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A policy design analysis of Iowa's Educational Excellence Program

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A policy design analysis of Iowa's Educational Excellence Program

by

Diane Lee Schnelker

A Dissertation Submitted to the
Graduate Faculty in Partial Fulfillment of the
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DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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1995

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION
- The Education Reform Movement of the 1980s 
- State Government Reform Initiatives 
- Factors that Contributed to the Failure of Initial Reforms 
- Policy Design 
  - General Description 
  - Elements of Policy Design 
    - Context 
    - Instruments 
  - Theoretical Framework 
- Evaluation Criteria 
- Need for the Study 
- Iowa Reform Legislation 
- Research Questions 
- Purpose of the Study 
- Significance of the Study 

## CHAPTER 2 REVIEW OF LITERATURE
- Introduction 
- Policy Design 
  - Context 
    - Values 
    - Structure 
    - Procedures 
  - Instruments 
    - Mandates 
    - Inducements 
    - Capacity Building 
    - System Changing 
  - Theoretical Framework 
    - Macro- v. Micro-Level Theories 
    - Models of the Theoretical Framework 
- Commonly Used Policy Designs 
  - Wilsonian/Authority Designs 
  - Capacity Building Designs 
  - Tangible Incentives 
  - Symbolic and Hortatory Designs 
  - Policy Learning Designs 
- Heuristics 
- Criteria 
- School Reform: A Brief History 
- Student Achievement: A Social Problem 
  - The Impetus 
  - The Year of the Reports 
- The First Wave: The State Response 
  - State Initiatives 
  - The Impact of the First Wave 
- The Second Wave: Restructuring 
  - Recommendations of Educators
The Impact of the State Initiatives: The Local Perspective

CHAPTER 3 METHOD
Study Design
- Interviews
- Documents
Data Collection Procedures
  - Interviews with Key Informants
  - Entry and Interview Procedures
  - Interview Protocols
Documents
Data Analysis
- Organizing the Data
- Generating Categories, Themes, and Patterns
- Testing Emergent Hypotheses
Indicators of Rigor
  - Credibility
    - Peer Debriefing
    - Triangulation
    - Member Checking
  - Transferability
  - Dependability
  - Confirmability

CHAPTER 4 THE EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE PROGRAM: A CONFLUENCE OF EVENTS
Introduction
Teachers' Salaries
- Iowa State Education Association
- The Iowa State Legislature
- The Governor
Education Reform
  - Should Education Reform be a Political Issue?
  - Defining Reform
    - Iowa Excellence in Education
    - Major Themes
Attitude Change: From Adversaries to Partners
  - Introduction
  - The Iowa Excellence in Education (FINE) Task Force
  - The Democratic Influence
  - Key Individuals
    - "Windfall"
Summary and Conclusions

CHAPTER 5 THE POLICY DESIGN OF THE EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE PROGRAM
Introduction
Values
  - Teachers
  - Education
Politics 82
Local Control 84
Reform 87
Efficiency 89
Structure 91
Actors 91
The Governor 91
Lobbyist for the Department of Education 91
Lobbyist for ISEA 92
Lobbyist for IASB 92
Chief of the Bureau of Planning, Research, and Development 93
The State Legislator 95
Political Organizations/Associations 96
Democratic Party 96
Republican Party 96
The Iowa State Education Association 96
The Iowa Association of School Boards 97
Executive Offices/Departments 98
The Office of The Governor 98
Legislative Bureaus and Committees 99
The Legislative Council 99
The Legislative Service Bureau 99
The Iowa Excellence in Education (FINE) Task Force 100
Procedure 100
Development of the Original Proposal 100
The Legislative Process 110
Instruments 117
Theoretical Framework 119
Model of Causation 119
Model of Evaluation 119
Model of Intervention 120
Evaluation Criteria 121
Internal Consistency 121
Context v. Instrument 121
Context v. Theoretical Framework 121
Instrument v. Theoretical Framework 122
Robustness 124
Level of Design 126
Structure of the Problem 126
Goal Consensus/Level of Conflict 127
Placement on the Agenda 129
Range of Alternatives or Instruments Considered 130
Diversity of Stakeholders 130
Locus and Level of Expertise Required 130
Availability of Resources 131
Responsibility for Implementation 132
Policy Design 132
Summary 135
Values 135
Structure 135
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Procedure</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instruments</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theoretical Framework</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation Criteria</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal Consistency</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robustness</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of Design</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy Design</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER 6 SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implications</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy Learning Designs</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Importance of Values</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limitations</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REFERENCES</td>
<td>148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX A THE EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE PROGRAM</td>
<td>158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX B CONSENT TO RECORD FORM</td>
<td>168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX C INTERVIEW PROTOCOL</td>
<td>170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX D COVER LETTER FOR MEMBER CHECKING</td>
<td>173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX E PRE-STUDY PERSONAL REFLECTIONS</td>
<td>175</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The Education Reform Movement of the 1980s

Growing concern about the quality of students graduating from high schools propelled education to the top of the political agenda in the mid 1980s (Bradley, 1993; Educational Testing Service, 1990; Goldberg & Renton, 1993; McNett, 1984; Rubin, 1983). A number of studies were conducted to assess the problem and explore possible solutions (e.g., Adler, 1982; Boyer, 1983; College Board, 1983; Goodlad, 1984; National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983; Sizer, 1984; Task Force on Education for Economic Growth, 1983; Task Force on Federal Elementary and Secondary Education, 1983). The results of all of the studies identified problems with the time for instruction, curriculum, teachers and teaching, and leadership (Goldberg & Renton, 1993; Smith & Steedman, in McNett, 1984; Watchke, 1983); however, the solutions to these problems fell into two basic categories. The first type of solutions was based on studies conducted by task forces and/or commissions created by governments, foundations, or associations (e.g., College Board, 1983; National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983; Task Force on Education for Economic Growth, 1983; Task Force on Federal Elementary and Secondary Education, 1983). These studies suggested that the problem was the result of insufficient amounts of those things commonly associated with education (time, courses, teaching, etc.). To improve student achievement, schools needed to increase what they were currently doing. Recommendations typically included lengthening the school day or year, increasing the number of courses students were required to take in core curriculum areas such as science, mathematics, and English, and increasing reporting requirements of local school districts to improve accountability.

The other category of solutions to improving student achievement was based on qualitative research studies that examined what was happening in schools (e.g., Boyer, 1983; Goodlad, 1984; Sizer, 1985). Recommendations based on the results of these studies called
for a complete restructuring of the organization, governance, and pedagogy of schools (Educational Testing Service, 1990; Goldberg & Renton, 1993; Rothman, 1993). For example, the studies recommended organizing schools in ways that were more consistent with human growth and development than the traditional organization, and promoting students on the basis of mastery of academic concepts rather than chronological age. Recommendations of these studies also emphasized the importance of site-based decision making and called for giving teachers and principals unprecedented decision-making authority over their classrooms and buildings (Davies, 1983; McNett, 1984; Rubin, 1983). Finally, the results of these studies suggested that what went on in the classroom (such as the course content and the approach to teaching) had a more significant impact on student achievement than how much time was spent in a course or at school. Recommendations based on these studies focused on the mastery of higher order thinking skills that transcend specific subject areas, and the instructional techniques that were most likely to facilitate development of these skills (Adler, 1982; Boyer, 1983; Goodlad, 1984; McNett, 1984; Sizer, 1985).

State Government Reform Initiatives

State governments were the first agencies to respond to the call for education reform in an organized fashion (Educational Testing Service, 1990; Goldberg & Renton, 1993; Kirst, in Blank & Engler, 1992). Initial efforts attempted to implement the recommendations of the task force reports. Virtually every state passed new legislation to increase standards for students; revise teacher licensure, preparation and compensation; and enhance knowledge about school performance (in Blank & Engler, 1992; "Charting a Course", 1993; Educational Testing Service, 1990; Fuhrman & Elmore, 1990).

State reform initiatives were essentially implemented by 1988 and impact studies linked the initiatives to changes in local behavior (Educational Testing Service, 1990; Fuhrman & Elmore, 1990; Goldberg & Renton, 1993; Kirst, in Mora & Kearney, 1991). Studies showed that students were taking more courses in science, mathematics, foreign language, and
computer; and fewer noncore courses such as business education, industrial arts, art, physical education, and vocational education (Blank & Engler, 1992; Mora & Kearney, 1991). Fuhrman and Elmore (1990) also linked increased graduation requirements and teacher and student assessment initiatives to increased attention to knowledge and skills addressed by standardized tests and adjustments in teaching assignments.

However, these efforts had little apparent impact on improving student achievement. Trends in the results of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) showed little if any improvement in test scores in general and only minor reductions in the gap between minorities and nonminorities and males and females (Blank & Engler, 1992; Education Testing Service, 1990). According to the Educational Testing Service (1990), only a small fraction of high school students graduated from high school with the skills to be successful in quantitative fields in college or to perform the statistics now being demanded in factories.

