

A COMPARISON OF SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS
OF READING PROGRAMS OF HIGH
AND LOW ACHIEVING RURAL
OKLAHOMA SCHOOLS

BY

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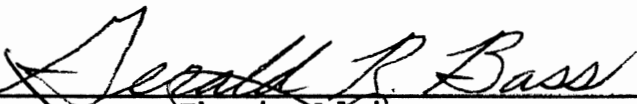
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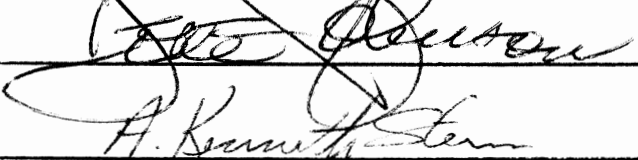
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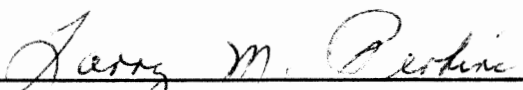
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Reading is generally considered a skill that is used throughout the lifetime of an individual. Becoming a skilled reader is a matter of practice, development, and refinement that begins early in life and is continuous throughout life (Anderson, Hiebert, Scott, & Wilkinson, 1985).

Reading is important for the society as well as the individual. The knowledge, skills, and problem solving ability developed through formal instruction in schools have an enduring value for individuals in society. A country receives a good return on its investment in education at all levels. However the returns are highest from the early years of school when children are first learning to read (Psacharapoulous, 1981). Chall (1983) wrote that, without the ability to read, excellence in high school and beyond is unattainable.

Based on what we now know, it is incorrect to suppose that there is a simple action or single step which, if taken correctly, will immediately allow a child to read. Becoming a skilled reader is a journey that involves many

elements. For large gains, many elements must be in place (Anderson et al., 1985).

Elementary schools, which consist of principals, teachers, students, and materials, provide students with fundamental reading skills which are usually taught through the use of basal readers (Anderson et al., 1985). Since becoming a skilled reader is a journey that involves many elements, it is most appropriate to examine the elementary school and the elements that comprise the reading program.

One of the ways of assessing the advancement of a student's reading skill is through the use of standardized achievement tests (Johnston, 1984). Reading achievement tests were first used by William S. Gray in 1915. These tests were an outgrowth of the scientific movement in education which began in the late 1800's. This movement produced school surveys which focused on the complete educational system and the development of objective measures for educational outcomes. Achievement tests are still a component of the educational system and reading scores are one indication of the success or lack of success of a reading program (Venezky, 1974).

Background

Chall (1985) stated that millions of children and adults have special problems in learning to read and tend

to remain behind others without problems in reading and other subjects. Various estimates indicate that the illiterates and adults who are only functionally literate make up a third or more of the population. Many of the problems of these individuals could be significantly lessened in the coming generations if the elements that have been identified as those that produce quality readers are used in every classroom. In classes where teachers stressed the development of comprehension and word meanings, read textbooks that were challenging, and read a variety of library books, students from low income and other "at risk" groups did not fall behind their peers in reading (Chall, 1985). Therefore, the more elements of good teaching and good schooling that children experience, the greater is the possibility that they will achieve their potential as readers.

Rauch (1974) wrote that successful reading programs depend upon a combination of factors. One is that the ultimate success of any program depends upon teachers who are prepared to teach reading and upon the amount of time specifically devoted to reading instruction, with special emphasis upon the direct and systematic teaching of skills. Another factor is the degree of administrator support of the reading program by providing the necessary time and materials for instruction, a realistic inservice program, and moral support for the program.

A standardized norm-referenced test provides data which

indicate relative rankings among students based on their performance (Farr, 1986). Such rankings yield comparisons of individuals' scores (as well as average scores for groups) with their peers at the class, grade, building, district, state, and/or national levels. Schools use achievement tests for two different reasons. First, specific information is needed on how students and classes perform on parts of the curriculum. Second, overall information is needed on how students or groups perform in the content areas of the curriculum. This provides a basis for monitoring progress, evaluating programs, and formulating general scholastic plans (Farr, 1986).

As a result of the passage of the Oklahoma Education Improvement Act of 1985, the Oklahoma State Testing Program (OSTP) was implemented in the 1985-86 school year. The OSTP was established by statute to employ a standardized, norm-referenced achievement test to measure the reading, mathematics, language arts, science, and social studies skills of public school students in grades three, seven, and ten statewide. The purpose of the OSTP was to improve instructional programs in all of Oklahoma's school districts.

The OSTP uses the Metropolitan Achievement Test, 6th Edition (MAT-6). The third-grade test, Elementary Level, includes three reading tests, vocabulary, word recognition skills, and reading comprehension. These three reading

tests combine to yield a Total Reading domain score. The seventh-grade test, MAT-6 Advanced 1, includes two reading tests, vocabulary and reading comprehension, which combine to yield a Total Reading score (Farr, 1986). Since this study will involve rural elementary schools, the Total Reading scores for grades three and seven are used.

The data from 1985-86 OSTP grades three, seven, and ten, reveal that in reading there is a decrease in performance levels as the students progress through the grades (Oklahoma State Department of Education, 1986a). A similar trend is experienced in reading achievement at the national level (National Commission On Excellence in Education, 1983). Oklahoma students' performance at grade three is significantly above the norm, while by grade seven such performance is only slightly above the norm (Oklahoma State Department of Education, 1986a).

The Oklahoma State Department of Education, Rural Cooperative Education Section, employs a definition of rural schools as those districts which have an average daily attendance of 800 or fewer students. Of the 610 school districts in Oklahoma, 78% are thus identified as being rural.

Statement of the Problem

This study will compare the differences between reading programs of high achieving and of low achieving rural

districts as identified by the Oklahoma School Testing Program in grades three and seven. Four questions will guide the study.

1. Are there differences in the educational backgrounds of teachers in high achieving and low achieving rural school districts?

2. Are there differences in selected elements of the reading programs of high achieving and low achieving rural school districts?

3. Are there differences in teachers' perceptions of the level of support by the administrator for the reading programs of high achieving and low achieving school districts?

4. Are there differences in the use of achievement tests in the reading programs of high achieving and low achieving rural school districts?

Limitations

This study will use only the results of the 1985-86 and 1986-87 Oklahoma School Testing Program to identify the high achieving and low achieving rural school districts. Therefore only those 40 specific districts, 20 high achieving and 20 low achieving, will be studied. A reading program consists of a large number of different elements. Only a selected set of those elements were used in this study. For example, different instructional materials are

used in the schools, so there can be no definite indication of how the variety of materials may have influenced the results.

Definitions of Terms

The following definitions of terms were utilized to clarify meaning throughout the study.

Basal Reading Series:

Basal reading series are complete packages of teaching materials prepared and distributed by a single publisher. They provide an entire reading curriculum (summarized in what is called a "scope and sequence chart"), instructional strategies for teaching reading (through teachers' manuals), a graded anthology of selections for children to read (through student readers), and practice exercises (through workbooks and skill sheets) (Anderson et al., 1985, p. 35).

Norm-Referenced Tests:

Norm-referenced tests are designed to measure the achievement of students on a scale that allows comparison to a national norm sample, which was selected to be representative of the nation's students in each of the grades tested (Farr, 1986, p.3).

Reading:

Reading is a process in which information from the text and the knowledge possessed by the reader act together to produce meaning (Anderson et al., 1985, p. 8).

Rural School District: A school district in Oklahoma in which the average daily attendance is 800 or less.

High Achieving Rural Districts: High achieving rural districts are the 20 rural school districts with the highest Total Reading scores in grades three and seven from

the 1985-86 and the 1986-87 Oklahoma School Testing Program.

Low Achieving Rural Districts: Low achieving rural districts are the 20 rural school districts with the lowest Total Reading scores in grades three and seven from the 1985-86 and the 1986-87 Oklahoma School Testing Program.

Standardized Tests:

Standardized tests are commercially published tests that contain a fixed set of items and have uniform procedures for administration and scoring (Anderson et al., 1985, p.95).

Summary

Chapter I has provided an introduction and statement of the problem. This study will attempt to identify the educational factors that could account for the differences in student reading achievement between high achieving districts and low achieving districts. Chapter II contains a review of the literature and Chapter III has a description of the research methods and procedures. Chapter IV includes information about low achieving districts while Chapter V describes high achieving districts. Chapter VI provides a comparison of the high achieving and low achieving school districts. Chapter VII includes the summary, conclusions, and recommendations of this study.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A review of the literature indicated that reading achievement depends upon a variety of factors. It has been demonstrated many times that nonschool factors have a direct relationship to student achievement. These factors lie beyond the direct influence of the school. Each school must work with the students it serves. While being aware of the importance of nonschool factors, there are school factors that have been reported to influence student reading achievement (New York State Office of Education, 1974). This review of the literature reports on those areas that the school can influence, and by that influence thus affect student achievement in reading. The first section addresses effective reading programs while the second contains information about reading materials and instruction. The third portion of the chapter reviews administrator support of the reading program and the final section considers the use of achievement test scores.

Effective Reading Programs

The characteristics of effective reading programs were summarized by Hoffman and Rutherford (1984). Their summary

included research by Brookover and Lazotte (1979); Brookover, Beady, Flood, Schweitzer, and Wisenbaker (1979); and Venezky and Winfield (1979). The results of these studies indicate that effective reading programs contain at least three basic dimensions that are suited to any method or approach. First, there are well-stated goals. The program provides for continuous student progress through the curriculum and the programs are established and in place for an extended period before the effects on achievement can be seen. Second, the leader establishes reading as a priority, monitors the program, provides support for the program, and makes use of test results. Third, if a child fails to learn to read, it is considered to be a shortcoming in the school program rather than a problem in the child. The teachers believe that the students will be successful in learning to read and the teachers are businesslike in their relations with the students. The teachers are accountable for student learning.

