can do. I can hug them and help them - but I'm not enough.

Further teacher alienation seems to be manifested in the bureaucracy involved in seeking help for students.

The researcher heard voices alienated and frustrated from their charge to help their students. The very programs that are funded to provide support often become too cumbersome and segmented to provide the help children need. Teachers and children continue to sit in classrooms waiting on the bureaucracy to "save" them with the correctly completed paperwork and another segmented and discrete program.

Other Bureaucracies. Teachers expressed concern about other bureaucracies. The teachers believe that at times they have placed themselves at legal risk and the safety of students in physical and emotional jeopardy to no avail.

17. We turn names into the social services center almost every week. They go out and speak to the parents. They don't remove the kids from the home or punish the parents. When they take a child out of the home situation it is for a week and then everything is back like it was. I don't know if the laws are not tough enough or if there are enforcement problems. But, situations remain the same...
18. No one listens. I talk to my principal who has "a heart of gold for these kids" but he can't get anything done either. There is a link in the chain broken somewhere. When a teacher reports a problem they are taking a big chance that the parents won't make it worse for the kids. I've talked with a local pediatrician and he says he has the same experience with the Department of Human Services.

These teachers' experiences support the educational literature that calls for all social support systems to



band together to seek ways of better providing for students and, in turn, the family system. Education is not conducted in isolation and the problems of education will not be addressed without a real and integrated systems approach.

There is often conflict between social agencies and schools regarding state funding levels. Taking money from social programs to fund education at a higher level or vice versa will not contribute to solutions to problems identified by these teachers. The social supports agencies must work with schools in seeking solutions to problems that are overtly manifested in classrooms, but are endemic of greater societal problems. The possibilities of making a difference in the lives of children is dependent on joint efforts between schools and other social institutions. This reality is a frustration to the teachers in this study. They speak of being helpless, and wanting a guidance counselor to help solve problems.

#### Guidance Programs, a Need

The teachers placed the need for an elementary and high school counselor or counselors as a high priority. The school district has a counselor in title but her

duties are those of an administrator. The following voices well represent the concerns these teachers expressed.

19. We desperately need an elementary counselor. The school counselor is more an administrator, and she has her hands full. I have children that need professional help.

This teacher went around her room and described the problems the children were experiencing. There were only three children in a class of almost thirty that the teacher felt were in good emotionally secure family situations. The other teacher for the same grade had a higher number of students in healthy home environments. Yet the number of children having to cope with the harsher sides of living was very high.

20. I have a child that has been sexually molested. One talks about death all the time and all his drawings are concerning death. He scares me. Most of my students are from broken homes, several live with grandparents. Several speak of fighting, drinking and being left alone. Some are hungry. Several are experiencing financial problems because their parent or parents have lost their jobs....

I wish kids would be able to keep some of the old values that our parents and grandparents grew up with. But it isn't going to be like that so we have to learn to cope with what we have coming to us everyday. We must make the best atmosphere for learning we can. We have to keep them encouraged so they don't give up...Some of these kids need to know that some body cares about them. They need to know some body has time for them.

This teacher's perspective reflects a more humanistic view of teaching than the vast majority of the teachers interviewed. There were perhaps at the most, four teachers that were more student centered than not in their views. None of the four more humanistic teachers were congruent in their views and their practices. For example, this very sensitive teacher supported and valued the use of corporal punishment in the school. Yet, she really knew her students in personal ways and, though she yearned for perhaps a more simple society, she accepted the reality of who her students were and what they brought with them to her classroom. She did all this without giving up on them as learners or herself as a teacher. She certainly expressed a strong sense of efficacy as defined and described by Ashton and Webb (1986).

#### Teacher/Counselors

The researcher asked most of the teachers if one of the roles they have is that of counselor. All of the elementary teachers saw themselves as counselors to their students.

21. I'm a counselor, nurse, mother, janitor, paper-pusher, as well as teacher.
22. I certainly listen when kids are upset, but I'm strong on not prying into their private lives.

Only if I think a child may be abused will I begin to open things up. If mom and dad had a fuss, I try not to pick up on what was involved in the fuss.

A few of the high school teachers do counsel students on occasion but none saw their role as that of a teacher/counselor and most of the teachers did not wish to incorporate the role of counselor into their teacher role.

23. [Do you counsel students?] No, not very much. [Do you avoid it?] No, it just doesn't come up.
24. Most people say learn all you can about a student. I say I really don't want to know too much.
25. [Do you become a counselor at times?] There is lots of information available on careers. I don't do much of it, but I do pass on some of the information that I receive.
26. I had a mother call yesterday about her child. The child was having eligibility problems. She called again later to ask me what she should do to make her child study harder. It is not my place to tell a parent what to do with their child...if I did, the parent would say, "Well, we did what the teacher said. It isn't our fault." Parents don't want to take responsibility...

One high school teacher commented on a difference in high school and elementary teachers. She said:

27. High school teachers teach subject matter. Elementary teachers teach kids....Elementary teachers tie shoes, hug, wipe noses. When they get to my classes we have a more adult to adult relationship.

The researcher asked an elementary teacher to respond to this statement.

28. In other words we [elementary teachers] are more subjective, more individualized than they are. That is true. That is a pretty good observational difference.

Most high school teachers are interested in their one subject. They don't seem to realize that kids are involved in other things and still need family time and personal development time.

In one staff development meeting, I was disappointed in the attitude of the high school teachers. If they don't have respect for the kids, the kids won't have respect for them. I just feel they are treating all those high school and junior high school students the very same way. All those kids are not the same. You can't stereotype kids. This may be one reason they have so much trouble with discipline problems.

Even if you are a high school junior you still need to know you have a teacher you can trust and talk with. There needs to be more understanding with these kids, instead of just poking them or jerking them and saying "I can't do anything with them." Now of course, I've never taught up there....

This point is re-affirmed by the voices of two high school teachers.

29. I'm getting kids every year who can't understand what they read, can't call the words. I keep saying how did you get to my classroom without these skills. I don't want to teach remediation. If I had wanted to, I would have majored in special education. I feel the same as college teachers that say don't send them to me if they can't....
30. If I had to teach general math, I would quit. I don't enjoy teaching people how to add and

subtract. I don't see my job here as teaching them to add, subtract, multiply and divide. I teach them to love and understand why mathematics works. What is fun is to see the "light bulb" click.

I asked one of these high school teachers if he/she could recall specific students in whose life they felt they had made a difference.

31. That would make me seem egotistical. [I don't think so.] Yes, some that have gone on to college have come back and said they were glad they had taken my classes.

These voices speak volumes about the conditions of teaching and learning in this school and perhaps in many schools. The elementary teachers do view one of their roles as a nurturing parental substitute when children are at school. These elementary teachers may not always use the most appropriate parenting skills anymore than they may or may not use the most appropriate pedagogy skills. They also may or may not practice the most humane interactions. Yet, they do recognize the need, desire, and appropriateness of relating to their students that they care about them as people and that they will listen to their problems.

The researcher does not question the motives of these caring elementary teachers. The researcher would, however, question how effective even the elementary teachers are at nurturing, considering that many of their

pedagogy practices and curriculum values are not child centered and humanistic in philosophical underpinning. What these teachers say they desire for children are not congruent with what they base curriculum decisions and pedagogical practices.

It would seem that perhaps there is a great void in the junior/senior high school for adult counsel for students. The teachers do not view the parents as being available and/or able to counsel. Yet, the teachers spend very little time, nor do they desire to spend their time, talking with their students about the concerns in their personal lives and how they can best approach the challenges of living and being in the present.

There are perhaps numerous students in this school that have no adult in which he/she can confide. The teachers see the students as unwilling receptacles of the knowledge they desire to give. Maybe part of the passive aggression exhibited by the older students in this school results not only from a lack of interest in the subject matter but also a demand to be seen and dealt with as human beings before they are willing to trust the teachers' judgments about what constitutes knowledge worth knowing.

The teachers expressed numerous times the frustration they feel because the students are resistive to

their teaching. Perhaps the teachers have forgotten or never learned that the teacher-learner relationship is personal and students must be acknowledged for their uniquenesses as well as their commonalities. There are no one-model students.<sup>7</sup>

Other Guidance Concerns. Several of the junior/senior high school teachers spoke about other areas of guidance or social concern in regard to their students. The teachers spoke on drugs, suicide, AIDS and sex education:

32. I'm sure we have drugs. I have students that I know are on something. I can't do anything unless I see them take them, but I can make life miserable for them. I don't let them sleep in my class.

A teacher quoted a letter she found written by a student:

33. "...I find myself losing it. I can't lose control here in front of everyone. The only thing that keeps me going is knowing death is near...."
34. We had some in-service work on suicide prevention. The suggestions included the implementation of a prevention team. Our principals said, we are a team. If someone has problems send them to us. [Would the administration have been supportive if the teachers had insisted on a prevention team?] I think it would have been seen as something we don't need.

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7. Freire (1985) cautions viewing education as "pure transference of knowledge that merely describes reality" (p.104).



The junior high health teacher has students develop a plan to stop the spread of AIDS.

35. I really want to scare them to death, because I'm scared. Even in seventh grade some of these kids are sexually active...[yet] I don't teach sex education. I teach from conception to birth. I do not teach about intercourse. I told them up front to go home and ask their parents if they want to know about how the sperm gets to the egg.

Another teacher speaks:

36. We have several girls each year end up pregnant and several get married even if they aren't pregnant. I don't see anything we can do about it. Everybody is too scared to do anything. I think we need sex education. I think some of them don't even understand how they got pregnant.

We have an AIDS programs and I had a sophomore boy come in and ask me what was spermicide. I said, "Do you know what an insecticide is?" He said, "Yes, it kills insects." I said, "Well, a spermicide kills sperm and prevents pregnancy." He said, "Oh, you mean if I eat it everyday, I can't get anybody pregnant." I said, "No, I think you use it before the fact." I just let it drop. Our kids don't know. But, I don't think school is the place to teach sex education. Morals pretty well have to come from the home.

This high school teacher seems to have very mixed feelings about the role of the school and sex education. She first stated that students needed sex education, yet soon says it is not the role or "place" of the school to teach sex education. This ambivalence or self contradiction seems representative of the teachers in this study

and perhaps of teachers and society in general in regard to sex education and maybe other social issues.

There is an intellectual or rational recognition of the need for sex education yet at the same time there is the recognition that sex is much more than a physical act. The traditional role of teacher as dispenser of objective knowledge is insufficient. Alternative pedagogical roles are either unknown, culturally unacceptable to teachers and society, or perhaps, teachers and society intuitively know that such profoundly personal knowledge requires a personal relationship between student/teacher. Such a relationship is necessity in order to effectively and sensitively share humankind's quest for deeper understanding of the human condition. Perhaps through dialogue concerning sex education, teachers and society can begin to explore all knowledge as personal, dynamic, culturally influenced and value laden.

### Summary

In this section the researcher has presented the views of the research participants concerning educational programs that are present or absent in their school. The teachers clearly expressed little or marginal interest in school programs that had little or no direct effect on

their classroom or affected their children or grandchildren that attended the school. Lack of interest or expressed feelings of helplessness may be attributed to the teachers' beliefs that additional programs, or the enhancement of existing programs, was totally dependent on unlikely, significant, additional school revenue. A belief that existing programs are underfunded, and the knowledge that the administration did not involve teachers in the decision making process regarding school programs are also possible interpretations of the reasons teachers hold these views.

Existing special programs were encumbered with bureaucracy, communication problems and lack of agreement as to the purpose and value of such programs. The researcher sensed that the problematic issues involved in the special programs at this school do not adequately address the needs of the students involved<sup>8</sup> and perhaps reflect many of the issues involved in educational reform

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8. Coles (1987) critically examines the concept of learning disabilities and suggests that educators and other interested persons have too quickly accepted the medical model to explain academic problems. He proposes an interactivity theory for explaining varying levels of educational success among children. He suggests that educators do not consider instruction to be insufficient but consider the insufficiency to be within the children that fail to learn. There is no evidence of reflection in this study on the possibility that educators and the school curriculum could be a factor that contributes to this problem.

currently being addressed through equally ineffective reform efforts in the 1980s. Perhaps more attention should be focused on the climate and resources of school. In the next section these factors are examined.

### School Climate and Resources

The Carnegie study collected data related to the view of teachers in regard to the degree conditions for learning had changed during the previous five years. Their study focused on seven areas related to the climate and resources of schools. This research focused on the same information but presents a thick description of the views of teachers. The areas are: Use of technology; textbooks and instructional materials; instruction tailored to student needs; orderliness of classrooms; fiscal resources available to schools; seriousness of students and classroom interruptions. Technology is the first sub-topic addressed.

#### Use of Technology

Much emphasis of the reform agenda of the 1980s has called for an increase in the use of modern technology in classroom instruction. The underlying premise seems to imply that the implementation of technology automatically

indicates sophisticated educational reform or improvement. There is a general omission in reform literature regarding the problematic issues of technology.<sup>9</sup> This same omission is evident in the views of the participating teachers in this research.

When the researcher inquired about the use of technology in the classroom, the teachers reflected on a historical comparison of changes in the use of technology.

1. I go back to the seventies as compared to now. Yes, I have calculators, we have computer lab once a week. We have a copy machine. I can remember having to write everything on the board. Some students have trouble copying from the board. But in one sense I think we can overwork the copy machine, too. (elementary teacher)
2. No, not any basic changes. There is no money available to add a lot of things we need. [Do you have a VCR?] Yes, we bought it with our carnival money. We would use it more if we did not have to transport it around. I wish we had a place where it was set up and we could take the kids to it. (elementary teacher)
3. I like the computer for the kids, but not for myself. (elementary teacher)
4. We now have computer for thirty minutes each week. [Is that a good use of that thirty

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9. Streibel and Apple in Beyer and Apple (1988) can provide the reader with a thoughtful critique of problematic issues of technology in school curriculum that is omitted in the functionalist promotion of technology in education and from the views presented by the teachers participating in this research.

minutes and what do students learn on a computer in thirty minutes a week?] We don't know, we don't get to go. We keep half the class while half goes to computer, then we change. So we really don't know anything about it.

[Would you prefer the time used in other ways?] Well, I think the kids ought to be familiar with computers in today's time. There are going to be some underprivileged children that will never come in contact with a computer if they don't have them at school. But I really don't know enough about the program to know if it is beneficial or not. (elementary teacher)

The researcher questioned the computer teacher about the elementary computer program.

5. Students are immediately motivated when they come to computer. I had used their achievement test scores to target math and reading needs and then use the computers in those areas. But, I think the scores are inaccurate so I'm not using them as much now. I know my disc well enough I can work around it some.

[Do you coordinate with classroom teachers?] If they let me know what they are working on.

High school teachers expressed a general desire to use more technology in their classrooms, but they considered the lack of money an insurmountable obstacle. The high school teachers comment on technology:

6. I can't use the computer in English, because we simply do not have the funds to buy computers for my classroom. A few years ago I took a class in computer use in English classes. I was all enthralled with all the programs available. But the money didn't materialize...

We do have a computer class and word processing class. So what I do is use their computers in conjunction with my research papers for juniors

and seniors. They get a grade from me and from their computer or typing teacher...I don't use the VCR much.

7. I have a sixteen mm projector, so I can show some films. We use to join a film library at a regional university but because of cost we didn't join this year....Most of the films are longer than our forty-five minute class periods anyway.
8. ...I've requested a computer for the students. I don't want it for myself.
9. We had a grant to put the library on computer.
10. It sounds horrible but I use a VCR a lot. They make things now that say it so much better than I can.
11. We had a chance to get foreign language through satellite. We turned it down. We knew there were some schools that didn't have any foreign languages that needed it more.<sup>10</sup>
12. We have more computers. The business teacher gets the junk left over from the computer lab. Her equipment is pretty much outdated...

The business teacher comments:

13. I worked with the administration last year in writing a grant to update my equipment. It was never submitted. They said the money was not there so there was no use in submitting the proposal. I've been told we probably won't do anything this year either.

The teachers' views and desires to use computer technology seem to correlate with their personal comfort

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10. Another teacher said the reason they did not get the satellite course was because not enough students registered to take German.

level with computers and what they taught. Nevertheless, the teachers were in agreement that students need computer skills in today's world. The lack of money to purchase computers and appropriate software was the overriding issue. But, all the teachers used textbooks to some degree.

### Textbooks and Instructional Materials

Textbooks were the course of study for almost all the teachers in this study, and one area where the school administrators did not usually exert their authority. Teachers used the texts so they chose them. Voices from junior/senior high school teachers:

14. [You said you didn't use a text. Do you not have a text or do you prefer to use other resources?] We have a text but it is pitiful. I made a mistake in ordering it even though I knew I didn't like any of the choices. I use it when I have a substitute. This year they are up for adoption again [health]. I've seen some good ones and I'm thinking about getting one. At times I really could use a text to do some paperwork - to improve their writing skills.
  15. The administration gives teachers complete freedom to choose text...We try to use the same series in junior high and high school to keep continuity in presentation. In grammar different texts use different labels and that throws the kids off. So I like for us to use the same company.
- [What influenced your choice of text?] Truthfully, Warners is like a tried and true friend. I'm use to it and like it. We used it even



when I was in high school twenty years ago. It is considered one of the best.

I especially like the grammar approach. I found some that I liked their approach to writing better but writing is so personal. I think each of us develop an independent writing program - rather than follow a book. So we stayed with Warners...

Our library is limited. They know we can use the city library....I use to have my students do a research paper on a literary figure, but our library has become so depleted of literary material, I now have them do the paper on anyone in history.

16. I don't have a text [for an elective]. [Why not?] Good question. I turned in a request but I never got an answer. I guess that tells me my program is not as important as some programs.
17. I've used Modern Biology for years. I think I may change. We [science teachers] have met twice to discuss our choices and will meet once more. [Why are you considering changing?] Modern Biology is leaning more toward evolution and I don't want to get into that. Plus they have put so many pictures and illustrations in the book that it kinda blows your mind to thumb through it. I've heard from two other teachers that they are also considering changing for the same reasons.

[What text are you now leaning toward and why?] There are two, Harcourt, Brace and Jovanovich or maybe Addison and Wesley. One especially has good critical thinking questions, instead of identifying fifty words. The pictures and stories are up to date and shows how society is affected...

The ACT test is changing. More reading to analyze - This is probably good. The ACT has been too fact orientated. Modern Biology has quite a bit of this too. But, it seems they

are cramming in too much. You are overwhelmed when you look through the book. [How much does the text influence your teaching?] I suppose quite a bit. I move around in it but I pretty well stay with the book. So I want to find a text that covers the material I want to cover - the way I want to cover it. If I don't like the text, I'll have to spend three times as much time trying to get information together for the kids.

In choosing a text, this teacher wished to avoid the controversial issue of evolution, but wanted the text to provide curriculum for preparation for the Enhanced ACT. In upper division science classes, the teacher said he still spent a lot of time in the text. He also did demonstrations with some lectures. He liked the demonstrations in some of the newer text because the materials were easier to get.

[Do you have the material you need for labs?] No, not really. I especially don't for physics. With the money situation the way it is I hate to turn in requests. Even for preserved animals, it can get up to \$150.00 - \$200.00 very easily. We are a little short on money to buy what we could use. But, I'm pretty well satisfied with what we have. I have the basic text and materials. It is the big money items I need.

It seemed that almost all the teachers were heavily guided by the textbooks. This seemed even more so for the elementary teachers than the junior/senior high school teachers. Voices from the elementary school are as follows:

18. The text book companies are very aware of achievement testing. At a language arts text-book meeting a book salesperson said, they have what is on the test. If you use their text you will have what is on the test.

One elementary teacher did not like the spelling text but followed it anyway. The researcher asked why she used it.

19. I would have to spend a summer developing my own program and I'm not sure the school system would let me skip the basal. Other grades would then be different.

I haven't thought about it much before because I haven't had children with spelling problems until this year. With all we do it still doesn't seem to help. I guess some classes have trouble with spelling. I guess we need to accept it and go on...

In reading we are given the charts, two workbooks, and skill masters. That is more than when I first started teaching. I had to make my own tests and worksheets then.

In math we are given test and workbooks. The company gave us some learning aids to check out. Science is up for adoption. We are hoping we can start a science lab. We don't have any resources unless we go up to the high school and borrow theirs.

Another elementary teacher speaks:

20. I like the reading series but I am tired of it. We have had it for two adoptions now and I'm just tired of it....

[Do you do many experiments in science?] No, we have no materials. For the experiments we do, the kids or I bring the things needed. Let's face it, when we have to get all the stuff together...it is just easier not to do it and I

don't. I take the attitude that it is the school's responsibility to provide the materials we need....

I'm happy with math, reading and the phonics series. I can teach spelling just as well without a book.

21. We are trying to stay with one company all the way through. [What if you don't like certain books in a series?] We've had that happen before. In a reading series the lower grades books were horrible....We begged, pleaded and had meetings. We were still told we had to teach from that book by the higher authorities. The lower higher authorities told us they understood it was not good and that they were not going to be looking.
22. [I hear you say you do lots of things different from textbooks.] Yes, but I still follow the text, too. I had a professor that helped me with this. He said beginning teachers are often graded down for following the text too closely. But remember there are people that are supposed to be our experts that have written the texts. So yes, I vary but sometimes I follow the format of the text pretty closely. I add to and leave out. You just can't help doing that.

A special programs teacher said:

23. I'm pleased with our progress. We were allowed some material for next year...I tried to teach reading without a series but now I have that.

I know special program texts are to be included on textbook orders, but they aren't. They say do it through grant money if possible. We had some grant money. I don't know what they would have done if they had not had the grant money. I'm just not sure.

The teachers generally focus much of their decision-making process on uniformity and coordination. This

is true even when some materials are not considered appropriate. Textbooks are followed closely even though the experts that write the text are far removed from their classes. Teachers acquiesce to the "superior knowledge" from "expert" textbook writers. No one spoke of textbooks as interesting, challenging or stimulating. The texts were basically the curriculum.

The elementary teachers were often more creative in their efforts to attract student interest. Primarily they seemed to seek activities that caught the students' interest but failed to speak of decisions based on reasons other than interest. Age appropriateness, inter-relatedness, philosophical purposes nor student needs were mentioned.

#### Instruction Tailored to Student Needs

The third sub-topic related to school climate and resources focuses on the tailoring of instruction to student needs. The teachers generally interpreted this topic to be individualization as in individual lesson plans for each child. The elementary teachers spoke of student interest or enjoyment as factors involved in tailoring to student needs. But all of these elementary teachers reserved these areas of interest to social studies and science.

Other content areas were taught from texts. The textbooks were the curriculum for most of the teachers or certainly the curriculum guide for all of the teachers.

The junior/senior high teachers used whole group instruction exclusively. If differences were made they were made with special placement students and altered grading scales. The researcher found that comment #31 well describes what happens with most students with special placement.

Voices of elementary teachers:

24. I don't group this year for reading. I like it for myself. With the remedial and L.D. programs the kids left in class are supposed to all be capable of doing grade level work. I like to just go through the basic readers all together.

25. I used cooperative learning in my classroom this year.<sup>11</sup>

Voices of elementary teachers:

26. We developed dinosaur units before they became so popular. We had students interested in them. If kids are interested they will do well. We mostly do units for social studies and science. (elementary teacher)

Voices of junior/senior high school teachers:

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11. This teacher was very pleased with her decision to implement cooperative learning into her class. She expressed reluctance in sharing her experience with her peers. She wanted to keep it quiet until she was sure she would continue.

27. I don't individualize much. There is a minimum criteria they have to meet. I do tutor every day after school. I don't tell them to come in. I tell them I'm here. If no one shows up I go home. I have stayed until 4:30. Response is good, especially around test time. I have a policy that to receive help they have to take notes and bring them with them. If they take notes they usually don't need much help.
28. No, I don't think you should tailor to their needs. They are the ones missing out. I say don't blame the teachers, because how did all the other students learn. It is a family problem - not the fault of the school. If a student has tried to learn and they do have a problem - and they need help then I think special programs are fine. But for other students that I have, you can tell they are intelligent. They are just lazy.
29. You do the best you can to reach them all. You have one kid bored and another wants it explained a third time. Somewhere along the road you have to go on.
30. [I get the impression that you pretty well tell all the students what they have to do, and then everyone has to measure up to that mark] Right. In my classroom I think there is enough on my tests of plain rote recall to pass. I honestly believe that anyone who sits in my class, listens, takes notes and tries can pass with a "C" or "D".

[So you build into the tests allowances for differences in students?] Yes, my tests start easy and build. It is when you get to the essay questions the differences become apparent. It is in the upper level thinking skills of interpretation and synthesis that separate upper and lower grades. Kids may have to work harder but hard work never hurt anybody.

It seems we have come to the point in education where we don't want the students to have to work hard. If they have to work hard there is

something wrong. The content is too hard...I say put the practical kids in my regular classes. They will have to work hard, but they can pass with a "D" or "C"...There is not a subject area where kids can't get enough points if they just do all the busy work.