Attention then shifted to recommendations of the research studies. However, these recommendations represented a dilemma for state legislatures. The studies focused primarily on changes local school districts needed to make to improve education. Little, if any attention was directed to the states' role in facilitating local reform. States were basically encouraged to eliminate barriers to local reform and to decentralize the education process but there was little consideration of the constraints under which state governments operate. For example, how do states develop policy to decentralize education but assure to the public quality, equity, and access to education? Answers to questions like this were more likely to come from identifying elements within the policy process that affected the development of education policy.

Factors that Contributed to the Failure of Initial Reforms

A review of the literature offers explanations for the failure of the first wave of reforms and has implications for an investigation of factors that affect the development of education policy. Policy makers may have overlooked contextual factors that affected the development and implementation of reform policies. These factors were both within and external to the
policy making process. Internal factors included consideration of other policies and monitoring systems. For example, Fuhrman and Elmore (1990) suggest that the urgency to respond to the call for reform, characteristic of the education reform movement resulted in the development of competing if not contradictory policies. In addition, reform initiatives rarely included provisions to monitor compliance or evaluate effects. As a result, there was no assurance that policies were implemented as intended. Without consistent implementation, it is difficult to determine with confidence the effectiveness of state reform initiatives.

Contextual factors external to the policy making process that may have affected implementation of the reform initiatives were activities occurring at the local school level. Many local schools had established their own reform agendas before state initiatives were passed (Fuhrman & Elmore, 1990). In addition, state initiatives added to, rather than replaced, existing regulations increasing burdens on local schools and few state initiatives provided resources to facilitate implementation. As a result, local school administrators were left to either throw out their own reform agendas and use available resources to comply with state policies, adapt state regulations to fit into local agendas, or ignore state regulations and risk possible sanctions.

The implementation of state reform initiatives may also have been compromised by the mechanism policy makers used to effect change. Most of the initial reform policies mandated changes in local school behavior (e.g., increased course offerings, lengthening the school day or year). Mandates are rules that govern the actions of individuals or agencies (McDonnell & Elmore, 1987). While mandates offered some advantages to legislators, they may have proven counter productive to the reform movement. Mandates are the easiest approach for legislators to apply. Mandates rarely require financial support and often defer implementation concerns to regulatory agencies and the individuals or agencies whose behavior is targeted for change (McDonnell & Elmore, 1987). In addition, mandates make a greater impression on the public than other, less forceful, approaches to policy (in Rothman, 1993).
Disadvantages of mandates include reliance on the capacities and wills of the regulatory agencies for implementation, and negative consequences associated with the adversarial relationship mandates create between the legislative and executive branches of government and the target agencies (in this case local education agencies). Mandates delegate the responsibility for assuring compliance to regulatory agencies (McDonnell & Elmore, 1987). The level of enforcement therefore, is determined by the agencies' resource capacity and willingness to allocate those resources. Rarely did reform initiatives include provisions to monitor compliance or evaluate their effects. When monitoring was specified, it was usually incorporated into existing accreditation processes without providing additional resources to state agencies. Accreditation systems are extremely labor intensive and costly for regulatory agencies to carry out. Regulatory agencies rarely have sufficient resources to confirm compliance among all school districts each year. Furthermore, imposing sanctions such as withholding state aid or accreditation is costly, difficult to accomplish, and may have political repercussions that regulatory agencies and legislators may not want to risk (Fuhrman & Elmore, 1990).

Mandates are intended to produce compliance. They assume that the required action is something all individuals and agencies should be expected to do, regardless of their capacities; and that the required actions would not occur at all, or with the desirable frequency or consistency, without explicit prescriptions (McDonnell & Elmore, 1987). As a result, the imposition of mandates is often perceived as a challenge to the integrity and professionalism of the target agencies and frequently generates considerable resentment and resistance to comply. Resentment for initial state reform initiatives manifested itself in a widely shared perception that states were usurping the control of education from local school districts (Doyle & Finn, 1984; Educational Testing Service, 1990; Faber, 1990; Killian, 1984; Kirst, 1987). The perception was enhanced by the observation that reform initiatives expanded state governance into areas not previously subject to regulation (Fuhrman & Elmore, 1990; Kirst, 1987).
This analysis demonstrates that the effectiveness of education policy is influenced by decisions that occur during the development of a policy. An investigation of the policy development process may identify factors that affect key decisions in the policy process. Policy Design is an approach to policy development that targets these factors. As such, it provides a useful model to investigate barriers to decentralization.

Policy Design

General Description

The concepts of Policy Design originate with the design sciences (e.g., engineering, architecture, etc.). The basic idea of design is to externalize the process of creating solutions. Externalizing the process includes identifying those elements of the problem and the solution that can be manipulated and assuring that the elements are assembled according to some rational process (Linder & Peters, 1984). Like the design sciences, Policy Design is also meta-oriented in that it provides criteria to evaluate not only the design (i.e., the outcome of the process), but also the process itself.

Elements of Policy Design

A "design" is a scheme for the purposeful arrangement of elements (Linder & Peters, 1988). The elements of a policy situation include contextual factors in which policy is created and implemented, and the instruments or actions governments use to implement policy. In Policy Design the "scheme" that links these elements is referred to as the theoretical framework. Policy contexts, instruments and theoretical frameworks are detailed below.

Context

The policy context characterizes the circumstances surrounding the policy issue (Dryzek, 1983). The circumstances include the values, structures, and procedures inherent in the general policy environment as well as within the specific policy process (Bobrow & Dryzek, 1987). These elements are described and clarified with examples from state level education policy.
Values. One of the unique characteristics of policy studies is the recognition that values affect the decision making process (Amy, 1984; Prunty, 1985; vonBeyme, 1986). Values external to the policy process include broad cultural values (Amy, 1984; Mawhinney, 1991; Swidler, 1986). Cultural values likely to affect educational decisions include democracy, and the value of education in a democracy. Values inherent in the policy process that have traditionally affected education policy include quality, equity, and access (Mitchell & Encarnation, 1984).

Structure. Structural aspects of the context include actors, institutions, and organizations involved in policy process. The structure of the education system external to the policy process in most states includes the state legislature and the state department of education, intermediate education agencies, and local education agencies. Structures within the policy process include the governor's office, the senate and house of representatives of the state legislature, and offices, agencies, standing committees, and interest groups that are part of the legislative process.

Procedure. Procedural aspects of the context are the formal and informal communication systems external to and within the policy process. A key procedure external to the policy process is the system that provides feedback about the effects of policies (Bobrow & Dryzek, 1987). These may be formal systems such as state reporting obligations of local school agencies; or informal systems such as newspaper editorials or meetings of professional associations. There are formal and informal procedures within the policy process as well. An example of a formal procedure is the process of transforming a bill into law. An informal procedure is the activities of lobbyists and interest groups as they attempt to influence policy.

Instruments

Policy instruments are also called policy mechanisms or policy tools. They are the actions that policy developers use to modify the behavior of the target population (Cogan & Associates, 1977; Howlett, 1991; Linder & Peters, 1988; McDonnell & Elmore, 1987;
Salamon, 1981). McDonnell and Elmore (1987) define four general categories of policy instruments. Mandates are rules governing the action of individuals and agencies, and are intended to produce compliance. Policies that dictate the courses local school agencies must require students to take to graduate are examples of state level education mandates. Inducements transfer money to individuals or agencies in return for certain actions. Although block grant programs such as Chapters 1 and 2 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act represent federal inducements, they are managed through state education agencies and are therefore offered as examples. The third category described by McDonnell and Elmore is capacity building instruments which transfer money for the purpose of investing in material, intellectual, or human resources. Funding for research and training programs are typical examples of capacity building programs. Finally, system-changing instruments transfer official authority among individuals and agencies in order to alter the system by which public goods and services are delivered. For example, voucher policies shift authority to determine student attendance from the state to parents or guardians.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework represents the "rational" aspect of a policy design. It is the way policy makers configure their interpretations of the context and instruments into a policy. The interpretations of policy makers are evident in the definition of the problem, the cause of the problem, the desired goals, solutions to achieve those goals and choice of instruments to effect the solution. Linder and Peters (1984) describe three models that are inherent in a complete theoretical framework. These include models of causation, models of evaluation, and models of intervention. This section details these models. The task force reports and research studies provide examples of these models.

Models of causation. Policies are created to address perceived social problems. Models of causation reflect the policy makers' beliefs about the problem and its cause(s) (Linder & Peters, 1984). Most policy problems are extremely complex (deLeon, 1988-89;
Dryzek, 1983; Ingraham, 1987). The complexity of policy problems increases the likelihood of diverse definitions or models of causality. For example, there was general consensus in society at large that achievement scores of U.S. students reflected a problem with the education system. The model of causation implied in the initial state reforms linked low student achievement to insufficient educational experiences particularly in key academic areas (e.g. not enough courses or time for learning). The model of causation inherent in the education studies attributed low achievement scores to inadequacies in the structure of the education system.

**Models of evaluation.** Models of evaluation describe the conditions or behaviors that policy makers believe will remedy the problem (Linder & Peters, 1984). Because the policy under development is intended to establish these desired behavior patterns, the model of evaluation expresses the goal of the policy. Linder and Peters maintain that there is less understood about goal setting and goal clarification than any other element of policy design. Current goal statements resemble contingency statements such as: If X is the principal goal, then Y should be the policy adopted. The literature suggests that the model of evaluation implied in the task force reports was: If higher student achievement scores is the principal goal, then policies that increase learning opportunities in core courses should be adopted. The model of evaluation implied in the education studies was: If higher student achievement scores is the principal goal, then policies that give local schools the freedom to develop their own curricular programs should be adopted.