Materials Used

A basal reader series is the organizational form around which the majority of reading instruction is done (Spache & Spache, 1986). Basal reading series are the most widely used approach to providing material for the teaching of reading in the United States. Spache and Spache (1986) found that 95% to 98% of primary grade teachers and 80% of

intermediate grade teachers used basals almost every school day. In fact, in more than half of American classrooms, the basal reader was the only source of instructional reading material.

A basal reading series provides an entire reading curriculum for teaching reading from kindergarten through grade six. Included in such a series are all of the essential instructional materials: readers, tests, workbooks, and reinforcement materials. Proponents of the basal reader approach claim that students benefit from such systematic and comprehensive organization of the reading curriculum (Anderson et al., 1985).

Durkin (1984) explains the content of the basal reading program.

The core of a basal lesson is a selection in the reader. For each selection, the teachers' manual summarizes the content, identifies the new vocabulary, offers suggestions on how to teach new words, provides background information to help students comprehend or acquire interest in reading the selection, and suggests at least one prereading question.

The manuals propose that the children read the selection silently, after the prereading activities. In the early grades, children are to read a page at a time and the teacher is to ask manual-supplied questions after each page. In later grades, children read larger amounts of a selection without interruption. Again, the manual proposes comprehension assessment questions for each part and lists more questions for use after the entire selection has been read.

For primary grades, the manuals next suggest that the children read the selection aloud. Once more the manual provides comprehension questions for each page of text and for a postreading

discussion. Oral reading is generally recommended less often for later grades.

The next segment in the manuals deals with skill development. Skill development sections deal with instruction and practice--mostly practice--and cover topics like decoding, word meanings, and comprehension, referring to workbook and worksheet assignments. The manuals also include sections called something like "Providing for Individual Differences," consisting of more practice exercises that are usually similar to, but easier than, the skills development practice (p. 735).

Stauffer's Directed Reading Activity (DRA) has five steps: (1) developing readiness by linking what the students already know (experience) to what they are going to read about, by stimulating interest and by identifying a general motive (purpose setting) for reading; (2) guiding the first silent reading; (3) developing word recognition and comprehension; (4) rereading for specific answers and text organization patterns; and (5) providing skill development (Stauffer & Hammond, 1969).

In the primary grades, teachers group students for reading. They usually have three reading groups: high, middle, and low. These groups tend to remain approximately the same size throughout the school year (Spache & Spache, 1986). Teachers usually form these groups during the first few weeks of school. They use test results, examine the previous years' reading records, listen to students read from various levels of materials, and use their own observations to form the groups.

The primary teacher emphasizes word recognition through

phonics or context or picture clues. In the primary grades the students learn approximately 2,500 words (Spache & Spache, 1986). During the daily one or two reading periods, the teacher works separately with each reading group. While the teacher is engaged with one group, the other groups are involved in seatwork. Small group instruction is necessary with beginning reading instruction because it is essential that each individual student read aloud so that the teacher can monitor reading progress.

The intermediate grade teacher emphasizes word recognition through structural analysis and context clues. At the intermediate level 1,200 to 1,500 words will be added to the students' reading vocabulary (Spache & Spache, 1986). The average intermediate grade teacher devotes less time to direct instruction in reading, averaging six to ten hours per week or less, with a larger proportion of this instruction being given to reading in science, social science, and English textbooks. The teacher makes less use of the basal workbooks, although about 60% of these classrooms continue to use this tool every day or two. At the intermediate level, both teachers and administrators may feel freer to modify the program because of the greater maturity of the pupils and their subsequent ability to work more independently for longer periods of time.

Analysis by Mason (1983) revealed that 75% to 80% of instructional events involve giving directions for, or checking the accuracy of, worksheets or lists of words

placed on a chalkboard. That is, a large proportion of instructional time consists of drills and exercises from workbooks, chalkboard, or skill sheets.

Rosenshine and Stevens (1984) found that students who spent most of their time being instructed by their teachers or working independently under supervision, in small groups of eight in the first grade and nine or more in the third grade, made greater gains than students who spent time in nonacademic activities. The California Early Childhood Study (California State Department of Education, 1975) reported that students made greater gains when they spent more time in reading and their teacher spent more time actively involved instructing in small groups. Although instruction can be conducted effectively in either the small-group or the large-group setting, reading achievement gain is linked to frequent active instruction in reading by the teacher (Glass & Smith, 1978). In later grades, lessons typically are presented to the entire class and involve applications of basic skills or consideration of more abstract content (Brophy & Good, 1984). Overt participation is less important than factors such as teachers' structuring of the content.

A major instructional component in most elementary reading programs is independent seatwork activities. These usually involve students' written responses in commercial workbooks and worksheets or in teacher-made materials

(Rupley & Blair, 1987). Students spend up to 70% of the time allocated for reading instruction in independent practice or "seatwork." This can total an hour per day in the average classroom. Children often spend considerably more time with their workbooks than they do receiving instruction from their teachers (Anderson et al., 1985). Duffy (1982) reported that evidence tends to support the concept that teachers of elementary reading may not be operating as instructional designers. Rather, the materials, and particularly basal readers and workbooks, may be governing instructional practices. Classroom teachers and principals believe that commercial materials are based on research and that the materials can teach children to read. Classroom teachers reported that they were meeting administrators' expectations when they used commercial materials .

Leinhardt, Zigmond, and Cooley (1981) found that one strategy for improving reading instruction would be to increase the amount of time students spend reading (preferably reading silently). They found that an increase of five minutes per day of silent reading time produced a one-month gain in achievement per school year. Independent reading was a major source for learning the meanings of new words and provided practice in the whole act of reading. Research also suggests that the frequency with which students read in and out of school depends upon the priority classroom teachers give to independent reading

(Anderson et al., 1985). An estimate of time devoted to silent reading in the typical primary school classroom is seven or eight minutes per day, or less than ten percent of the total time devoted to reading (Allington, 1983). By the middle grades, silent reading may average 15 minutes per school day.

Independent reading is important to the total reading program because it supports the theme that children learn to read by reading. Schoolwide independent reading can have a positive impact on students' reading habits and the building principal can be a major supporter of this portion of the reading program (Sanacore, 1988).

Students are more likely to learn what they are taught than what they are not taught. Teachers who allocate more instructional time to reading produce readers with higher achievement (Allington, 1983). Simply stated, students will not master basic reading skills unless they are given the opportunity to do so. Opportunity to learn is perhaps the most powerful variable in education (Blair, 1984). Regardless of how content was determined--textbook pages, or number of books read--there was a significant relationship between the amount of content covered and achievement scores. Barr (1982) reported that more than 80% percent of the variance in reading scores (using tests of basal reading achievement) was accounted for by the amount of content covered. Content coverage was related to

opportunity to learn because exposure to larger amounts of content constituted greater opportunity.

Wyne and Stuck (1982) concluded that the available evidence shows that time on task is a powerful variable capable of influencing student achievement. The evidence is equally convincing that it is the classroom teacher who will ultimately determine the quality and quantity of time on task and, consequently, the school learning performance of students. Barr (1974) found that whether the teacher chose to instruct the class as a unit or in instructional groups appeared to influence the ongoing pace of instruction both in the average amount of material covered and in the differing amount of material covered by pupils within a class.

The class organization, once established, is highly stable and continues in essentially the same form throughout the remainder of the school year. Since groups differed widely in the number of stories they read per week, the basal story as a unit was not the determining factor. Good readers read about three times as many words per day in the reading group as did poor readers. Additionally, 70% of this reading is done silently by the good readers, but orally by the poor readers (Barr, 1974).

The amount of silent reading was the best predictor of school reading achievement in studies of 14 high and 14 low achievement school districts (Clark, 1977). The simple efficiency of silent reading, more words read per minute

compared with oral reading, is an argument in its favor (Harris & Sipay, 1980).

Administrator Support

There are three critical managerial competencies required for the principal in improving reading instruction (Barnard & Hetzel, 1976). These are goal focusing, resource allocation, and program monitoring. A principal demonstrates that reading goals are important by attending meetings about reading, talking to individual teachers about the reading program, and emphasizing reading at each faculty meeting. Program monitoring is most effectively carried out when teachers have identified those tasks which are necessary to provide reading services to students. These tasks may include objectives, assessment, organization of materials, classroom management, and an evaluation system. A principal's commitment is best reflected by the manner in which time, space, personnel, and materials are allocated at the school level. Reading must have priority in the budget. Simply asking faculty if there is anything the principal can do to assist them with the reading program will keep reading instruction as a high priority.

Anderson et al. (1985) wrote that administrator leadership in instruction was associated with academic success. Numerous researchers such as Weber (1971), The

New York State Study (1976), Edmonds (1979), and Brookover et al. (1979) cited by Pearson (1984) reported involvement and interest in instruction by the principal was a typical characteristic of an effective school.

The California School Effectiveness Study (California State Department of Education, 1975) reported that the importance of the teacher's perception of administrative support for the reading program was one of the strongest factors influencing achievement. Teachers in higher achieving schools consistently reported that principals gave them greater support in instructionally-related areas, such as provision of adequate materials.

DeBevoise (1984) interpreted the concept of instructional leadership to include those actions that a principal takes to promote student learning. These include providing the resources needed for learning to occur and coordinating staff development.