31. I think the smart kids have what they need. At least a minimum. Then the slow kids can take CVET and vocational courses. [There are about 50 kids in the senior class. About how many of these kids are getting what they need?] About half. The other half have no ambition. They don't want to do anything but just get out of here. I don't know what we can do with them.

Comment #30 provided insight in regard to the values of heterogeneous classes providing opportunities for students to learn from each other and to come to value each other as learners. Yet, the comments recorded in #30 and #31 and numerous other comments made by almost all the teachers in this study suggest that many teachers do not seem to believe that most students are capable of demonstrating higher order thinking skills. These skills will be demonstrated by only the "brightest" students.

Reconciliation for blending of the different "capacities" for learning are made in Comment #30 by providing enough "busy work" and low level or rote memory questions on tests to insure students that "do" their assignments and memorize well will pass the course. These teachers do not seem to reflect on what is occurring in school or their classrooms that allows only



students that are considered "bright" to demonstrate higher ordered thinking. The problem is viewed as being with the students and external to the influence of the educational experiences. If students do not learn and/or demonstrate higher ordered thinking the teachers conclude the problem is a lack of innate ability or that students are not studying. Alternative reasons such as appropriate curriculum and pedagogy do not seem to have been given consideration.

Teachers are again helpless. The administrative solution is to employ special teachers to work with students that do not "fit" or measure up to an acceptable external standard. Has thinking become an elitist process? If this attitude is very prevalent, the ramifications for a democratic society are staggering. The teachers' of students in special programs speak:

32. Generally, teachers aren't modifying teaching techniques for students. They modify their grades. They end up passing but not learning.

Teachers seem more concerned with how they are to grade students than with their learning.

33. We did order some lower level texts for science and social studies. We try to place special needs kids with teachers that will work with them. One teacher said she didn't have any special education kids this year. She never will if I have anything to say about it.
34. Two L.D. students are in CVET (Cooperative Vocational and Educational Training) English, and they flunked last nine weeks. They have

about third grade English skills, but they were working in a ninth grade practical English book - not the CVET English. The teacher said they have to "get ready" to go into another teacher's practical English. I see the point. They can't go to the L.D. class in tenth grade. So they have to be ready to meet the next teacher's expectations. The 10th grade teacher's expectations are they come in at 10th grade level and leave at 11th grade level. The class is taught accordingly.

General CVET students have 5th, 6th, maybe 7th grade English level. So they aren't going to pass. The teacher will say that none of the kids can do their work. Well, if none can why keep teaching something they can't do? At one time, 7 of the 15 had failing notices.

Lots of kids are picked up in L.D. at 11th and 12th grade. By then they usually have a discrepancy that qualifies them for L.D. and they can then pass English.

35. Some teachers will not modify their program. I say lets talk minimum competencies. What must they know and what would it be nice to know. Some teachers say they can't do that. Students have to do these hand out sheets, because the grade is at least partly determined by the worksheets. No special provisions will be made.

Perhaps teachers do not cognitively separate their "tools" from their "product" or goals. Worksheets, study questions, etc., become an end in themselves. The teacher continues to speak:

Sometimes we have to take kids out and put them in the lab. In the L. D. lab there may be six or seven subjects going on at one time. Most of the students would learn more just sitting in a regular class. But some of the teachers say they don't know what to do with students that can't do the work. They say, "But how am I going to grade him?"

I think dual certificates would solve a lot of this problem. Educators work with people, and all people are different. So, how can you set standards for all people...Don't students have a right to learn, even if it isn't up to a standard you prefer? What about those kids that come in with 8th grade skills and achieve 10th grade skills. You did wonders for that student, but they still flunk. Simply because they did not meet your expectations...I can argue my side, but I can understand theirs.

- 36. We do a lot more oral testing for kids that can't read.
- 37. Slow learner kids are not being helped...There are just so many kids that need help.
- 38. We have several elementary teachers that individualize well. Students tell me they get harder stuff.

I think we are going to have to do more individualizing and a better job. I like mastery learning. I'm not sure we should have grades. We should have levels. I could really go for a wild, way out system.

These special programs teachers bemoan the methods many classroom teachers use to comply with regulations that address the educational needs of students that have been identified as in need of educational support services and "mainstreamed" into regular classes. These teachers recognize that such students are not receiving appropriate opportunities for success in their educational endeavors. Yet, at least one special programs teacher (see comment #35) seeks solutions within the same order as practiced by the classroom teachers.

The suggestion for two diplomas or dual certification does not provide for reflection and dialogue about basic philosophical issues nor educational practices. Solutions from this perspective again seek administrative and organizational answers, thus avoiding the examination of the more fundamental issues. Issues other than structure and seals of approval must be addressed if "special" students gain access to knowledge that is supposed to be available in schools.

#### Orderliness of Classrooms

The teachers generally interpreted the sub-topic of orderliness in terms of student behavior. None of the teachers in the interviews considered the students to have serious behavior problems. One high school teacher attributed the orderliness of student behavior to a county alternative school program. Others attributed the student behavior to the fact that most of the kids are "just good 'ole country kids that have respect for authority." Firmness of the school principals was also mentioned.

None of the teachers that were interviewed considered overall student behavior in their classrooms a problem. Elementary teachers did see the behavior of

individual students as a problem. The elementary teachers report isolated behavior problems among students. The individual students that "act out" inappropriately can and at times do disturb the orderliness of the elementary school. Such behavior appears to be active aggression. The teachers see these behaviors and fear that such behaviors will only become more anti-social as the students mature. The teachers speak:

39. He demands attention. He will not be ignored. It is very draining and hard on the teacher and on his classmates...I don't know what will happen to this student. It scares me.
40. One minute he may be hugging and the next thing you know he has hit someone with his fist.

The elementary teachers generally use assertive discipline in their classrooms and they like it.

41. Yes, I use it. It was one of the best workshops I've ever been to. But, you have to be consistent or it won't work...I don't like to use the board, but I do think there is a place for corporal punishment. They have to learn authority someplace.

I usually keep students in from P.E. and music. That is the only time for punishment. [What do the student do to have to stay in?] Maybe they didn't finish their work. A check by their name is not a real punishment.

42. [Is paddling a fairly common punishment?] Not as much this year. Last year and the year before it was common. [Who paddles a student?] Just the principal.

High school teachers present their views on student behavior:

43. It depends on the teachers more than the students. We have had teachers that could not control their classes, but they don't stay. For the most part each teacher maintains their own discipline. I haven't had many conflicts with students. My classes are electives and hands-on. They are busy and out of trouble. The one or two students with whom I have had problems have also been problems for other teachers.
44. Seniors were getting really rowdy, so we addressed that as a group.
45. The alternative school gives us options. I give them the option of the alternative school for three days or corporal punishment. [What problems would merit corporal punishment or the alternative school?] Any type of fighting or stealing. A first instance of cheating wouldn't, but a second instance would. I wouldn't use it for kidding around in class. I go and ask them to be quiet the first time. The second time I tell them. I try to build in options before a problem gets out of hand. I give them plenty of chances. I really don't have many problems...even with the tougher kids. As long as you keep them busy there is no problem.
46. I raise cattle. If I get a cow that is too mean, I sell it. But in the classroom I can't kick them out. They are there with the rest of them.
47. I went to high school here, and I never heard of a student "cussing" a teacher out. We had one the other day. The student is now gone. You see more of that now. [Why?] Because teachers do not have nearly as much authority that they once did, there is not nearly as much respect. You can't paddle. There is too much red tape. I don't always comply with the red tape and it will probably come back on me someday. There needs to be an assurance of punishment. If you cross the line you will be punished.

48. I've never had discipline problems. Partly because I start the year by giving the kids a list of classroom rules and from day one I do not bend.

I seldom send anyone to the office. So, if the principal gets one he knows they have been out of line. [What do you do when you have a problem?] Depends on the situation. If a kid is sleeping, I never miss a beat.<sup>12</sup> I simply put my hand on their shoulder and shake them. Other times I'll ask a student to stay after class. If you approach them one to one, ask what is wrong and not embarrass them in front of their peers, that will usually solve the problem.

49. As far as open rebellion in the classrooms, I haven't seen it.

It would seem that this last teacher's statement (comment #49) is congruent with the views of the teachers. But when one examines these statements with the descriptions of general apathy exhibited by students, it seems that many students are very much involved with aggressive behavior. By the time students reach high school their behavior is passive aggression and seems to be a very prevalent behavior. Other students appear to be compliant in behavior by meeting minimum expectations.

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12. Comments found in #45 and #48 concerning the need to address potential classroom problems before they become "out of hand" is reflected in Kounin (1970), Doyle (1984), Good and Brophy (1987) classroom management research. Effective teachers address potential problems before they become a point of conflict and by using methods that do not interfere with instruction.

This interpretation is well supported by the voices of the teachers concerning the seriousness of the students, but does not seem to be overtly recognized by the teachers.

#### Fiscal Resources Available to School

Educational reform has been instigated first from the federal level and then mandated from the state level. The agenda has been imposed from outside the local school and outside the profession. See pages 22-30 of this study for a review of the funding of education and the relationship of funding and the reform efforts of the 1980s.

While many states have addressed reform efforts with mandates, they have also provided significant increases in revenue to the schools. This has not been the case of the sunbelt, oil dependent state where this study was conducted. The mandates were delivered but the revenue to fund reform did not follow. The teachers speak:

50. I don't agree with our national priorities. Yes, national defense should be number one, but education should be the weapon.
51. Improvement comes with proper funding. There is no proper funding for education in our state. There is not going to be proper funding



unless there is a huge change in a lot of people's thinking.

52. People are getting tired of taxes. Every time they want to raise taxes it's for education but then the moneys not earmarked for education and we see very little of it. Then the next year we're asking for more taxes for education. The people are getting tired of it. I'm getting tired of it. I pay taxes too. They can raise my taxes but I sure don't see it back in salary.
53. Our people are rural. They don't have the money to pay more for our school.
54. I'm not into the money issues much but I see school funding as a state problem. Why should city children have more money spent on them than rural children?
55. Our school has always had money problems.
56. What I understand about this school is that we're just trying to get financially back to where we were before the oil crises. They used to have more programs. We have lost an art teacher, a librarian, the auto mechanics program and I don't know what else. The programs are just being cut, cut, cut and yet we're having to increase the requirements or course offerings for the college bound. But only about one-third of the kids go on to college. I think it really puts a strain on this school to meet all the criteria. The upper level classes are very small in number.
57. Our school was in the red when school started and we are trying to get out of debt. We aren't buying anything but the very basic.
58. We've had cutbacks in materials for the last several years. We used to get \$50.00 to spend in the classroom any way we needed. We didn't get it this year.
59. We all pay for lots of the things we use in our classroom.

60. Lots of things we have to pay for ourselves. I don't have the money.
61. We had a fund raiser to pay for magazines for the debate file. Everything we get we have to do ourselves.
62. I can't get Junior Scholastic for my class. They say we can't afford it.
63. I have textbooks. I need the big money items.
64. There are better uses for the money we spend on testing but I'm not asked. I think they need to be tested but not every year.
65. My vocational education program has always been funded well. There is some equipment I would like to have but it would just be icing on the cake.<sup>13</sup>

The issue of money is an overarching concern for the teachers in this study. From the perspective of the teachers, money affects every aspect of the educational endeavor. Morale, curriculum, goals, staff, teachers, etc. are all directly affected by the lack of funds. Reform is considered to be rhetoric if financial resources are not available to lend support.

It is very evident that the teachers are frustrated and that they feel helpless in the quest for additional moneys for education. Little consideration appears to be given to exploring educational changes that may need to

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13. Vocational education funding sources are structured differently than common education. Historically, vocational education for the state is funded better than common education.

be made that are not so tightly coupled to school financing. This may or may not be because the financial needs are to the point that all other decisions are affected directly by financial resources. Apparently, even very minimal expenditures are a major issue.

### Seriousness of Students

Much of the reform movement of the 1980s has viewed students as empty vessels to be filled by teachers. Students seem to be expected to passively but eagerly accept "knowledge" that is given to them by teachers. The teachers in this study seem to view their role and the role of their students in this same manner. The teachers expressed frustration and helplessness with the large number of their students that sit passively, not eagerly accepting their "gifts of knowledge." Again, from the perspective provided by the teachers in this study, the problem lies totally outside the teachers' spheres of influence. Again, teachers are helpless.

Students either come to school willing to accept the role demanded of them or they have at best an ill-fit throughout their public school experience. Pity to the child that does not or cannot conform to their expected role. They come to be viewed as "lazy," "indifferent" and/or "irresponsible...".

Voices from elementary teachers:

66. Right now I'm battling Nintendo. It has taken over! I think seriousness of the students depends on the home.
67. About 10% are serious. [What makes them serious?] I think it is just a desire to learn. I'm not saying others aren't serious. But if we have reading games day, that is fine and if it is reading book day, it isn't as fine.

You can't expect elementary students to see that many years down the line. [Can your students see present value in learning?] Yes, pretty well. After February I tell them they are future...[next] graders and they will need to know something we are studying in the next grade.

This teacher speaks specifically about students learning social studies:

The students like social studies pretty well. But, they have never been tested this way before. They read the chapter and then they are tested over the main ideas. When they catch on as to how to study for the test they like it better. If they don't score well they don't like it...

When we get to study something they know something about they are more interested. They can share some of the stuff they know.<sup>14</sup>

Other voices continue to speak on the seriousness of elementary students:

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14. Why is it such a quantum leap for teachers to recognize that students enjoy learning when they are experientially connected and can share knowledge that is theirs with other learners? What are the obstacles that prevent teachers from implementing these observations into their teaching?

68. I would say 50% are interested and 50% aren't. [What is the difference?] Their home life, their environment.
69. Achievement isn't always environmental. There are a lot of parents who want their children to achieve and try to help. But the kids don't always care. They aren't interested in school. They have to have self motivation. I don't know how you teach it.
70. I had a little girl miss twelve words in her reading story the other day. I asked her why she hadn't practiced. She said she tried. She said, "I went to my mother and she didn't have time. I went to my daddy and he didn't have time. I asked my brother and he had to practice for something." I had to think, yea, I hear you. I told her to go ahead and we would read it together and then I got her a reading partner. She tried.
71. [Are kids serious about school?] Not really. [Should they be?] If we could make them mature quicker I guess they would be. [Is it appropriate to try to make them mature quicker? Do you want your children to grow up fast?] No, I really don't. I want them to be children, but I want them to be responsible. I see lots of irresponsibility. If we could teach people to be responsible a lot of problems would be solved...You give them more responsibility, teach them natural consequences. I'm not sure how to approach a written curriculum for teaching responsibility...

High school teachers speak:

72. The older they get the less students want to do something new. They want to do something easy. Even the bright students. Everybody just wants to get by. Now the brighter students want to make "As". But, they want to know exactly what they have to do to get the "As". I don't have any discipline problems. Most of them just sit there and would do nothing if I would let them. That may be human nature. No one is going to say give me a bunch of work.

I think they get serious after they get out of high school. I have students that come back and say, "Gee, I wish I had studied." These aren't the smart ones either. I'm thinking of a couple of cute girls that now want good jobs that go with their self image. They can't get the good jobs.<sup>15</sup>

73. I have some problems in my upper division math classes with apathy and doing minimum amount of effort, but not too bad.

My problem is not having a screening program. I get kids that aren't capable of doing upper division math. If they can't add fractions they can't do algebra. [What do you do with these kids?] I flunk them. What else can I do?

74. [What are the majority like?] They are good kids. They get it done. They bicker and whine but do it.

75. Better students are better students. No difference, just like always. In my class I try to go beyond facts. Some of the kids can do it. It depends on whether they want to think that day. You would be surprised. The eighth grade class is pretty sharp. The biggest problem is apathy. Parents don't nail them to the wall. They don't think they need it. They think it is boring.

[Is apathy the rule or exception?] No, there are still a lot of kids into school that work. But more and more are apathetic. They say, "My dad didn't go to college and he makes more than you." Sometimes it is true and sometimes not.

76. As a whole less serious. It may be more within this system rather than schooling as a whole. A teacher left here and is now teaching in a

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15. Perhaps more research and thought should be given to structuring schools where students can exit when disenchanted and return when they are interested and desire to learn in a formal academic setting.

suburb school. She said she had never seen so many students doing research. The socio-economic level is much higher there.

The researcher wonders if there are other factors that contribute to differences?

77. I've been teaching seven years. I see enthusiasm for learning diminish each year....They have a lot going on in their lives. They don't care about learning. They are too cool. [Do you teach the same way you did seven years ago?] Yes, I teach the same way and I get so little....

Students are too apathetic. Too many are not willing to work. [Why not?] Partly because they are a visually orientated generation....On parents' night the only parents that come are my "A" students. Others are not interested.

[What percentage of the senior class will not graduate?] Of about forty students I have three that I know will not graduate. I know they could pass. We aren't talking L.D. students.

If they don't get a grade they won't do the work. We just finished an essay contest. I didn't really have time for it so I told the students I would give twenty-five points to those that entered. All they had to do was two typed pages. I had a total of four students that entered. They were already my "A" students. Twenty-five points could make a difference between an "F" and a "D" or "C".

78. They need to come to the point where grades are important.
79. Most kids don't understand the "why" in math, and most don't care either.
80. I've had two or three students come this year without their book. I ask where it is and they say they don't know - "Flunk me."

I find most of them don't want to work - even the "good" students. Out of thirty students seven or eight might care. [Why?] I think it is just part of life. I don't see much change with students over the years. I asked another teacher and he says fewer students want to work...On a scale from one to ten students overall are at about three in seriousness or interest in school.

81. I don't see the competitiveness in students that we had. They like to stay even. No one wants to shine anymore.

A special programs teachers speaks:

82. I think the vo-tech school will help some students be more serious. Before the vo-tech came in students had to fill the hours on their schedules. Vo-tech has given them some meaningful choices. They do fine at the vo-tech.

[Does the opportunity to take the vocational courses help their self image?] Definitely. In fact I have two seniors for only English IV that made all "As" and "Bs". They remarked when they got their grades that they had made the honor roll, but hadn't. All grades have to be on level to be on the honor roll.

The language used by the teachers suggests that their knowledge of child and adolescent development is either limited or is not applied to their teaching. The teachers speak of expecting children to be responsible by adult standards, learning for grades, being academically competitive, not understanding the "whys" in math, not being capable of learning higher ordered concepts and experiencing significant pressures. Yet, the teachers are using the same curriculum and teaching methods as



used for a past culture. Students are expected to conform to the teachers' ways of teaching. No one even remotely suggested that many problems were within the domain of the educators and within the traditional structure of education.

This teacher was very reflective regarding the seriousness of today's students by providing a context for the issue. She continues:

I don't know if kids are serious. I was always pretty serious. My relative has gone back to college and she loves it at 35. College is wasted on the young.

Kids for the most part are still worried about a date [peer acceptance] and maybe at that age that is what they need to be concerned about. They think they are invincible. I wish they were more serious about their life [safety]. They have some things to be very serious about - AIDS, drugs... They don't have to decide on their life career now.

A vocational teacher speaks in regard to the seriousness of students:

83. [Are your students serious?] More than half are interested. Otherwise they would take something else. A lot, but less than half, have not found their thing out here yet. They may never. If they don't I don't think I have failed. There isn't something here for everyone. Yet, I hope I can give them something that will help them later on, or something they enjoy for a while.

[Are students motivated to learn?] Everyone is different. Some of them you will miss motivating them. You won't get them started.

[Do you think it is part of your responsibilities to motivate students?] To a certain degree. My job is to offer possibilities. I have to have feedback about what they want to study.

[They have choices?] Oh sure, I don't necessarily say what they have to work on. At certain times I do, but not all the time. All of a sudden you'll be doing something and you'll hear from a kid you haven't heard from in two months. Something clicks and they start answering questions.

This particular vocational agriculture teacher provided a voice that, except for his views concerning motivation, often resembled the views of Eliot Wigginton. He is open to his students and instead of a blanket condemnation he suggests that many students "just haven't found their thing". Throughout the interview with this vocational teacher, the researcher was provided a view of education that was student centered, active, process orientated and having present as well as future value.

The researcher would suggest that, if this teacher is representative of vocational teachers in general, common education could learn much about viewing education from an alternative perspective. By seeking dialogue and understanding of certain aspects of vocational education perhaps alternative views would be more easily conceptualized and articulated in common education. Certainly the issue of enrolling in a vocational course as an

elective is a factor. But, it would appear that along with the issue of learning by doing which was raised by the coach elsewhere in this study, this teacher strikes at some fundamental issues not brought forth by general education teachers in this study.

### Classroom Interruptions

Interruptions that interfere or prevent instruction in the classroom is an issue that has come forth in the effective school research and is often addressed through mandates about when and what kinds of interruptions can occur during school hours. The teachers in this study generally considered the number of interruptions in their school to have decreased. The decrease in the number of interruptions is credited by the teachers to concerted effort on the part of administration to reduce the number of interruptions that occur during instructional time.

Classroom interruptions were still viewed by several elementary teachers as problems but perhaps a problem that has been addressed to some degree and is better. The elementary teachers speak:

84. Classroom interruptions are a problem but it is better. We now have signs up asking parents to go to the office before coming into our classrooms. It helps but some parents still disregard the signs.

85. They mow outside your window and we can't hear...We have requested that announcement be made once a day. [Has that happened?] More or less. It is better...The janitor will come in during class to change a lock. You can imagine

how that affects young children...Parents come and take their child out of class early. Some days it is a problem. Generally, if it once starts it is all day long.

86. [Are pull out programs disruptive?] Yes, that is why I would like sixteen students and take care of all the learning problems myself...

The voice of a special programs teacher.

87. I go with the flow. Interruptions don't bother me that much.

High school teachers share their views:

88. The principal keeps interruptions down. We don't have many assemblies. Baseball games are my major interruption.

89. The principal seldom comes in to speak to a class but when he does he asks what day would be good.

90. Interruptions are less. We tried having school club meetings after school but memberships dropped. Part of the problem was transportation and part was if they didn't get out of class to participate they weren't going to join.

We now have monthly FHA, FFA and 4-H meetings during the school day. There is about one meeting per week. They rotate through the class periods throughout the year.

91. Some kids are gone a lot with activities but they usually catch up. I like for them to participate.

92. I'm hateful so they don't come in my classroom much.

93. Interruptions are a minimal. I [a coach] get pulled out of class some for phone calls. They are usually to schedule or reschedule ball-games.

It would seem that the teachers are generally satisfied with efforts to reduce the number of interruptions experienced during instructional periods. The researcher sensed that perhaps maintenance issues were more than just interruptions but also reflect a hidden message. Maintenance needs come before instructional needs. Perhaps, more simply, there is just a lack of consideration for the value of what is happening in the classroom. Either interpretation leaves teachers and students receiving a message that what they do is not the most important activity within the school.

### Summary

The academic climate of the school is considered by many of the teachers to have improved. There seems to be an effort to convey a message that education is important. But the overt message intended is not the message that students, and even several teachers, receive. Or maybe it is received as intended.

Technology has become a part of the school to some degree, but is not incorporated into the curriculum as a

tool. It is usually another subject area and taught in short discrete time periods. The purpose and materials used are not common knowledge among the faculty. Isolation is much too prevalent.

Textbooks continue to be the curriculum. Emphasis is on standardized experiences that are intended for preparation for another grade or another course. Little variation is developed or experienced in the school. Elementary teachers make curriculum decisions based on textbook content and achievement tests. High school teachers make similar decisions for similar reasons.

Student needs are defined in terms of course and textbook content and preparation for future study. Classrooms are orderly and interruptions are minimal to manageable. Students are generally passive aggressive in their behavior. Monetary needs are of paramount importance and foreshadow almost all possibilities of looking beyond limited fiscal resources.

Students are not viewed as generally serious or interested in school. Teachers and students go through the motions of schooling. All those involved are alienated from the purpose and process. Students are a finished product that is to be inspected and certified as "educated." Yet, teachers do not seem to be struggling with the concept of what constitutes "educated."

The verbal picture presented of the climate of the school coupled with meager resources presents a picture of an environment that is, at best, endurable, but often meaningless, and at worst, a miseducative experience for children. This is not to say there aren't bright spots of joy and meaningful experiences. There must be. But all too many teachers and students are going through the motions but with little positive effect. Possibly, there are harmful effects for larger numbers of students and teachers. Do the reformers of the 1980s really want what they seek?

#### Student Testing

Education reform in the 1980s has looked to the testing of students as the "bottom line" item on which almost all other aspects of reform have been measured. Success has been defined from the monocular perspective that judges and measures success in terms of increased achievement test scores. Schools that have not shown academic improvement have often been put on notice that their state can, and perhaps will, take drastic measures if academic improvement as measured on standardized tests continues to lag.

In several states, reform measures have been taken even further. Not only are schools expected to show academic improvement but individual students must also "measure up" to an arbitrary standard of a minimum competency demonstrated on standardized tests. Such tests are often referred to as "exit exams" for high school graduation or promotion to a higher grade level.

In this section the researcher first reports on the views of teachers regarding the use of achievement testing and the influence testing has on the curriculum. The researcher then presents the views of teachers in regard to the reform suggestions of competency testing for graduation and/or promotion.