**Models of intervention.** Models of intervention link the policy goal with the plan for achieving that goal. They are generally structured around the instrument selected to implement the policy. The model specifies who will do what within the structure of that instrument. The reform literature indicates that initial reforms were implemented with mandates. Continuing the example, the model of intervention implied by the task force recommendations was: To assure students take more courses in science and mathematics, the state will require school districts to increase the number of science and mathematics courses students must take to graduate from
high school. There is insufficient information to provide examples of models of intervention implied in policies that attempt to implement the recommendations of the education studies.

Summary. A complete theoretical framework includes all three models and explains the relationship between the policy context and the policy instrument chosen to implement the policy. Every framework starts with a policy problem (P) that is based on the interpretation of contextual variables. The model of causation represent the policy makers' beliefs about what caused the problem (i.e., X caused P). Models of evaluation specify the behavior that will solve the problem (i.e., if society does Y, then P will be solved). And models of intervention specify the action governments will take to assure that the desired behavior occurs (i.e., governments will do Z to get the target population to do Y).

Evaluation Criteria

The Policy Design literature describes two criteria to evaluate policy designs. "Good" designs are internally consistent and robust (Dryzek, 1983; May, 1981). Internal consistency refers to the extent to which the elements such as the definition of the problem, the goal of the policy, and the instrument selected to achieve the goal, are logically related. Robustness refers to the extent to which designs are applicable across a range of policy situations. In this case, for example, robust designs would be applicable in reform policies that address time devoted to learning, teacher certification, curriculum standards, and school leadership. Ingraham (1987) offers a third criterion, level of design, that provides oversight of the design process, and refers to the extent to which a policy has been systematically structured. This includes the extent to which the cause of the problem, the range of solutions, the choice of instrument, and the match between the instrument and available resources have been considered.

Need for the Study

Literature that paved the way for education reform included reports of task forces and commissions and qualitative studies of the educational setting. Although there was general consensus about the nature of the problem, the two groups of research reports had significantly
different recommendations for resolving the problem. Recommendations of task forces called for increased state control through increased regulations. Recommendations from research reports called for decentralizing the education system.

State legislators were the first to respond to the call for reform and relied predominantly on task force reports for guidance. When these initiatives proved largely ineffective, more serious consideration was given to the recommendations of the research studies. However, the recommendations provided little guidance to state legislators and reflected little appreciation for constraints state legislatures operated under. If education reform is to occur, policies must be designed to increase local discretion, but also provide for the needs of state policy makers. Studying the policy process might identify those elements that meet the needs of both state and local policy makers.

A review of the literature suggests that first wave reform efforts were compromised by discrepancies between decisions that were made in the policy process and the context in which policies were implemented. Policy Design is an approach to policy development that takes into account contextual factors, characteristics of policy instruments, and the theoretical frameworks policy makers use to link these elements. As such, Policy Design provides guidelines for examining the policy process to identify factors that may effect the development of education policy.

Iowa Reform Legislation

The reform movement in Iowa followed the general pattern of many states in the nation. In 1983 the Legislative Council of the Iowa State Legislature created a task force to "study the state's education system and to set an agenda for Iowa education in the next decade" (Iowa Excellence in Education Task Force, 1984). The task force's findings and recommendations were released in 1984. Initial attempts of the Legislature to implement recommendations of the task force consisted of relatively minor, incremental, adjustments to existing regulations.
However in 1987, policy makers took a more comprehensive approach to school reform when they passed the Omnibus Reform Bill.

The abstract of the bill demonstrates its scope:

An Act relating to education including salary increases, efficiencies, and education enhancement, relating to the establishment of an educational excellence program consisting of three phases relating to the recruitment of quality teachers, the retention of quality teachers, and the enhancement of the quality and effectiveness of teachers; activities of the state board of education relating to the accreditation process; collective bargaining; certification of school district employees; provision of certain services to school districts and other area education agencies by area education agencies; provision of pilot projects for modified block scheduling by school districts and for year around schools; elimination of prohibition of employment of spouses of school board directors; weighting of school administrators; establishing sabbatical programs for teachers; increasing the enrichment of pupils in contiguous school districts; postsecondary enrollment options for certain high school students; redrawing boundary lines of area education agencies; plans for a governance structure for merged area schools; date of the organizational meeting of school corporation; sharing interscholastic activity programs; adoption of student achievement goals; provision for intercollegiate athletic activities at merged area schools; procedure for opting out of whole grade sharing; calculation of enrollment of school districts; weighting for non-English-speaking students; and provide effective dates. (State of Iowa, 1987a)

Preliminary investigations revealed that the Omnibus Reform Bill brought together initiatives of two groups of policy makers. The core of the Bill was the Educational Excellence Program. The program includes three phases. Phase I was intended to raise the minimum teachers' salary to $18,000. Phase II provided salary increases to all experienced teachers. Phase III made money available to districts to develop and implement performance-based and/or supplemental-based pay plans. The program also included a provision that required school districts to develop student achievement goals and an assessment system to monitor progress toward those goals. The Educational Excellence Program was developed by lobbyists for the Iowa Department of Education, the Iowa State Education Association, and the Iowa Association of School Boards at the request of the governor.

The remaining provisions in the bill were compiled in a section entitled "Efficiency Incentives". These were issues that the legislature had been working on for a number of years, but had been unable to pass through the legislature. The support that the Governor's program
had from its inception virtually guaranteed its passage. This created an opportunity for the legislature to attach many of the initiatives that the legislature had been pushing.

This study examines the development of the Educational Excellence Program (Appendix A). This piece of the Omnibus Reform Bill was singled out because of its scope and support relative to the bill in general. The Educational Excellence Program is a cluster of provisions that were developed by the same group of individuals. The Efficiency incentives were a cluster of discrete provisions that were offered by a variety of legislators. The Educational Excellence Program had the support of the entire education community. The provisions in the Efficiency incentives section had not garnered sufficient support to pass during previous legislative sessions.

Research Questions

The research questions are based on the elements of Policy Design and are intended to identify the factors that impacted the development of the Educational Excellence Program.

1) What values were apparent in government documents and interviews with policy actors that affected the development and implementation of this reform policy?

2) What structural elements, as described in documents and interviews with policy actors, had an impact on the development and implementation of this reform initiative?

3) How did procedural factors affect the development and implementation of this reform initiative as was evident in documents and interviews with policy actors?

4) What policy instruments were available and considered by policy makers in the development of this reform policy as was evident in documents and interviews with policy makers?

5) What theoretical frameworks did policy makers maintain to describe the problem, justify government intervention, and provide a rationale for the choice of policy instrument as was evident in documents and interviews with policy makers?
6) To what extent did the design of this policy satisfy the criteria of a "good" design as defined by the theory of Policy Design?

7) To what extent did the model of Policy Design facilitate this investigation?

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to examine the policy making process to identify factors that affect the development of education policy in Iowa. The model of Policy Design provides the most comprehensive analysis of factors that contribute to the development and implementation of policy. Applying this model to the investigation of the development of the Educational Excellence Program should identify not only those factors that serve as barriers to education reform, but also insights into solutions to those barriers.

Significance of the Study

The results of this study should identify not only the barriers to reforming education in Iowa, but also the constraints under which state policy makers operate. Once these factors are identified, policies can be designed to increase local discretion and also meet the needs of state policy makers. Such designs offer the best chance for implementing reform recommendations of the education studies.
CHAPTER 2
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction
The review of literature consists of two major sections. The first summarizes some of
the literature associated with the elements of Policy Design. Policy Design is predicated on the
notion that the design of policy can be improved by applying findings of previous research and
experience (deLeon, 1988-89; Linder & Peters, 1984; Schneider & Ingram, 1989). As such,
the structure of Policy Design provides a way to organize the policy science literature. The
scope of the body of literature however, precludes a comprehensive review of all of this
literature from the Policy Design perspective. The literature reviewed here was selected for its
relevance to this particular study. The second major section provides a more detailed account
of the national education reform movement. This study focuses primarily on the impact of the
local context on the development of education reform policy. This review of the literature is
intended to locate the local perspective in the broader context.

Policy Design

Context

Values
There is growing consensus among policy researchers of the need to explore the value
system as a factor to explain the development and effects of policy (Amy, 1984; McDonnell,
1991; Prunty, 1985; vonBeyme, 1986). The policy environment is part of a culture which
consists of images and understandings that are tied together by a system of values (Swidler,
1986). For a value system to characterize a culture, it must ultimately withstand challenges
from competing value systems. The enduring quality of the value system may provide a more
stable basis on which to establish a body of knowledge for policy studies. The aim is to
identify the value system that influences choices during the formulation of a policy, determine
the extent to which it impacted the decision and generalizes to other decision situations and
individuals, and determine its relationship to other value systems (von Beyme, 1986). Bobrow and Dryzek (1987) argue that values should be clarified to the point where they provide clear guidance for developing policy alternatives.