Use of Achievement Tests

Calfee (1987) suggested that standardized tests, used intelligently as part of an overall evaluation, are significant indicators of educational progress. Rutter (1983) wrote that the norm-referenced standardized tests may well be most appropriate for the evaluation of the effectiveness of elementary schools. By their nature, such tests are designed to assess skills across the whole range of the curriculum. Hoffman and Rutherford (1984) wrote

that, while there are many shortcomings in using norm-referenced tests in program evaluation, they are at least potentially sensitive to changes in performance of all students. The school staff which uses norm-referenced measures can focus improvement efforts on all levels of goals and students in the program and the results of these efforts have the potential to be reflected in the tests being used in evaluation.

It should be obvious that an accurate measure of academic achievement is dependent on the degree of overlap between the content covered (what was taught) and the achievement test (what was measured) (Berliner, 1981). Based upon the theory that achievement tests ought to assess what is actually taught in the classroom, the Metropolitan Achievement Test, 6th edition, was developed to provide accurate, dependable data concerning students' achievement in the key areas of the curriculum. The teachers' manual of that test includes a chapter that details what is measured on the reading test and provides a compendium of objectives which teachers are encouraged to use (Farr, 1986). If children score poorly on standardized tests, it may be that reading instruction across the entire curriculum needs to be improved as well as basal reading instruction (Flood & Lapp, 1987).

Summary

A program that has well-stated goals, provides for continuous support from the principal, and has been in place for an extended period of time provides a basis for measuring achievement. Placement of students in materials, grouping for reading instruction, use of the basal reader series, direct instruction, and independent reading are aspects of the reading program that need attending to each day. The teacher's perception of administrator support and of the reading program as a whole promotes focus on goals, progress of the students, and continuing achievement.

CHAPTER III

METHOD AND PROCEDURE

The purpose of this study was to compare the educational background of the teachers, selected elements of the reading programs, administrator support of the reading program, and the use of achievement tests of high achieving and low achieving rural school districts in Oklahoma. This chapter will describe the population, instrumentation, data collection, and analysis of data.

Population

The populations in this study consist of the 20 high achieving and the 20 low achieving rural school districts in Oklahoma. Rural school districts have an average daily attendance of 800 or less. High achieving and low achieving rural districts have been further identified using the MAT-6 Total Reading scores, for grades three and seven, as part of the Oklahoma School Testing Program in 1986 and 1987. High achieving rural school districts are the 20 rural school districts with the highest Total Reading scores, those having three out of the four scores that were available from the testing program, at or above the 62nd percentile. Low achieving rural school districts

are the 20 school districts that have been identified as having the lowest Total Reading scores on the MAT-6 (three of the four scores at or below the 40th percentile).

Instrumentation

A teacher questionnaire was designed to gather information about the instructional staff, selected elements of the reading program, and administrator support of the reading program as perceived by the teachers. A copy of this questionnaire is included in Appendix A. A draft of the original questionnaire was reviewed by four experts, two with doctorates in reading and two with reading specialist certification and employed as elementary school administrators, for validity. The revised questionnaires were completed by a selected group of elementary practitioners for reliability purposes. All suggestions for improvements to the questionnaire were made and this final revised version (Appendix A) was used in the study.

Data Collection and Analysis

Copies of the questionnaire were mailed to 40 rural school districts along with a letter of explanation. A copy of this letter is in Appendix B. A copy of the questionnaire was to be given to one teacher in each of grades one through six. One week later all of the districts from which questionnaires had still not been

returned, were contacted by telephone. Additional questionnaires were mailed to those who had not received them. At the end of three weeks all of the schools that had not returned the questionnaires were called. Additional questionnaires were mailed a second time to those who could not locate their originals. At the end of four weeks all of the schools were called once again and asked to return their questionnaires.

All information concerning average daily attendance, assessed valuation of school property, minority enrollment, participation in the National School Lunch Program, and the results of the Oklahoma School Testing Program is a matter of public record in Oklahoma. Figures of ADA and assessed valuation of property are reported in the annual statistical reports published by the Oklahoma State Department of Education.

When the surveys were returned, responses were tallied and the totals and percents were reported. Chapter III has described the sample that was studied, the instrument that was used and the data collection and data analysis.

Summary

Chapter IV reports the analysis of the data from both the questionnaire and the State Department summary in regard to low achieving school districts. Chapter V reports the analysis of the data for high achieving school districts.

Chapter VI compares low achieving and high achieving school districts and chapter VII includes a summary, conclusions, and recommendations.

CHAPTER IV

LOW ACHIEVING RURAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Low achieving rural school districts have been defined in this study as the 20 rural school districts in Oklahoma with the lowest Total Reading scores from the 1985-86 and the 1986-87 Oklahoma School Testing Program. Questionnaires, designed to gather information about teacher characteristics and elements of the reading program, including administrator support of the reading program, inservice opportunities, and the use of achievement tests, were sent to these 20 school districts for distribution to classroom teachers in grades one through six. Responses were received from 12 of the 20 school districts for a total of 39 usable questionnaires. This chapter provides a description of the districts through the information from the questionnaires as well as data from other sources. Achievement, elements of the reading program, and demographic factors will be reported as they relate to these 20 low achieving rural school districts.

Achievement

The Oklahoma School Testing Program was initiated in the 1985-86 school year and has continued to be administered. This study used the test results from the 1985-86 and 1986-87 school years. In the spring of 1986, the average Total Reading scores in Oklahoma for third grade was at the 60th percentile while that average score for seventh grade was at the 54th percentile. The average Total Reading score in Oklahoma in the spring of 1987 was at the 62nd percentile for the third grade and at the 55th percentile rank for the seventh grade. Total Reading scores, from grades three and seven for each of the two years, were used to identify these low achieving districts. The annual test reports (Oklahoma State Department of Education, 1986a, 1987a) were the sources for these scores. These 20 low achieving school districts had scores at or below the 40th percentile on three out of the four Total Reading scores for each of the two grades in the two years of testing. The Total Reading scores for the 20 low achieving districts ranged from the 10th percentile to the 61st percentile. Of the 80 scores, 48% were below the 30th percentile. Only six scores (eight percent) were above the 50th percentile.

Elements of the Reading Program

Reading programs depend upon a combination of elements. Teachers who are adequately prepared to teach reading, the amount of time devoted to reading instruction, the direct and systematic teaching of skills, and the administrator support of the reading program are elements that are necessary for successful reading (Rauch, 1974). This section contains a description of these and other elements in the reading programs of the low achieving school districts.

Instructional and Support Personnel

Questions one through six of the questionnaire were used to collect information about the teachers, including age level, educational background, and the number of years of experience in the teaching profession. The data from these questions are reported in Tables I through IV.

Table I displays the age and gender of those teachers in low achieving school districts. Of the 39 teachers, 34 (86%) were female. Five male teachers were included which represented 14% of those responding. The largest group of teachers were in the 30-39 age group. Only five of the teachers (13%) were 50 years of age or older, while eight (23%) were under 30.

TABLE I
AGE AND GENDER OF TEACHERS

Gender	Age					Total Teachers (By Gender)
	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	
Female	7	18	6	2	1	34
Male	1	2	0	2	0	5
Total Teachers (By Age)	8	20	6	4	1	39

The data on the highest degree reported as having been earned indicate that 83% of the teachers had earned only a bachelors degree while 15% had earned a masters degree. Of the 39 teachers reporting, only 1 indicated having earned a doctorate.

The number of hours of college credits earned in reading is one indication of the professional preparation of teachers to teach reading. Table II summarizes this information as reported by the teachers in low achieving rural school districts.

The teachers had completed an average of ten hours of undergraduate reading courses, with a range of 0 to 21 hours of credit. An average of 12 graduate credit hours in reading was reported by 14 teachers, with a range from 4 to 44 hours. Of those responding, 38% had earned no

graduate credit in reading, while 23% had earned more than 12 hours of graduate credit.

TABLE II
HOURS OF UNIVERSITY CREDITS EARNED IN READING

Number of Reading Credits Earned	Number of Teachers Receiving Credit	
	Undergraduate	Graduate
0	1	10
1-6	6	6
7-12	12	5
13-18	3	1
19-24	6	2
25-30	0	1
31+	0	1
(No Response)	11	13
Total	39	39

The length of time the teachers had spent in the teaching profession is presented in Table III. The average number of years of service in the present system for all teachers was seven years. The range was from 1 to 21 years. The average length of total experience for the 38 respondents was ten years. The range was from 1 to 31 years.

TABLE III
 TIME IN PRESENT DISTRICT AND TOTAL TIME IN
 THE TEACHING PROFESSION

Years	Number of Teachers Reporting Experience	
	In Present District	In All Districts
1-6	20	8
7-12	13	18
13-18	5	6
19-24	1	4
25-30	0	1
31+	0	1
(No Response)	0	1
Total	39	39

Support personnel in the classroom provide teachers and students with an opportunity to spend additional instructional time on reading. Teachers were asked to report the amount of time and the type of assistance that was available to them on a weekly basis. As shown in Table IV, only 12 of the teachers reported having assistance with the reading program.

TABLE IV
 AVAILABILITY OF SUPPORT PERSONNEL
 FOR THE READING PROGRAM

Type of Personnel	Number of Teachers Reporting	Average Hours of Assistance (Per Week)
Paid aides	6	11
Parent volunteers	2	3
Older students	1	1
Other volunteers	3	15
None	25	0
No response	2	0

In the "other volunteers" category, one teacher listed foster grandparents as her support personnel and the others did not specify. Of those who did report support personnel, it would appear there was someone to assist the teacher for a minimum of two hours a day.