#### Achievement Testing

The school in this study traditionally and voluntarily administers annual achievement tests to all students in all grades. During the 1980s the state has mandated standardized statewide annual achievement testing in grades 3, 7 and 11. The scores have often been used as an indication of the "effectiveness" of education and education reform efforts. The tests scores for grades 3, 7, and 11 are usually published in state newspapers and identified by grade level and district. A



third grade teacher expressed the following views concerning achievement testing and its influence on her teaching:

1. The thing that affects how I teach more than anything has been the MAT 6 Basic Skills Test. After giving the test for three years I pretty well know what is on it...

I don't know that I have taught better but I stress certain things more. Before the testing became so important, when a student asked a questions, say on planets, and we weren't on planets, we would look it up. Now I tell them they will have it in fifth grade and we go on working on what they are expected to know.

Ten years ago we had at least two hours of reading each day - not just out of the basal. Reading, math and spelling were stressed more. Now we have to worry about teaching social studies and science, because of the achievement test. [Do you get it all taught?] Yes, I get it all in. But to get it all in I do all the oral reading of the text books. They listen.

There is lots of pressure on all of us from November through February. After the test in March we have more fun with learning. Until after the test I really cram just basic knowledge. [How do you teach this basic knowledge?] Drill mostly. In reading, the achievement test doesn't go into "what if" or deeper thought questions so I don't either. We stick to facts....

I don't change the way I teach spelling until right before the test. I like to give the students a word and have them write it. I change the format to choosing the correctly spelled word from four choices shortly before the test date.

In Math, computations are not too bad. Word problems throw young children. They make care less errors.

The test is weighted so they aren't supposed to know it all. I tell them that but I still see anxiety in their eyes when they don't know the last few questions. [Does this affect their self image?] They forget about it quickly. For a few very conscientious students that are wanting in the gifted program, it means more. Some are very aware that to stay in the gifted program they have to do well too. I think there is more pressure for those wanting in the program.

The researcher ponders the present reality of students that live this experience and certainly the long term effect of such a sterile, but stressful, environment. The students in the high school are described as passive to resistive recipients of information. Children do not come to the school environment resistive to learning. The researcher suggests that educators examine the scenario of classroom experiences such as described here to find clues to how and why students become so passive.

The teacher for the gifted program also broached the issue of placement in the gifted program based on achievement testing. The number of children eligible for placement has increased. The teacher of the children placed in the gifted program speaks:

2. The achievement testing has backfired on the gifted program. Teachers are feeling so much pressure to show positive achievement test scores that they either teach for the test or teach what is on the test. In my opinion the test is invalid. I have twenty-three new elementary kids in my gifted program. These

kids are scoring in the 97 percentile or above, but they are not intellectually gifted.

The inflated scores have created a second problem. In computer I had used their achievement test math scores to develop an individualized math program for areas where they had scored low. I can't use the scores now. They are not valid.

I don't blame the teachers. The public doesn't understand all the factors that influence the scores. Then for the score to be published in the newspapers doesn't help. I would feel pressure, too.

The students of the third grade teacher in this study have almost always scored above the national mean except for one year in math. Yet, this teacher comments further:

3. I worry if we get behind. We have been out a lot with flu and some bad weather. There won't be an asterisk by our class this year saying we were out for eight days.

The researcher found other elementary teachers that were more critical and reflective in their views on achievement testing and how the test scores have become such a major focus in education. Their views were, to a great extent, reflective of their personal confidence in their own knowledge and experience in teaching. Their views were perhaps also due to the absence of the stress of knowing the scores for their classes would not appear in print for the public to use to "judge" their teaching.

The third grade teacher did not have this psychological distance. Yet, even the two teachers (Comments #5 and 6) who more consistently viewed education in predominately humanistic terms were struggling with problematic issues regarding testing. They had ambivalent feelings about whether their lack of emphasis on achievement testing could create problems for themselves or for their students. The voices of elementary teachers continue:

4. [How do you feel about achievement tests?] I hate them. [Who makes the decision they will be given in your grade?] The administration. [Why?] It is just a tradition. We have tried to break the tradition but it doesn't work. [So as far as achievement testing is concerned you see it as what?] An unnecessary evil...a wasted week. [Do you find that you teach to the test?] No, other than the day before I taught them how to do division real fast. We had three problems.

5. I don't care for all this testing. I'm not a test person. These achievement tests cost a lot of money and time. It will take a week of instructional time to do all this testing.

[How much do these standardized tests affect your teaching?] Not much for me. The other day a teacher was preparing the test format to send home. It bugs me when I know teachers prepare students for the test. I know I don't teach all the things on that test.

[Where do you get the confidence to not be intimidated by the testing of your students?] I don't know where I get it. I guess I feel confident enough that I've taught them enough that they will make it. Maybe it is because tests are not that important to me. Yes, I do want my children to do good. I just don't

worry about it. My children did well last year. I was new to this school and I didn't know much about these things [teaching to the test]. What is the point of spending three weeks teaching what is on the test? These tests do not prove the performance of a child. It just makes kids apprehensive and parents competitive. Just to see if this school is up to par with that school is stupid.

What is important to me is that these children can go into the next grade and do the work. Now it would bother me if they couldn't do that. The test doesn't tell me that. It is their performance in the classroom that tells me if they are ready to do the next grade's work.

6. [Do you find that you end up teaching the achievement test at some point?] Oh yes, I guess I don't recall specific questions and teach them but if you give the test once you remember where the textbooks focus on certain areas.

[Does it guide your curriculum?] There is no way it could guide my curriculum. I go off on tangents. There probably aren't any questions on the achievement test about the human body and I love to teach the kids about the body because they love it. So, I do. I probably should spend more time on simple and compound machines. There are a lot of questions about machines. [So do you shut your door and do what you think you should do?] Many times, yes. The older I get the more I do it. If I could know it was my last two or three years to teach there is no telling what I would do. If I knew I was going to retire, I'd do a lot of things I've felt were right and I've wanted to do. [What keeps you from doing that now?] Fear for the children not performing well on a test. Let's face it, we are a testing world and these kids are going to be taking lots of tests.

I don't want a test to keep them from having opportunities. If I had my way we would allocate money to other things. We need so much.

But if we are going to use standardized tests I teach my class how to be "test wise". I feel a little concern when I hear of a person I have taught that couldn't get into a college they wanted; doesn't do well on a job; couldn't fill out an application or whatever. It bothers me. I don't lose sleep, but I do have a twinge. [Do achievement tests measure what students know?] Not any more.

7. Too many administrators look at achievement test scores and judge the teacher.
8. We had a grant to work on writing skills. We then found our math skills were low. That was when we also got our computer grant. So we bought math discs that go along with the text. They are mostly guided practice on computers. We saw an increase in math achievement. [How do you make an evaluative decision in your school?] We look at achievement tests. [Who makes these decisions?] The administration.

High school teachers did not seem especially concerned with achievement test scores but some of the teachers put a high degree of confidence in the validity and reliability of standardized testing. The voices of junior/senior high teachers:

9. For staff development we look at achievement tests for weak areas. Then we try to beef up those areas. [Do achievement tests reflect what a student has learned?] Every now and then we get a surprise. Not too often. Sometimes a kid will do poorly on tests yet does well in class. [Would you think the test or the classroom performance was a more valid reflection of what the student knows?] I think the test is more valid. They are probably over achievers. A lot of kids can memorize.

I have had kids from the gifted program make "Cs". Some kids just goof off. They seem to

lose their drive when they get to high school. [Why?] I don't know - divorce, problems at home, trying to be cool.

Again, there is no consideration given to the possibility that the lived experiences of students in the school could be factors that cause "some kids [to] goof off" or that some "lose their drive."

10. Well, I guess we need them [standardized tests]. Sometimes I don't know that comparing schools is good. One school may teach toward the test and another may not. It makes a difference. [How much does the achievement test affect your teaching?] In the past it hasn't dictated that much but they are changing the format for the ACT (more graphs, stories, interpretations) so I guess I'll need to get with the counselor and see what I need to change.

[How do you feel about that? Should a test "dictate" what you teach?] I hate to teach to a test. Sometimes I find myself nearly teaching an area I know is on the test and I can't go on and teach it.

11. I think they need to be tested and I don't think a teacher should give out the questions. But, I do think teachers should teach what is on the test. General knowledge is what the test is over and you should be teaching that. I don't think I should be teaching something in math that is not on the test. I don't let my junior high math students use calculators because they can't use them on the test.
12. I don't pay much attention to achievement tests. It is the ACT that concerns me. If my students take me for all four years I expect them to make 25 or better on the ACT. If they don't, I haven't done my job. My kids do great.
13. The tests are not as culturally biased as they once were. I sometimes think they pay too much

attention to standardized tests. [Yet, this teacher supports competency testing for high school graduation.]

14. I like the writing assessment test but the overall emphasis on testing is bull...There is more validity in them now than at first. The first year I gave them, no one told me what was on the test. So the next year I looked at the test and a week before I taught to the test. My scores went up. Now that everybody knows that scores are what matters to the public, everybody is doing it. [Could the money and time be used more wisely?] Probably, but it won't. The public wants to see scores.
15. Too many students make designs out of the answer sheets. They don't care.
16. Achievement tests give us a more accurate record of growth.

Even though the high school teachers in this study are perhaps more concerned about ACT testing than achievement testing, the use and value of standardized testing is accepted and generally viewed as appropriate. It seems very clear that throughout this school standardized testing drives the curriculum. This is true whether they are achievement tests or college entrance tests. The appropriateness of basing curriculum decisions on these tests and their perceived public value is only addressed by three or four of the sixteen teachers participating in this research.

Even teachers that expressed reservations were accepting of the reality of a curriculum and society that



standardizes knowledge and the access to knowledge. The vast majority of the teachers generally supported the measuring and valuing of education and curriculum decisions based on quantitatively measurable methods that supports the current philosophy of education reform. None of the teachers expressed concern about what constitutes the "basic" knowledge that the teachers believed they were to teach. But it did seem very clear that this "basic knowledge" was factual knowledge and little time is devoted to higher ordered thinking opportunities or other aspects of learning.

The teachers may intellectually know about basic principles of learning, but apparently do not connect learning theory with their pedagogical practices. The sterility of the learning environment that provides a focus driven by testing is not a conducive environment for inquiry, joy, empowerment, responsibility, autonomy, self-motivation, involvement or other descriptive language that could be used to portray a learning environment that was multi-dimensional and student centered rather than one-dimensional and test centered.

Is the picture presented by these teachers acceptable even to the functionalist reformer of the 1980s? No wonder Jackson (1968) found that by late elementary school nearly 20 percent of children are identified as

against school and that the majority "do not feel strongly about their classroom experience one way or another" (p.60). This picture of teaching and learning is similar to Goodlad's (1983) research and to the research of Bullough's, et al. (1982) which is reviewed in this study.

#### Competency Testing

The concept of competency testing for high school graduation was mandated for future classes by the state legislature while this study was in progress. The teachers in this study, including those involved with special education, support the idea of competency testing for high school graduation and/or the awarding of two types of high school diplomas. Some of the teachers expressed concern about the validity and fairness of both concepts but thought the benefits generally outweigh the costs.

Some of the teachers did not endorse the awarding of two different types of diplomas but could support competency exit testing. There were only two voices heard that raised serious concern about the issues of appropriateness, fairness, equity, or reliability of such testing. (See comments #28 and #31.) The teachers speak on competency testing:

17. I would like to see competency testing from junior high to high school and before they can get their diplomas. That would force parents to become interested in their children's education.

The tests need to be prepared by the state, not individual teachers who could ask simple questions such as "What color are the walls?" The tests need to be graded somewhere else besides at the school, too. Eventually, slowly, education could be reformed.<sup>16</sup>

18. I think it is a good idea. Yet, I don't see how they could have a standardized test for everybody. All the kids are never going to be at the same level.
19. If we test for graduation, we need two tests. Some can't pass a hard test. If we make it low enough to be fair, then it isn't going to do any good. [Would it make a difference if kids had these exit tests hanging over them?] It might. If you test for graduation, parents will have to get behind it. Not just the kids.
20. I think it might help if they started testing early enough. They might know they had better study. We shouldn't just give it to them in their junior or senior year.
21. I don't know. I haven't thought about it. But I know I hate to see them leave school without being ready. I don't know if a sit down paper and pencil test is the way to go. It might be better to have individual interviews. I don't know why we think we have to put everything on

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16. This teacher's voice reflects a basic distrust in teachers generally and her school specifically. Why would tests need to be graded away from the school? What experiences have lead this teacher to distrust the "system?" Perhaps her experiences are similar to those that have taken reform efforts away from the professional educators and local school boards. Perhaps professional educators have violated the trust that the general public had given educators. Perhaps teachers, administrators and school boards have violated the trust by acts of omission more than commission.

paper. But I do want them prepared before they leave.

I think it will probably be alright. What it may do is make students make up their minds early about vocational high school or college preparation. It is really that way now.

I change my mind on that day to day. I can live with either. Seems like people could look at the transcript and see that they just existed in school for twelve years if they had "Ds" in about everything.

I'm not saying exit testing is bad. I'm saying we have to have alternatives for kids that don't pass. Maybe the two diplomas would help. Not all kids are college bound. They don't even need to think about it.

I kinda agree with the idea of competency testing to exit high school. [How would special needs students be handled?] You would need to establish minimum competencies at a lower percentile. Instead of 80 percentile maybe 70 percentile. (learning disabilities teacher)

22. We do graduate students that cannot read and that does make us look bad but we can't keep them in school forever. I have mixed feelings. Some say differences in diplomas would discriminate or label. But they are labeled by their peers, parents and day care workers even before they come to school. A parent will say "Just wait until you get so and so." So I'm not sure.
23. Yes, we do graduate people who can't read and write and it does need to be reflected on transcripts or somehow. I prefer two diplomas over kids dropping out.
24. I do support competency testing for graduation to a certain extent. It might be a good idea for some students to hang around for another year. But, I guess if they flunk they will be

back anyway. The concept is okay. The implementation of fairness and worthwhileness are the issues.

25. I think an employer could find out real quick if an applicant had the skills needed for a job without our establishing two diplomas.
26. If we are going to talk about reform, I think we ought to have two degrees. Some kids are not going to be able to get a high school diploma and you don't want to flunk them. They need to get something. They need that diploma as part of the rites of growing up.
27. I haven't really thought about two diplomas. But, I don't see where that would be good. You would start making two classes of people.

All the teachers seem to have a genuine desire that all students have, at least, basic academic skills. Beyond basic skills, most of the teachers expressed interest in sorting students. A few teachers see problems with two diplomas or competency testing. It would seem that the overwhelming consensus of the participating teachers is that they are concerned that students are "stamped" with a seal of approval. The diploma certifies that students are "educated" to a level of competency deemed appropriate for a high school graduate. The confidence placed in testing by these teachers is not consistent with research in the use of standardized tests to predict "success" in post-secondary educational endeavors, the work place, or general satisfaction with life.

A 1974 study conducted in California by Feldstein is an example of how such confidence is unsubstantiated by standardized testing. Feldstein found that regardless of other contributing factors non-high school graduates were able to do as well or better than high school graduates when grade point averages were used to make comparisons. The grade point average of the non-high school graduates was 2.56 and 2.51 for other students. The teachers seem to seek simple methods of addressing a complex experience often called "achievement" and less often called "learning". This is often done without regard to scholarly research that draws different conclusions.

#### Summary

The teachers in this study most often seem to view learning, knowledge and/or achievement as "products" readily measurable on standardized, norm referenced tests. (This view was expressed throughout the school, but was pervasive among secondary teachers.) The teachers seem to believe that they can demand or "force" achievement/learning by placing a "day of reckoning" in the path of students. Learning is standardized by the testing, for future success and usually instrumental in value. There is surely an unrealistic if not totally

inappropriate expectation on the parts of the teachers to demand that children and adolescents be able to project future value on tasks that are seemingly meaningless to them.

The teachers, as adults, may have the advantage of maturity and middle class white values to hold factual knowledge in high regard but to demand these same standards of those without the same experiences, maturity, values, and socio-economic background will not "produce" the desired narrow outcomes. When the teachers do achieve their goal, it would seem that often the reasons are compliance in nature. The teachers do not speak of joy in learning, the empowerment of knowledge or the satisfaction of students in mastering their world through knowledge. They did not speak of the intrinsic value of learning. Surely even the reformers did not intend for education to be so narrow, boring, empty and futuristic in value as described by the voices of most of the teachers in this study and lived by their students.

If the teachers in this study and teachers in general are dissatisfied with achievement within the school setting, perhaps they should examine or re-examine some of the research concerning factors that make a difference in achievement. For example, Coleman's (1967)

extensive study of 600,000 students found only two factors that influenced achievement. Coleman's research identified the students' sense of control over their own fate or sense of self-worth and the socioeconomic background of the students as the factors most likely to determine academic achievement.

Platt's (1974) study of 258,000 students in 9,700 schools in twenty countries reached virtually these same conclusions. Schools have little influence on the socioeconomic factors. But, surely, if the teachers in this study and teachers in general, put more thought, time and energy into making the school environment a supportive, enhancing and conducive place for personal autonomy and self-worth, the students that live there six or more hours a day would, more likely, choose to learn.

Students would not only learn the instrumental values of knowledge, but they would learn that which enhances and expands the possibilities of the human condition rather than reduces and thwarts possibilities. Instead of focusing on identifying limits, we could learn to promote dreams never dreamed and concepts never previously envisioned about the human potential to truly understand, invent and promote a common good for humankind.



### School Autonomy

Second wave reform efforts of the 1980s, such as those proposed by the 1983 Carnegie Foundation, call for principals to have more "authority" and for teachers to be more "empowered." The 1983 Carnegie report suggested that the role of the state is to establish general standards and provide support. The state should not be overly prescriptive in proposing that schools need to improve. Yet, less authoritative models for reform have been the exception.

Reform has been driven by outside regulations that have produced compliance behavior on the part of teachers and burdened them with alienating bureaucracy. Bureaucracy has produced statistical information and accountability, but certainly not better educational experiences for children nor better teachers.

In this section the researcher presents the views of teachers in regard to political and regulatory mandates that have been established for educators to follow. The teachers present their views concerning the appropriateness of mandates from "outside" their profession and paperwork involved in teaching in the 1980s. The emotional distress and sense of helplessness and rejection

speaks loudly in the following presentation of the voices of teachers.

Political Interference and  
State Regulations

The Carnegie study distinguished political interference from state regulations. In reporting the findings of this research, the researcher has not separated political interference and state regulations. The reason is that few of the teachers interviewed distinguished a difference in political interference and state regulations. The teachers viewed all bureaucratic action basically as political interference. This may be because the State Department and the State Board of Education, for this state, have basically proposed and endorsed reform within the same frame of reference as the state legislature. The teachers speak:

1. Teachers don't have any real power to really control things or make changes. We can't strike because we are state employees. But, when it comes to state raises or state insurance we aren't state employees. The teacher union has a long way to go, but I think it is the only way teachers will ever get anything. Teachers don't have anything and they are afraid and powerless.

[Q] Yes, I'm bothered by the role the legislature has taken. I don't think they value education. If they did they would pay us more.

I'm not really a union person. They are too liberal and they are for gun control, but that is all you have. In another state I don't remember having to write the legislators every two seconds trying to get them to do something.

We always had money, it wasn't a whim of government. I took a \$6,000.00 pay cut when we moved here.

2. Every time they want to raise taxes it is for education. But, then the money is not earmarked for education and we see very little of it. Then they ask again for more money for education...
3. When one of our students was a Legislative Page a state capitol employee told the Pages that teachers should have to have a bake sale to fund their salaries. Something is terrible wrong with the attitude of the people in the capitol.
4. Improvements in education come with proper funding and funding will not come unless there is a huge change in a lot of people's thinking.
5. I'm not a very political person but I get upset when they say in order for teachers to get a raise teachers will have to do more. They can't just vote us a raise because we work hard and deserve good salaries. They always have to have additional stipulations.

I agree with a teacher friend of mine. She says she wants a raise - but not if they are going to put something else on us. If it isn't broken or bad don't fix it. Some things weren't bad to start with but we are trying to do something different. Maybe the legislature should conduct research before they change things.

6. [How do you feel about political interference in education?] Angry, frustrated, I want them to come down and do my job so they can choke on my dust for a while.

Just let the legislators come down and tell a student they can't participate in school activities because they have a 61% in Algebra II instead of 63. Let them tell the kids they should not have tried Algebra II. They should have stayed in general math.

7. I resent political interference. I'm sure many teachers resent it. You want to go and teach and not have to worry about the politics of it all. We have to play the game, I guess. I've been through it before, it is just another passing thing.

Rural schools have especially been affected because of mandates concerning the funding formula. Big schools got more money we got less. I think they are pushing toward consolidation. I have mixed feelings about that but mostly I feel it would be good.

8. I think the mandates would be great if they also funded them. I don't have a problem with the legislature making decisions as long as they put money behind the decisions. A lot of the laws have a hidden agenda for consolidation - so why not just go ahead and do it.
9. I didn't keep up with political issues before I started teaching and I'm not much of a political type person. I'm not that interested. I don't think the legislature can do a lot because they don't see our needs...I don't think they care about real needs. So many of the things done are done to say I [an elected official] did this. I had this passed. They will say something is good for education but I'm not sure that is why they push a bill. [Can you think of an example?] No. [What about the proposed math-science high school?] I think it is a misuse of money. It sparkles but there is no substance. They could reduce class sizes and spend money on training the math and science teachers. Then all the students would benefit.
10. Yes, I think it is appropriate for the legislature to be involved in education. As for me, I just do what I am told. But I don't consider

the same things they do as important. They give convicts more money than teachers...We once laughed at another state, but they have passed us now. We have nothing to work with. Nothing.

I see a lot of government interference when they don't know anything about school. They like to interfere but then they don't provide the funds. [What is the appropriate role of the legislature?] Certainly they need to realize that without good education we will not attract business to our state...They need to have more input from educators on any education decision. I don't mind the mandates as much as I mind not providing the money for them. Staff development is good but we were to have been paid for it and they don't give us any time. Teachers are tired after school, they have work to do in their rooms and papers to grade.

11. To a certain extent the legislature needs to have a hand in the decisions about schools. They provide the funding. I get the feeling they are grasping at straws. I don't know if they aren't getting enough or proper feedback from school districts.
12. If educators are advising the politicians I guess the political mandates are fine. But I don't really know if educators are advising.
13. I think the legislature wants to have a say in what goes on in the schools because they give us our money. It is probably good that they set some state goals and guidelines, otherwise each school would be so different. It is not the legislature that does all this. The State Board of Education is still the one who decides how to implement much of the legislation. The people on the state board are not a majority of teachers. They are not necessarily personally aware of the needs of education.
14. If the state mandates it, we do it and on paper we do it well.

The teachers present a picture of their sense of powerlessness in the struggle about what constitutes a "good", "effective" or "appropriate" educational experience for children. They cry out concerning the meaninglessness of much that has been called reform. (See comment #9.) They resent the games played by the powerful regarding the financing of education. (See comments #1, 2, 5.) Everyone wants quality education yet no one wants to pay the money that teachers believe is necessary to address the issues they consider fundamental. Such issues seem to be pay, pay, pay, appreciation and working conditions.

Teachers support mandates imposed on students and generally oppose those imposed upon them. The problems of education are viewed by the teachers as being with students and the system, not within their profession. The teachers seem unwilling to accept part of the responsibility for problems that are within the school. Politicians need to "fix" students and the way to "fix" students is by demanding greater academic performance and demanding more course work.

The possibility of teachers themselves addressing the issues is not mentioned. Teachers are looking to business, political and community leaders to appreciate their worth. Teachers want to be "taken care of"; they

want to be rescued. They are looking outside their profession for "solutions" to the issues facing education and the greater society.

Though none of the teachers expressed a desire to be personally a part of the dialogue concerning educational reform, surely some would. But several teachers spoke of the appropriateness of others (those that control the money) in making educational decisions. The concern was generally with financing the mandates. (See comments #8, 10, 11, 12, 13.) Many teachers did not have the desire, energy, time, or knowledge base to look beyond their classroom door. (See comment #7.) One reason is because the reform agenda has often compounded the work for teachers. Work that is often very time consuming. More time consuming paperwork has been the result of reform efforts and is an issue addressed by the Carnegie study and the teachers in this research.

#### Paperwork

Much of the reform agenda has demanded the production of documentation of compliance with the reform mandates. Teachers have always had lots of papers to grade, reports to compile and tests to prepare. Now the

addition of documentation of student and teacher compliance has generated a plethora of mandated paper shuffling. A representative comment concerning paperwork of a high school teachers is: "Sometimes I wonder how we ever teach because of all the paperwork."

The high school teachers have been affected more by the mandating of additional paperwork. The no-pass/no-play mandate typically requires approximately one and one-half to two hours per week. No-pass/no-play is to be calculated cumulatively over a semester, while grade reporting is calculated on nine-week averages. This mandate is considered to be very time consuming for teachers, and confusing for students and perhaps missing the mark in intent. For example, there are students that are failing courses yet are eligible to participate in activities because the formula for calculating participation is accumulative. There are also students that have decided to "try" and are currently passing and yet are ineligible because of previous failing grades.