Linder and Peters (1984) distinguish between fundamental and instrumental values. Fundamental values often provide strong explanations to help define the nature of the context, but provide little assistance in shaping specific government action. They are therefore, rarely values considered in the resolution of policy issues. An example of a fundamental value that effects education in the United States is democracy. The value of democracy is founded on the assumption that society consists of autonomous, freely choosing individuals who should, at least theoretically, be responsible for their own welfare (Swidler, 1986). As the success of a democracy depends upon participation of its citizens, the creation of productive, democratized citizens is in the public interest and transcends the interests and values of any single class of individuals. The development of such a citizenry has been charged to public education which attempts to shape the kinds of individuals defined by the electorate as in the best interest of society (Prunty, 1985; Swidler, 1986). For geographic as well as political reasons, the "electorate" has traditionally been defined in this country as the local community.

Instrumental values play a greater role in the definition of the policy problem and the formulation of policy solutions (Linder & Peters, 1984). Mitchell and Encarnation (1984) trace dominant instrumental values inherent in education policy since the early 20th century. The first was "efficiency." According to the authors "virtually every important educational policy issue was debated in terms of professional standards and cost effectiveness" (p. 5). Efficiency became a dominant theme beginning in the 1920s and remained dominant through the 1950s (in Mitchell & Encarnation, 1984). Equity became a preeminent concern with the case of Brown v. Board of Education (1954) and remained a priority through the 1970s. Issues associated with this value included client access, expanded opportunity, and democratic representation. Concerns about the quality of education began to develop with the launching of Sputnik in
1957 and continue into the 1980s. Early definitions of this issue focused on inadequate planning or financing rather than deficiencies on overall school performance. By the 1970s there were more objective indices of the quality of education such as declining test scores, few positive findings for evaluation studies, declining productivity in American industry, and quality emerged as a primary concern.

What is interesting about this chronology is the overlap of the emergence and dominance of these values. Mitchell and Encarnation demonstrate that instrumental values were not replaced, but were added to the value system of a policy environment. The presence of so many values in a value system creates tension between values in the development of education policy.

Structure

The environment in which policy decisions are made and implemented includes multiple structures that are in a constant state of flux. Policy is made at different levels of the decision making structure (Guba, 1984), from the point where policy is generally implemented (e.g., policy through action), to the official policy setting body (e.g., state legislatures or boards of directors). It is also characterized by a dynamic power structure that includes single individuals (e.g., the governor, or board president), and groups of individuals such as political parties, houses of government, and organized and unorganized interest groups. The structure of the policy environment effects both the development and implementation of policy.

Ingraham (1987) contends that the level (or locus) in the structure at which policy is designed is a significant aspect of policy design. Policy actors at different levels of the policy structure have different expertise, different demands for information, and different needs that affect the design process. As an example, Ingraham explains that the need for consensus and compromise characteristic of the legislative environment, "mitigate against stringent and clear design standards" (p. 617), but are suitable for those problems whose solutions are contingent
upon widespread consensus. On the other hand, policy problems whose solutions require technical skill may be more effectively designed at other levels of the policy structure.

The various actors in a policy environment are rarely related in a tightly hierarchical structure. Rather the structure is usually described "loosely coupled" (Fuhrman & Elmore, 1990; Ripley & Franklin, 1986). The amount of control any level of government has over another therefore, is quite limited. In addition, policy actors at each level of the policy structure have their own set of resources and constraints within which they must operate (McDonnell & Elmore, 1987; Ripley & Franklin, 1986). As such, each actor in the policy structure filters policy through its own contextual factors (McLaughlin, 1987). These results support the premise inherent in Policy Design, that appreciation for the relationship between the actors in the policy structure, as well as the particular resources and constraints with which these actors must contend, should improve the design of public policy.

Procedures

Policy Designers also contend that the application of knowledge about the policy process, from formulation to implementation, will improve the design of public policy (deLeon, 1988-89). Research provides insight into each phase of this process. For example, public policies originate as social problems. Social problems are conditions or situations that create human need, deprivation or dissatisfaction among a wide segment of the population in a social context (Anderson, 1976; Eyestone, 1978; Gerston, 1983). As the population of affected individuals expands, differing opinions arise regarding substantive or procedural matters associated with identifying the most appropriate solutions. This conflict elevates a pervasive social problem to a social issue (Anderson, 1976; Eyestone, 1978).

Once a problem has become a public issue, it must still be registered on the public agenda in order to receive attention of policy makers. The public policy agenda consists of those problems or issues that the governmental body and its constituents feel compelled to give active and serious consideration (Anderson, 1976; Eyestone, 1978; Gerston, 1983). The
collection of major issues is often unpredictable and volatile (Gerston, 1983). Items on the agenda are sensitive to changes in other policies, shifts in the power structure and changes in the perceptions of variables related to the problem which impact the political agenda (Dery, 1984; Guba, 1984; House, 1982; Mead, 1983; Rubin, 1983).

Once defined, policies are generated to address a problem. Research indicates that political exposure is generally greater for new programs than it is for revisions existing programs (in Rothman, 1993). As such, new initiatives are frequently developed and implemented with little coordination with existing policies. Policy problems are rarely resolved with the implementation of one policy. Rather, they are generally approached through a series of successive approximations (Majchrzak, 1984). Each new policy decision point may be affected by other policy, shifts in the power structure and even changes in the perceptions of variables related to the problem which impact the political agenda (Guba, 1984; House, 1982; Majchrzak, 1984; Mead, 1983; Rubin, 1983). As a result, policy goals become cloudy and avenues or phase available to reach a goal become ambiguous (Dunn, 1988).

Policy implementation studies focus primarily on the implementation of federal programs such as programs provided through the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965. McLaughlin (1987) and Peterson, Rabe, and Wong (1991) demonstrated that the implementation of these programs unfolded in a distinctive pattern. New programs generally included few specifics to guide implementation. In the absence of guidelines, local implementers were free to implement programs according to their interpretations and definitions of the policy (Guba, 1984). As a result, policies were implemented in ways that met local needs and priorities (Murphy, 1991; McLaughlin, 1987; Peterson, et al., 1991).

Initial evaluations of federal policies, understandably, revealed discrepancies between the actual implementation of a policy and the intentions of federal policy makers. This led to the imposition of more precise regulations and stringent accountability measures. Implementation of these regulations however, required growth in regulatory agencies and
greater cooperation from state education agencies, whose role had been minimized in original
development and implementation efforts.

As a result, agencies across levels of government began communicating with each
other. Through this process, local agencies learned more about the intentions and expectations
of the federal government, and state and federal agencies increased their sensitivity to local
needs and constraints. The agencies began to coordinate efforts and eventually local agencies
began implementing programs more consistent with the original goals.

**Instruments**

Policy designers contend that better policies may be drafted with knowledge about the
nature and impact of various policy instruments. Although limited, some information is
available to provide insight into alternative policy instruments. The most commonly cited
taxonomy of policy instruments includes four categories (e.g., Howlett, 1991; McDonnell &
Elmore, 1987; Mitchell & Encarnation, 1984). Policy makers may choose to transfer resources
to individuals or agents in return for certain actions (inducements); transfer financial resources
to invest in material, intellectual or human resources to promote production of certain goods or
services (capacity building); impose rules to govern the actions of individuals and agencies
(mandates); or redistribute official authority among individuals and agencies in order to alter the
system in which goods and services are delivered (system changing).

**Mandates**

Mandates are rules imposed to govern the actions of individuals and agencies
(McDonnell & Elmore, 1987). The use of this instrument is based on theories of compliance
and coercion. Mandates assume that laws, regulations, and decisions are to be obeyed or
sanctions will be imposed. They also assume that institutions will comply because they are
basically law abiding agencies and they fear sanctions (Berman, 1986; McDonnell & Elmore,
1987). Mandates typically take the form of minimum standards which are designed to create
uniform behavior or bring variation within more tolerable levels (McDonnell & Elmore, 1987).
Legal concepts and modes of reasoning as well as legalistic techniques such as the provision of written arguments and due process procedures, are incorporated into the rules and regulations to enforce the mandates and protect individual rights (Neal & Kirp, 1986). Mandates are used to define program and accreditation standards that attempt to create minimum universal standards for education; prohibitions on educational tracking, special class assignments for disadvantaged groups and other nondiscrimination requirements; and personnel and certification requirements (Mitchell & Encarnation, 1984).

Research suggests that regulatory statements make a bigger impression on constituents than less forceful approaches to policy (in Rothman, 1993). However, mandates seldom achieve their goal. Compliance with mandates is dependent upon the level of enforcement. Maintaining speed limits, for example, is contingent upon the presence of law enforcement officials. In education, uniform enforcement is generally beyond the resource capabilities for regulatory agencies (in McDonnell & Elmore, 1987). In addition, mandates typically set minimum standards for compliance which serve as disincentives to exceed the standards (McDonnell & Elmore, 1987). Finally, the coercive nature of mandates often produces the unintended effect of resistance and resentment among those whose behavior the policy is trying to change.