Materials

In response to question eight on the questionnaire, seven different reading series were reported as being used as the primary basal readers in the schools. They are, in alphabetical order, Economy, Ginn, Houghton Mifflin, Macmillan, Riverside, Scott Foresman, and Rand McNally. In

response to question nine, teachers reported that other available reading materials included phonics books, workbooks, duplicating masters, Weekly Readers, SRA Reading Labs, library books, newspapers, magazines, skills packets, filmstrips, charts, computers, tape recorders, language experience charts, Readers Digest Skill Builders, Read to Succeed, and New Practice Readers. Eleven teachers reported that they had only their basals to use and had no additional reading material.

When asked to report the percentage of pages in the basal series workbooks that were used, primary teachers reported using 59% of the workbook pages and intermediate teachers reported using 68%. While one basal series did not have a workbook, those teachers reported using comprehension skills duplicating materials to accompany that series on the average of four pages per week. Primary teachers indicated that their students each did approximately eight reproduced pages per week and intermediate teachers indicated that their students each did approximately six reproduced pages per week.

Classroom Practices

Information about a number of classroom practices was gathered from the instrument. These practices included placement of students in reading materials, the number of reading groups in the classroom, instructional time, use of

the teachers' manual, time for independent reading, recent changes in the reading program, and administrator support of the reading program.

Grouping. Question 16 from the instrument requested data concerning the sources of information that teachers used when assigning students to reading groups. Table V provides a summary of the responses. The figures in each

TABLE V

SOURCES OF INFORMATION USED BY TEACHERS
IN FORMING READING GROUPS

Source of Information	Teachers Using Each Source	
	Number	Percent
Achievement tests	12	31
Teacher-made tests	18	46
Basal series tests	13	33
Permanent records	8	21
Other sources	7	18
(Do not group)	4	10

column represent more than the total of teachers who responded because more than one source could be checked. Because of the total number of responses, it is apparent a number of teachers use more than one source of information

to placing students in appropriate reading materials and groups. Teacher-made tests, achievement tests, and basal series tests appear to be those sources most frequently used by teachers in low achieving school districts. Teachers who checked the "Other sources" response listed recommendation of previous teacher, listening to individual students read, and the Gates MacGinite Reading Test as sources of information.

The number of groups in each classroom ranged from one to seven. Three teachers reported that they taught each child individually. Primary teachers averaged three reading groups per class and intermediate teachers averaged two reading groups per class. In response to question 19, 14 teachers indicated that they used a different basal reading series with each of their reading groups, 22 teachers indicated they used the same basal reading series with all their groups, and 3 did not respond.

Instructional Time. Teachers reported that they taught reading for a total of from 25 minutes per week to 16 hours per week. Primary teachers averaged eight hours per week and intermediate teachers averaged five hours per week. Primary teachers reported using their teachers' manuals 62% of the time while intermediate teachers used their teachers' manuals 45% percent of the time to guide their teaching of reading. No one reported not using the manuals to teach reading.

Questions 14 and 15 asked for information about independent reading. Teachers reported that their students read independently in school from none at all to three hours per day. While primary teachers indicated that their students averaged 80 minutes reading independently in reading and 53 minutes reading independently in all other subjects, intermediate teachers indicated that their students spent 29 minutes reading independently during reading and 55 minutes reading independently in all other subjects.

TABLE VI
CHANGES MADE IN READING PROGRAMS
DURING THE PAST FIVE YEARS

Types of Changes	Teachers Reporting Changes	
	Number	Percent
Computers	4	10
Departmentalization	1	2
Library books	1	2
New basals	11	28
Newspapers	1	2
Reading skills books	1	2
SRA labs	2	5
(No changes)	17	44
(No response)	5	13

As noted in Table VI, changes in the reading program in the past five years were reported by 19 teachers. Seventeen teachers indicated that no changes in the reading program had been made in the past five years and three did not respond. The reported changes included departmentalization, new basal series, new library books, newspapers, reading level skills series, computers, and SRA Labs.

Some teachers reported that more than one change had taken place in the past five years. Because of this, the number of responses is greater than the number of teacher questionnaires that were received. This also accounts for the percent being greater than 100.

Administrator Support. Questions 21 through 24 asked the teachers to respond to information about their principal. The number of years the same person had served in the district as principal ranged from 1 to 28 years. The average tenure was 11 years.

Responses of 18 (46%) teachers indicated that their principals talked to them, as individuals, about reading. They talked about improving the reading program, methods and materials, how the students were progressing in reading, improving grouping techniques, and improving test scores. The same number of teachers (18) indicated that their principal did not talk to them about reading. The remaining teachers did not respond to that item.

Reading was reported to be discussed by the principal

in staff meetings by 15 teachers, while 21 indicated that reading was not discussed and 3 teachers did not respond. Those who responded affirmatively described the frequency of such discussions in these terms: seldom, when necessary, two or three times a year, twice a year, once a month, and monthly.

While 29 teachers (74%) reported that the principal provided them with the necessary basic instructional material, 5 reported that the principal did not provide the basic instructional material and 5 did not respond.

Inservice. Reading inservice was available at least once a year to 24 teachers, while 9 teachers did not have a reading inservice available and 6 did not respond. When asked if the principal would provide a reading inservice if requested, 32 teachers responded affirmatively, 3 responded negatively and 4 did not respond. In response to the 28th question, 22 teachers reported having a schoolwide reading motivation activity, 14 reported there was not a schoolwide reading motivation activity, and 3 did not respond.

Achievement test results and their instructional implications were not usually discussed by the principal in a staff meeting. In response to the question about achievement test results, 15 teachers indicated there was a staff meeting held to discuss achievement test results, 18 teachers indicated there was no such meeting to discuss achievement test results, and 6 teachers did not respond.

Demographics

Information about the location, enrollment, percent of minority students, per pupil expenditure, and participation in the National School Lunch Program in low achieving school districts is presented in this section and was taken from the Oklahoma State Department of Education Annual Report 1985-86, and other Oklahoma State Department data.

The geographic divisions of the state used in this study were delineated by Interstate Highway 40, dividing north from south, and Interstate Highway 35 dividing east from west. Considering the geographic locations of the low achieving school districts, it was found that none were in the northwest section of the state, while three were in the southwest, nine in the northeast, and eight in the southeast.

The average daily membership in low achieving school districts ranged from a low of 62 to a high of 458. Three schools had an enrollment of 1 to 99 , 10 schools from 100 to 199, 2 schools 200 to 299, 4 schools from 200 to 299, 4 schools from 300 to 399, and 1 school from 400 to 499. In low achieving school districts, the percent of minorities, which include native born Americans, Blacks, Hispanics, and Asians, ranged from a low of 6% to a high of 100% of all students in grades 1 through 12. Fifty percent of the low achieving school districts had over half

of their student population represented by minorities. The relationship of race and socioeconomic status to achievement has been studied for decades. Research has indicated that relationships do exist (Coleman et al., 1975). In order to more clearly understand and picture those students in low achieving rural school districts, data on per pupil expenditure and percent of students on free or reduced lunches were collected. The average per pupil expenditure in Oklahoma in the 1986-87 school year was \$2,817 (Oklahoma State Department of Education, 1987). The per pupil expenditure in the low achieving school districts ranged from a low of \$2,426 to a high of \$4,984. One half of the low achieving school districts were below the state average and one half of them were above the state average.

All of the low achieving school districts had students eligible for participation in the National School Lunch Program. The range of student participation was from a low of 41% percent of all students to a high of 96%. There were 18 low achieving school districts that had 50% or more of their students eligible for the National Lunch Program.

Summary

Based upon the data reported in this chapter, the following is a description of a typical low achieving rural school district in Oklahoma. The district is located in

the eastern part of the state and has an enrollment of 100 to 199 students in grades K-12. The average attendance is 95%, and the per pupil expenditure is between \$2,501 and \$3,500. Approximately 50% of the student population is eligible for the Federal Lunch Program and approximately 50% of the student population consists of minority students.

The majority of the teachers are female, between 30 and 39 years of age, have taught seven years in the present system and have approximately ten years of teaching experience. The teachers typically have a bachelor's degree, have completed three undergraduate reading courses and may have completed a graduate course in reading.

The teachers may use achievement tests, teacher-made tests, or basal series tests to place students in reading groups. In the primary grades it is most common to find three reading groups and in the intermediate grades two reading groups.

All of the teachers use the basal reading series as their primary teaching source. The teachers' manual is used 62% of the time in the primary grades and 48% of the time in the intermediate grades to guide reading instruction. Primary teachers teach reading eight hours per week while intermediate teachers teach reading five hours per week. Primary students complete 59% of their workbook pages and intermediate students are assigned 68%

of their workbook pages.

Students do read independently. Primary teachers have their students read independently for approximately two hours each day and intermediate teachers have their students read independently approximately one and one-half hours per day.

The principal may or may not talk to the individual teachers about reading. While the teachers may or may not have a reading inservice available to them each year, most would report that, if asked, their principal would provide a reading inservice for them. The basic reading instructional materials are provided for the teachers. Schoolwide reading motivational activities are not done on a regular basis.

CHAPTER V

HIGH ACHIEVING RURAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS

High achieving rural school districts have been defined in this study as the 20 rural school districts in Oklahoma with the highest Total Reading scores from the 1985-86 and the 1986-87 Oklahoma School Testing Program. Information about teacher characteristics, elements of the reading program, including administrator support, inservice opportunities, and the use of achievement tests, was gathered by having teachers respond to a questionnaire. The questionnaires were sent to these 20 school districts for distribution to teachers in grades one through six. Usable questionnaires were received from 15 of the 20 school districts for a total of 58 teacher responses. This chapter will describe the school districts and summarize the information from the questionnaires. Achievement, elements of the reading program, and demographics will be described as they relate to these twenty high achieving rural school districts.