There is another mandate regarding attendance. This mandate requires about thirty minutes of paperwork each week. Teachers are responsible for making certain their records are congruent with official records. In addition, a parent conference is required when a student has six tardies. These conferences, of course, do not



require significant additional paperwork, but they are time consuming and of questionable value to the teachers.

One of the teachers in this study is a high school vocational agriculture teacher. His job is under the guidelines for vocational education and, to a lesser degree, common education. He spends on the average of one to two hours per day on paperwork. The guidelines for vocational education provide for fewer hours in class. Therefore, this teacher had more time to devote to paperwork. He has quarterly reports and other required paperwork. He views his paperwork as generally necessary and either valuable to him or to others within the vocational system. He comments: "Paperwork is just something you do. As long as you keep up it is okay. Some of it is a crock but most of it is useful."

All teachers are required by the school to file lesson plans with their principal each week.<sup>17</sup> The intent for the procedure is to provide a substitute teacher with a copy of the daily lesson plan if a teacher is absent. Yet, the teachers view this requirement as meaningless and some consider the requirement as mild harassment. The following comment well reflects the

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17. Lesson plans are also required for all students that are enrolled in the alternative school.

teachers in this study.

15. I turn in lesson plans to the office because it is something I need to do to meet the requirements they put on me. They don't help me. I have to be flexible and able to change daily. My lesson plans don't help a substitute either.

The high school teachers say that a substitute generally is not knowledgeable enough in course content to adequately teach a lesson as written in a lesson plan. All the teachers generally found that substitutes often disregarded lesson plans. Many of the teachers prepare detailed plans when they know they will be away from the classroom. They often come to school to deliver additional or alternative plans even when they are ill. When teachers return to class they usually review or re-teach any material taught by a substitute.

All the teachers in this study also spoke of paperwork in regard to their teaching assignments. A high school English teacher spends many hours outside class time marking papers and considers the task a part or "the nature of the discipline." She comments:

16. On a light week I spend about eight hours marking papers....When I have students write essays it takes about 30-40 minutes per essay. I have about 40 seniors and 32 juniors so you can see I spend lots of time marking their papers.

Just to save me some time I'm trying to do more editing in class. To do the job I would like to do I shouldn't have more than 12-15 students

in a composition class instead of about 40 students. The first year I taught I had a composition class of twelve college bound students. It seemed ideal. They wrote an essay each week. I could keep up with that.

The researcher probed about the class size she now has. The teacher saw no solution to the issue of class size without hiring an additional teacher. She thought this possibility was highly unlikely.

17. Basically we do not have enough students to justify hiring another English teacher nor do we have a room for her.

Another high school teacher saw a need for more work at home yet he usually does not get it all done.

18. If I did what I need to do I would spend about three hours each night at home working. But, I don't do it. [Why not?] Well I come to school early. I leave home at 6:45 a.m. and like last night I got home at 9:00 p.m. That is the reason right there. I have lots of extra-curricular activities and my family is left out as it is. I kind of ride the fence. I slip a little here and there. I never get it all done.

About two weeks of the summer is used by one high school teacher to duplicate teaching material and re-do her lesson plans. Then during the school year she devotes her time to grading papers.

The reform mandates have not had a significant effect on elementary teachers in regard to additional paperwork. But paperwork is a time consuming issue.

They have the required lesson plans, lunch money accounts, and endless fund raisers in addition to, as one teacher says: "...my usual two hours of grading each night."

This particular teacher arrives at school by 7:00 a.m. and leaves about 4:30 p.m. She tutors (for free) before and after school most days and uses her planning period to help students that are having "trouble." So she does almost all her planning and grading at home. This teacher works more with students outside scheduled class time than most of the teachers in this study, but all the elementary teachers that participated in this study spend many hours at home working on school related projects.

Only one elementary teacher had small children of her own. She said she spends less time working on school "stuff" now than before her children were born. She thinks she has become more efficient in the use of her time.

19. I now often grade papers standing up and cooking supper at the same time.

The elementary teachers recognize that they have lots of paperwork but at least one teacher thinks her school requires minimal paperwork in comparison to many schools.

20. I know I have lots of paperwork but ours is minimal in comparison to lots of schools. We have few reports and little committee work.

Yet another says:

21. ...we are always on committees that require a lot. There is always an extra something with lots of paperwork involved to satisfy the bureaucracy. We spend lots of hours on a lot of things. We send them in and never see any implementation of our suggestions.

The special educators interviewed consider PL 94-142 their Nation at Risk and consider paperwork a major part of their jobs.

22. I do sometimes feel like I'm more a paperworker than a teacher. I see a need for all the paperwork but some of it is for legal protection not to help the students.

[Does all the paperwork make you a better special education teacher?] No, not really, but it does map out what I do. I'm very organized so I don't mind paperwork...Paperwork is useful I guess. It keeps me organized. I have to be organized.

It seemed to the researcher that this teacher was ambivalent about her paperwork. She received satisfaction from completing paperwork, but she also sees paperwork as separate from teaching. Perhaps, she finds paperwork easier to do and because of the nature of her work, more identifiably successful. Teaching success that is identifiable and measurable is so intangible in general education and even more so in special education.

Perhaps special education teachers have learned to measure their own success in terms of how well they comply with the enormous amount of bureaucratic paperwork, rather than pedagogical encounters.

One elementary teacher has re-examined the role of worksheets and the production of work. She speaks:

23. I'm trying to cut down on the paperwork for me and for the students. I don't think learning is always about filling out a worksheet or workbook. We are doing more together. [She uses cooperative learning for many activities.] I've never felt I had to do everything in a workbook or teacher's guide. Now, they do have good ideas but I pick and choose and put things with them.

The researcher found this teacher's views on the production of work very different from those of junior/senior high teachers and somewhat different from other elementary teachers. The degrees of differences with elementary teachers seemed to reflect personal and professional confidence and views as to what is the purpose of school. This teacher was less task orientated and more holistic in her view of what constitutes an education.

The issue of paperwork and the additional mandated documentation of educational endeavors are educational reform issues to all the teachers. If the teachers saw value or agreed with the purpose of the paperwork they were more likely not to begrudge the allocation of their

resources to the task. If they did not see the value or agree with the purpose they were more likely to comply but to comply with passive aggressive behavior.

### Summary

The teachers in this study generally do not view themselves as autonomous individuals or professionals. Their fate is in the hands of the more powerful. Basically the teachers accept their chains and may have grown to love them. They certainly seemed to have a certain sense of satisfaction in bemoaning their lot in society. The teachers respond to hierarchical power much the same way as they describe their students. Both seem to respond to the "powers that be" with passive aggression. (See comment #14 for a summation of the teachers' behaviors and their attitudes. See comment #74, page 229 for a similar description of the behavior of students. Both teachers and students are alienated from the dictating of expectations that are external to their values.

### Salary and Job Security

The 1983 Carnegie Report and other reform proposals have recognized the need to raise salaries of teachers and to create opportunities for teachers to advance in

leadership opportunities within their profession. The 1988 Carnegie Study found impressive salary gains for teachers. Since the early 1980s salaries have increased nationally about 40 percent and several states have introduced "career ladder" programs. The intent of the career ladder is to provide leadership opportunities and financial advancement for teachers.

In Oklahoma, teacher salaries were increased in the early 1980s. But, little or no money has been appropriated by the state for teacher salaries or other expenses since the oil bust. Not only have salaries remained relatively flat, school districts have experienced budget cuts as much as 33% and developed "rift" policies. Generally the budget cuts have come from programs, but teachers that quit or retire often have not been replaced. A few school districts across the state have developed various career ladders as pilot programs for the state to evaluate.<sup>18</sup>

### Teacher Salaries

The teachers in this study generally spoke of their salaries as representative of the status they held in the

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<sup>18</sup> This information was provided by the local school superintendent



community and the state. The issue is money, but it is also more than money. The teachers want to be appreciated and held in high public regard. They see the lack of support for higher salaries as reflective of a lack of respect or regard for not only them as individuals but also for their profession. One teacher reported that she never told people what she does professionally. For some participants there is a sense that they are being exploited. The teachers speak:

1. It has been four years since we have had a raise.
2. Some people think we are baby sitters.
3. I'm making \$6,000.00 less in this state than where we lived before. The people here just don't seem to really care much about education.
4. I go to the coffee shop a lot. Those guys don't want to pay teachers more money. They think all there is to teaching is assigning chapters to read, questions to answer, and grade a few papers. They say teachers only work 180 days a year. They make enough. They don't see that there is a lot more to teaching.

I don't normally say this because I would get chewed out. I'm probably a little different than most teachers. I can live with the salary. It may be, because teaching is not my only income. I also have my farm income. At present the state economy is bad. We have trouble making ends meet in school and people don't want more taxes. Sure I would like an increase in my salary but I'm not pushing and I'm not mad.

5. I think a real salary increase would help me feel better about my job and myself. There are

days when you hear about our state dropping from 45th to 48th in salaries and you hear

about fantastic salaries other teachers receive. You do ask why did I become a teacher. Supposedly you choose teacher for noble reasons, but we still have to make a living...I believe higher salaries would raise student and community support and respect for teachers.

6. [Is salary that big an issue?] Yes, it is. When you don't get raises, we know we are not valued. When we know we have gone to school as long as medical doctors and lawyers yet high school dropouts make more money than we do - it is a big issue. It is very depressing. I've worked as a secretary and I never had to supply my own typewriter and paper. When I worked as a sales clerk I didn't have to provide my own sales pads. What I needed to do my job was provided.

It is ridiculous that we don't have what we need. It is also ridiculous that we don't have even one private bathroom in the whole school or hot water in which to wash our hands. But, it beats where I use to teach. I taught in another school for three years before we had doors on the bathroom stalls.

7. How many professions are there where you "top out" after fifteen years.
8. Our pay is an embarrassment. I have students who say my dad didn't finish high school and he makes more than you. Why should I go to college?
9. It is sad when teachers' children qualify for reduced lunches.
10. I recently saw an old high school friend. She was going back to school to become a teacher. She said where else can you start at \$17,000.00, have three months off and get your insurance paid. She has no idea what I do. I use to be a secretary and at 5:00 p.m. I went

home, kicked off my shoes and that was it. Now I work at night and many Saturdays and Sundays. Lots of people think teachers have it made.

I paid \$55.00 to a medical doctor this week that saw my child maybe five minutes. A repairman worked on the school's duplicating machine for three minutes and the bill was \$45.00. I had our VCR cleaned and it was \$47.50. Yet what I make is begrudged and I influence the lives of children!

11. I made more money as a welder in seven months than I do in twelve as a teacher. [This teacher has a twelve-month contract.] I looked at engineering at first because of the money. I could have handled the course work but I needed to do what my heart was into even if I knew I would never make a lot of money. [Q] We couldn't make it on my salary. My wife has to work.
12. [Q] No, my salary doesn't affect how I see myself. I think it would affect men more than women. Women are use to making less money. [The morale of many of the teachers I interviewed is affected by their salary. Why do you think their morale is affected and yours is not?] I don't know, unless it is because their total family income is not very high. My husband makes a good salary.
13. I just try not to think about my salary too much. I get upset when I think about how long I have taught and how little I make. I try to look at it from the point that I guess if I wanted to change bad enough I would leave or I would have already left teaching.

Many of the parents of our children don't have the skills for good paying jobs. In comparison I guess I have a pretty good salary. But as far as my education and experience, I feel I should make a lot more money. I have tried every year to give of myself as to what my salary is, but I can't do it. [Do you feel exploited?] Yes, I do. But I don't give as much time to my job that I once did.

14. I'm making it. We aren't going to starve. But we couldn't make it if my wife didn't work.
15. My salary is not an issue for me. I would love to have more money but I knew what the salary was when I took the job and I accepted it. If I get to where it bothers me I'll look for an alternative. I can see myself getting out of teaching if the right situation came along.

The researcher found a difference in the views of the teachers that perhaps reflects a gender difference. There were only four men that participated in this study, therefore the sample size is small. Yet there was a marked difference in the way the four male teachers viewed their jobs and their salaries. Comments # 4, 11, 15, and 16, and comment #2 under job security, are made by male teachers and their voices reflect more accepting positions of their role, status and salary as teachers. It seemed very clear that all four of the male teachers were in the classroom and in their school district by choice. Therefore, the salary was not the issue with them as it was with the female teachers.

All the teachers wanted to make more money but money was not as big an issue for the male teachers as it was for the female teachers. It seems that the women spoke of wanting to be appreciated and viewed their low salaries as professionals as an indication of a lack of appreciation. None of the male teachers mentioned a need

for appreciation and at least two of the male teachers spoke of feeling appreciated by the community.

The researcher interprets these differences as at least partially reflecting a sense of choices. All the male teachers believe they could, if they chose, make more money in other professions or they see their teaching as just part of their gainful employment. The female teachers taught, or at least taught in a school that pays near state base salaries, because of family considerations that includes geographic confinement. Even though the women in this study were obviously intellectually bright, well educated and hard workers, they generally appear to not have or not recognize real options for gainful employment that would equal their current salaries within their community. These women are economically victimized by their gender. The state takes advantage of this cultural reality. Again, the teachers consider themselves helpless.

Even though these women felt they worked long hours, they generally viewed their working schedule very conducive to their second jobs. They were also mothers and homemakers. The possibility that the female teachers did not see options does not mean they were less dedicated or professional, but simply more frustrated, angry and dejected.

The possibility of the development of a career ladder for teachers appealed to the participants. A career ladder was one way to provide opportunities for teachers to earn more money and be a leader within their school. In the next section teachers discuss this issue.

### Career Ladder

The teachers in this study were open to the discussion of a career ladder for teachers. They commented:

16. I can support the paying of teachers more when they accept additional responsibilities. I don't like paperwork. I would be happy to pay a teacher more that was willing to do more of the paperwork, or serve on the staff development committee and things like that.
17. I have a relative in another state and she loves the way they are paid. If teachers accept additional responsibilities they are paid more. It sounds good to me. I would just want to clearly understand what it took to advance.
18. I'm being paid \$10.00 to sell tickets to the baseball tournament today. I'll be there five hours. I've been sponsor of the senior class for two years. There is lots of extra work involved. I'm paid \$100.00, which is nothing. So when they talk about extra pay for extra work it depends on how much money they mean. A career ladder sounds good if they can figure out a way that personalities are not a factor.
19. I think teachers need their own board, just like lawyers...school administrators don't necessarily know who the good teachers are. Kids sure don't know. They think if you are easy you are good.

The teachers were concerned about the amount of compensation for extra responsibilities and clear articulation about criteria for promotional opportunities. They were hopeful that career ladders will provide opportunities for leadership and/or pay for extra work. Yet, there was a cynical view that if the career ladder was implemented there would be a strong possibility for misuse and exploitation.

#### Job Security

The issue of job security was not a concern for teachers that taught traditional grades or subjects. But, for teachers that taught in subject areas that were often viewed as non-essential or not basic, job security was not taken for granted. However, the teachers were basically secure in their belief that they had gainful employment unless the economy turned down again. The teachers speak:

20. I'm not tenured but I don't worry.
21. I don't worry about job security. I've already lost one job because of not enough funds. If I lose my job, I'll go find something. If I didn't find another teaching job it would be okay. I would probably make more money doing something else. The only reason I'm here is because I like it. (male teacher)
22. I don't worry about job security, but I know title teachers do worry. They don't get a

contract until our school has received the money for their programs.

23. [Have you worried that your job might be in jeopardy?] Yes, because of low enrollment numbers in my elective classes. If push comes to shove my job could be gone. I think the higher math teacher is worried that she might not have enough kids capable of passing her courses. There just aren't that many smart kids.

### Summary

The desire for salary increases, career ladders and the security of their jobs is viewed by the participants as basically out of their sphere for influence. The voices of the teachers present a view of a group of people waiting (primarily women) on others to make decisions about how they will live within their profession. They are again waiting to be rescued, appreciated, compensated and given security. It would seem that the teachers see no options for professional decisions relating to these matters. Decisions will be made by those in power and outside the classroom. The teachers may or may not agree with decisions made but they do not seem to believe that they will be at the decision table when these issues are discussed or when changes are made.

Most of the teachers did not express concern about macro-professional decisions. They were more concerned



about appreciation and receiving more than token salary increases. The teachers basically accept their reality and will continue to be in their classrooms. The interviews did not reveal a point of deprivation that would cause most of these teachers to, in good conscience, be unable to continue their jobs. Salary would be the closest possible factor that would cause some of these teachers to strike.

Perhaps Drucker (1969) provides insight into possible reasons why so many of these teachers expressed such intense feelings about their salaries. Drucker suggests that knowledge workers are not satisfied with just earning a living. Knowledge workers view themselves as professionals and need the opportunity to accomplish extraordinary work and earning extraordinary pay. High pay for knowledge workers is a prerequisite for motivation and job satisfaction. High pay is not an end but a means that needs to be coupled with other professional needs.

The teachers compared their professional training to that of medical doctors. The research wonders if a surgeon would demand reasonable economic compensation for their professional expertise and appropriate environment before performing surgery in less than life threatening circumstances. The researchers suggest

that most medical doctors, for economic and ethical reasons, would insist that their economic and professional needs be provided before practicing their profession. The researcher wonders what accounts for the differences between the demands for support by the two professions.

#### Teacher Renewal

"Teaching is a grueling, thankless job. Most people who criticize teachers could not long survive in many of the nation's schools....if we want better schools, this nation must find ways to identify great teachers and give them the recognition and the opportunities for renewal they deserve" (Carnegie, 1988, p.7).

The teachers in this study were asked about the renewal methodologies that were broached in the 1988 Carnegie study. The renewal areas were: inservice education, teacher awards, monetary support of innovative ideas, summer fellowships and teacher travel funds. The teachers primarily focused their responses toward inservice education and teacher awards. The support of innovative ideas, fellowships and teacher travel require adequate funding and are not even remotely considered possibilities by these teachers. Yet, inservice education is an issue relevant to the participating teachers

and an issue to which the teachers responded with a wide range of views.

### In-service Education

The state has mandated that teachers participate in inservice education. The mandate requires teachers to earn seventy-five staff development points over a five-year period. College course work and inservice workshops are the primary ways teachers earn points. The views of the teachers seem to range from suppressed hostility, to compliance and to degrees of appreciation for the opportunities to learn. The prevalent attitude seems to be compliance behavior with a hope that the information gleaned can be useful.

The researcher presents the voices in a progressive order that begins with resentment, moves to compliance and finishes with teachers identifying an attitude that affords many teachers the ability to look for good in less than perfect conditions. The learning opportunities that were spoken of most favorably were most often those sponsored by agencies larger than the local district and The teachers speak:

1. I stayed late yesterday working on staff development programs for next year. I don't get any extra pay. It is just extra work and an extra burden.

2. We are supposed to get 75 points in five years. I had well over 500. Good teachers were already doing what they needed to do to keep up. Now it is more paperwork. Teachers that are actively learning get around the requirement by going to things that aren't worthwhile.
3. We were to have been paid.
4. I haven't participated. I've been working on my master's degree and principal's certification. The courses count toward my points. I haven't seen much. I would be interested in either.
5. Staff development is a big farce. I teach math to over one hundred students. I spend hours at night grading papers. I don't want to go listen to "Eat Your Lawn". I complied with staff development, but I'm never going to eat my dandelions. Most teachers have way more points than they need.
6. I don't like change much. I have in my own mind what I want to teach the kids. I've been doing this for twenty years and it is probably hard for me to change. I don't agree with lots of the new things they have come out with in education. [Like what?] Staff development. I don't gain much from the meetings. [How could your time be used more wisely?] I don't know. I just don't like going to all those meetings and I don't want to go back to college either. Basically I want to teach my subject and not worry about meetings, new ideas, and stuff like staff development and curriculum development that come from the state department. They can put all kinds of stuff on paper. It looks good. In reality we are here and we use what we have.
7. They want you to do a lot for nothing.
8. We had one mandatory meeting on insurance, and we don't even get their insurance. [Do you get anything from the inservice workshops?] Yes, I get points.

9. As far as helping me be a better teacher, I don't know.
10. Some of them are helpful. Some are necessary, because of all the changes that affect special education.
11. Some or most are good. My attitude is that usually there is always something I can learn, even if it is pretty bad.
12. I usually get one or two good ideas from every workshop.
13. It is difficult to find a workshop I haven't already attended. I complained about the inservice this year. I didn't think we had enough offered.

For me it has been my total educational opportunity since I got out of college. I want a master's degree, but what I want to study is not offered regionally. I would have to travel an extensive distance and stay away from my family during the summer. I'm not willing to do this at this time in my life. Maybe later when my children are older. I read professional books and spend my time going to workshops. I have learned a lot. I get it on my own. I don't have the paper credentials but I know my stuff. It bothers me we are not to ask to go to conferences this year.

14. One I went to was real helpful. The man told us it was okay to not level everything. It was okay to teach to the middle children and build for the ones who were above and try to pull those below into getting something out of it. He said all that stuff about individualizing was developed in small classes that had lots of helpers. You can't do that if you have 30 kids in a classroom and no help.

It was a real relief. All our college classes emphasized individualizing. Everyone should be on their own level. There should be learning centers everywhere with students going to different centers while the teacher is doing something with other students. We tried it,

and tried it and tried it. It was maddening. [So the workshop took a lot of guilt off your heads.] We looked at each other and said "Wow, somebody else feels like we do!" So I liked that man. I liked his workshop.

15. One of my favorite places to go for staff development is only fifty miles away. They have psychologists that you watch work with kids. I think teachers are like kids. They need hands on experience rather than lectures. A teacher ought to keep up with teaching but some of the workshops are too shallow. Some are very good and some just take up your time.

The teachers here don't like to have the meetings at the beginning of school. They think there is already too much pressure. But, I would like them as school starts and I would like for them to be something I can use during the year.

I don't resent staff development meetings when they are good, but I do when the presenter isn't prepared or the content has nothing to do with what I need to know or use.

There was little consensus on the values of inservice education. But, the teachers were in agreement that they were to have been financially compensated for inservice education. There was no indication that inservice education affected educational values or caused teachers to make significant changes in their classrooms and certainly not the ethos of the entire school. Inservice education provided "bags of tricks," not personal/professional growth opportunities.

### Teacher Awards

Teacher recognition was considered to be more prevalent than in previous eras of education. Teachers may be receiving recognition more often but they seem to be basically skeptical about the reasons behind the publicity about good teachers. They also consider the recognition as "more paperwork." It seemed that the teacher cannot even receive recognition without a "price to pay" in additional paperwork.

The researcher also heard voices pondering why some teachers are recognized and others are not. They were all working hard. What constitutes teaching worthy of recognition? It seemed that in the process of recognition there was a unspoken backlash that left some teachers wondering why they were not selected. Teachers speak:

16. I think teachers are being recognized more for their work.
17. I think of all the teachers I have worked with over the years that were never recognized for their work. It is sad. I would like to go back and recognize some now.
18. We have trouble getting a teacher to accept the Teacher of the Year Award at our school. It is looked upon as just more paperwork. I wouldn't want to fill out all that stuff. I don't think a teacher should have to spend weeks getting paperwork done to receive recognition.
19. I've served on the teacher of the year committee. You have to beg teachers to take the

nomination. Too many strings attached - too much paperwork.

20. If a teacher is doing their job they are worthy of recognition. Why do we single out one teacher? We are all teachers of the year. [When you feel you are a teacher of the year, what gives you that feeling?] Feedback from parents, which we are getting less and less of.
21. Teacher awards are often political and token. One of my college professors said research indicates teachers desire recognition more than money.
22. A lot of it is just public relations. It is good for the school and good for the community to read about good teachers.
23. Teachers don't get enough recognition. Your principal may say at the end of the year, you have done a good job. I don't give "As" but you get a "B".

One of the teachers interviewed had been a finalist in the state teacher of the year program. She felt the paperwork was very demanding but she had learned a lot about herself. She also hoped some doors would open for her to have more input into the deliberation of educational issues but so far she had not received any invitations to speak or participate in any group deliberations. She did not expect this opportunity within her own school. Very few of her colleagues including administrators and school board members ever extended to her words of congratulations. She comments:

24. I'm pleased I had the opportunity to participate. I learned a lot about myself. I had to think about things I had not thought about in a



long time. It was an in-depth and a very soul searching experience....I wish I could better understand why so few educators in my school ever even acknowledged that I had received state level recognition for my teaching.

The researcher equates the recognition and lack of recognition of "good teachers" to those practices conducted in school where students are singled out as "excellent" with nebulous terms as "best student". It would seem that teachers that question the practice within their profession would surely see a connection to such practices within the student population. Yet, no one spoke of seeing similarities of unspoken lessons learned by teachers and by students when recognition is stated in broad general terms.

It also seems evident that the teachers discounted recognition for political reasons but would have been so pleased to have a few private words of encouragement and recognition by administrators, peers, parents and students.