**Inducements**

Inducements transfer resources (typically financial), to individuals or agencies in return for certain actions (McDonnell & Elmore, 1987). The transfer of money or budget authority is often accompanied by rules and regulations designed to assure that the money is used in ways consistent with the expectations of policy makers. Use of inducements implies that the desired policy outcome will not be achieved without additional financial support. Additional funding is used to mobilize the capacity to attain the policy outcome at expected levels. Examples of inducements include categorically funded programs, block grants, grants to promote specific
site or district programs and the development of differentiated staffing and incentives funding programs (Mitchell & Encarnation, 1984).

Research supports the finding of policy implementation studies previously mentioned. When the interests of the policy implementers are inconsistent with those of the policy makers, a certain amount of money granted through the inducement is lost to the priorities of the implementers (in McDonnell & Elmore, 1987). Conversely, inducements are most effective when the implementing agencies have the capacities to behave as policy makers intend and when the preferences and priorities of the implementers are consistent with those of the policy makers (McDonnell & Elmore, 1987).

Capacity Building

Capacity building instruments transfer generally financial resources to invest in material, intellectual, or human resources. They are similar to inducements in that they provide resources to promote desired policy goals, however, the intent is to encourage investment in material, intellectual, or human resources to enhance the skills, or competence of the current capacity (McDonnell & Elmore, 1987). Capacity building techniques are used in response to continued, fundamental failure in the performance of some set of individuals or institutions and assume that without additional resources, society will not achieve long term benefits. These benefits are either believed to be worth having in their own right or are necessary to achieve other desired outcomes considered important to policy makers. Examples of capacity building instruments include investing in basic research, transferring budget decisions to the site in which decisions are actually implemented, providing grants to increase access to educational opportunities and to implement categorical program for special populations such as head Start (McDonnell & Elmore, 1987; Mitchell & Encarnation, 1984).

The goals sought with capacity building instruments (e.g., investing in basic research) are long term, intangible, and uncertain which poses a problem for policy makers (McDonnell & Elmore, 1987). Long term results are difficult to justify and defend against investments with
more immediate results. The dilemma between long-term v. immediate pay offs compromise the effectiveness of capacity building policies as inducements to change behaviors.

**System Changing**

System changing instruments transfer official authority among individuals and agencies in order to alter the system in which public goods and services are delivered (McDonnell & Elmore, 1987). Key to these instruments is the transfer of authority and not money. These instruments are typically employed when existing structures fail to respond to new policies or important changes in the environment.

System changing instruments assume that existing institutions working under existing incentives cannot produce the results desired by policy makers. Modifying the distribution of power among the institutions within the policy system will significantly change the nature of the products or services, or the efficiency with which they are delivered. Examples of policies implemented through system changing instruments include establishing new agencies to monitor performance and/or compliance, and decentralizing authority through programs like education vouchers (McDonnell & Elmore, 1987; Mitchell & Encarnation, 1984). They may also include establishing advisory groups or developing new support structures to assist local implementers plan and implement programs.

System changing policies tend to get reduced to incremental modifications of existing institutions (McDonnell & Elmore, 1987). Attempts to broaden authority are thwarted by existing institutions whose authority is being diminished. They can also be compromised by insufficient capacity in the institutions to which authority is being transferred.

**Theoretical Framework**

**Macro- v. Micro-Level Theories**

Although political and social scientists have always explored ways to increase the relevance of their research to policy making, they have met with limited success (Bobrow & Dryzek, 1987). Historically, the focus within these disciplines has been to develop theories to
explain the nature of social proclaims. When applied to the policy process however, macro-level theories fail to account for unintended effects of policy, and fail to provide a way to choose between alternative theoretical perspectives (Bobrow & Dryzek, 1987; Linder & Peters, 1984).

The limitations of political and social theory for the development of public policy may be due to the nature of macro-level theories (Linder & Peters, 1984). Macro-level theories provide theories, methods, rules of evidence, a set of variables, as well as a research agenda to guide research (Bobrow & Dryzek, 1987). While such a structure supports further research of the macro-theory, it provides a circumscribed view of reality (Bobrow & Dryzek, 1987). In addition, macro-level theories provide the principles on which to base interpretation, explanation, and prediction of social phenomena (Bobrow & Dryzek, 1987). However, the principles draw relationships between broad, system-level factors. As the breadth of the factors broaden, they loose precision necessary to apply meaningfully to the development of public policy (Linder & Peters, 1984).

The alternative is to seek, not additional macro-levels of inquiry, but to develop micro-level theories of government action. The models inherent in the theoretical framework element of a policy design constitute a micro-level theory of government action. This section summarizes research related to the models of causation, evaluation, and intervention.

Models of the Theoretical Framework

Models of causation. Models of causation link policy problems and their perceived causes. For a problem to reach the attention of policy makers, there must be a set of basic facts that must people agree on (McDonnell & Elmore, 1987). Some of these facts help define the problem. Linder and Peters (1984) summarized characteristics of policy problems that may have implications for designing policy. Schulman (in Linder & Peters, 1984) found that policy problems varied in scale and that some policies cannot be effective unless the problem for which they were created are of sufficient size. Benjamin (in Linder & Peters, 1984),
concluded that problems that include collective consumption goods may require special
treatment in the design of policy. Contextual factors, which contributed to the definition of the
problem vary in their stability. This variance affects the extent to which policy makers can be
certain of the problem. Designing may also be affected by the extent to which predictable
relationships exist between contextual elements. Finally, problems vary in the extent to which
they are independent of other policy areas.

The basic set of facts must also contain evidence to support causal explanations for the
problem. The relationship between facts that define the problem and facts that support causal
theories may be affected by characteristics of the policy makers. Causal attributions for a social
policy problem reflect the world view of policy makers (Linder & Peters, 1984; McDonnell &
Elmore, 1987). World views may be based on macro-level theories (e.g., economic theory)
and/or specific value systems (e.g., equity). Often alternative attributions are forwarded to
explain the policy problem (Linder & Peters, 1984).

Models of evaluation. Models of evaluation link policy goals with general solutions for
reaching desired goals. Policy goals are the least well understood aspect of policy design
(Linder & Peters, 1984). Linder and Peters have identified some characteristics of policy goals
that may affect the design process. Goals may be heavily value-den (e.g., justice or
efficiency) or operational (e.g., standards for teacher certification). Goal statements are
generally stipulated as contingency statements (Linder & Peters, 1984).

Ripley and Franklin (1986) present a taxonomy for policy solutions that is based on the
goals of the policy. Distributive policies promote activities believed to be desirable and
beneficial to society, and that would not occur without subsidization. Redistributive policies
adjust the allocation of wealth, property rights, or some other valued commodity among social
classes. Protective regulatory policies are designed to protect the public by establishing
conditions under which various private activities can occur. Competitive regulatory policies are
designed to establish conditions for specific goods and services but through regulating the producers or service providers.

**Models of intervention.** Models of intervention operationalize the policy solution by linking the goal and solution to the tools to implement the policy. Although some work has been done in the development of taxonomies of policy instruments (e.g., McDonnell & Elmore, 1987), there is little research on factors that contribute to the success of or failure of various instruments (Linder & Peters, 1984). Often models of intervention will include assumptions relating the desired behaviors of the target to the goals of the policy (Schneider & Ingram, 1989).

**Commonly Used Policy Designs**

**Wilsonian/Authority Designs**

Schneider and Ingram (1989) summarize five frequently used designs. One of these is the Wilsonian/authority design. Wilsonian designs generally attribute the cause of social problems to insufficient will of the target groups to behave in the desired manner or with a enough uniformity to eliminate the policy problem. To achieve the desired uniformity, target groups must be coerced into behaving with the desired regularity. Coercion is achieved through mandates, tightly prescribed rules, and the hierarchical links between agencies in the policy chain. Compliance is assumed because of the relationship between superior and subordinate agencies. In other words, target populations will comply because they are supposed to.

**Capacity Building Designs**

Capacity building designs assume social problems are the result of insufficient capacity among the target group to behave as desired. There is a general belief that the target group would comply if they had sufficient resources. The goals of these designs is to build instruments that provide resources such as equipment, training, technical assistance, and financial grants. Resources are often granted with few, if any, operational strings attached.
Tangible Incentives

Designs that include tangible incentives assume that social problems are the result of insufficient will among the target groups rather than their capacity. However, such designs are also founded on the assumption that target groups will act in their own best interest. Policy making bodies, capitalize on the self interest and encourage compliance by establishing positive and/or negative incentives such as establishing fines for non compliance and grants or waivers to reward compliance. The concern is not coercion as is implied with Wilsonian designs, but to charge people who engage in undesirable behavior and reward those who engage in desirable ones.

Symbolic and Hortatory Designs

Symbolic designs are based on the assumption that social problems are the result of inconsistencies between the priorities of the target groups and those of the government. The goal of these designs is to raise the priority associated with a particular behavior by modifying the perceptions, attitudes, and values of the target population. A variety of specific methods have been used to achieve this goal such as: Stating the purpose and priorities of the governing body; appealing to normative beliefs about what is just, correct and "right"; and calling for information campaigns that promote norms or beliefs consistent with policy objectives.