Achievement

The Oklahoma School Testing Program was initiated in the 1985-86 school year and has continued to be

administered. The test results from the 1985-86 and 1986-87 school years were used in this study. In the spring of 1986, the average Total Reading score in Oklahoma for third grade was at the 60th percentile rank and the average seventh grade was at the 54th percentile rank. The average Total Reading score in Oklahoma in the spring of 1987 for the third grade was at the 62nd percentile rank and the average seventh grade was at the 55th percentile rank. The Total Reading scores from grades three and seven from each of the two years were used to identify these high achieving school districts. The annual test reports (Oklahoma State Department of Education, 1986a, 1987a) was the source for these scores. These 20 high achieving school districts had scores at or above the 64th percentile on three out of four of the available scores. The Total Reading scores ranged from a low at the 60th percentile to a high at the 90th percentile. All of the scores were above the 60th percentile and 70% of the scores were above the 70th percentile.

Elements of The Reading Program

As reported in the previous chapter, Rauch (1974) reported that reading programs depend upon a combination of elements. This section presents data collected from the 58 usable questionnaires received from 15 high achieving school districts. The data are organized into four sections: instruction and support personnel, materials,

classroom practices, and demographics.

Instructional and Support Personnel

Questions one through six of the questionnaire were used to collect information about the teachers, including age level, educational background, and the number of years of experience in the teaching profession. Tables VII through IX report these data.

TABLE VII
AGE AND GENDER OF TEACHERS

Gender	Age					Total Teachers (By Gender)
	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	
Female	9	21	14	10	2	56
Male	0	1	0	1	0	2
Total Teachers (By Age)	9	22	14	11	2	58

The teachers were 97% female and 3% male. The age range was from 23 to 61. There were 38% represented in the age group of 30 to 39.

The responses regarding the highest degree earned by

teachers in high achieving districts indicate that 72% had earned a bachelor degree, while 25% reported having earned a masters degree. One had earned a doctorate.

TABLE VIII
HOURS OF UNIVERSITY CREDITS EARNED IN READING

Number of Reading Credits Earned	Number of Teachers Receiving Credit	
	Undergraduate	Graduate
0	0	13
1-6	12	13
7-12	22	9
13-18	9	4
19-24	0	2
25-30	1	1
31+	0	1
(No Response)	14	15
Total	58	58

One indication of the professional preparation of teachers to teach reading is the number of hours of college credits earned in reading. As shown in Table VIII, the teachers had an average of 10 hours of undergraduate reading credits, with a range of 3 to 25. Of the 58

teachers responding, 30 reported graduate hours in reading with an average of 11 credit hours and a range of 2 to 32 and 28% had earned no graduate credit in reading while 56% had earned more than 12 hours of graduate credit.

TABLE IX
TIME IN PRESENT DISTRICT AND TOTAL TIME IN
THE TEACHING PROFESSION

Years	Number of Teachers Reporting Experience	
	In Present District	In All Districts
1-6	21	10
7-12	17	14
13-18	15	22
19-24	3	7
25-30	1	4
31+	0	0
(No Response)	1	1
Total	58	58

The average number of years of service in the present system for all teachers was nine years. The range was from 1 to 26 years. The average length of total

experience for these 58 teachers was 12 years. The range was from 1 to 28.

Teachers were asked to report the type of assistance and the amount of time available to them on a weekly basis. Only 10 of the teachers reported having assistance with the reading program.

TABLE X
AVAILABILITY OF SUPPORT PERSONNEL
FOR THE READING PROGRAM

Type of Personnel	Teachers Reporting	Average Hours of Assistance (Per Week)
Paid aides	10	2:15
Parent volunteers	1	1:00
Older students	3	1:40
Other volunteers	2	3:00
None	48	
No response	0	

There were 17 teachers who reported they did not receive assistance in the reading program. The number of teachers exceeds the number of teacher questionnaires.

Some of the teachers had more than one type of assistance with the reading program. That accounts for the total. On the other category, one teacher listed her mother-in-law who recorded tapes for classroom use and one teacher listed the migrant teacher.

Materials

In response to question eight on the questionnaire, eight different reading series were reported to be used as the primary basal readers in the school districts. They are, reported in alphabetical order, Economy, Ginn, Heath, Harcourt Brace, Houghton Mifflin, Macmillan, Scott Foresman, and Rand McNally. Other reading materials reported by teachers as being available for use in their schools were newspapers, State Department of Education materials, computers, Scholastic, library books, dictionaries, encyclopedias, thesauri, SRA Reading labs, literature supplements, personally-made games and activities, resource center, elementary media center materials, film lending library, Reading for Concepts, Readers Digest Skill Builders, tapes and videos, reading machines, Weekly Reader, magazines, poetry books, word cards, charts, Barnell-Loft Specific Skills, Modern Curriculum Press, and controlled readers. None of the teachers reported that basal materials were the only materials available for their use when teaching reading. This information was in response to question nine.

When asked to report the percentage of pages in the basal series workbooks that were used, primary teachers reported using 89% of the workbook pages and intermediate teachers reported using 73% of the workbook pages. Primary teachers indicated their students did approximately 11 reproduced pages per week and intermediate teachers indicated that their students did approximately four reproduced pages per week.

Classroom Practices

Placement of students in reading materials, the number of reading groups in the classroom, instructional time, use of the teacher's manual, time for independent reading, recent changes in the reading program, and administrator support of the reading program were classroom practices about which information was gathered from the instrument.

Grouping. Information the teachers used to form their reading groups was the focus of question 16 of the instrument. Table X provides a summary of the responses. The totals in each column represent more than the number of teachers who responded and more than 100%. Because of the total number of responses, it is apparent a number of teachers use more than one source of information when placing students in appropriate reading materials. Achievement tests and basal tests appear to be those most frequently used by teachers in high achieving schools

districts to place students in groups. Teachers who checked the "other sources" response listed observation, recommendation of previous teacher, listening interest inventories, and modality preferences.

TABLE XI
SOURCES OF INFORMATION USED BY TEACHERS
IN FORMING READING GROUPS

Source of Information	Teachers Using Each Source	
	Number	Percent
Achievement tests	18	31
Teacher-made tests	15	26
Basal series tests	18	31
Permanent records	7	12
Other sources	9	16
(Do not group)	14	24

The number of groups in each classroom ranged from one to six. Primary teachers averaged three reading groups per class and intermediate teachers averaged two reading groups per class. In response to question 19, 34% of the teachers indicated that they used different basal readers with each of their reading groups, 64% of the teachers indicated

they used the same readers with all their groups, and 2% did not respond.

Instructional Time. Teachers reported that they taught reading from 20 minutes per week to 20 hours per week. Primary teachers averaged nine hours per week and intermediate teachers averaged four hours per week. Primary teachers reported using their teachers' manuals 60% of the time and intermediate teachers used their teachers' manuals 55% of the time to plan the reading instruction. No one reported not using the manuals to teach reading.

Questions 14 and 15 concerned independent reading. Teachers reported that students read independently from 15 minutes to 3 hours per day. Primary indicated that their students averaged 47 minutes reading independently in reading class and 60 minutes reading independently in all other subjects. Intermediate teachers indicated that their students spent 33 minutes reading independently during reading and 90 minutes reading independently in all other subjects.

In the past five years, changes in the reading program were reported by 45 teachers. No changes in the reading program were reported by six teachers and seven did not respond. Some teachers reported that more than one change had taken place in the past five years. Because of this, the number of responses is greater than the number of teacher questionnaires that were received. This also

accounts for the percent being greater than 100. Changes in the reading program are reported in Table XII. The "other" category changes included integration of English

TABLE XII
CHANGES MADE IN READING PROGRAMS
DURING THE PAST FIVE YEARS

Types of Changes	<u>Teachers Reporting Changes</u>	
	Number	Percent
Computers	2	3
Departmentalization	0	0
Library books	2	3
New basals	29	50
Newspapers	1	2
Reading skills books	0	0
SRA labs	0	0
(Others)	16	28
(No changes)	6	10
(No response)	7	12

into the reading program, use of new reading words as spelling words, grouping methods, attendance at more workshops, reading for enjoyment, use of the controlled

reader, and concentration on comprehension skills. Two teachers reported less emphasis on workbook pages and two teachers reported the addition of a remedial reading program.

Administrator Support. Questions 21 through 24 asked the teachers to respond to information about their principal. The average tenure for a principal was 11 years and the range of service was from 1 to 28 years for the same person serving as building principal.

Responses of 45 teachers (78%) indicated that their principals talked to them, as individuals, about reading. They talked about achievement test scores, selection of texts and methods, each child's individual progress, grouping, problems encountered, using aides, lesson plans, evaluation, allocation of time, and the materials they wanted. The responses of 11 teachers indicated that their principal did not talk to them about reading. There were no responses from two teachers.

Reading was reported to be discussed by the principal in staff meetings. However 21 teachers reported that reading was not a topic in staff meetings and 1 teacher did not respond. Those who responded affirmatively indicated the frequency of the discussion in these terms: several times a year, very often, twice a month, when it's important, when there's a need, every meeting, usually after inservice, and once every three years.

While 54 teachers (93%) reported that the principal provided them with the necessary basic instructional materials, 3 reported the principal did not provide the basic instructional material and 1 did not respond.

Inservice. Reading inservice was available at least once a year for 54 teachers, while 3 teachers did not have a reading inservice available and 1 did not respond. When asked if the principal would provide a reading inservice if requested, 54 teachers responded affirmatively, 3 responded negatively, and 1 did not respond. Schoolwide reading motivation activities encourage reading and are another indication of principal support. In response to the 28th question, 56 teachers reported having a schoolwide reading motivation activity while 2 reported that there was not a schoolwide reading motivation activity.