#### Money to Support Innovative Ideas

In an economically depressed time and in an area of the nation that has not traditionally held formal education in high regard and thus failed to appropriate adequate resources for support, these teachers amazingly still have hope. Yet, they are also stifled in their

dreams, expectations and visions. The lack of public support in tax dollars has definitely limited the probability for these teachers to think in terms of innovation. But, the researcher surmises that the absence of community and administrative appreciation has extracted an equally vital nurturing of innovation. The teachers speak with voices of hope but little vision:

25. There is no money, but I can still hope it will get better. I want to do the best I can with what I have. But, surely it will get better.
  26. [Does the lack of money keep you from being innovative?] No, you just have to think of things that don't cost money. I'm going to use 60's music for modern poetry. We will analyze music for literary devices and underlying meaning....I do wish we had the money for computers so we could write and edit on the word processor.
  27. With the money situation like it is, I hate to turn in requests. I know we don't have the money.
  28. There is no money. It is stifling. I would do more. If I had even \$100.00 a year I could do more. It is ridiculous to try to teach with so little.
  29. If we had more money I would use films and videos more. We cut our membership to a film library.
- Even when money is tight, it doesn't hurt to try. We got some matching funds this year for some power tools.
30. [Do you feel you are encouraged to come up with innovative ideas?] No. [Do you anyway?] Some...I wish we could take field trips.

31. Why bother to be creative? There is no money available to put your ideas into action. We don't have anything to do with seeking money for innovative ideas. [If you wanted to seek grant money, could you?] I don't know.
32. ...any question you ask I can pretty well tell you no, because we don't have the money.

It would seem that if institutions have a hierarchy of needs, money is perhaps the fundamental necessity for a collective potential "institutional actualization." Money will not cause a paradigm shift in education. But, without basic needs of adequate funding most teachers are mired in the limitations imposed by the financial realities or perception of financial deprivation.

#### Summer Fellowships and Teacher Travel Funds

There has never been money budgeted for any summer fellowships. The possibilities of the teachers receiving money to attend summer institutes seemed far removed from more basic and feasible possibilities. The teachers did not respond any further than to acknowledge the absence of money for the consideration of summer fellowships.

The above mentioned basics in a hierarchy of needs for professional growth are absent. These teachers are struggling to have access to more basic and less costly

opportunities. The researcher was asking about opportunities for self actualization when the participants were struggling with personal recognition or even basic safety needs. The conceptual leap was not appropriate and perhaps even insulting to these teachers. The researcher did not ask all participants about summer fellowships.

The teachers interpreted the idea of teacher travel funds in terms of money budgeted for the attendance of state conferences. In past, more prosperous academic years, some teachers have had the opportunity to attend state conferences pertaining to their teaching area. The school has usually paid the registration fees and substitute teacher cost. The teachers have paid for their personal expenses of food, travel, and if needed lodging.

Several teachers expressed an interest and desire to have the opportunity to attend conferences but were unable or unwilling to bear the cost. Even teachers willing to pay the cost involved, felt they were discouraged from requesting the opportunity to attend. Teachers who generally attended (no more than one or two conferences per year) expressed disappointment and frustration that this opportunity for professional growth was not currently an option.

### Summary

"If hope were not, heart would break" (Unknown, Gesta Romanorum, Tale 51). In this section the researcher has presented the views of participating teachers in regard to teacher renewal. The voices of teachers expressed their views on the educational reform issues of inservice education, teacher awards, money for innovative ideas and teacher travel. The teachers seem to be resiliently hopeful but bound by tradition, absence of resources, appreciation and support. Many of the "ideas" of reformers regarding how to "fix" teachers are political, shallow, insufficient and inappropriate. Teachers have not been involved. Teachers are focused on the survival stage of professional-actualization.

### Teacher Involvement

The early 1983 Carnegie teacher research indicated that teachers felt powerless. They were uninvolved in shaping the curriculum, school schedules, goals or rules. The Carnegie Foundation has encouraged teacher involvement in the decision-making process and has considered teacher empowerment essential to school reform.

A school, to flourish, must have an environment in which people work together. In such a setting, teachers stay in touch with current practices,

and administrators involve teachers in school leadership. In the end, it is students who benefit when teachers are made full partners in the process (Carnegie, 1988, p.8).

The researcher broached teacher involvement in setting school goals, shaping the curriculum and selecting textbooks with the research participants. The voices of the participants will be presented in this section regarding these issues.

#### Setting School Goals

The teachers in this study spoke of the lack of clarity of the goals for their school and is reported in an earlier section of this study. Again the teachers speak of lack of clarity and of their lack of involvement in setting goals for their school. Goals are developed by the school administration and are not articulated down through the network to the teachers.<sup>19</sup> It is equally clear that the teachers have not developed and articulated goals up through the network to the school administrators.

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19. The bureaucratic levels of this small rural school is minimal when compared with the layers of bureaucracy of larger systems. Yet communication problems are just as real in this small school setting as one might expect in a large district.

The school is adrift without direction from administration or teachers. There is little wonder that schooling has been defined by outside interest groups that have directed most recent reform efforts. Schooling is an alienating experience for everyone involved.

Teachers speak words of alienation:

1. We set lots of goals to no avail.
2. I don't think there is any input from classroom teachers as far as goals are concerned. Now, in the past, we have done committee work and put stuff down on paper. But, as far as this work showing up on a document, I haven't seen anything.
3. [Do you think teachers in your school have had the opportunity to set goals for your school?] What type of goals? We don't have the social part at our school as much as at some schools...
4. [What is the role of the teacher in setting school goals?] I don't know how to respond to that...But any question you ask I can pretty well tell you no, because we don't have the money.
5. [Who sets goals?] I have been taught in my administration course work that the administrator should be the key person in charge of goal setting, but everyone should be involved.
6. We get with the special education director at the beginning of the year and talk about what we will do.
7. [Do you ever sit down with other teachers and talk about goals for the school?] No, we don't have time.
8. [How do you evaluate a program in your school?] We look at achievement tests. [Who makes the decisions?] The administration and counselor.

9. I guess sometimes we will just decide after the achievement test that we are going to improve on reading, math or whatever.
10. [Do you think the administration can identify the goals for your school?] I doubt it.
11. [Do you as a teacher ever serve on committees that set school goals?] No, but a couple of years ago the other two English teachers and I had to sit and write, more or less, our curriculum and where we wanted to go.
12. When we set goals we work on curriculum.

### Selecting Textbooks

The selection of textbooks is considered to be teacher directed. There are no administrators directly involved. The teachers do select their own text, but there is usually an effort to use the same series within each of the three schools or throughout the school.

Teachers speak:

13. The administration gives us complete reign over the selection of our textbooks and instructional materials.
14. We went to several workshops before we selected our math text. The junior high teacher agreed to take what I liked. We both wanted continuity. I don't know what the elementary teachers use.
15. I think we should select a text school wide so that the subject blends.
16. [I know you are adopting science books this year. Are you pleased with the choices?] I



personally haven't been to any of the workshops. We have a committee and another teacher is the elementary representative. [Will you get to examine the books and tell your representative which one you like?] Well, it might make a difference. Last year we had English text to adopt. We all got to tell which one we preferred, but the final decision was with the committee. We are trying to stay with one company all the way through. [What if you get a poorly written book for a particular grade?] We have and that is why we don't currently have the same series throughout the grades. We are trying again to adopt the same series so there will be continuity.

17. I don't like the new English books. I liked our old ones but somewhere up the line they changed them. Some of the upper grades decided we had to take the whole series. I don't like that. I think my cohort and I should be able to choose a book that we think is best for our grade.

Most of the teachers valued continuity provided by selecting one publisher for textbooks within a content area. A few elementary teachers seemed to value the content of the specific text for a specific grade level. Those that prefer text company continuity usually had more support.

When there are differences of opinion as to which company to select, teachers in higher grade levels seem to prevail in making the choice. It seems as though knowledge is seen as hierarchal and lineal. Primary teachers sacrifice their choices to secondary teachers with little thought of the consequences of these sacrifices. Choices are made for the value of continuity.

Again and again teachers are alienated. Most teachers are even alienated from the sacred teacher domain of textbook selection.

### Shaping the Curriculum

Curriculum seems to be seen exclusively as courses of study. And, curriculum development as a meaningless compliance task. Again teachers are uninvolved. Curriculum development is meaningless, absent, or dictated by Learner Outcomes and textbooks. Little or no thought seems to be given to curriculum development as a process of deliberating the issues involved in the experiences of children in the school setting. Curriculum development is an alienating experience. The teachers speak again words of alienation:

18. Seven or eight years ago each department worked on curriculum. We had five or six people on each committee. There were representatives from the elementary school on the committees. It was good to find out what others were doing in my content area...
19. If I get out voted, and men usually do, I guess I can live with it...I would hate for them to tell me what kind of test to give or narrow me down to teaching certain chapters in a certain way. Most of the stuff I put down I can't do. I don't have the equipment. I can put it down on paper and it looks good. In reality we are here and we use what we have.

20. [What is your role in shaping the curriculum of this school?] I don't mess with it. They tell you pretty much what they want you to teach.
21. [What shapes the curriculum?] For me it is the importance of getting the basics. Mostly reading - if they can't read, they can't do anything.
22. We mostly go by the curriculum guidelines of the state's Learner Outcomes.

Meaningful curriculum development is missing from this school. Teachers may or may not go through the motions, but there is no purposeful deliberation and follow through concerning school curriculum. One teacher shared what she considered to be a successful experience in curriculum development while teaching in another school.

23. The other teacher and I decided that if we were going to have to work on it - it was going to be something we would use. We studied on it for a year, before we met with the other teachers on our committee. As a result, they departmentalized elementary science. It is still in effect. [It was worth the work?] Yes, we were committed to it, we saw a need for it and we both loved science...It was more than paperwork.

It would seem this teacher and her colleague experienced a meaningful curriculum development experience. There seem to be several differences. The first, and perhaps most valuable, is that they saw a need for some changes in the science curriculum. The two teachers then

devoted a year to the study of possible alternatives to the teaching of a content area that they "loved."

This teacher speaks of curriculum development as a process and a labor of love. Perhaps one reason curriculum development is viewed by other teachers as a task to complete and set on the shelf is because they do not see a need; do not devote adequate time; and perhaps do not have a genuine love for their subject, grade or education in general.

The teacher in comment #24 also had a reasonable degree of certainty that her work would be implemented in classrooms. She did not view the work as fruitless and useless paperwork. She was connected not alienated to the endeavor.

### Summary

There is a functionalist view of education imposed on these teachers but also accepted by them as their reality of education. This reality presents education as a hierarchal organization that prevents the participation of teachers and other interested persons from deliberating educational issues, such as goals, curriculum and textbook selection through reflection and meaningful dialogue. The words spoken by the teachers of this study

concerning their involvement speak loudly to the status teachers experience and expect.

They often accept the role of being "given complete reign over textbooks and instructional material" (see comment #13) as appropriate and a realistic expectation of their participatory role in education deliberation. Teachers go through meaningless compliance tasks in regard to goal setting and curriculum review. They may, if the opportunity arises, complain to one another, but not loudly and not beyond their circle of cohorts.

There appears to be little reflection among these teachers in regard to school goals and curriculum development. This lack of reflection seems to be consistent with Apple's (1975) observations. Lack of reflection among teachers seems to result from "habits of thought." Habits that have become so commonsensical that teachers have ceased to question. The absence of questions result in boundaries for imaginations and a limited framework for addressing the many problematic practice and activities in our schools. "The limits of a man's [people's] habits of thought are limits also to what he [they] can be expected to try to do" (Hampshire, 1959; Apple, 1975, p. 12). Such lack of reflection is also profoundly influenced by working conditions.

### Working Conditions

The working conditions of teachers in general were found by the 1988 Carnegie study to have failed to make improvements deemed appropriate and necessary to attract and hold outstanding teachers. This qualitative, descriptive study concurs with the 1988 Carnegie study. The researcher explored the same issues addressed in the Carnegie questionnaire. The areas explored in the interviews were: Scheduling flexibility, assigned classroom, lounge space, freedom from non-teaching duties, class size, allocation of time to meet with other teachers, daily preparation time, teaching load, and teacher study space. Research findings in each of these areas follow:

#### Scheduling Flexibility

The schedule for the elementary school was determined to a great extent by the need to work with and around constraints involving activities or classes outside the regular classrooms. As with textbook selection, considerations involving the high school again have priority. There was a need to coordinate physical education, music, and lunch throughout the school system. Computer, remedial math and reading and other special programs also have to be scheduled. (Special programs

include remedial math, remedial reading, learning disabilities, educative mentally handicapped, gifted education and speech).

The administrators work out schedules for all the teachers in regard to when classes will come and go to programs outside the regular classrooms. The classroom teachers can make their own schedules once the schedules for music, physical education, lunch and the pull-out programs are determined. Elementary teachers explain:

1. In elementary we are limited on any scheduling. High school gets first choice, then junior high and we then have the leftovers on music and physical education times. This year, our music and physical education are during our lunch hour. The kids come straight from the lunchroom and we take them to physical education or music. Then we eat while they are out of the room. So our preparation time is also our lunch time. The third and fourth grades do not have music and physical education back to back. Their forty-five minute lunch/planning period is split into two twenty-minute periods.
2. I have to have my classroom reading when the remedial readers are out. Basic skills math is the same. Most all of my planning is around the coming and going of students.
3. I'll find myself saying let's do so and so and then I realize we can't. I have some students out for something. I have to have my reading reinforcement activities while remedial reading students are in remedial reading. These students need the reinforcement activities as much or more than the students that stay in the room.

A special programs teacher speaks:

4. Scheduling is a big problem. I wish I could have all my reading students at one time. Then I could plan reading activities or units on different levels. We end up using lots of worksheets, workbooks and textbooks. I have so many things going on at once the students pretty well have to work independently.<sup>20</sup>

The junior/senior high school schedules are also made by the building principals. The teachers have no input into scheduling and they see no flexibility in how it might be changed.

5. Scheduling is not a problem. The principal takes care of it.
6. For the eighth grade, there is only one way the schedule will work.
7. Even if I wanted to do something different, if it doesn't fit the schedule, I couldn't do it. The schedule rules.
8. The principal makes the schedule. He hands it to me and I teach accordingly.
9. In a small school there are just so many teachers. There are just so many things you can take in a particular period. If a required course is offered and offered only one period, you then can't take an elective.
10. The principal has a pre-enrollment to see what students want to take. Then he works out a schedule as best he can.

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20. How successful can a special education program expect to be when students are expected to work independently? Many of the students are placed in special programs, because they are unable to work independently.



11. Scheduling is tough. My elective is offered at the same time as boy's basketball. So it is hard to get your students.
12. We don't change the schedule mainly because it works the way it is. There are lots of things we could do - like nine-week mini-courses. I think when you are around a situation where it has always been done a certain way, it rubs off. You are less likely to do something new yourself. To do something new or different requires a lot of work. You don't get appreciated for extra work.

Comment #12 is the only voice heard that even hinted that there could be alternatives to sequential daily forty-five minute classes. All teachers agreed with the following comment:

13. We have no input in the scheduling. It is strictly administrative.

The "strictly administrative" scheduling has profound impact on the totality of the education experience. What would happen if priorities were given to educational considerations and then flexible, dynamic schedules were developed?

### Classrooms

All the teachers have their own classrooms. Several expressed special appreciation for a space of their own. Several junior/senior high and special programs teachers had worked in schools where they did not have their own classroom. These teachers had experienced the

problems associated with not having their own classroom space.

14. All teachers need a classroom. I've taught out of the trunk of my car. It is really hard. I still appreciate having a room.
15. Yes, we all have our own classroom, and I think everyone has access to their room during their planning period.
16. I think all teachers need a place to call their own. I'm thankful I have my own room. Teachers are so use to doing without that they don't realize how it could be.

It seems that in deprivation teachers learn to appreciate what others might take for granted.

#### Lounge Space for Teachers

There are two lounge areas in the school. One in the elementary building and one in the high school and junior high building. There is also a quasi-lounge area in the preschool-special programs building. The junior/senior high lounge is the only one used by the teachers. They are very pleased to have a nice lounge area and they believe it has helped their morale. The lounge is used less now that lunch is only twenty minutes, but some teachers go to the lounge during their planning period. A high school teacher speaks:

17. Basically our lounge is nice. We paid for everything in it ourselves. We bought the icebox, microwave, furniture, everything. We each put in about \$25.00. We use to have a

tiny room off the office so this is great...Now if we could just get our own bathroom!

The elementary lounge is not used by the teachers. They have no time to go in it. (They eat lunch in their rooms and work.) The bus drivers have taken over the lounge. An elementary teacher explained:

18. We have a lounge, but it isn't used. We don't have time to go in there. The janitor and the bus drivers use it. The only time we go in is to get a soft drink from the machine. We eat lunch in our rooms after we take our class to physical education.
19. None of the elementary teachers smoke but the bus drivers do. I can hardly stand to go in there to get a Coke. [But the high school has a nice lounge.] Yes, we know. It is a bit of a problem.
20. If we worked for a corporation, do you think they would expect us to pay for our lounge equipment? Not hardly!

The "lounge" area in the special programs building is really a tiny storage area. The teachers in this building also bought a microwave oven for their use. But few of the teachers use it because of staggered lunch times and the fact that it is inside a classroom. These teachers also eat in their rooms or the school cafeteria.

#### Freedom from Non-Teaching Duties

High school teachers have student supervision duty approximately every third day. They have ten minutes of duty before school. All of these teachers were pleased

that student supervision duties were light. The light duty schedule is a result of tight scheduling. With a twenty minute lunch "there is little time for students to roam."

The women teachers have hall duty and the men teachers are assigned duty on the parking lot. The researcher asked the men teachers if this was equitable. It was not an issue for any of them. The women teachers recognized the differential treatment but did not consider the difference their issue to raise. Men teachers commented:

21. Never even thought about it. I like being outside except when it is real cold. I guess if I wanted equal right, I could demand equal access to hall duty.
22. It doesn't bother me, I'm never back from my bus route in time to take my duty anyway.

A woman teacher comments:

23. The men have the outside duty and women inside. The men haven't fought for equality.

Elementary teachers have playground and bus duty one day a week and every fourth Friday. The principal told the teachers to work out their duties themselves. Student supervision was not a big problem for elementary teachers either, but they are aware that they have more duty than high school teachers. The need for students to have closer supervision was considered part of their job as elementary teachers.

All teachers also work ball games or get someone to take their place. Teachers earn \$10.00 per game. High school teachers sponsor various school activities. Some teachers have more responsibilities than others, and receive some financial compensation. But, all the teachers considered the extra money token payment for the work involved. The duties are generally aligned with class sponsorships. They may work the school carnival, prom activities or graduation activities. Other duties are basketball and baseball games (not many), yearbook, newspaper, cheerleaders, 4-H, FFA, interscholastic meets, etc.

24. If you stop to think about it, we do have lots of extra duties. But they mostly just come with the job of teaching high school. At least we do get paid for some of it, even if it isn't much. I have taught where we were not paid anything extra and still had the same responsibilities.

#### Typical Class Size

High school classes vary greatly in size. The size of classes depends in large part to the schedule or the type of class. Unless there is a scheduling problem, the high school teachers do not consider their classes too large. Some are too small because of scheduling. Class sizes vary from 2 to 28 students. Upper division classes

are usually small. General required classes are usually large. Comments:

25. Scheduling hurts. My Algebra II class is last hour, seniors can go home last hour. So many did not take my class that should have.
26. I have two students in vocational English. Since we offer CVET we have to also offer CVET English. My largest class is American history with twenty-seven.

Elementary classes are generally considered large. Class size is a big issue with these teachers. There are two teachers per grade level. One class will be held to a state mandated maximum of mid-twenties. The other class then has all the other students for that grade. For example, one second grade teacher has her maximum set by the state. The other second grade teacher has thirty students and had thirty-four earlier in the year. The larger class has the help of an aide.

27. An aide helps, but I still can't teach the way I want to with that many children. I have wall to wall kids. I don't have any more room for even the desk. I had to take out the reading table to make room for all the desks.
28. I wasn't prepared in college to deal with the class sizes I work with. Everything was from an ideal number of students. I do the best I can.
29. There is no such thing as typical class size for the elementary. It depends on how effective birth control was that year.

An elementary teacher speaks about a previous very large class of thirty-three. Her current class has twenty-three.

30. There were days I said to myself I can't handle this. I was not just thinking about myself. I was scared that I could not teach them. I just didn't have time for them all.

### Time to Meet with Other Teachers

One of the clearest pictures of the teachers in this school is one of basically women supervised by men working in isolation from other adults. This is most true about the elementary teachers. The researcher asked about isolation. Listen as they speak of their isolation.

31. [Don't you see other teacher?] There is no time. [Do you feel isolated?] Pretty much. [Would it help to have the opportunity to sit down and visit?] Yes, you need a shoulder to cry on sometimes. Once and a while the other grade level teacher and I exchange a few words at the water fountain. But, we never sit and talk. [Not even at lunch.] Goodness no...

I tutor [for free] at 7:30 each morning and I tutor after school several afternoons a week. I seldom even see other teachers. I am with children or I'm working alone in my room.

32. I really don't know what other teachers do. I don't know what they teach or how they teach.
33. We (teachers in the same grade) use to visit some after school. But my home schedule has changed in the last few years. I now come real early in the morning and leave earlier. She

stays late to work. We sat down today after achievement testing and visited for the first time all year.

34. About the only time I see anybody is if we happen to sign in or out at the same time.

The junior high and high school teachers also describe isolation, but some of these teachers spoke more of isolation in terms of isolation from others that taught in their subject areas.

35. Yes, I'm isolated. I have no way of knowing what other math teachers teach in other schools. Every once in a while you need a pat on the back from other math teachers to let you know you are teaching the right stuff or covering enough material, of that you are just doing okay...

I would like to have the time for us to put our heads together. You don't know if you do what they do. [Do you talk to the other math teacher (junior high) in your school?] We are best friends. We spend a lot of time together. We picked out our books together and we discuss what we would like. But basically when we are together we spend very little time talking about school. We need to forget about school problems.

36. I have a brother that teaches in my subject area. We visit a good bit about school stuff. It helps to know if he has the same problems I have. I can't say I feel isolated. Basically there is only one teacher for each content area for our school. It is just the way it is.
37. I visit with some of the teachers at [a regional] college about my program.
38. [When do you have the opportunity to meet with other teachers?] If I eat lunch, I can visit some. I often work through lunch so I won't have so much to do after school or at home.



39. There is no time to meet with other teachers. I usually work in my room after school.
40. I feel isolated from some of the ladies in junior high. Some teachers I saw at the beginning of school and I won't see again until after the students are gone in May.
41. The only time I see another adult is during the twenty minute lunch period or if we speak in the hallway between class. [Do several of you have the same planning period?] I don't know.

#### Daily Preparation Time

All the teachers have scheduled daily preparation time. The high school teachers have 45 minutes each day. The elementary teachers have one hour on paper but in practice it is nearer forty minutes. The elementary teachers use part of their planning period to eat their lunches. By the time the students are through the cafeteria line the first students served are finishing their lunch and are returning to their classrooms. The teachers take their tray or their sack lunch back to the classroom. A teacher explains:

42. I have children back in my room within five minutes. Many don't really eat their lunch. We have asked that the children be required to just sit there fifteen minutes whether they are eating or not. That would encourage them to eat more of their lunch and give us a minute to catch our breath. So far nothing has been changed. Lunch is twenty minutes, so by the time they all go to the restroom and get water, it is time for their physical education. So I eat after I've walked them to P.E.

43. We lose part of our planning time coming and going. Sometimes I have to wait for the P.E. teacher. She sometimes gets tied up with other responsibilities. So my planning period is closer to forty minutes than sixty.
44. The upper elementary grades do not have P.E. and music back to back. So I have twenty minutes for P.E., then later twenty minutes during music. I can't get as much done in twenty minute periods as I would if it was a continuous forty minute period of time.

#### Daily Teaching Load

The elementary teaching load has not changed. Their load is very traditional. The reform movement has resulted in changes in the high school. The junior/senior high teachers now teach an extra class.

Two years ago the schedule had six fifty-five minute classes. Teachers taught five fifty-five minute classes and had a fifty-five minute planning period. The reform movement has called for schools to require and/or to offer students more courses. The school in this study responded by adding an additional class period by shortening the existing class periods. The school adjusted the time periods to now offer students seven classes instead of six. The teachers had varying opinions as to whether they liked shorter classes but they were in total agreement that the change created more work for them without any additional compensation. The teachers speak:

45. We now have less preparation time and one more preparation. Of course there was no more money for the extra work.

Timar and Kirp (1987) identify additional class periods and similar practices as "rough proxies for excellence." See pages 48-51 of this study.

### Study Space for Teachers

Since the teachers have their own classrooms, they considered their classroom their study space. There are a few professional magazines in the high school lounge. There may be a few professional teaching resources in the high school library.