Policy Learning Designs

Policy learning designs assume that social problems are due to the lack of consensus about what to do to improve a social condition. The primary goal of these policies is not necessarily to ameliorate the social problem, but to determine what works. This is accomplished by providing target populations with sufficient capabilities and incentives to experiment and learn about the effects of actions they believe will address a policy problem. One approach is to give target groups a wide choice of policy tools and few rules to constrain their actions. Another approach is for governments to be silent on a wide range of decisions
and actions that might be taken in relation to particular problems thereby permitting discretion and innovation rather than directed activities.

Heuristics

Very little is known about how policy makers develop or choose policy (Linder & Peters, 1984). Many analytic models reflect a rational decision making model and assume that various policy alternatives are generated and policy makers then apply some set of criteria to select the alternative that satisfies most, if not all, of the criteria. Research from this perspective attempts to identify factors that facilitate or impede the generation of alternatives and the criteria and/or heuristic applied to evaluate the alternatives.

Some advocates of policy design also reflect the rational decision making model. Bobrow and Dryzek (1987) for example, suggest that each actor in the policy making process develops a design based on his/her particular world view. The challenge is to decide which design is the most appropriate solution to the problem. The advantage of policy design in this case is that it clarifies the argument supporting a particular alternative. The argument can then contribute to the debate to make the selection of a policy alternative more "rational". Research from this line of reason would focus on the process of choosing among alternatives but provides little insight into the development of the policy itself.

Other advocates of the design approach cite research that fails to support the assumptions of the rational decision making model and focus instead on the process of constructing (i.e., designing) a policy. For example, rather than the formal, structured process implied by the rational decision making model, policy development process was found to be much more ad hoc. Policy makers searched through their knowledge base for policy alternatives and "copied, pinched, or borrowed" elements of policy in this knowledge base (Schneider & Ingram, 1989). Evaluation was not, therefore, a separate step but a continuous process. Policy makers blended acceptable elements of policies in their knowledge base, and eliminated unacceptable elements (Alexander, 1979).
These findings suggest that designing policy is constrained by two significant factors. The first is the knowledge base of the policy makers regarding alternative policy designs and the second is the decision criteria applied to evaluate elements of policy alternatives in their body of knowledge (Linder & Peters, 1984; Schneider & Ingram, 1989). Policy Design, as an approach to policy studies promises to fill the gap in both of these areas. In addition, policy design offers a more creative approach to the formulation of policy alternatives. Once identified, elements may be pinched and blended in new ways to fashion policy alternatives more likely to be effective (Dryzek, 1983; Linder & Peters, 1984; May, 1981).

Criteria

Research in policy design also provides few criteria for evaluating policy designs. Internal consistency refers to the extent to which the elements of a design are logically related (May, 1981). The dynamic, pluralistic nature of the policy environment create a number of opportunities to introduce inconsistencies into a design (Paris & Reynolds, 1983). The competing world views of policy makers, the interaction of competing policies, new empirical evidence, changes in normative trends, changes in the configuration of policy problems are examples of the many potential sources of inconsistencies. Designers must work conscientiously to identify and resolve inconsistencies as they arise. Bozeman (1986) suggests that the internal coherence of a design contributes to its credibility and ultimate utility.

Dryzek (1983) points out that the traditional prescription in policy analyses is to identify policy alternatives that will produce the maximum performance according to a set of specific criteria. However, optimization is only successful if there is a single theoretical perspective that accurately accounts for the social problem and explains the context in which policy will be implemented. The fallacy of this assumption calls for developing alternative evaluation criteria. Dryzek suggests robustness presents a more useful criteria. Robust policies perform "tolerably well" across a range of contexts.
Finally, the level of design refers to the extent to which a policy has been "consciously and systematically structured" (Ingraham, 1987). Ingraham argues that policies can range from a complete absence of design (e.g., a simple transference of political rhetoric to programs purpose and structure), to carefully analyzed and structured policies (e.g., less complex, more routine programs). Ingraham describes a number of factors that affect the level of design. 1) Problem solubility/intractability/amenability to analysis deals with characteristics of the problem and how the problem is structured. 2) Goal consensus or level of conflict addresses the purposes of policy and the extent to which a problem should be solved. 3) Placement of a policy on the agenda and the commitment to solutions may affect the design process. 4) The range of alternatives or instruments considered may be limited by the experience of the policy makers, knowledge about factors that determine the effectiveness of policy instruments. 5) Diversity of the stakeholders. 6) The locus and level of expertise required for design and the consensus among experts. 7) Available resources and resource demands of a policy. 8) the responsibility for implementation and the determination of performance criteria. Finally the locus of design, the level of government where designing is taking place affects the level of design.

School Reform: A Brief History

Student Achievement: A Social Problem

The Impetus

The two most frequently cited missions of public education in the United States are educating the citizenry and preparing a productive workforce. By the 1970's, concern about schools' ability to accomplish these missions was growing (Bradley, 1993; Educational Testing Service, 1990). Every report of the results of SAT and ACT tests showed declines (Educational Testing Service, 1990). Other studies that examined the patterns of courses taken by high school students showed steady declines in mathematics, science, and foreign language
Increases were evident in the number of elective courses such as physical education and other noncore courses (in Mora & Kearney, 1991).

The poor achievement levels of students was increasingly recognized as a threat to the United States economic, military, and social standing. In 1982, a panel created by the National Governors Association announced that pre-collegiate mathematics and science must improve if the United States were to remain economically competitive ("Charting a Course", 1993). Advances in technology and increased access to information were increasing the demand for workers that could collect, analyze, and synthesize information and apply the information to solve problems in the workplace (Bernstein, 1988; Cetron, Rocha, & Luckins, 1988; National Science Board Commission on Precollege Education in Mathematics, Science, and Technology, 1984).

In addition, declines in birthrates after 1960 were expected to result in a severe labor shortage in the traditional white male labor force. Employers were increasingly relying on women and minorities to fill positions. Yet, these groups, particularly minorities, typically received less educational training than their white male counterparts (Cetron et al., 1988; Ehrlich & Garland, 1988; Nussbaum, 1988). These demographic conditions demanded greater commitment to improving educational achievement of all students (Bradley, 1993).

The demand for people with higher order thinking skills and the demographic conditions also affected the viability of the U.S. military. In 1982, then Secretary of Defense Casper Weinberger warned the audience at a meeting sponsored by the National Academy of Science that national security would be weakened if problems in pre-collegiate mathematics and science were not remediated ("Charting a Course", 1993).

Finally, the impact of poorly educated citizens on society was becoming apparent. Increased demand for higher level jobs reduced the need for unskilled laborers which was expected to increase unemployment. It was also likely to increase the gap in the earning power
between higher skilled and unskilled laborers. Both of these factors were expected to increase problems associated with low income and unemployment.

Responsibility for the condition of education was initially attributed to educators. There was growing doubt in the ability of educational administrators, as well as teachers, to deliver the social mandate. School administrators were perceived lacking commitment to high expectations and standards, civil rights, and the handicapped (Boyed, 1987; Kirst, 1987).

The quality of the teaching force was challenged by observations of the recruitment, preparation, and retention of teachers, particularly in science and mathematics (Cetron et al., 1988; in Blank & Engler, 1992). The competition for skilled workers particularly in mathematics and science fields compromised the ability to recruit highly qualified candidates to the education profession (Cetron et al., 1988). Ehrlich (1988) showed, for example, that only eight percent of college freshmen expressed an interest in teaching and approximately one-half of those changed majors before completing a degree. Those who stayed in teaching preparation programs tended to rank in the bottom quartile of their class (Ehrlich, 1988). Other factors such as salaries, the lack of prestige, and the lack of professional standing compromised the ability of local schools to retain talented instructors. Ehrlich (1988) showed that approximately one-half of all new teachers left teaching within seven years.

The Year of the Reports

Concern about the quality of education generated considerable study of the problem and potential solutions. Most of the results of these studies were published in 1983. In fact, there were so many reports issued in that year, it became known as "The Year of the Reports" (McNett, 1984). One of the most significant impacts of the reports, particularly A Nation At Risk, was to propel the issue of education reform onto the political agenda, where it remained for over 10 years (Goldberg & Renton, 1993; McNett, 1984; Rubin, 1983).

The reports most frequently cited in reviews of the reform documents revealed two general types of studies. One type applied qualitative research methodologies to examine
specifically what was happening in schools and provided recommendations based on their observations. Examples of this type are A Place Called School (Goodlad, 1984), High School (Boyer, 1983), and Horace's Compromise (Sizer, 1985). These studies were generally sponsored by education associations and were conducted by educators and education researchers.

The other type was conducted by task forces and/or commissions created by governments (i.e., the U.S. Department of Education) or foundations and associations that may or may not have been related to education such as the Twentieth Century Fund and the College Board. The Twentieth Century Fund is an independent research foundation that conducts policy studies of economic, political, and or social issues (Task Force on Federal Elementary and Secondary Education, 1983). The College Board is a nonprofit membership organization that provides tests and other educational services to students, schools, and colleges (College Board, 1983). Institutions of higher education tended to be well represented on the task forces and commissions. When K-12 representation was present, it tended to be administration such as school board members, superintendents and principals. Very few K-12 teachers served on the task forces. The reports of the task forces generally included recommendations based on the results of commissioned papers, expert and non expert testimony, and panel discussions.