Achievement test results and their instructional implications may or may not be discussed by the administrator in a staff meeting. In response to question 25 about achievement test results, 28 teachers indicated there was a staff meeting held to discuss achievement test results and 30 teachers indicated there was no staff meeting to discuss achievement test results.

Demographics

The Oklahoma State Department of Education Annual Report 1985-86 (1986a) and the Oklahoma State Department data provided information about the location, enrollment,

percent of minority students, and the per pupil expenditure in high achieving school districts.

Interstate Highway 40, dividing north from south, and Interstate Highway 35, dividing east from west, were the geographic divisions of the state used in this study. The geographic locations of the high achieving schools indicated that 13 were in the northwest section of the state, 1 in the southwest, 2 in the northeast, and 4 in the southeast.

The average daily membership in high achieving school districts ranged from a low of 37 to a high of 792. Three school districts had an enrollment of 1 to 99, 4 school districts from 100 to 199, 3 school districts from 200 to 299, 7 schools from 300 to 399, 1 school from 400 to 499, and 2 schools from 700 to 799.

The percent of minorities, which include native born Americans, Blacks, Hispanics, and Asians, in high achieving schools range from a low of 0 to a high of 44% of all students in grades 1 through 12. Among high achieving school districts, 70% had less than 1% minority population in the school.

The average per pupil expenditure in Oklahoma in the 1986-87 school year was \$2,817. The per pupil expenditure in the high achieving school districts ranged from a low of \$2,258 to a high of \$9,442. Two schools were in the \$2,000 to \$2,500 range, eight schools were in the \$2,501 to \$3,000 range, three schools were in the \$3,001 to \$3,500 range,

three schools were in the \$3,501 to \$4,000 range, one school was in the \$4,001 to \$4,500 range, three schools were in the \$4,501 to \$5,00 range, and one school was at \$9,442.

All of the high achieving schools had students on free or reduced lunches. The range was from a low of 11% to a high of 82%. Of the 20 high achieving school districts, 85% had less than half of their students on free or reduced lunches.

Summary

The data reported in this chapter are the basis for the description of a typical high achieving rural school district in Oklahoma. The district is located in the northwestern part of the state and has an enrollment of 300 to 399. The average attendance is above 95% percent, and the per pupil expenditure is between \$2,501 and \$3,500.

The majority of the teachers are female, between 30 and 39 years of age, have taught 9 years in the present system and have approximately 12 years of teaching experience. The teachers typically have a bachelor's degree and have completed three undergraduate reading courses and one graduate course in reading.

The teachers may use achievement tests, teacher-made tests, or basal series tests to place students in reading groups. In the primary grades it is most common to find

three reading groups and in the intermediate grades two reading groups.

All of the teachers use the basal reading series as their primary teaching source. The teacher's manual is used 60% of the time in the primary grades and 55% of the time in the intermediate grades to guide reading instruction. Primary teachers teach reading nine hours a week and intermediate teachers teach reading four hours a week. Primary students complete 89% of their workbook pages and intermediate students are assigned 73% of their workbook pages.

Students do read independently. Primary teachers have their students read independently approximately one hour and forty minutes a day while intermediate teachers have their students read approximately two hours a day.

The principal talks to the teachers about reading. The majority have a reading inservice available to them once a year and most others reported that, if they asked, their principal would provide a reading inservice for them. The basic reading instructional materials are provided for the teachers. Schoolwide reading motivational activities would be found in the schools.

CHAPTER VI

A COMPARISON OF HIGH ACHIEVING AND LOW ACHIEVING RURAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS

There are a number of similarities, as well as differences, in the characteristics of the high achieving and low achieving districts. This chapter will compare the information that was collected about these school districts. Achievement, elements of the reading program, and demographics will be compared. In this chapter, these topics will be presented in the same sequence as in Chapters IV and V.

Achievement

The selection of low achieving school districts and high achieving school districts was done by using the 1986 and the 1987 test results from the Oklahoma School Testing Program (Oklahoma State Department of Education, 1986a, 1986b). Table XIII provides the mean scores for low achieving and high achieving school districts.

While all mean scores of high achieving districts were at or above the 60th percentile, 66 (83%) of the scores of low achieving districts were below the 40th percentile. The selection of districts were based upon these scores.

TABLE XIII
 MEAN TOTAL READING SCORES OF LOW ACHIEVING
 AND HIGH ACHIEVING DISTRICTS

Percentile Range	Number of Total Reading Scores	
	Low Achieving	High Achieving
95+	0	0
89-95	0	1
77-88	0	25
60-76	3	54
40-59	11	0
23-39	43	0
11-22	22	0
4-10	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>
Total	80	80

According to the Test Interpretation Manual (Farr, 1986), percentile ranks indicate the relative standing of students in comparison with other students of the same grade in the national norm sample. The average performance for the sample is 50. Percentile ranks below 23 indicate below average performance. Twenty-three (29%) of the scores of low achieving districts were in this category with an additional 43 scores (54%) in the low average category (23rd through 39th percentile). Scores from high achieving districts, on the other hand, were above average

in 26 cases (33%) and in the high average category for all of the remaining scores.

Elements of the Reading Program

This section will compare selected elements of the reading program in low achieving and high achieving school districts.

Instructional and Support Personnel

Table XIII compares the age and gender of the teachers in the study.

TABLE XIV
COMPARISON OF AGE AND GENDER OF TEACHERS IN
LOW AND HIGH ACHIEVING SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Gender	Age					Total
	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	
Low Achieving Districts:						
Female	7	18	6	2	1	34
Male	1	2	0	2	0	<u>5</u>
						39
High Achieving Districts:						
Female	9	21	14	10	2	56
Male	1	0	1	0	0	<u>2</u>
						58

As indicated in Table XIV, low achieving districts had 72% of their teachers in the 20 to 39 range compared to 53% in the high achieving districts. In the low achieving districts 8% of the teachers were at or above the age of 40 compared to 47% of those in the high achieving districts. Males accounted for a small proportion of elementary teachers in both categories of districts (13% in low and 3% in high). Table XV provides information for comparison of the level of education of teachers in low achieving and high achieving school districts.

TABLE XV
HIGHEST DEGREE REPORTED BY TEACHERS IN LOW AND
HIGH ACHIEVING SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Degree	Number of Teachers			
	Low Achieving School Districts		High Achieving School Districts	
	Number/Percent		Number/Percent	
Bachelors	32	82	42	72
Masters	6	15	15	25
Doctorate	1	3	1	3

In low achieving school districts, 82% of the teachers had received only a bachelor's degree compared to 72% for

high achieving school districts. A greater proportion of teachers, therefore, in high achieving districts had earned masters degrees (25% to 15%). Only one teacher in each district had earned a doctorate.

Another measure of preparation to teach reading is the number of credit hours earned in college. This information is presented in Table XVI.

TABLE XVI
UNDERGRADUATE AND GRADUATE HOURS OF UNIVERSITY
CREDITS EARNED IN READING

Reading Credits	Number of Teachers			
	Low Achieving School Districts		High Achieving School Districts	
	Undergrad.	Grad.	Undergrad.	Grad.
Range				
0	1	10	0	13
1-6	6	6	12	13
7-12	12	5	22	9
13-18	3	1	9	4
19-24	6	2	0	2
25-30	0	1	1	1
31+	0	1	0	1
(No Response)	<u>11</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>15</u>
Total	39	39	58	58

The average number of undergraduate credit hours earned in reading courses was ten for both low achieving and high achieving school districts. The average number of graduate credit hours earned in reading was 11, which was the same for low achieving and high achieving school districts.

As noted in Table XVII, the length of time the teachers had spent in the present district and in the teaching profession was not of great difference in low achieving and high achieving school districts.

TABLE XVII

TIME IN PRESENT DISTRICT AND TEACHING PROFESSION
FOR LOW ACHIEVING AND HIGH ACHIEVING DISTRICTS

Years	Low Achieving School Districts		High Achieving School Districts	
	Present	Teaching	Present	Teaching
1-6	20	8	21	10
7-12	13	18	17	14
13-18	5	6	15	22
19-24	1	4	3	7
25-30	0	1	1	4
31-36	0	1	0	0
No Response	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>
Total	39	39	58	58

Teachers averaged eight years in the present system in low achieving school districts and nine years in the present system for high achieving school districts. The average years of total teaching experience was also similar (10 in the low and 12 in the high).

As shown in Table XVIII, the proportion of teachers reporting assistance with the teaching of reading in low achieving districts was greater than that in high achieving districts. The average number of hours of assistance provided in low achieving school districts was 30 per week compared to 8 in high achieving school districts. However, adult support personnel were more likely to be paid in high achieving districts.

TABLE XVIII
READING PROGRAM ASSISTANCE

Types of Assistance	Number of Teachers		Average Hours Of Assistance (Per Week)	
	Low	High	Low	High
Paid aides	6	10	11	2.25
Parent volunteers	2	1	3	1.00
Older student	1	3	1	1.40
Other volunteers	3	2	15	3.00
None	25	48	0	0.00
No response	2	0	0	0.00

Materials

All schools reported using basals as their primary source for teaching reading. While 11 (28%) of the teachers in low achieving districts reported having only basal series available for teaching reading, all teachers in the high achieving districts reported the availability of supplementary materials.

All teachers reported use of the teachers' manual to plan the teaching of reading. Primary grade teachers in both types of districts reported that they used the manual 60% of the time. Intermediate teachers in low achieving districts used the manual 45% of the time compared to 55% in high achieving districts.