### Summary

The working conditions of the teachers in this study are not conducive to promoting reflection, dialogue, growth, preparation or possibilities. Only the exceptional can possibly rise above these kinds of conditions to become the kinds of individuals, and in turn, the kinds of teachers we say we desire for our children. These teachers are trying to survive. The researcher examines the data and is critical of how little the teachers reflect on why schools are as they are. Yet, the researcher is amazed that the school functions as well as it does and that teachers can be even competent

technicians under such stressful conditions. How can teachers be expected to become skilled craftpersons, much less artistic pedagogist?<sup>21</sup>

### Community and Parental Involvement and Support

In High School: A Report on Secondary Education in America (1983), the Carnegie Foundation proposed that the way our nation regards our schools has a powerful impact on the prospects for "success." The regard of the citizens "helps determine the morale of the people who work there; it helps students calibrate their expectations; it contributes to the climate of reform" (Carnegie, 1988, p.9). As does the Carnegie study, this study also explored the views of teachers in regard to community support.

The researcher explored the views of the participating teachers with emphasis on the following areas: Involvement of local businesses with the local school; parental involvement and support for teachers; and community respect for teachers. The views of the teachers concerning these issues follow:

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21. See Eisner (1985) for information regarding the art of teaching.

### Partnerships with Business and Industry

This basically rural school which is located on the edge of a commercial and light industrial rural town (population of approximately 15,000-20,000) has been untouched by any rejuvenated "business interest in education." This is in spite of the fact that a large national industrial company has a plant located in the school district.

There has never been and continues to be no business or industry "partnership" with the school in this study. Yet, local merchants and businesses are usually willing to buy advertisement space in yearbooks and sports programs and donate merchandise for raffles and school carnivals. But involvement of the type promoted in reform literature is absent.

One successful community involvement was mentioned. Several community members participated in the school's mentor program for high school "gifted" students. According to the teacher that organized the program, the participating community members, the students, and the teacher all considered the mentor program very successful. The teacher thought the program had the potential to further involve the community in the school. The mentor program has been canceled because of scheduling

problems and the increase in state mandated high school requirements for college entrance. One teacher, however, predicted:

1. I think we are going to see businesses and educators working together more.

Other teachers commented concerning business partnerships with this school:

2. There are no real businesses right here in our community. The town does not recognize our school. When you read the newspaper, you see school districts in the news, but not us. When we get stuff in the newspaper we usually have to pay. Sometimes we don't get it in then either. It really makes us feel like mistreated stepchildren.
3. There is no partnership with business for our school. They advertise with us, but that is all.
4. I thought the mentor program was very successful. The kids loved it.

Business and industry may have been a major driving force in education reform for the 1980s. Numerous school districts across the nation and state may have established foundations and school adoption programs. But, the teachers in this study seemed to speak words that portrayed the interest of business with education as a phenomena they had read about but certainly was not a part of their lived reality. Business involvement, or even interest, was a non-event in their school.

Some teachers expressed resignation of acceptance. Some bemoaned the lack of concern by business leaders. Others seemed to express hope that the possibility existed that business and community leaders would "rescue" them and the plight of common education. They wanted recognition, appreciation and monetary compensation for their professional training, work and for the responsibilities they shouldered with caring for and educating the children of the community and for the community's future. The desire for respect and support is even more evident when teachers spoke of parental involvement.

#### Parental Involvement and Support of Teachers

The participating teachers presented a strong almost monolithic view of the community support that was basically negative. The teachers spoke of community support as apathetic or actively anti-teacher. Views concerning parental involvement or support were much more varied. Teachers' views were strongly reflective of personal experiences with the parents of students and/or their ability to view parents from a value base that allowed for "supportive parenting" to be defined in terms other than middle class expectations.

Teachers who saw parents as involved taught in the early elementary grades or worked with students in the extra-curricular areas such as gifted education, vocational education or sports. A few, perhaps three or four teachers, truly empathized with parents and felt that parents do as well as they can under the circumstances in which they live. Nevertheless, almost all the teachers considered community support and parental involvement far from that which they would consider desirable. The teachers speak:

5. Most of the people that live in this community went to school here. The school is their source of entertainment.
6. [Tell me about your Parent-Teacher Organization.] It has gone downhill quickly. Nobody cares. Nobody wants to be an officer so nobody shows up. They know at the next meeting there will be an election of officers if there's anyone there. So nobody comes.
7. [Do parents volunteer to work in the school?] We did have volunteers, but it became a problem...The parents tended to gossip about the school, especially the students.
8. Our community will never vote a bond issue or increase taxes locally. [No matter what?] I think the school could fall down around our heads and they wouldn't vote for more taxes.
9. Maybe it is because we are rural. But I think we are often seen as overpaid babysitters.
10. Money talks. If we were paid as professionals the people would consider what we do as important.



11. I think there is more respect for teachers and most parent would support a tax increase for education.
12. No we aren't respected. You hear it all he time. Those that can do. Those that can't teach. That's okay. Let them just come down and try. One guy who use to be on the school board said, he hadn't been to school, but he could study the material and come up here and teach. I do wish he would come try.
13. There are two sets of parents. You do have parents that care. But, the majority of them you never hear from.

The teacher for the gifted program found parents very willing to help.

14. The parents of the children in the gifted program are very willing to help. I've found the reason some parents have gifted children is because they are interested in them and want to do things with them. [So you see giftedness as more an environmental factor as opposed to innateness.] I don't know that I see it as more - but it is very much a factor.

Other voices:

15. [Do you work with your parents well?] Some years more than others. It just depends on who the parents are...Parental support is always the same people. It is hard to get people who have never been involved to become involved. When you know the lifestyle of some of these people it is hard to get excited about going to school and helping when they have worked all day and they are worried about having enough money to pay their bills. It is difficult and I'm not so sure if I were in their shoes that I wouldn't do some of the same things they do. They are trying to keep their heads above water. They don't have time to be involved with the school.
16. The first year I was here I had zero parental involvement. But it is better. [What is the

difference?]

I guess I'm learning how to deal with parents better. I don't wait anymore for them to volunteer. I say we are going to have a tournament and I need....Two mothers went with us when we went to the state speech tournament. They said they didn't know it was so much work. They learned and they will help spread the word.

17. We have a booster club for young farmers. Not many will come to meetings, but about 60% will help. [What is the difference in greater parental involvement with your students?] The students and parents can work together. Parents can help get an animal ready to show. They don't just watch. [Many of the teachers say the parents are too busy with their own problems to take time for their children. Do you see this?] Sometimes, yet when parents start spending money they start paying attention.
18. We have a bunch of good parents at our school. You can get help. But I'm seeing less involvement with class parties and stuff. More mothers are having to work.
19. When we have parties kids almost always bring something.
20. Parents generally don't cooperate yet they want to put teachers down and blame us because their child can't read or write a decent paragraph. Parents can't blame teachers totally. I know it is what we get paid for, but kids pick up their attitudes from mom and dad.

With the economic problems families are having it takes both parents working. They don't have much time for their kids. There are lots of personal problems too. I guess they feel very frustrated and need to blame somebody. I guess teachers are a pretty easy target.

21. Parents tend to put the blame on the school too quick.
22. Seems to me I see more irate parents coming up here about discipline. When I grew up, and

when my children were growing up I took the teacher's word. I didn't go and cause a ruck-us. I wanted to back the teachers. I wanted my kids to respect their teachers. I know teachers can make mistakes. But I don't think parents ought to put the teachers down all the time. You see it more and more.

23. I have a generation of kids whose parents don't care. If anything goes wrong the parents say it has to be the teacher's fault. It can't be the parent's or the child's fault.
24. We can send out failing slip after failing slip to parents saying their child is at risk. Then parents will come up the day before graduation and cry and say, What can I do? I have it every year...

You may have a student for four years and never see the parents. Not at open house, conferences or anywhere else.

25. [Do parents feel guilty for not parenting better?] Not many. Many of these kids are on their own even in first grade.
26. We have very little parental involvement, which is sometimes to our advantage. It depends on what kind of parental involvement we get. If a parent wants to tear down everything, ridicule, pull books from the library, etc. If they aren't open-minded, then these people can stay at home as far as I'm concerned.

[Do parents support you as a teacher?] Generally, sometimes they don't follow through, but they have good intentions. Because my class is an elective I seldom have conflict. The few students that have had problems have had problems in other classes, too. Parents have been supportive and taken my side of the issue.

27. [Do the parents love their kids?] Yes, parents love their kids, but they haven't been raised to show it....They are too busy. Some parents have a "poor me" syndrome and are engrossed with their own needs. "I need my time". If any time is left then the kids may get it.

28. I don't know if parents aren't involved in the school because they are too poor, they are all working, or they don't feel they have anything to offer.
29. They want the best for their children but they don't always provide those opportunities. I don't know if they don't know how or they just talk about it and will not do it.

Of course, I realize as a teacher I know all these things too, but it is being able to do what is best that is hard for teachers as well as parents. I understand the problems. So, I'm trying not to be so terribly judgmental.

30. [What are the parents like? I'm not getting a very good picture of the parents?] I have a good picture of them. They are very good as far as I'm concerned. They are just like the students. You have to treat them fair. That is the key word - fairness. We aren't any better than they are and they aren't any better than we are. We must exhibit mutual respect and fairness. We must be willing to listen to them. When they come up to the school, we need to listen. Let them come up with a solution that we can adapt and turn it so it is their idea. When I do this I don't have any problems. I use to be angry with parents. Now I can see both sides. My children are getting to the age they need some help and I'm too tired to do it. One problem is parents don't touch their kids enough. They don't hug them, kiss them, and tell them they are loved enough.

The voice of this last teacher (#30) offers a humanistic perspective that, if adopted and practiced by educators and parents, could promote an atmosphere where real change or reform could be fostered. The problems of education are the problems of society. The teachers in this study would do well to enter dialogue among themselves and invite parents and community members to join.

Voices such as this (#30) and a few other less alienated voices represented in this study could begin to promote alternative possibilities for understanding the lived reality of the parents, students and the participants in this study.

### Summary

These teachers describe business involvement and community and parental support in varying degrees of alienation or estrangement from children and from school. Their voices most often describe frustrated teachers that often hinted at repressed anger. Teachers speak loudly of lack of recognition, support and appreciation. Business is viewed as critical but non-involved. When parents and teachers come together it is often to accuse and/or defend. Children and education may be the subject of controversy, but not the meaning.

Those that speak with anger and accusations are trying to survive, seek meaning and protect their self esteem. Business, parents and teachers, are seeking an "out" using no-win methodology and language. Business, community and parents blame teachers; teachers blame business, community and parents.

What could happen if blame no longer was accessed for the "woes" of the society in which we live? What could happen if the less alienated voices were heard entering dialogue and inviting the estranged to join in a search for seeking understanding and acceptance? What could such a freeing accomplish for humankind and their organized school to which society and these teachers are closely coupled? The teachers clearly recognize that schools cannot solve the problems of society alone. There must be a concerted effort and cooperation among family, school, community and social support agencies.

#### Teacher Morale

In spite of the national attention given to the issues of education in the 1980s, the Carnegie study found that half of the teachers in their 1988 study believe that "morale within the profession had substantially declined since 1983" (p.11). The morale of the teachers that participated in this study has been tightly coupled with all aspects of education reform and is reflected in their voices as presented in this reporting of the totality of the research findings.

Aspects of the morale of these teachers and teachers in general have been lifted with the concern for the

value of education that has brought about reform dialogue and efforts. Yet, the "blessing" that has given many of the teachers hope has also been a part of a diminished morale. Teachers readily recognize that they have been seen as villains in education reform and that many solutions to promote excellence have been directed toward "fixing" teachers.

The teachers in this study did speak of the "big picture" of reform mandates and dialogue as affecting their morale but if they examined their morale at all they spoke more often of local, in-house, micro-experiences having a greater influence on their morale. Their lived experiences were the factors and needs that influenced their morale more than the theoretical or the rhetorical.

The teachers like their jobs as teachers, when narrowly defined. It is when they look at the macro-concept and experiences of teaching and education that they become discouraged. The teachers speak to the issue of morale as follows:

1. If I stop and dwell on my morale and the problems I see, I could really get down. I don't know about others. When you don't talk to others I wonder if it is just me or if it is the way it really is.
2. The only thing that saves me from having a poor morale is the people I work with and the people in the community. Our community is full of

good people and that keeps me ticking. My two principals help my morale, too. They are good role models.

My wife and I took nearly a \$10,000.00 cut in pay to come back to this area. I was the assistant principal and I could have had the principal's job if we had stayed where we were. Money isn't everything. Our kids can be with their grandparents here. This is home, and I like what I do.

3. I find teaching wonderful. Maybe it is because I waited so long to get to be a teacher. The teachers told me when I first started teaching that I would lose my enthusiasm. But, I still think it is fun. I'm anxious to get here. There are situations that bother me, but generally I love it.
4. I don't get down too much. I pray to be positive.
5. I like teaching. Sometimes I think they hate me now but they will love me later. [Why would they hate you?] I make them work.
6. I like teaching. I'm not down because of the teaching, it is everything they put on us and no rewards for it.
7. Right now my morale is down a little. It bothers me that we were told not to ask to go to conferences. I feel I need to know what is going on. I always come back with new ideas.
8. [What about your morale?] We are depressed. This is my worst year ever. [She has 34 primary age students.]

Several teachers spoke of their morale being affected by the hiring of a new superintendent and/or with the hard-won battle for the right to negotiate their contact.



9. [How has morale changed?] It was low, then better when we got teacher negotiations. Now teachers are apathetic. We had high expectations.
10. Teacher negotiations have created so much tension. It has affected our morale. Last year was terrible. I don't feel too bad right now. Last year was real low...
11. Our morale is better with the new superintendent. We seem to have a little hope this year. The old superintendent pitted people and kept things going all the time. Things are better.
12. The work we've done to start teacher negotiations has given me hope. Where I use to teach our teacher organization was very weak. The teachers were restless and aggravated all the time. It is the only way we can let them know what we want.

Some teachers spoke words that reflect hopelessness, apathy and a general malaise about their morale.

13. I've learned to just accept a lot of things...
14. I've lost my steam. If I'm not worth anything to this state then I'm not willing to put in a lot of extra time. I've quit spending my own money, too.
15. A former student came by recently to see me. We visited awhile and he said "You sure are negative." I guess I am. I told him I was ready for a change. I'm tired of no money and no equipment.

The issue of low salaries was a big factor concerning morale. Several teachers expressed their need for better financial compensation based on economy needs but usually coupled with a value society placed on the importance of their job.

16. Yesterday we laughed when a teacher said, "another day another dime." Sometimes we really do feel we work for dimes.
17. I don't tell people I'm a teacher. I like my job but teachers are looked down on. People say teachers teach because they can't do anything else. I think morale is the lowest I have ever seen it...A \$200-300 a year raise would be just a pat on the head.  
  
There is no incentive to stay in teaching. You have to have a strong determination and good self image, cause everyone else tells you how bad teachers are.
18. I like my job. But when I realize that if I were single I would be living in poverty, it is pretty sad. I don't see how single teachers make it. I tried working an extra part-time job. I couldn't keep up with everything.
19. [Do you feel exploited?] Yes, I do.
20. They can't seem to say you just deserve a raise. They mix it with strings and put more on us...Other people get cost of living raises, but for every 1¢ raise we get we have to promise to do even more...
21. They give the convicts more money than they give education.
22. We use to laugh at [a southern state]. They have passed us now. We have nothing to work with. I can't even get a news magazine for my class.
23. We now offer seven class periods a day. It is just another preparation for us teachers but no extra money.

These teachers consider themselves professionals, but their salaries are not representative of professional status.

Stress was also a major contributing factor that affected morale.

24. I was off yesterday. I didn't realize it was stress until another teacher pointed it out to me. I've been so concerned about one of my students.

I told a student the other day that I had learned to almost have four arms and I can even listen to several different things at the same time. But, I haven't learned to speak two different things at the same time.

25. There is just not enough me to go around. [how do you handle this?] Not very well. [Is your job stressful?] Yes, and I take it home with me. It is the days I introduce something new. Like last week I introduced adverbs. Then I went around the room, desk to desk, trying to explain. Someone will say "I need you!" then someone else will say it. At the end of the day I wondered how many really knew adverbs. The "ly" adverbs were easy. They could just go down the worksheet marking them. But then "where" or "when" adverbs were hard. [Why do you teach adverbs?] I teach the book and they are in our text.

I want to be the best at what I do. When I get caught on the short end I feel I'm slighting something. [Do you ever get caught up?] On snow days I do. But, then I start the next day and I'm behind again. I get caught up in the summer. If we ever go twelve months there will be so much burnout. We need our summers.

There is just so much stress with dealing with so many little bodies everyday. I go home worrying about the one with the black eye or the one whose parents I called and they didn't come get him when he was sick. You try and put them out of your mind because you have your own family to deal with. But when I pray at night, I ask God to remember this child or that child.

26. I take my problems home with me. I worry about students.

27. Just about the time I think I'm past losing sleep over students I'll have one that I really worry about. I have one right now that I spend a lot of time thinking about. I try and block school out of my mind on weekends, but I'm thinking about this student a lot. I just don't know what is going to happen to him.

Morale problems related to stress could perhaps be reduced through group therapy and better involvement of other social institutions. Support and critique of teaching methods and content appropriateness could help teachers (as in comment #25) identify and perfect instructional methods that included peer teaching and are more appropriate for young children. Numerous possibilities exist. When almost all classes have twenty-five and more students, the researcher doubts that anything less than smaller classes will open a window for a significant reduction of stress. Teachers believe they are helpless, and perhaps they are.

Lack of appreciation was the overriding morale factor. The teachers yearned for sincere words of appreciation. Words and deeds that reflected appreciation by the administrators and to a lesser degree the school board were significantly needed by several female teachers to varying degrees. Almost every female teacher spoke of a need for recognition and appreciation by their

administrators. Not one of the male teachers spoke of this need. Male teachers spoke of wanting appreciation from the students and parents. Female teachers speak:

28. [Other than money, how could your morale be improved?] Just by some verbal pats on the back. It would be that simple. Just for the administration to verbally recognize that I do a good job. [Do they do that?] No, no one is given any verbal pats on the back. It isn't just me. We go through the formal observations and they'll say, "Well, you are doing a good job, no complaints about you this year. You sign and I'll sign and we'll get this turned in." But that is formally handled. I like those sincere, spontaneous compliments.
29. [Anything else that would help your morale?] You know what really irritates me. Every year all three principals send flowers to their secretaries during National Secretary's Week. There is also a National Teacher's Week and we are never recognized. That is like saying the secretaries are important to us, but you teachers aren't. We would even bake our own cookies, if they would have a little meeting to say we know you are important and we appreciate you.
30. We could have free coffee and doughnuts now and then.
31. If administration were appreciative they could do little, thoughtful things to show they liked us.
32. More money would be nice but the administration could let you know you were appreciated in little ways. I've never worked for that kind of administration but it would be nice and I have heard of them.
33. I appreciate it when we have a principal that puts a little note in my box saying keep up the good work. It is worth a \$100.00 bonus. A

boost to me would be to get a surprise Christmas bonus. I'd like a raise, of course, but unexpected money would make me feel appreciated.

One teacher mentioned providing access for teachers to participate in decision making. This teacher had worked in schools where management decisions were more likely to be shared.

34. If we have no money, then let teachers have more input into what is going on.

The physical work environment was also a morale factor that teachers mentioned often.

35. [Other than money, what would help your morale?] A private bathroom for teachers, hot water to wash my hands, time off to go to professional meetings, some general respect from everybody.
36. It would be wonderful to have chairs, desks and tables that weren't split. I ruin so many clothes by snagging them. I have a "new" desk this year. My old one literally fell apart. I found this one in the hall. Someone didn't have room because it is so big. It is ugly but I'm thrilled.

Parental, student and community support were also morale factors.

37. Morale would be helped if the local newspaper gave the school more coverage. We have to pay to get things in the newspaper when two larger county schools get lots of coverage for free.
38. Pay is an issue, but so is parental involvement. The state needs to educate parents. Teachers can't do it all.
39. Besides money, parental support. [Q] Maybe they don't know how to be good parents. But I

wonder if they aren't just so caught up in themselves that they just use us for babysitters. It takes both parents to make a living.

They just don't have that much time for their kids. They have lots of personal problems, too. It is just hard.

40. I wish students were more enthusiastic about school. But, I realize that won't change until society changes.

One teacher interviewed presented a completely different perspective of morale. Low morale, poor self esteem, even working conditions and community support were recognized as problems in education, but not factors that influenced his morale and enthusiasm for teaching.

He speaks about his vocation as follows:

41. Morale is not a problem...when I first got out of college I worked for a living. [He worked as a welding contractor.] I'm having fun now. I like the kids, well most of them...Lots of people ask me why I'm a teacher, especially my high school teachers. They want to know why I didn't go ahead and study engineering as I had planned. I was a good student. I could have made it in engineering. But it didn't take me long to learn I needed to do what my heart was into...[Q] Yes, I would still be a vocational agricultural teacher if I had it to do again.

The researcher probed about the likelihood of the participants continuing in the profession and as to whether they would choose again to be teachers.

42. [Will you stay in teaching?] Yes, no doubt. I love working with the kids. I'm a teacher

because I like it and I have to work. Might as well do something you like.<sup>22</sup>

43. I'm definitely looking forward to retirement....No, I doubt that I would be a teacher if I had it to do over again. I probably would be more satisfied if I had done something else.
44. [Do you see yourself teaching in ten years?] I don't know. Since I've had a child I'm more likely to stay. Teaching will give me more time with my child. I don't have any great ambitions right now.

### Summary

"I don't have any great ambitions." What a revealing comment of how this teacher and the majority of the other teachers seem to feel about what they do professionally. They hear the voices of society telling them that what they do is done poorly and that almost anyone could improve on what they do as teachers. The negative to apathetic voices of administrators, parents, politicians, business and community leaders are all heard by these teachers. It would seem that even though the teachers feel that they should feel what they do is important, they really do not.

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22. This same voice speaking elsewhere in this study described significant stress. The researcher suggests that this teacher may like her job less than she is willing to admit. Perhaps she sees few alternatives for herself.



Teachers are not only rhetorically told they are less than acceptable, their treatment speaks even more loudly. They work in isolation, under stressful, often humiliating conditions, without encouragement, adequate compensation or recognition. It would seem that philosophers and theorists could not construct an environment designed for failure of the human spirit any better than the lived experiences voiced by these teachers.

The consensus of the voices that speak here surely are not any less repressed in their human spirit than the spirit of those that live in what many members of our society or government would label "repressive" in basic human rights issues. Theoretically, perhaps, the teachers are in the classroom by choice but in their lived realities the teachers seem to see few, if any, viable choices for employment other than teaching. Most of the teachers, especially the women, are not geographically mobile. It would seem that the only reason there is no outcry for the treatment of teachers would be because of cultural acceptance, even within the profession, of these conditions.

#### Visions of Possibilities in Education

Throughout the interviewing process, the researcher was not only seeking the views of teachers concerning

educational reform, but the researcher was also seeking the participants' visions of their "oughts" for education. This research reporting section is devoted specifically to the participants' visions for education. But, the "oughts" of the participants are also woven into the holistic presentation of this research. The entire research effort renders an interpretation of the visions of the participants. This section merely brings the subject to "center stage."

The researcher assumed there was the possibility that participants did not ponder their alternative visions of education as much as they did the day to day institutional, political and media issues of current educational reform efforts. The researcher wanted to provide the participants with the opportunity to reflect on all the issues of educational reform. But, the researcher especially wanted to insure that the participants had ample opportunity to collect their thoughts and share their most important and thoughtful ideas about their "oughts" for improving education. Therefore the researcher posed the question to the participants on several occasions and in several ways.

As previously reported, the researcher met with the school faculty weeks before interviews began. The purpose of the meeting was to explain the research project and to ask teachers to participate. During this initial meeting, the researcher provided the teachers with a copy of the 1988 Carnegie research questions and emphasized that the researcher wanted to learn not only about the teachers' views on current reform issues but also their visions for education. (Appendix B is a copy of the information provided during the first meeting.)

The researcher next spoke of the visions of teachers during the interviews. Often the teachers did not know about their "oughts" so the researcher asked them to give the issue more thought. Inquiry about the participants' visions was broached again in subsequent interview sessions.

At the completion of the interviewing phase of this research, the researcher again attempted to ascertain the participants' visions of the "oughts" of education. The researcher requested that participants jot down their ideas and mail them to the researcher. None of the participants mailed their responses.

The researcher personally approached some of the participants a final time and received four notes that teachers had intended to mail or a few words regarding

their visions. The information provided in the four notes were very similar to information rendered during the interviews. Therefore, the researcher does not distinguish in the reporting of findings between written and oral responses.

Much of the data that is presented in this section had to be gleaned from the inclusiveness of the interviews. Responses from direct questioning concerning their visions were minimal. The primary and specific visions for these educators were practical nuts and bolts issues for schools. The teachers explain:

1. We need textbooks and general supplies. My want list is long. I would like computer networking, a mouse for each computer. A want list is a dream sheet.

Monolithic voices speak:

2. We need to offer more advanced math courses, more liberal arts classes, geography, science labs....We especially need library books for the elementary classrooms... We need smaller classes....We need teacher aides....We need changes in the scheduling of special classes so we would have fewer interruptions...