All of the reports cited problems with the curriculum, teachers and teaching, leadership, and the amount of quality time devoted to instruction, and offered recommendations to improve each of these areas (Goldberg & Renton, 1993; Smith & Steddman, in McNett, 1984; Watchke, 1983). There were fundamental differences, however, between the recommendations of the educational researchers and those of the task forces. These differences became increasingly apparent and key issues in the debate as the reform movement unfolded.
State Initiatives

Once the education issue reached the political agenda, governments were obliged to respond. The first to respond were governors and state legislators. States initiated reform legislation at unprecedented rates (Fuhrman & Elmore, 1990; Kirst, 1987; Mitchell, in Mawhinney, 1991). Virtually every state passed new legislation to increase student standards; revise teacher licensure, preparation, and compensation; and enhance knowledge about school performance (in Blank & Engler, 1992; "Charting a Course", 1993; Educational Testing Service, 1990; Fuhrman & Elmore, 1990). Often this legislation expanded governance into areas not previously subject to regulation (Fuhrman & Elmore, 1990; Kirst, 1987; Mitchell, in Mawhinney, 1991). In addition to minimum standards, equality, financial assistance, and categorical programs, legislatures began looking for ways to regulate the quality of the curriculum and the quality of teachers.

Finally, initiatives were frequently implemented and monitored with mechanisms not previously employed. Policies tended to be implemented with mandates and regulations rather than grants and other mechanisms that provided a choice for local compliance and/or resources. Automated reporting and assessment systems facilitated the implementation and oversight of new mandates and regulations (Fuhrman & Elmore, 1990; Kirst, 1987).

In general, state initiatives were consistent with the recommendations of the task forces. Inherent in these recommendations was the assumption that educators were doing the right thing, they just needed to do more of it. For example, legislation was passed to lengthen the school day or year and to provide guidelines to help teachers assign homework to students at all levels. Curriculum "improvements" generally meant increasing the number of courses students needed to complete in basic subject areas to satisfy graduation requirements. Initiatives to improve teaching and teachers often included increasing the course and practicum requirements of preservice teachers and establishing differential pay plans for practicing
teachers based on what they did and/or how well they did it. Initiatives to improve leadership often took the form of increased governance and accountability (i.e., increased reporting requirements).

The Impact of the First Wave

Recall from Chapter 1 that most state reforms were implemented by 1988. Although the initiatives appeared to have had an impact on the process of education (e.g., the number and content of courses taken and required for graduation, increased attention to knowledge and skills assessed on standardized tests, and greater correspondents between teacher certification and teaching assignments), they had little apparent impact on improving student achievement. Trends in the results of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) showed that some gains were made during the 1980s in mathematics and science at the age levels examined with the NAEP assessment (9, 13, 17). However, all of the gains occurred at the lower (basic content knowledge) and middle (comprehension and interpretation) proficiency levels. There was essentially no improvement across grades in reading, writing, or civics (Educational Testing Service, 1990). International comparisons suggest that United States students scored among the lowest in science among developed countries. Recall that the Educational Testing Service estimated that only a small fraction of high school students graduated from high school with the skills to be successful in quantitative fields in college or to perform the statistics now being demanded in factories (Educational Testing Service, 1990).

Small gains were made in closing the gap between Black and White students in mathematics, science, and reading. However, little if any changes were evident in the gap between Hispanic and White students (Blank & Engler, 1992; Educational Testing Service, 1990). Slight reductions were also evident between males and females in mathematics and science. Larger reductions were seen between males and females in reading and writing (Educational Testing Service, 1990).
The Second Wave: Restructuring

Recommendations of Educators

Failure of the state initiatives re-ignited the search for effective solutions. Whereas K-12 educators were largely left out of the discussion in the first wave of reform, reaction to the state initiatives incited educators to become more actively involved. The solutions forwarded by educators were consistent with the recommendations of the education researchers. Educators placed individual schools at the center of the second wave of reform and recommended a complete restructuring of traditional organizational, governmental, and pedagogical practices (Educational Testing Service, 1990; Goldberg & Renton, 1993; Rothman, 1993).

Organization. The research reports criticized the traditional organizational structure of schools. While they agreed that primary/secondary education should be 12 years, they suggested alternative structures that were more consistent with natural human growth and development. For example, Goodlad (1984) suggested that children attend school from the ages of 4 to 16 rather than 6 to 18 and that this age range be divided into three phases: primary education would serve students between the ages of 4 to 7 years, the elementary phase would serve students between 8 and 11 years, and the secondary phase would serve ages 12 to 16.

The reports recommended eliminating the promotion of students from grade to grade based on chronological age. Students were promoted when they demonstrated mastery of competencies. Goodlad recommended eliminating grade levels within the three phases of education entirely to allow students to progress at their own pace without as many structural boundaries.

There was general agreement that the new organizations would require smaller class sizes and some suggested alternative approaches to assigning teachers. Goodlad suggested for example, that each nongraded unit have no more than 100 students with representation across
the ages within a given phase. A cluster of teachers was assigned to each unit. The unit of students and teachers remained together for the entire phase.

**Governance.** Restructuring offered teachers and principals unprecedented decision making authority over their classrooms and buildings. The reports demonstrated the importance of involving school staff in planning reform for its ultimate success (McNett, 1984). And most described the central role of principals in providing the leadership necessary to develop and implement plans for reform. Some emphasized the principals' role in maintaining order and creating an effective learning environment. Others emphasized the role as instructional leaders (Davies, 1983; McNett, 1984; Rubin, 1983). Most of the reports argued principals should have the authority to hire and fire teachers, enforce standards of conduct, and control school budgets (Davies, 1983).

**Pedagogy.** Education reformers agreed with business and government reformers that the quality of teaching needed improving, but educators advocated an alternative approach. It was considered imperative to establish a common core of learning for all students, however, this was to be achieved by eliminating all tracking systems and elective courses. There were some differences between recommendations about what constituted the core of learning (Adler, 1982; Boyer, 1983; Goodlad, 1984; Sizer, 1985).

While task forces focused on the number of courses to be taken in each subject area, educators placed greater emphasis on the skills to be taught in the courses. The education reform initiatives focused on the mastery of higher order thinking skills that transcend any given subject area. Finally, the educators were the first to link instructional techniques with student achievement. Didactic techniques were tied to acquiring knowledge, practicing and coaching were tied to developing skills, and Socratic questioning techniques were recommended for achieving understanding (McNett, 1984). One of the plans placed instructional techniques at the center of the plan (Adler, 1982).
The Impact of State Initiatives: The Local Perspective

Additional weight was given to the recommendations of education reformers because many of the recommendations had been attempted at local schools. As a result, education reformers could describe how state initiatives interfered with local reform efforts. School administrators had to figure out how to reconcile discrepancies between state initiatives and the needs of local constituencies and local reform initiatives that had already been implemented. In addition to incorporating state initiatives into local programs, local administrators had to figure out how to accommodate the initiatives with existing staff and financial resources. Finally, with so many policy decisions being made by the state, local administrators were left to figure out new roles and relationships with local school boards. Teachers were also left to figure out how to implement state initiatives and meet the individual educational needs of their students. Mandated curricula, textbooks, and testing limited their flexibility to individualize instruction, enhance learning experiences, and satisfy curriculum objectives.

The education community continues to explore the implications of the recommendations of the second wave of reform. The results of this study may help clarify, at least in part, some of these implications, assuming decentralization would provide the flexibility to local school districts to implement reform recommendations with minimal interference from the state.
CHAPTER 3

METHOD

The purpose of this study is to examine the development of the Educational Excellence Program. Policy Design emphasizes the need to ascertain the views of the decision makers. As such, interviews were conducted with those individuals who were instrumental in the development of the bill. Ideal policy research uses multiple research methods to corroborate findings and broaden insights that may be limited by the use of a single method (Majchrzak, 1984). One of the advantages of studying public policy is the availability of public records that document formal elements of the policy process. These records were used to enhance the recollections of the policy makers. This chapter describes the procedures used to reconstruct and analyze the development of the Educational Excellence Program. This research was approved by the Iowa State University Human Subjects Review Committee.

Study Design

Interviews

Key informants are subjects that are more willing to talk, have a greater experience in the setting, or are especially insightful about what goes on in a setting (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992). For purposes of this study, key informants were those individuals who were actively involved in the development and passage of the Educational Excellence Program. Because of their involvement, these individuals are most likely to provide an accurate description of what occurred during the development of the policy, as well as the greatest insight into the dynamics between the elements of the policy environment and their impact on the process of policy development. The special nature of these individuals and the fact that many were public officials, characterizes these informants as "elites" which had an impact on the sampling and nature of the interviews (Spector, 1980).

A combination of positional, reputational and snowball sampling techniques were used to identify key informants for this study (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992; Merritt, 1970). Initial key
informants were those individuals who occupied important positions during the 1987 legislative session. One was a consultant in the Legislative Service Bureau who was responsible for drafting education legislation. Another informant served as the Legislative Liaison (lobbyist) for the Iowa Department of Education during the 1987 session. These individuals were asked to identify other people who were actively involved in the development of the Educational Excellence Program.