Teachers in low achieving districts used 59% of the workbook pages in the primary grades and 66% workbook pages in the intermediate grades. High achieving districts on the other hand used 89% of the workbook pages in the primary grades and 73% in the intermediate. The average number of reproduced pages assigned each week was 8 for primary and 6 for intermediate in low districts schools and 11 for primary and 4 for intermediate in the high achieving districts.

Classroom Practices

Information about a number of classroom practices was gathered from the instrument. The information included placement of students in reading materials, the number of

reading groups in the classroom, instructional time, use of the teachers manual, independent reading, changes in the reading program, and administrator support of the reading program.

Question 16 from the instrument requested data concerning the information that teachers used to form their reading groups. The totals in each column represent more than the number of teachers who responded and more than 100%. While teachers in low achieving school districts appear to use teacher-made tests and permanent

TABLE XIX
SOURCES OF INFORMATION USED BY TEACHERS
IN FORMING READING GROUPS IN LOW AND
HIGH ACHIEVING SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Source of Information	Teachers Using Each Source			
	Low Achieving School Districts		High Achieving School Districts	
	No.	%	No.	%
Achievement tests	12	31	18	31
Teacher made tests	18	46	15	26
Basal series tests	13	33	18	31
Permanent records	8	20	7	12
Other	7	18	9	16
Do not group	5	13	14	24

records more frequently than do teachers in high achieving districts, the latter group are more likely not to use grouping practices at all.

Teachers in both low achieving and high achieving school districts averaged three reading groups per class in the primary and two groups each in the intermediate. Teachers in low achieving districts reported using different basal reading series with different reading groups 36% of the time compared to 30% of teachers in high achieving districts.

Instructional Time.

Questions 13, 14, and 15 asked teachers to report the amount of time spent in reading instruction and the amount of time they perceived their students were engaged in silent or independent reading. More instructional hours are allotted to reading instruction in high achieving rural school districts (8 hours in primary, 5 in intermediate) than in low achieving districts (9 hours in primary, 4 in intermediate). While the average difference is only one hour per week, an additional hour of instruction per week for 36 weeks could point to an advantage. In the intermediate grades, this is reversed and more hours of instruction in reading take place per week in low achieving school districts than in high achieving districts.

As noted in Table XX, primary students spend more time

in independent reading in low achieving school districts than in the high achieving districts. At the intermediate level, students read independently more in high achieving school districts than in the low.

TABLE XX
AVERAGE INDEPENDENT READING TIME, REPORTED IN MINUTES,
IN LOW AND HIGH ACHIEVING SCHOOL DISTRICTS

	Low Achieving School Districts		High Achieving School Districts	
	In Reading	In All Other Subjects	In Reading	In All Other Subjects
Primary Grades	90	53	47	60
Intermediate Grades	29	55	33	90

Teachers were asked to list any changes that had been made in the reading program in the past five years. Of the 39 teachers from low achieving districts who returned the instrument, 17 reported no change in the reading program and 5 did not respond to the item. Therefore, only 44% of those individuals reported changes as compared to 78% of the teachers who reported changes in the reading program of the high achieving districts.

TABLE XXI
 CHANGES MADE IN READING PROGRAMS IN THE PAST FIVE YEARS
 IN LOW AND HIGH ACHIEVING SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Type of Change	Number of Changes Reported	
	Low Achieving School Dist.	High Achieving School Dist.
Computers	4	2
Departmentalization	1	2
Library books	1	2
New basals	11	29
Newspapers	1	1
Reading skills books	1	0
SRA labs	2	0
Others	0	16

Administrator Support. Questions 21 through 24 asked the teachers about the support that their administrator provides for the reading program. As noted in Table XXII, the administrator in high achieving districts is more likely to support a schoolwide motivational reading activity, to talk about achievement tests, and to talk about reading to individual teachers and in staff meetings than is the administrator in low achieving districts. Neither administrator is likely to discuss achievement

tests on a regular basis and both are more likely to talk individually with teachers about reading than to discuss the subject in a staff meeting.

TABLE XXII

INDICATORS OF ADMINISTRATOR SUPPORT OF THE
READING PROGRAM IN LOW AND HIGH
ACHIEVING SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Item	Percent of Teachers					
	Low Achieving School Dists.			High Achieving School Dists.		
	Yes	No	NR	Yes	No	NR
Talks to you about reading	51%	46%	3%	78%	19%	3%
Talks about reading in staff meetings	38%	54%	8%	62%	36%	2%
Conducts School-wide reading motivation	56%	36%	8%	97%	3%	0%
Talks about Achievement tests	39%	46%	15%	48%	52%	0%

Demographics

The information used in this section is from various Oklahoma State Department of Education sources which

provide a comparison of the low and high achieving districts on geographic location, average daily membership, minority population, attendance, per pupil expenditure, and eligible students for the National School Lunch Program.

The geographic division of the state was made by using Interstate 40, dividing the north and south, and Interstate 35, dividing the east and west. There are more high achieving school districts located in the western part of the state and more low achieving school districts in the eastern part of the state.

TABLE XXIII
GEOGRAPHIC LOCATIONS OF LOW AND HIGH
ACHIEVING SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Geographic Quadrant	Number of Districts	
	Low Achieving	High Achieving
Northwest	0	13
Southwest	3	1
Northeast	9	2
Southeast	8	4
Total	20	20

As shown in Table XXIV, a greater proportion of low achieving school districts is found in the lower portion of

of the size range. Half of the high achieving districts have an enrollment equal to or greater than 300 while over half of the low achieving districts have an enrollment of less than 200. The largest group of low achieving school districts, has an average daily membership between 100-199. The largest group of high achieving school districts, has an average daily membership of between 300-399. Over half of all districts have an average daily membership of 299 or less.

TABLE XXIV
AVERAGE DAILY MEMBERSHIP FOR LOW AND HIGH
ACHIEVING RURAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Average Daily Membership	Low Achieving Districts	High Achieving Districts
700-799	0	2
600-699	0	0
500-599	0	0
400-499	1	1
300-399	4	7
200-299	2	3
100-199	10	4
1-99	3	3
Total	20	20

Table XXV includes the percent of minorities that are found in the student populations for both low achieving and high achieving school districts. Among high achieving school districts, 85% had less than 10% of the student population consisting of minorities. In fact, those 85% of high achieving districts all actually had less than 2% of the population consisting of minorities.

TABLE XXV

PERCENT OF MINORITY REPRESENTATION IN TOTAL SCHOOL ENROLLMENT IN LOW AND HIGH ACHIEVING DISTRICTS

Percent of Minority Students	<u>Number of School Districts</u>	
	Low Achieving	High Achieving
90-100	3	0
80-89	1	0
70-79	3	0
60-69	2	0
50-59	1	0
40-49	1	1
30-39	0	2
20-29	2	0
10-19	6	0
0-9	<u>1</u>	<u>17</u>
Total	20	20

As shown in Table XXVI, 18 (90%) of the high achieving districts had average daily attendance rates of 95% and higher while only 9 (45%) of low achieving districts had rates that high. At the lower level of attendance, 10% of low achieving districts had attendance rates lower than 91%, rates lower than any of the high achieving districts.

TABLE XXVI

AVERAGE DAILY ATTENDANCE OF LOW ACHIEVING AND
HIGH ACHIEVING SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Percent of Students in Average Daily Attendance	Number of School Districts	
	Low Achieving	High Achieving
95-99	9	18
91-94	9	2
87-90	2	0
Total	20	20

As reported in Table XXVII, 16 districts (8 in each category) were in the \$2,501 to \$3,000 range on per pupil expenditure, which is consistent with the state range of \$2,817. Only three districts were below this range.

TABLE XXVII
 LEVEL OF PER PUPIL EXPENDITURE FOR LOW ACHIEVING
 AND HIGH ACHIEVING DISTRICTS

Per Pupil Expenditure	Number of School Districts	
	Low Achieving	High Achieving
\$2,000-2,500	1	2
\$2,501-3,000	8	8
\$3,001-3,500	6	3
\$3,501-4,000	1	3
\$4,001-4,500	1	1
\$4,501-5,000	3	2
\$5,501 +	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>
Total	20	20

Clearly, socioeconomic status differences have been found to exist in relationship to achievement. Coleman et al. (1966) reported that children from lower socioeconomic status homes perform less well than children from middle-class homes. In addition, the discrepancy increases across the school years. One indication of the socioeconomic status of the family is the eligibility of their children to participate in the National School Lunch Program. This information is noted in Table XXVIII. Of the 20 low achieving districts, 19 (95%) had over 50% of the students

eligible for participation in the National School Lunch Program. In contrast, the high achieving districts had 3 (15%) with over 50% of the students eligible for participation in the program. There was 1 (5%) of the low

TABLE XXVIII
PERCENT OF STUDENTS ELIGIBLE FOR PARTICIPATION
IN THE NATIONAL SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM

Percent	Number of School Districts	
	Low Achieving	High Achieving
90-100	6	0
80-89	5	1
70-79	3	0
60-69	3	2
50-59	2	0
40-49	1	1
30-39	0	4
20-29	0	8
10-19	<u>0</u>	<u>4</u>
Total	20	20

achieving districts with less than 50% eligible for the program. In high achieving districts 17 (85%) of the districts had less than 50% of the students eligible for participation in the National School Lunch Program.

Summary

The data reported by the teachers and various state reports are the basis for the comparisons in this chapter. The districts were selected based upon the Total Reading scores and of course, there was a difference in reading achievement. More instructional hours are allotted to reading instruction in high achieving rural districts. An additional hour per week for 36 weeks could point to an advantage. The administrators in high achieving districts give more support to the reading program than do those administrators in low achieving districts. In low achieving districts a major component of the student population consisted of minorities and a large percentage of the students participated in the National School Lunch Program.