All the participants viewed education as preparation for work and good citizenship. This is accomplished through the transference of knowledge using traditional banking methods (Shor and Freire, 1987). Only one or two teachers mentioned education having personal value. The

following comment is representative of this functionalist philosophical view.

3. School needs to prepare students for the real world. They need to become functioning, productive citizens. A lot aren't. They are another hand reaching for a handout.

[What is your role as a teacher?] Not to teach history but to apply it. They can learn from past mistakes. Not only that but they have to know history to graduate.

Yet, one teacher was open to non-traditional teaching, i.e. cooperative learning. The researcher explored with this teacher her reasons. She explains:

4. [Why are you innovative in your teaching?] Maybe I do it for me. I have to feel good and stay interested. I have to do different things. I can't use the same bulletin boards every year. I have to have some different ways of doing things to keep from burning out. I've been doing this for 24 years. I have to stay current or I would burn out. I've experienced burn out feelings and I may again. But, I'm still normally excited about Monday morning. There are very few times that I've dreaded to see school start. I've been apprehensive and I've worried about all the administrative changes we have had over the years. But I still love to teach.

[How many other teachers value cooperative learning as a goal?] I have no idea. I don't know if more than three or four teachers know I'm doing this.

The discovery of personal value by seeking some non-traditional approaches to pedagogy has been meaningful to this teacher. Her efforts have contributed to her

being able to avoid teacher burnout. She has created her own opportunities for professional growth.

One teacher provided insight into the possibility for a paradigmatic vision of education other than the dominant functionalist view. A teacher's confrontation with the recent death of a student caused her to reflect on the meaning and purpose of education. This teacher speaks:

5. I had a heart to heart talk with a couple of my boys yesterday. Since Blake's [name changed] death I've been questioning the worth of everything. He hated to do subtraction and loved addition. I would say I was sorry but he needed to learn it. Did it make any difference that Blake did all his math lessons. Maybe sometimes we need to say to heck with a reading lesson. Those boys showed compassion. I thought it really isn't important right now that they can't multiply, if they can understand and have compassion....

I think it is more and more on the teachers to teach things like compassion and caring for others. The people I know teach their children these things. Then I come to school and see other kids from different kinds of families. I'm not saying they are bad families. Unfortunately, we may need to teach more values. Maybe not unfortunately, because I don't mind. Those are some of the most rewarding times. Sometimes we need to say to heck with this reading lesson...

The death of a student affected this teacher in a very personal way. Her reactions have at least temporarily, opened the door for her to examine what she does in her classroom and the meaning of education. If this

opportunity was nurtured, perhaps significant, permanent changes would occur in her teaching. If the environment was nurturing, this teacher could possibly make a conceptual leap that would forever change her as a person and an educator.

The researcher's position that calls for a supportive environment for personal change is also supported by Glassberg and Oja's 1981 research. They conclude that in order for a major shift in education to occur there needs to be a major change in the entire educational environment, including how the school as a system is organized. The call for personal change is also supported by Combs (1962, 1982), May (1969), Rogers (1980), Goodlad and Klein (1976).

Inhibitors of change or innovation were discussed with the participants. These same inhibitors to change would also affect the vision of educators. The teachers speak on change inhibitors.

6. We don't change, because it works the way it is. There are lots of things we could do - we could have nine week mini-semesters, if people would do it. I don't know though, I think when you are around a situation where it has always been done a certain way, it rubs off. You are less likely to do something new yourself. It is lots of work and you don't get much appreciation. If the administration was willing, there probably could be some changes.
7. I wanted to do some tri-semester courses. I couldn't because of how the schedule works.

The basketball boys and girls have to share the gym. So that sets the P.E. courses at first and seventh hours. Then teachers are shared among the schools. I teach junior high and high school. The music teacher teaches in all three schools. The junior high and elementary principals are also coaches - and the whole school shares the lunchroom. All these factors cut down on your flexibility.

8. [Do you close your door and do what you think you should or try to meet political expectations?] No, I do what they expect me to do. I want my job, but so far I don't have to compromise much, except for testing.

Numerous inhibitors to change are identified by the participating teachers. It would seem that there is no one factor that inhibits change and there is no one factor that will nurture change. The totality of the environment including working conditions, organizational structure, and expectations limit personal and professional critical reflection.

There is also a general degree of satisfaction with the "success" experienced by most students that is a factor. "Success" seems to inhibit further exploration. As the teacher in comment #6 says, "We don't change because it works... Change requires lots of work and "you don't get much appreciation."

Recognition that the administration is not actively and critically examining the experience of schooling is also a factor. Administrators generally seek stability, and do not seek major changes. Changes create



a disequilibrium and administrators want everything to run smoothly.

Another factor is that teachers are passively waiting for better conditions and for others to initiate change. Teachers speak:

9. [Do you see the possibility for curriculum changes?] They [administration] add whatever is mandated.
10. I don't think education will change until the political system changes. We need to elect educators that understand. Yet our state senator was a teacher and he/she found that they could do little. The State Board of Education should be making the decisions that the legislature has been making. The Legislature should provide the money and the State Board should mandate policies. The State Board should be educators, but with a few business people to help with financial matters.
11. Money is the key to changes. Let's face it, money talks...
12. We need school consolidation.<sup>23</sup>

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23. The issue of school consolidation was mentioned by most of the teachers in this study. All the teachers that broached this subject support the need for consolidation of small rural schools, especially high schools. The teachers generally see some disadvantages in the consolidation of small rural high schools, but thought the advantages far outweighed the disadvantages. The advantages of the rural high school were seen as advantages to parents and the maintenance of the rural culture. Academic and social advantages were perceived to be with larger school systems. Teachers felt that students needed a greater variety of course offerings. They need more than athletic and agriculture extracurricular choices. The teachers also thought their school was large enough to survive consolidation. They seemed to think smaller schools would joint them.

13. We don't have anything to do with grant writing.

Teachers provide other reasons for the status quo. One special programs teacher had requested a field trip and was told she could not take it. The researcher asked if the negative response to her request would inhibit future requests. She responded:

14. Probably, I think I'm a creative person and creativity is an ongoing thing. A step backwards takes a while for me to get over. I'll have to pick myself up to go again.
15. You develop tunnel vision when you don't work, with kids at different levels to see what needs to be done.

Other special programs teachers continue:

16. ...I question some of the things I teach, even though they are important to me...I would like to use learning centers and less paper and pencil work, but I have to take all kinds of students together and I can't do it with such diverse students and no material.

For teachers to make major or even more minor changes in what they do is not easy. However, if they value the reasons for making changes, they will try. A teacher candidly explains:

17. [Why would you change?] If I could see it would be useful to students...

I don't like change a whole lot. I have in my own mind what I want to teach kids. I've been doing it for twenty years. It is probably hard for me to change. [Part of my study is interested in change. What would make you change, even if you liked what you are doing?] I guess if I was told to do something differently I

would. [If your principal came in and said he wanted you to do something different in one of your courses, would you?] If he wants me to change the grading scale or the number of acceptable absents or to leave something I usually taught out I would. But if he came in and told me to change the way I teach - it would be hard. [What would make you want to change?] It would be hard but if I thought it would be good for the students I could. I guess....

[But] I don't want a longer school day; I don't want a longer school year. I couldn't stand it and students couldn't either.

Many of the teachers see change efforts as useless.

Teachers are powerless.

18. No matter what you do it comes down to the socio-economic situation. It isn't fair. It isn't right. But I don't think it will ever be different. [So you don't see public education being able to make much difference?] No. [Do you see individual teachers being able to make a difference?] I think teachers make a difference in a few lives. But teachers are so hurried. There is a distance from the kids...
19. [What can schools do to help students more?] I can't see a whole lot. Society will have to change a good bit.
20. We need to be able to have more motivation externally applied. [Punishment?] Maybe, or maybe more rewards.
21. I wish we could go back, to where we could paddle students that misbehaved.
22. We need more discipline at home not school. We can't do anything. Schools are helpless.

Teachers consider meaningful changes dependent on changes with society and the home environment. Teachers

consider themselves to be powerless. Teachers speak regarding their visions as to parental involvement:

23. I told the principal that when I retire I'm going to work on two things. (1) a magic bottle to spray on students to motivate them; (2) a spray for parents that will make them want to cooperate with the school..

[What can you do?] All I can do is refer them to counselors, have conferences with parents and try and get them interested and involved.

24. [What do you see as ways schools can build better working relationships with home and school?] That is a hard question. Time is a factor. I don't know where we could find the time to do a program. You can't ask them to come help at school or listen to programs too much. They are working and want to sit back in the recline and watch T.V.

You wouldn't believe how many of these kids get up and dressed with mother still in bed.

[Do you see any solutions for these kids?] There is not a solution. You educate them as much as you can - the rest is up to them.

25. [Do you see any ways the school can help these students and their parents?] I can't see a whole lot. I think society will have to change a good bit. Change morals, family values, etc.
26. The state needs to do more to educate the parents. If I didn't work with my children at home, I'm sure they wouldn't do well either. Teachers can't do it all.
27. We are planning, or at least considering, a workshop for the fall to try and get parents more involved with their children. We will also have packets for the parents to let them know exactly what they can expect, and how parents can help their children be better students.

Managerial solutions or visions for education reform were articulated:

28. [What is your vision for education?] Everyone needs a basic education. Everyone needs basic skills. Yet, at some point they need to shoot off in one direction or the other - Either college or trade.

[What else have you thought about?] I think, if they are college prep, they need to be challenged more. The college bound are not challenged enough. They need more course work with more depth.

Seniors look at their senior year as the easy year. [Is it?] Not in English, but if they have the required courses out of the way, they can choose things that are easy.

We need more programs that are specialized as they go up into their junior and senior year.

29. I think we need more guidelines from the state. When children change schools there would be continuity...I would like to see a state curriculum. Not necessarily the same textbooks. The Learner Outcomes help but a state curriculum would be more uniform.
30. I'm not going to say a state curriculum would be the worst thing. I can see where it would have its benefits. But I don't see how everyone can be on the same page on the same day. I think the child is the most important thing and if the child is not ready to go to p. 233, then I think you ought to stay on pages 230-231 until the majority is ready.
31. There are too many loop holes in the system. If it was the same way across the board - no slow or fast classes. You master this and you graduate period. Real simple...
32. [I think I hear you saying that state control should be strong. Is that accurate?] Yes, I do think the state needs to be strong.

[What should be the role of the local board?] Employment of teachers and things like that. We don't have any extra money, so I can't even imagine what the local board should do with extra money.

Most teachers in this study want students to pass either a test to graduate from high school and/or award two types of diplomas.

33. Some people want to say everyone is capable of succeeding. But, I have taught long enough that I know some kids are slow, slow, slow. They could do homework for six hours a night and not pass. Let them have a certificate saying they survived high school. They aren't going to college. They will end up carrying groceries. You can talk to them ten minutes and you'll know their high school education didn't mean that much.

What we do now is water the material down. It hurts the "good" kids.

They could have a test. If you pass you get a high school diploma, if not you get a certificate or whatever.

34. We need competency tests for high school graduation.

Teachers who participated in this study were supportive and accepting of education reform through mandates that demanded more from students, parents and society. Better education is to come from new and improved managerial and sorting methods. These teachers believe that if changes are made, they will come from mandates outside their school. They are not powerful

enough to instigate changes. Many of these teachers wanted American education to be more like the Japanese.

35. [Do you have a vision for education, that you think about and can articulate? What is your dream, your ideal for education.] "I don't know that I have ever articulated one - But, I think if I ever had anything to do with education, my main goal would be that we stop trying to educate everyone equally." Other nations don't educate the masses. I know some would be siphoned off into the wrong areas, but not everyone can pass high school and go on to college.

36. If I had the power to change education, I would make it more like the Japanese. If opportunities to come to school were more limited, students would want to come and would work harder.

[You like what you see in other countries?] They sure are testing better than we are. Aren't they? Of course, they don't test everyone. They use vocational education for the masses. They may have the right idea - if we could just get people into the work force.

[At what point do you decide who goes to the vocational track and who goes to the academic track?] They probably need to take a test around the eighth grade.

The American and Japanese education systems are philosophically different and so are the cultures. The voices of the teachers in this study articulate admiration for the Japanese system, which emphasized success through hard work. The American culture attributes success to innate ability and socio-economic factors. These, and other cultural differences, need to be addressed when espousing the virtues of different systems.

37. Most of it will be based on socio-economic levels. As terrible as it may be - your lower socio-economic groups will not push the grade school kids and the higher one will. So I guess it is immaterial how you do it. The results will be the same.

I don't see it being any different, unless you get some benefactors for some of the "better" kids. I think we serve the middle kids pretty well. But I worry when I look at the birth rates of educated people and the birth rates of your minorities and uneducated people. Something is going to have to happen to change the birth rate trends. It is getting worse and worse. We have twelve kids from one family and everyone is L.D. That has to be social. Those twelve will have twelve. That is one hundred forty four, all from the same family.

Our "good kids" go out and go to college and some have one or maybe two babies...We are getting fewer and fewer people taking care of more and more people. Eventually we will be drained, and people will say they don't want to do it anymore. [Then what will happen?] I'd say we'll be in one hell-of-a-mess. That is when you'll see wars. I see it coming. Not in my lifetime, but several generations away.

[What is the role for education in the world you describe?] I don't know.

The voice of the teacher who speaks in comment #37 and all the teachers in this study readily recognize major cultural shifts in society.<sup>24</sup> The school is a microcosm of society. Therefore, the numerous problems that face society are also in the school. Teachers know

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24. Husen in Gardner (1984), page 60 of this study, identifies the rapidly increasing size of the underclass as the most significant problem facing American education.



they cannot single-handedly solve the problems of society.

The ocean is so big and the teachers' boats are so small. The teachers do not offer possibilities. They are again basically helpless. They do not dream dreams of capable and caring people coming together and entering dialogue about the problems and the possibilities of a nurturing society. They do not speak of a vision of people, including teachers, envisioning and beginning to construct a society that nurtures their young.

The researcher wonders why there are no voices that envision collaborative social problem solving. Perhaps, the reality of working is isolation, meaningless committee work, segmented curriculum development and instruction, and other cultural factors prevents teachers from conceptualizing the possibilities found in concerted community (state, nation or world) problem solving.

Experiences and alternative visions for professional development, clearly have not enhanced teachers' possibilities. Nor do they seem to offer possibility. Teachers present their vision for staff development:

38. We need staff development that is conducted by qualified persons...Workshops ought to give us ideas that we can use daily in our classrooms.
39. [How would you like to experience opportunities for professional growth?] I don't know. I

like some of the staff development. I've received some good information from some of the workshops.

40. Staff development could be better. [What would you suggest?] It shouldn't be state mandated. I think teachers do a much better job of doing things by themselves. Staff development should be teachers getting together to learn new ways to present material or manage the classroom.
41. [Have you given much thought as to how teacher development could be better?] No.

The teachers in this study accept and want to experience professional growth as reported elsewhere in this study. The teachers have diverse views on the value of staff development as currently conceptualized and implemented. These voices speak about staff development but only one voice (comment #40) presents an alternative. Perhaps if teachers did more peer interaction, the groups of teachers would not only look at methodology but also at the purpose of education. No one speaks of meeting in-house to deliberate educational issues.

#### The Absence of a Vision for Education

42. I'm not sure I have a vision for education. I would like to have a vision. I'm not sure I'm intelligent enough to write one that works. I think maybe we should look more to foreign countries to see how they educate their people....
43. I don't have answers to educational problems. Sometimes, I look at a problem and try something and it works. I can have the same problem another time and the same solution doesn't

work. Each year is a new beginning. You work with what you have. Personalities affect everything you do.

44. [Am I hearing you say that you had rather others deal with the issues of education? Are you saying you don't have time to fool with the issues?] Yes, that is right. [But there is a point for teachers to have input?] There should be, yes. [How?] I'm not sure. Not unless we stayed until 6:00 p.m. every night and we put in our thoughts for the day. It would be great, but I have children of my own and I want to be a part of their lives. I love being a teacher but I love being a mother, too.
45. ...I can hope. I can hope education will get better...I do with what I have to do with.
46. There are lots of things that I think about, but I don't have answers. I don't get paid to have answers. I just have lots of questions.
47. If you come up with some answers let me know.

The most surprising insight rendered from the inclusiveness of this research is that these teachers are basically void of alternative approaches to changes in education. The researcher had expected the participants to envision education within traditional philosophical perspectives. But, the researcher had expected the teachers to envision more humane, enjoyable and creative educational experiences for children. This was expected even if they were still philosophically aligned with functionalist educational philosophy. This was not the case. Teachers articulated few changes in institutional education and few within their classrooms. Teachers were

also willing to let others, mainly politicians and administrators, mandate policies that directly affect their classrooms.

### Summary

The researcher provided numerous opportunities for the participating teachers to share their visions for the "oughts" of education. The teachers most often discounted their ability to conceptualize educational "oughts." When they did articulate their ideas, they tended to focus on basic supplies, more courses, a need for an elementary counselor, and their desire for managerial sorting of problematic issues in education. The teachers did not seem to be able to creatively or pragmatically articulate options. The teachers' visions were for more control, more sorting and more requirements of the status quo in American education.

In the following and final chapter of this study, the researcher will summarize this research project, present tentative conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND  
RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

It has been said the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. This is an appropriate description of education, education reform, and this research study. Education reform is a problematic issue that at best allows public and professional debate on the role of schools in our society, and at worst fosters simplistic solutions to complex issues.

Kaestle's (1985) metaphor, that is mentioned early in this report, likens education and education reform to a sailing vessel that rocks a "bit from side to side as it attends to one slight current and then another" (Kaestle, 1985; Presseisen, 1985, p. 137) aptly describes education reform and especially education reform in the 1980s. America has historically experienced numerous periods of education reform. Yet, education has changed little. If the reform efforts that began with the 1983 release of A Nation at Risk are to be different changes will come in the 1990s. There have been few changes in

the 1980s as to how children experience schooling. Education reformers of the 1980s did not heed John Goodlad's (1983) caution. Reform has been a non-event.

During reform efforts of the 1980s teachers were often blamed for problems in education and excluded from the dialogue and reform proposal efforts. If education is to change teachers will be a part of the dialogue and the conceptualization and implementation of reform or changes. This research focused on the view of teachers concerning education reform.

In 1988, the Carnegie Foundation released their study, Report Card on School Reform The Teachers Speak. This study found that the majority of the 13,500 teachers that were surveyed, graded the national push for school reform with a "C" or less. The research presented in this paper is a contextual study regarding educational reform issues and alternatives from the cultural perspective of teachers in a single school system. The researcher conducted practical curriculum inquiry (Schwab, 1970; Schwab, 1978a; Schwab, 1978b; Schwab, 1983; Schubert, 1986) into the culture of teachers. Insight rendered from the study is intended to contribute to the possibility for educators and reformers to act morally and effectively in pedagogical decision making (Schubert, 1986).

A summary of each of the fourteen focused inquiries follows:

### Reform Grade

This research was conducted in the contextual culture of one school district. The researcher interviewed sixteen K-12 classroom teachers. The interviews were guided by the 1988 Carnegie research questions. The teachers in this ethnographic study assessed a grade of "C-" to reform efforts of the 1980s. The grade reflects a lack of reform impact rather than disagreement with the philosophy that guided reform efforts.

The teachers in this study were basically in agreement with the intent and approach to reform. The teachers agreed that education has serious problems. The teachers disagree about the origin of the problems. Reformers consider the teachers to be a major obstacle to quality education. Teachers consider students, parents, politicians, administrators, underfunding of education and society to be the obstacles to quality education.

Teachers were unable or unwilling to assume partial responsibility for student apathy, low academic achievement, or suggest paradigmatic alternatives to education that might be more appropriate for students in their school. Teachers wanted the state to require more of

students, but resented more being required of them. This is especially true since there was no monetary compensation for additional requirements of teachers.

### School Goals

Goals for the school were vague at best and non-existent at worst. Goals for the individual teachers were most often (with the exception of two or three teachers) task orientated, discrete, content specific and valued for future, instrumental purposes. Content knowledge and academic skills were needed for academic success in succeeding grades and/or for college.

Junior/senior high school teachers especially expected students to set problems outside the classroom and become eager sponges that soak up knowledge poured on them by teacher-talk. Students were expected to perform tasks, take tests, and behave in a conciliatory manner. Teachers equated expectations with additional graduation requirements, no-pass/no-play and a higher grading scale.

A picture of students was presented that expected them to "do" more work. But, students often responded with a worker slowdown. The students were passive aggressive in their behavior toward the expectations imposed on them.



The teachers in this study accept their division of labor from administrators. They accept the hierarchical, top-down organizational model that places them at the bottom of the organization. The teachers personally like their principals but do not consider them prepared to be instructional leaders. The teachers want the principals to maintain order, discipline, be supportive of them and to show appreciation for the work they do.

Alienation is the description the teachers present in regard to students, administrators and themselves. Everyone is isolated and alienated in the schooling environment. All participants exhibit degrees of passive aggressive behavior toward the culture of the school.

### Student Achievement

Student achievement is a "bottom-line" issue for education reformers of the 1980s and is measurable on standardized achievement or college entrance tests. High school teachers, and to a lesser degree some elementary teachers that participated in this study, accepted standardized testing as the bottom line assessment of quality education. Achievement test scores or ACT scores were higher but the teachers did not generally see a difference in daily interest or academic performance. If there achievement is poorer and interest has not improved.

Reasons teachers gave to account for lower academic interest and achievement were social, environmental and hereditary factors. The problems lay totally outside the realm of the school and teachers. Teachers generally supported state mandates that demanded more of students.

#### Academic Requirements

Academic requirements have been increased through state mandates. Yet, elementary teachers were not particularly concerned about increased academic requirements. The issue was considered to be a secondary school issue.

High school teachers were supportive of requiring more credits to graduate. They were concerned, however, that many students cannot achieve at an academic level as high as many of the additional requirements demand. Teachers were concerned that academic courses were or would be diluted so that more students could pass the courses.

#### School Programs

Underfunding and the possible elimination of school programs have been issues for this school in the later 1980s. An economic recession and lack of community and

state economic and moral support have left programs impoverished and teachers scarred.

Teachers showed only a mild interest in school programs that did not directly affect their classrooms. There were strong opinions expressed concerning the value of special programs for "gifted" learners and especially special programs for "learning disabled" students. Elementary teachers resented the yo-yo effect of the pullout programs and how the coming and going of these students affected their teaching.

Junior/senior high teachers basically considered the learning disabilities program an easy way out for students not willing to put forth enough effort to learn. They did not want to establish different expectations for different students. There was one curriculum, one grading scale and everyone was expected to conform to the one model.

The need for guidance counselors in the school was mentioned often by all teachers. There were many students in need of counseling. High school teachers were unable or unwilling to counsel. They did not accept the role of counselor for their students. They were in the classroom to teach their content areas.

High school teachers said they liked students but did not want to know too much about their lives outside

the classroom. Apparently, once students exit self-contained classes at the end of grade six, students have no single adult person within the school to whom they can turn for guidance. Many students probably have no adults in their lives to whom they can confide. Adolescents counsel adolescents.

Elementary teachers accepted "counselor" as one of their roles as teacher, but did not feel they were prepared to handle numerous serious problems among students. Teachers expressed frustration with governmental social support programs that failed to lend assistance when approached.

#### Academic Climate

The academic climate was considered to be better. Yet, the language described the climate as alienating. Textbooks were the curriculum. Tailoring instruction to the needs of students was interpreted as individualization of education as in special education. Some elementary teachers varied the rate and amount of work to be generated by students and considered this to be individualization. High school teachers expected all students to produce the same amount of work at the same rate.

The appropriateness of educational expectations or developmental differences were never mentioned. Student interest was mentioned more often. Interest made the job of teaching easier and more fun, but was only garnish to the curriculum. It would seem teachers wished students liked to learn, but accepted their reluctance as a norm. Students were not perceived as serious about learning. Students were often "made" to work or at least expected to produce work pages and assignments as evidence of their learning. Students were alienated from the purpose and process of learning and were most often apathetic or passively aggressive toward schooling. This was much more the case with older students, but there was evidence of student alienation even in early elementary students.

#### Student Testing

The testing of students directly or indirectly drives the curriculum in this school. Some of the elementary teachers and some teachers that teach electives in the junior/senior high place less emphasis on testing. Even teachers who exhibited professional confidence about their teaching and their students' learning, still struggled with the emphasis placed on testing in our society. They are concerned that they must prepare their students

to be "test wise". The future options and opportunities of students may depend on how well they take tests.

Most of the teachers that participated in the study placed a high degree of confidence in the ability of tests to statistically measure knowledge. Almost all participants support either high school exit testing or differentiated diplomas for graduating and completing high school. Some teachers are aware of problems of equity and fairness, but were either ambivalent about the issue or considered the benefits to outweigh costs.