CHAPTER VII

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this study was to compare the differences between reading programs in high achieving and low achieving rural school districts in Oklahoma.

The populations consisted of the 20 lowest achieving and the 20 highest achieving rural school districts in Oklahoma, as identified by the Total Reading scores for grades three and seven on the Oklahoma School Testing Program in the 1985-86 and 1986-87 school years. Copies of a teacher questionnaire, developed by the researcher and reviewed by reading experts and classroom teachers, were mailed to each of the 40 school districts for distribution to one classroom teacher in each of grades one through six. Responses were received from 12 low achieving rural school districts, with a total of 39 usable questionnaires. There were 58 usable questionnaires received from 15 high achieving rural school districts.

Four research questions were used to guide the study:

1. Are there differences in the educational backgrounds of teachers in high achieving and low achieving rural school districts?

2. Are there differences in selected elements of the

reading programs of high achieving and low achieving rural school districts?

3. Are there differences in teachers' perceptions of the level of support by the administrator for the reading programs of high achieving and low achieving school districts?

4. Are there differences in the use of achievement tests in the reading programs of high achieving and low achieving rural school districts?

Summary

The comparison of the data reported from low achieving and high achieving school districts is presented in the form of conclusions that relate to the research questions and the literature. These conclusions are organized in the same manner as was material in three preceding chapters.

Elements of the Reading Program

The average number of undergraduate and graduate credit hours earned in reading courses was the same for teachers in both low achieving and high achieving districts. More teachers in high achieving districts had earned advanced degrees. Low achieving districts had more adults providing a greater number of hours of support per week for the reading program than did high achieving districts; however high achieving districts were more likely to use paid adult aides rather than volunteers.

The literature indicates that students benefit from the systematic and comprehensive organization of the reading curriculum. The primary source for teaching reading in the low achieving and high achieving school districts was the basal reader approach which is a systematic and comprehensive organization of the reading curriculum. Teachers place students in groups by using one or a combination of standardized tests, informal reading tests, observation, and previous reading records. Use of such placement data is supported by the literature.

Greater gains are made when students spend more time in reading and the teacher spends more time actively involved in instruction with small groups (California State Department of Education, 1977). Brophy and Good (1986) found that students achieve more in classes in which they spend most of their time being taught or supervised by their teachers rather than working on their own. Those findings tend to be supported by the data from this study that indicate that primary teachers in high achieving rural school district teach reading one more hour per week than do those primary teachers in low achieving school districts. Leinhardt, Zigmond, and Cooley (1981) wrote that an increase of one minute of teacher instruction per day gains a minute of student reading and, in addition, an increase of five minutes per day of silent reading produces a one-month gain in achievement. The high achieving school district's primary teachers have their students read

independently for less time than do low achieving school districts. Thus there is more direct instruction in the primary grade reading classes in high achieving districts.

For the intermediate grades, the literature suggests that grouping is less important and that more important is the teacher's structuring of the content. There is more time devoted to independent reading by students in high achieving districts than in low achieving districts. The high achieving school districts' teachers indicated that the students did a greater percentage of workbook pages than did those students in low achieving school districts. The literature suggests that the classroom teachers were meeting their perceptions of administrators' expectations when they used these commercial materials.

The amount of independent, silent reading children do in school is related to gains in reading achievement (Allington, 1984). Children learn to read by reading. Since teachers in low achieving school districts reported that their students read independently for longer periods than did those in high achieving districts, these data tend to contradict those reported in previous studies.

Administrator Support

Rauch (1974) suggested that there are three critical managerial competencies required for the principal in improving instruction. These are goal focusing, resource allocation, and program monitoring. In high achieving rural districts, more principals talked to their teachers

individually about reading, talked to them in staff meetings about reading, provided basic instructional reading materials, and supported schoolwide motivational reading activities. Clearly, reading was demonstrated to be a high priority by the principals in high achieving school districts.

Norm-referenced standardized tests may be those most appropriate for the evaluation of the effectiveness of elementary schools (Rutter, 1983). Achievement tests are designed to assess skills across the whole range. If children score poorly on standardized tests, it may be that reading instruction across the entire curriculum needs to be improved. More administrators discussed and used achievement test results with their teachers in high achieving districts than did administrators in low achieving districts.

Demographics

The population in low achieving school districts cannot be ignored. In Oklahoma, the student populations in low achieving districts consist of relatively larger percentages of minorities and are characterized by a large percentage of students eligible for free or reduced lunches. The majority of them are located in the eastern part of the state.

Conclusions

The data from this study suggest the following conclusions:

1. Socioeconomic status, as indicated by the eligibility of students qualified to participate in the National School Lunch Program, is a major factor that distinguishes high achieving from low achieving districts.

2. A large minority representation in the student population of a school district may influence achievement.

3. Direct administrator support of the reading program was evident in high achieving districts.

4. Primary grade students benefit from instructional interaction with the teacher rather than extended independent work.

Recommendations

There are several recommendations that seem apparent. First, administrators and teachers are urged to use the results of achievement tests. The school staff which uses norm-referenced measures can focus improvement efforts on all levels of goals and students in the program and the results of these efforts have the potential to be reflected by the tests being used in evaluation.

More instructional time in reading is needed in low achieving districts. Particular programs, designed for low achieving students could be implemented. These

programs encourage teachers to set goals and objectives and help them provide instruction in a consistent manner.

Teachers in low achieving districts did not report the presence of supplementary materials and library books as frequently as did those in the high achieving districts. Independent silent reading is important to the total reading program because it supports the theme that children learn to read by reading. Resources are needed for independent reading to take place. Making supplementary reading resources available and monitoring their use might improve this important aspect of the reading program. The allocation of additional resources would give teachers the perception of additional support for the program.

Low achieving districts would benefit from having administrators use those strategies employed by administrators in high achieving districts. These include support for schoolwide motivational activities, provision of appropriate instructional materials, and emphasis on talking about the reading program through individual and group discussions with the teachers.

Direct observation in a low achieving school district may reveal elements of the reading program that could be improved to enhance the achievement level of the students.

While the intent of this study was to examine selected elements of the reading program, the differences between high achieving school districts and low achieving school districts may well be supported by external forces such as

socioeconomic status and minority population rather than by internal forces. One element that does seem to be related to reading achievement is the support provided by the school administrator and the resulting relationships between principal, teacher, and students.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

SURVEY

TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE

Background Information

1. Age Sex Degree: B.S. M.S. Ed.D.
2. Number of undergraduate credits in reading?
3. Number of graduate credits in reading?
4. Years in this system?
5. Years of teaching experience?
6. What grade do you teach?

The Reading Program

7. Do others provide assistance with any aspects of your reading program? If you answer yes indicate the following:

paid aides	number of hours per week
parent volunteers	number of hours per week
older students	number of hours per week
other volunteers	number of hours per week
8. What is the primary basal series used in your class?
(List the company name)
9. What other materials are available for your use?
10. What percent of the workbook pages do you use?
100 90 80 70 60 50 40 30 20 10 0
11. Approximately how many reproduced pages would the average student in your class complete each week?
12. What percent of the instructional reading time is based upon the teachers manual?
100 90 80 60 50 40 30 20 10 0
13. How many hours of instructional time do you use for reading each week?
14. How much time each day do students spend in independent reading, library books, etc.?

15. How much time do students spend reading silently in all subjects each day?
16. What information do you use to form your reading groups?

Achievement tests	Tests provided with basals
Teacher made tests	Permanent records
Other, please explain	
17. How many reading groups do you have in your classroom?
18. If you have more than one group, do you use different reading series with each group?
19. Have any changes been made in the reading program in the past five years?
20. If yes, what are they?
21. How long has your principal been at your school?
22. Does your principal talk to you about reading?
If yes, provide an example
23. Does your principal talk about reading in staff meetings? How often?
24. Does your principal provide the necessary basic instructional materials?
25. Do you have a staff meeting to examine achievement test results?
26. Do you attend or have available to you at least one reading inservice per school year?
27. If you requested a reading inservice would your principal arrange for one?
28. Do you have any schoolwide reading motivation activities, such as Drop Everything And Read, Certificates (Awards) for reading 25 books, etc.?

APPENDIX B

INITIAL LETTER

March 18, 1988

Dear Fellow Educator:

I know you are extremely busy. I am collecting information about reading programs in Oklahoma for my dissertation. Your time and effort are greatly appreciated. Please return the completed questionnaire to the school secretary.

Sincerely yours,
Emily Porter
Reading Consultant,
Oklahoma State University Doctoral Student

VITA

Emily Bieselt Porter
Candidate for the Degree of
Doctor of Education

Thesis: A COMPARISON OF SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS OF
READING PROGRAMS OF HIGH AND LOW ACHIEVING RURAL
OKLAHOMA SCHOOLS

Major Field: Educational Administration

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in Ellwood City, Pennsylvania,
April 28, 1938, the daughter of John and Lois
Bieselt.

Education: Graduated from Lincoln High School,
Ellwood City, Pennsylvania, in May 1956;
received Bachelor of Science degree in
Elementary Education from Indiana State
University in 1960; received Master of
Science in Applied Behavioral Studies;
from Oklahoma State University, 1980
completed requirements for the Doctor of
Education degree at Oklahoma State
University in December, 1988.

Professional Experience: Elementary teacher,
1960-78, graduate teaching assistant,
Oklahoma State University, School of
Education, 1980, reading consultant,
Oklahoma State Department of Education,
1980.