#### School Autonomy

Once individual school districts has significant autonomy, but in the 1970s and 1980s schools have become less autonomous. The teachers in this study were basically supportive of state control of local schools when mandates were directed toward student and angry when mandates were directed toward teachers. Mandates toward teachers were meaningless, petty, and certainly alienating. Teachers did not trust local "powers" to make good educational decisions nor did they consider themselves part of the decision-making process.

Teachers expressed anger, resentment and a sense of helplessness toward legislative mandates. Participating teachers demonstrated compliance behavior and passive

aggression toward staff development, paperwork, teacher testing and evaluation. The behaviors were the same kinds of behaviors the teachers described students exhibiting. Mandating of education reform is a alienating experience.

### Salaries

Poor salaries and limited fiscal resources are the overreaching concerns and inhibitors to teachers seeking education alternatives. Teachers and administrators seem to be concerned with basic maintenance needs on a Maslow-type hierarchy scale of professional needs. It would seem that, even though it is well accepted that changes in how schooling is provided and experienced are not just economic issues, lack of basic school materials, supplies, class size, and compensation hinder the capacities of teachers to explore and/or implement options. Knowledge workers expect professional compensation.

The teachers seem to withdraw and struggle with real fiscal needs and the low self-esteem due to feelings of disrespect, lack of appreciation and exploitation. Teachers want to be appreciated and many of the teachers see their low professional salaries as lack of appreciation for their hard work. These feelings of low self

esteem are reinforced in working conditions that are isolated, stressful, drab, ill-kept, impoverished and, perhaps, often, meaningless.

Teachers are helplessly waiting to be rescued. This was more true of female teachers than male teachers. Male teachers in this study did not express the resentment, helplessness and need for appreciation that was expressed by most of the women.

We cannot examine the culture of schools and ignore that teaching is a female profession. Many of the overt and covert messages sent from the greater society, received and often accepted by teachers, are culture values. These values condone the treating of teachers who are basically women, as second-class people/professionals.

### Teacher Renewal

1980 reform efforts have mandated teacher renewal methodologies. There is no money budgeted for the development of innovative ideas, fellowships or travel. In-service workshops and graduate study are the organizational methodologies for teacher development. Teachers varied on their opinions as to the worth of staff development workshops.



It seemed clear from the interviews that even teachers that enjoyed the workshops did not experience pedagogical encounters that caused them to reflect on the purpose of education or how best to provide educational experiences. There were certainly no opportunities for personal growth experiences.

Teachers, whose language suggests that they were more reflective, less alienated and self-actualizing individuals, did not receive support from organized professional development efforts. These teachers seemed to discover qualities of self-renewal in isolation from other professionals and planned opportunities.

Teacher awards are appreciated, but they are often viewed with a skeptical eye. Awards may be attempts to satisfy teachers' needs for appreciation or considered tokens, and good for public relations. Recognition often makes other teachers feel even more unappreciated. Teachers that are recognized end up with hours of paperwork. Spontaneous personal words of appreciation are often more uplifting and meaningful.

### Teacher Involvement

The agenda that has guided reform efforts in the State of Oklahoma is aligned with the philosophical positions of A Nation at Risk. This agenda does not

recognize the necessity and possibly desirability of teacher involvement in local decision making. There is a functionalist, lineal view of education planning that the organization model for the functionalist agenda imposes on teachers. The teachers in this study generally accept this model as the only possibility and as an absolute reality. The organization of the hierarchal structure prohibits teachers from even expecting to participate in meaningful education dialogue and planning that goes beyond their classroom doors.

#### Working Condition

Of all the aspects that the researcher examined, the conditions in which the teachers work were perhaps the most revealing of why so little change occurs in education. The barbs that influence poor self esteem outside the school are compounded during the school day. It seemed even more so for the elementary teachers that participated in this study.

Teachers (primarily women) come early and stay late. They work in isolation for other adults. They work in overcrowded classrooms with children that bring to school a plethora of often serious emotional, social, physical, economic and academic problems. Teachers stop

and start their teaching to the helter skelter of the coming and going of students to special programs. They eat during their planning period. They work and plan with inadequate materials and supplies. They seldom stop from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. When they leave they take work with them and still leave much undone in the classroom.

Once these women are home, they begin their second work shift of mother wife, homemaker, etc. Most of these women not only assume the duties and responsibilities of their second job, they incooperate additional school related work into their hours away from school. Teachers also worry about problems their students are living.

The school culture is physically, mentally and emotionally stressful. Seldom is a word of encouragement or appreciation heard from administrators, parents or community members. Little wonder that many teachers do not critically examine education and educational issues.

#### Community and Parental Support

Community and parental support are viewed very differently among the teachers that participated in this study. It would seem that perhaps there are two major differences between the two extremes. One difference is their beliefs regarding the goodness of humankind. Those

teachers that expected to see good, found good. Those that expected to find less virtue, found less.

A second possibility seems to be a difference in a point of reference and degree of frustration. When teachers compared parenting skills of the parents of their students with their own parenting skills, many parents did not measure up. Yet, when teachers recognized the struggles many parents were confronting, teachers were less severe in their judgment. Regardless of which view of parents the teachers held, parent and community involvement is minimal and there are problems of alienation with all concerned.

#### Teacher Morale

Morale of teachers varied in relation to many factors. But, it seemed that some teachers were more adept at finding ways to renew themselves than others. Almost all of the teachers spoke of enjoying the act of teaching. Some teachers spoke of liking the students, some spoke of liking their subject area. Teaching did not seem to be an issue. Yet, the researcher sensed that when some of the participants spoke about how much they like what they do, they were not being truthful with themselves or with the researcher. There was too much

inconsistency between their moans and their statements about loving their jobs.

Morale problems were not identified as being with teaching. Morale problems were in regard to the multitude of factors that were beyond the teachers' spheres of influence that were demoralizing. Stress, class size, planning time, behavior problems and meaningless paperwork and committee work were all morale factors.

Salaries were the issue in substance and in perception. Teachers economically needed a real increase in monetary compensation. Teachers also needed and wanted the respect, appreciation and valuing that is associated with our society in relation to earned income.

### Conclusions

1. Change is hard to conceptualize and to articulate. There are no simplistic solutions to the problems of society that can be solved through simplistic educational mandates.

2. The teachers in this study are intellectually bright, articulate, and capable individuals. They work very hard and they are committed to being good teachers in the ways they define good teachers.

3. This research supports John Goodlad's (1983) conclusions that education will not significantly improve

until entire faculties are able to self-examine their professional views and practices.

4. This research supports and is supported by Carlson's (1987) position that teachers have the potential to be change-agents in education. Teachers can change education by "critically reflecting on their roles in the schooling process, theorizing about what could be, and working to promote specific changes consistent with a broad vision of a just society" (p.308). Through this process, education can be transformed rather than reformed.

5. Many of the participants have internalized a belief that their sphere of influence and concern stops at their classroom door.

6. The culture of a school inhibits or nurtures possibilities for change.

7. These teachers do not have a very positive self-image nor a very positive image of students, parents, administrators or other teachers.

8. From the perspective presented by these teachers, education and education reform is an alienating experience for teachers, students, parents, administrators and community members.

9. Education has instrumental and futuristic value to the teachers in this study. School goals are nebulous. Teachers conceptualize goals in terms of their classes. Classroom goals tend to be covering textbooks, preparation for next grade, course and/or achievement tests and academic success in college. (Only 20% of students actually attend college.)

10. Teachers feel powerless and want to be rescued by those with power.

11. Mandated reforms produce compliance and passive aggressive behavior for teachers and students.

12. The structure of the work environment must change before teachers will be able to examine personal and professional possibilities. This conclusion is supported by Bacharach's (1986) research.

13. The teachers in this study used closed-system thinking skills. The teachers exhibited the following characteristic of closed-system thinking: (1) they focused on things; (2) their goals were simple and clear; (3) they wanted the control of events to be in the hands of a leader (Combs, 1988). The teachers were unable to conceptualize and articulate alternative visions or possibilities for education.

14. The teachers in this study believe that students must be made to learn.

15. The teacher in this study are primarily at a survival state of professional-actualization.

16. Increased funding for education will not solve all the problems of education, but could create the possibility that problematic issues begin to be recognized. Currently, teachers are in a defensive and survivalist mind-set.

17. Until the financial deprivation of education as described in this study is addressed, there is no possibility that meaningful changes will occur in schools.

#### Recommendations

1. Further ethnographic research directed toward the views of teachers concerning each of the fourteen components in this research.

2. A longitudinal study in this school system as to how the view of teachers changes.

3. Further qualitative research conducted in the participating school. Research could be directed toward students and parents.



4. To promote changes in teaching, the researcher suggest that this research be coupled with the Fenstermacher's (1987) educative approach to changes in the beliefs and practices of classroom teachers. This approach focuses on what teachers want to do and why. Teachers then examine professional research literature in regard to these issues.

5. Research should be conducted as to how best to remove constraints such as those mentioned by the teachers in this study. "I don't know how"; "they won't let me"; "I don't want to change"; "no time, no money"; and "change is difficult;" "I just do what they tell me."

6. Indepth study of change theories.

7. Use this research and similar research to promote study, dialogue, reflection, possibilities and thoughtful planning regarding problematic educational issues.

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## APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH FINDINGS OF

THE 1988 CARNEGIE STUDY REPORT

CARD ON SCHOOL REFORM THE

TEACHERS SPEAK

## METHODOLOGY FOR THE 1988

## CARNEGIE STUDY

The data in this report were collected by the Wirthlin Group of McClean, Virginia. The survey instrument was mailed to 40,000 teachers in all fifty states on November 20, 1987; a follow-up mailing was sent to the same teachers on December 2. A total of 13,576 teachers returned questionnaires by January 22, 1988, for an overall completion rate of 33.9 percent.

The results of any sample survey are subject to sampling variations. The magnitude of the variations is measurable, and it is affected by a number of factors, including the number of completed questionnaires.

While the maximum sampling error for this survey is less than plus or minus 1 percent-.84 percent, to be exact-the actual error for any given question depends on the number of teachers who answered that question. In general, more than 95 percent of the teachers who returned the questionnaire answered each question.

A stratified random-sample design was used for this study. Teachers' names were drawn from alphabetized lists of public school teachers in each state. Market Data Retrieval of Shelton, Connecticut maintains

the lists, which include the names of about 75 percent of all public school teachers in the United States.

Every nth name was drawn from the lists, where "n" was determined to achieve a total sample size of 800 teachers for each state. Because the alphabetical order of names was not expected to have any relationship with the substance of their responses, the total sample size is comprised of simple random samples from each state.

Using a fixed sample size from each state does not allow for differences between states in terms of the total population of teachers. A weighting scheme was developed so that the survey response would represent the relative numbers of teachers, both at the elementary and secondary levels, in the fifty states.

The data collected by this survey will be available for public use in 1989. (Carnegie, 1988, p.85)

1988 CARNEGIE RESEARCH FINDINGS  
(In percentages)

If you were to give a grade to  
the education reform movement,  
what would it be?

A = 2  
B = 29  
C = 50  
D = 13  
F = 6

	Better	Worse	No Change
How have the following issues related to school goals changed at your school since 1983?			
a) Clarity of goals	76	5	19
b) Academic Expectations for Students	74	10	16
c) Leadership of Principal	56	20	24
How has student achievement in basic skills changed at your school since 1983?			
Math Skills	66	11	23
Reading Skills	64	13	23
Writing Skills	64	14	22
How have the following special programs changed at your school during the past five years?			
Programs for Disadvantaged	60	10	30
Programs for Gifted	58	11	31
Pre-Kindergarten Programs	44	7	49
Guidance Services	38	21	41
After-School Programs	32	13	55

	Better	Worse	No Change
How have the following conditions for learning changed during the past five years?			
Use of Technology	74	5	21
Textbooks and Instructional Materials	61	10	29
Instruction Tailored to Student Needs	58	8	34
Orderliness of Classrooms	42	16	42
Fiscal Resources Available to School	34	38	28
Seriousness of Students	32	30	38
Classroom Interruptions	27	22	51
How have the following working conditions of teachers changed at your school during the past five years?			
Scheduling Flexibility	31	30	39
Have Own Classroom	29	16	55
Lounge Space for Teachers	24	20	56
Freedom from Non-Teaching Duties	21	31	48
Typical Class Size	21	37	42
Time to Meet with Other Teachers	20	31	49
Daily Preparation Time	16	27	57
Daily Teaching Load	15	32	53
Study Space for Teachers	11	25	64
How, from your experience, has the morale of teachers changed since 1983?			
	23	49	28
Based on your own experience, how have the following changed since 1983?			
Partnerships with Business and Industry	45	7	48
Parental Involvement	41	19	40
Parental Support for Teachers	26	25	49
Community Respect for Teachers	25	27	48



	Increased	Decreased	No Change
How have the following academic requirements changed during the past five years?			
Core Requirements for			
Graduation	62	3	15
Science and Math	76	1	23
English and Literature	53	2	45
Social Studies	49	4	47
Foreign Languages	47	6	47
Arts	30	13	57
How has the testing of students at your school changed since 1983?			
Achievement Testing	63	4	33
Tests for Graduation or Promotion	50	3	47
How have the following issues related to school autonomy been changed by the reform movement?			
Political Interference in Education	59	4	37
State Regulation of Local School	57	5	38
Burden of Bureaucratic Paperwork	52	8	40
Based on your own experience, how have the following changed since 1983?			
Teacher Salaries	59	15	26
Career Ladder Arrangements	26	10	64
Job Security	25	16	59

Increased    Decreased    No Change

Based on your own experience,  
how have the following been  
affected by the reform  
movement?

In-service Education	51	15	34
Teacher Awards	29	15	56
Money to Support			
Innovative Ideas	29	29	42
Summer Fellowships	25	16	59
Teachers Travel Fund	13	34	53

Based on your own experience,  
how have the following been  
affected by the drive to  
improve schools?

Setting School Goals	58	11	31
Selecting Textbooks	53	5	42
Shaping Curriculum	51	10	39

APPENDIX B

LETTER INTERVIEW FOCUS QUESTIONS

AND PARTICIPATION REQUEST FORM

TO: [Name of School Removed] Classroom Teachers  
FROM: Martha Steger  
RE: Research participation in doctoral dissertation  
DATE: January 31, 1989

I wish to invite the teachers of this rural south central Oklahoma school district to participate in a research study concerning education and education reform in the 1980s. The purpose of this study is to present the views of classroom teachers regarding education and education reform. The focus is the presentation of your voices concerning your work and your vision for education.

My research role is not to place value judgments on your views, but to value your opinions as they are. My task is to seek clarity of understanding and accuracy of interpretation of your views of this research endeavor. The method to be used in collection of data will be the semi-formal interview. The value of the data will be dependent on our mutual trust and equal desire to examine and present your views, beliefs and visions concerning education.

I request a commitment of your time of up to but not more than four hours. For your participation in this study it is hoped that there will be personal and professional benefits for each participant that go beyond the contributing to the scholarly body of knowledge for the field of education. The researcher would hope that through the challenge of reflective thinking and collegial dialogue participants, including the researcher, will derive a richer understanding of their values, goals, and visions for the education of children. It is my understanding that research participants will have the opportunity to earn staff development points. I understand one point can be earned for each hour a teacher participates in the research.

Thank you for your time and for your consideration of participation in this research.

Martha Steger  
332-3542

## INTERVIEW FOCUS

The questions that follow provide focus for the interviews for this study. Follow up questions will come from the ambiance of each interview, but will likely relate to the focus questions. The framework questions for the first interview are provided so that participants will have the opportunity to promote dialogue with colleagues and time to reflect on their own views. The focus questions are:

- (1) Reform movement: If you were to give a grade to the education reform movement, what would it be?

- (2) School Goals: How have the following issues related to school goals changed at your school since 1983?

Clarity of goals  
Academic Expectations for Students  
Leadership of Principal

- (3) Student Achievement: How has student achievement in basic skills changed at your school since 1983?

Math Skills  
Reading Skills  
Writing Skills

- (4) Academic Requirements: How have the following academic requirements changed during the past five years?

Core Requirements for  
Graduation  
Science and Math  
English and Literature  
Social Studies

Foreign Languages  
Arts

- (5) New Programs, New Schedules: How have the following special programs changed at your school during the past five years?

Programs for Disadvantaged  
Programs for Gifted  
Pre-Kindergarten Programs  
Guidance Services  
After-School Programs

- (6) School Climate and Resources: How have the following conditions for learning changed during the past five years?

Use of Technology  
Textbooks and Instructional Materials  
Instruction Tailored to Student Needs  
Orderliness of Classrooms  
Fiscal Resources Available to School  
Seriousness of Students  
Classroom Interruptions

- (7) Student Testing: How has the testing of students at your school changed since 1983?

Achievement Testing  
Tests for Graduation or Promotion

- (8) School Autonomy: How have the following issues related to school autonomy been changed by the reform movement?

Political Interference in Education  
State Regulation of Local School  
Burden of Bureaucratic Paperwork

- (9) Salary and Job Security: Based on your own experience, how have the following changed since 1983?

Teacher Salaries  
Career Ladder Arrangements  
Job Security

- (10) Teacher Renewal: Based on your own experience, how have the following been affected by the reform movement?

In-service Education  
 Teacher Awards  
 Money to Support Innovative Ideas  
 Summer Fellowships  
 Teachers Travel Fund

- (11) Teacher Involvement: Based on your own experience, how have the following been affected by the drive to improve schools?

Setting School Goals  
 Selecting Textbooks  
 Shaping Curriculum

- (12) Working Conditions of Teachers: How have the following working conditions of teachers changed at your school during the past five years?

Scheduling Flexibility  
 Have Own Classroom  
 Lounge Space for Teachers  
 Freedom from Non-Teaching Duties  
 Typical Class Size  
 Time to Meet with Other Teachers  
 Daily Preparation Time  
 Daily Teaching Load  
 Study Space for Teachers

- (13) Teacher Morale: How, from your experience, has the morale of teachers changed since 1983?

- (14) Community and Parental Support: Based on your own experience, how have the following changed since 1983?

Partnerships with Business and Industry  
 Parental Involvement  
 Parental Support for Teachers  
 Community Respect for Teachers

(Report Card on School Reform The Teachers Speak, 1988),  
 pp.14-27.

APPENDIX C

LETTER OF APPRECIATION TO PARTICIPANTS

AND REQUEST FOR MORE INFORMATION

REGARDING PARTICIPANTS'

VISIONS



## M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Classroom Teachers

RE: Research Concerning the Views and Visions of  
Classroom Teachers

FROM: Martha Steger

I wish to thank the teachers who have participated or were willing to participate in the research conducted in your school this semester. Because of a desire to present a balance among elementary, secondary, and special programs teachers and also a balance among content areas in the high school and among grade levels in the elementary school, not all willing participants were interviewed. It is important to me that I convey my thanks and my appreciation to the teachers who participated or were willing to participate. I also want to thank the teachers who gave consideration to the interviews but were unable to make the time commitment this semester.

I requested of those teachers who were interviewed to give consideration to their visions for education in general and perhaps more specifically for their school. I have invited the participants to jot down their ideas as they have gone about their work over the last few weeks. I would like to extend the invitation to all the teachers in your school to join your colleagues in reflecting on your visions of what you desire education to become. It seems that perhaps as you complete the school year you tend to be more reflective about education. I would like to have the opportunity to present your ideas about the "oughts" of education in my research.

If you are willing to share your visions, please just make your views available to me by hand delivering or mailing them to the address below. I will be on campus Tuesday, May 23, 1989, during the noon hour and after school to provide the opportunity for you to hand deliver your notes and/or answer questions. Please remember that I am not concerned with an organized format. The concern is with being able to have access to your views. Notes on back of worksheets, grocery lists, or whatever, are just as appropriate and desired as any that would be more organized.

The opportunity to have been in your school and to interview teachers has been a professional and personal growth opportunity for me. It is my desire that the participating teachers gained from the experience and, in turn, dialogue concerning education and education reform has been promoted throughout your school. I hope that I will

have the opportunity to share with you my research findings this fall and to further promote dialogue within your school, within our profession and with other interested parties.

If you mail your notes, please mail to:

1331 Crestpark  
Ada, OK 74820  
Phone: 332-3542

In order to contact you for clarification, I would appreciate your name and a telephone number where you can be contacted this summer. If you wish to omit your name, please identify whether you teach in the elementary, junior high, high school or special programs department of your school.

APPENDIX D

EXCERPTS OF SCRIPTED INTERVIEW

## RESEARCH SCRIPT SAMPLE

**Participant:** I think a teacher is poorly equipped when she goes into the classroom. I had substituted, so I had an advantage over a lot of student teachers. I think they are doing better because they are having Clinical I and II and sifting some out. We have some that are filling the positions that probably shouldn't be with our kids. I hate to be so narrow-minded.

**Researcher:** Does staff development help?

**Participant:** I think we could be a little more particular about what we accept for staff development. A teacher ought to stay up with teaching, but some of the workshops are too shallow. Some are very, very good and some are just taking your time. But, I do think that teachers should be willing to learn all the time to better themselves.

**Researcher:** Have you given much thought to how best this can be done?

**Participant:** No, and I don't know who to put the responsibility on to decide what is deep enough or what is too shallow.

**Researcher:** Give that some thought as to how teachers should continue to grow. Okay? We will talk about it later.

**Participant:** One of my favorite places to go is only fifty miles away. It is usually the first week in June. They have very qualified teachers and you get 12 to 14 hours of staff development points. There are two whole days. It is magnificent! They have psychologists and you see them work with kids. I think teachers are like kids - they need hands-on experiences, rather than just lecture.

**Researcher:** If you had to give Oklahoma grade in reform, what would you give it?

**Participant:** Probably a middle "C". I hope that's fair.

**Researcher:** Do you see a clarity in the goals for education?

**Participant:** I don't think we have been specifically clear at all. It is 'hit here today and there tomorrow.' We do not stay on track with our objectives for education in Oklahoma. I think we are going to stick with this and get it ironed out and, before I know it, we have bounced up against something else.

**Researcher:** Can you think of a specific example?

**Participant:** This may be a muddled thought, but, class size. One year [at another school] I taught 42 sixth graders.

**Researcher:** One teacher?

**Participant:** Yes. They got around it by the principal taking the better math students out for forty minutes. That is all the help I got except when they went to P.E. and music. I ended up spending my planning period working with students. There wasn't enough time when you have that many. It was an awful year. I had two Board members kids in my classroom. They couldn't do anything about it because of the money. They couldn't hire another teacher. That year, all I heard was 'class-size, class-size'. Anyone knows that one person cannot teach that many kids.

Another teacher had 32 first graders and an aide. It was bad enough for sixth grade, but for first grade - that isn't fair to anyone. Children suffer too much.

**Researcher:** You think they jump around on goals? One year it is class size, another year testing, and so forth?

**Participant:** Right. And we are testing them to death. I am not a 'test' person - I really am not. One or two tests does not prove the performance of a child. There is no way. So why do we spend all the money on testing? Making kids apprehensive and parents competitive. I'm not for that. Now, with Special children - you need to refer them and they need to be tested. Just to test to see if this school is up to par with that school - I don't go for that. I have a box of tests waiting. I spent 2 hours getting those tests labeled and ready to go.

**Researcher:** What is the test?

**Participant:** The Otis Lennon and a math test.

**Researcher:** What is the Otis Lennon used for?

**Participant:** I don't know - interview the Counselor.

**Researcher:** You give achievement tests in every grade at your school, is that right?

**Participant:** Yes. I guess they do. I don't know too much about that. As I told you, if I can I run from paperwork. I'd really work with kids.

**Researcher:** How do you define your personal goals for the classroom?

**Participant:** I would like very much, though it's like living in a fantasy world, I would like to see every boy and girl achieve what he or she is capable of doing. Not on paper, but in just being happy and altogether as a student in years to come.

**Researcher:** So you see it as more than just teaching them to read and write?

**Participant:** Yes, definitely. Some of these kids need to know that someone cares about them - that someone has time for them.

VITA 2

Martha Truitt Steger

Candidate for the Degree of  
Doctor of Education

Thesis: TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS CONCERNING REALITIES AND  
VISIONS FOR EDUCATION REFORM

Major Field: Curriculum and Instruction

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in Logansport, Louisiana, March 22, 1948, the daughter of Garvin and Lucille Daw Truitt. Married to Eric K. Steger on June 7, 1969. Daughter, Jill Ellen, born January 25, 1980.

Education: Graduated from Center High School, Center, Texas, in May, 1965; received Bachelor of Science Degree from Stephen F. Austin State University in May, 1969; received Master of Education from East Central State University in May, 1976; received Master of Education from East Central State University in May 1986; completed requirements for Doctor of Education Degree at Oklahoma State University in May, 1990.

Professional Experience: Classroom teachers, Texas, 1969-1970; Oklahoma, 1971-1973; Louisiana, 1973-1974; Oklahoma, 1974-1980. Private tutor, Oklahoma, 1980-1986; learning disability practicum supervisor, East Central State University, summer, 1983; student teaching and entry year supervisor (part-time), East Central State University, 1985-1986; graduate assistant, Oklahoma State University, 1987-1989; Director of Developmental Education, Seminole Junior College, 1989-present.