In addition, possible key informants were identified by reviewing the documentation of the Educational Excellence Program as it moved through the legislative process. Candidates for informants were those individuals who introduced the bill into the House and the Senate, and authors of amendments to this program in particular. These names were compared to those provided by the first informants. Those individuals whose names came up consistently, and who were identified as being key participants in the development of the policy were selected as key informants. These informants were also asked to identify other people who were instrumental in the development of the policy. Those individuals whose names appeared consistently among sources were identified as key informants for this study.

Interviews were conducted with seven informants who held the following positions in 1986-87.

- Representative of the Iowa House, Chair of the House Education Committee (1)
- Former Consultant of the Legislative Service Bureau assigned to education legislation (2)
- Former lobbyist for the Iowa Department of Education (3)
- Former lobbyist for the Iowa State Education Association (4)
- Former Chief of the Bureau of Planning, Research, and Development of the Iowa Department of Education (5)
- Former lobbyist for the Iowa Association of School Boards (6)
- Former Senator of the Iowa Senate (7)

The number in parentheses following each position was the code assigned to each respondent. The code was used in the analysis to identify direct quotes made by each respondent.
Documents

Various documents were used to help reconstruct the policy environment surrounding the development of the Educational Excellence Program. These included official government documents such as the Code of Iowa (State of Iowa, 1987b), The Acts and Joint Resolutions (State of Iowa, 1987a), and records of the bills and amendments introduced during the 1987 legislative session. Other official reports also proved helpful such as the Legislative Service Bureau Information Guide from the Legislative Service Bureau, and the Final Report: First in the Nation in Education from the Legislative Council. Articles from The Des Moines Register provided insights and accounts of the legislative process. Miscellaneous documents such as descriptions of associations actively involved in the policy decision process and my field notes were the fourth general category of documentation reviewed for this study.

The documents were selected on the basis of their relevance to the research process. For example, the Acts and Joint Resolutions (State of Iowa, 1987a) and the records of bills and amendments provided documentation of the changes that were made to the Educational Excellence Program as it navigated the formal legislative process. These records are maintained at the Iowa State Law Library. While the library's records included complete copies of the bill as it was introduced and left the legislature, records of the amendments were less complete. The Code of Iowa and documents from various state departments and educational associations provided basic information about the agencies and enhanced respondents' descriptions of formal processes associated with policy development and implementation. An attempt was made to use editions of documents that were current at the time the Educational Excellence Program was developed. When historical documents were not available, differences between previous and current editions were discussed with the appropriate informant.

Articles from The Des Moines Register were used to confirm and clarify information from other sources. They proved particularly helpful in filling in gaps in the records of the
legislative process. The study included a review of editions of The Des Moines Register published from January 1 through June 30, 1987. These dates included editions published first prior to the official announcement of the Educational Excellence Program and editions published immediately following the adjournment of the legislative session. During this period, The Des Moines Register publishes approximately 109 articles related to education and teacher salaries. Of these articles, approximately 48 (44%) pertained to the context surrounding the development of the Educational Excellence Program. These 48 articles were used in this study.

About on-half of the 48 articles used in the study (52%) addressed procedural aspects of the development of the program. In particular, the articles provided status reports of the bill as it worked its way through the legislative process. Another 19 articles (40%) contributed to the clarification of the values inherent in the context of the policy environment. The remaining 4 articles (8%) clarified the political positions of some of the actors in the policy environment.

Almost two-thirds of the articles (62%) were written as news pieces. They described events and the reaction of various stakeholders to those events. Another 10 articles (21%) described the position of specific policy makers (e.g., the Governor and the Speaker of the House) and stakeholder groups (e.g., the Iowa State Education Association and the Iowa School Board Association) on issues related to the Educational Excellence Program. Eight articles appeared in the editorial section. Five of the eight editorials were written by The Des Moines Register staff. The editorial supported raising teachers' salaries, the Educational Excellence Program, and the consolidation of small schools. The remaining three editorials were contributed by citizens at-large and represented a range of views regarding teachers' salaries and the Educational Excellence Program.
Data Collection Procedures

Interviews with Key Informants

Entry and Interview Procedures

I had met many of the respondents identified for this study through my previous position as Chief of the Bureau of Planning, Research, and Evaluation at the Iowa Department of Education, and as a member of the Executive Council of the Iowa Education Research and Evaluation Association. On this basis, I made the initial contact with respondents via the telephone. At this time, informants were given a general description of the study and details of the interview such as the specific piece of legislation in which I was particularly interested. All of the respondents were willing to visit with me about the Educational Excellence Program and arrangements were made to conduct interviews.

Targeting elite informants, as the respondents for this study, places a number of constraints on the interview process. Research indicates the importance of limiting the interviews to a single session, not more than 1.5 hours in length (Hunt, Crane, & Walke, 1964; Kincaid & Bright, 1957; Spector, 1980). A greater time commitment jeopardizes the participation of the informants. While most of the interviews lasted approximately 1 to 1.5 hours, I found respondents willing to give me more time. Two offered to schedule follow-up interviews and two others gave me 2-2.5 hours of their time.

Elites, particularly public figures, present a significant dilemma with regard to anonymity. Assuring the anonymity of the informants requires the use of pseudonyms and reporting only that information that will not reveal the identity of the informant. However, elites are characterized by their unique positions. Therefore, the general description of each of the informant is likely to reveal his/her identity. Failing to identify the informant's position and/or role in the development of the program may compromise the credibility of the results because readers will have insufficient information to evaluate the credibility of the informants. Spector (1980) argues that public figures recognize that the significance of a statement is often
derived from the individual who makes it and that previous statements are a matter of public record. In addition, public figures may want to speak on the record in anticipation that the results of the research will cast them in a favorable light.

As research fails to provide guidelines to assist in the resolution of this dilemma, I gave each informant the opportunity to determine the extent to which he/she wished to remain anonymous and complied with their wishes. All of the respondents expressed appreciation for the dilemma and gave me permission to describe their positions in relation to the development of the Educational Excellence Program. Numbers (i.e., 1 through 7) were assigned to each of the informants and used as pseudonyms. The numbers were attached to the interview data and remained attached throughout data processing and analysis. They appear in parentheses following a direct quote from a specific informant.

I asked informants to sign the release form giving me permission to tape the interview (Appendix B) and began the tape recorder. The tapes were erased and the identifiers were removed following completion of the project. In addition to the initial interviews, key informants were contacted to verify information and get feedback regarding my interpretations of the data collected. These follow-up contacts were not tape recorded, but were noted in my field notes. Informants were promised a summary of my research upon its completion in appreciation for their assistance.

There was one exception to this procedure. The initial contact with the representative of the Legislative Service Bureau (LSB) was a serendipitous encounter. I had visited the LSB to request general information about legislative process and the locations of records of the legislative sessions. The staff person of the LSB who assisted me mentioned that the current Director was the staff person who worked on the Education Excellence Program in 1987. The person assisting me called the Director, informed her of my interests, and requested an appointment. I met with the Director and received information regarding how to trace a bill
through the documents of the legislative process. She also provided her recollection of the
process.

She requested some time to review her records and we made arrangements to talk
again. I called her approximately one week later on the phone to make arrangements for a
second interview. At that time, the respondent clarified statements made in our first visit and
provided some additional information. However, she felt her notes were incomplete and as
such, did not feel a second face-to-face interview would be useful. Neither of the interviews
with this respondent were tape recorded. I assured her that I would try to protect her identity
with the use of pseudonym, but explained that her identity might be revealed by a description
of her position and role in the development of the Educational Excellence Program. She
explained that she understood the situation and gave me her permission to describe her
position.

**Interview Protocols**

**General survey questions.** The time constraint associated with interviewing elites
creates a greater need to maximize the effective use of the time available. Although less rapport
is needed than would be required in a long term interview (Hunt, Crane & Walke, 1964;
Kincaid & Bright, 1957; Spector, 1980), sufficient rapport must be established to put the
informant at ease to conduct a successful interview. Necessary rapport must be established
quickly. Elites prefer a conversational rather than interrogatory interview. They expect the
researcher to asks penetrating questions rather than basic descriptive information that is
available through other sources (Hunt, et al., 1964; Kincaid & Bright, 1957; Spector, 1980).
Higher level questions and a conversational tone was found to be particularly important in
interviews with lawyers and business elite (Kincaid & Bright, 1957). Hunt et al. (1964)
however, suggests that political elites may be more tolerant of questioning particularly
regarding their personal opinions and values.
The characteristics of interviews with elites was considered in the development of the interview protocols for interviews with key informants (Appendix C). I began to establish rapport with key informants by beginning each interview with general questions about something in their lives, personalized on the basis of information such as personal interests, common acquaintances, etc., which I discovered during the preparation for the interview. For example, one of the key informants, a Democrat, had just survived a reelection campaign to the House of Representatives. This election, however, resulted in a shift of control of the Senate from Democrats to Republicans, which broke the long term control Democrats had maintained over the legislature. We visited a short time about the campaign and the implication of the shift in the power structure.

In addition to the constraints imposed by interviewing elites, the subject of this study required informants to recall events that occurred approximately seven years ago. The initial question of the formal interview was intended to continue to establish rapport and help informants recreate their perceptions of the 1987 legislative session. Informants were asked to describe "what it was like" to occupy the position they occupied during that particular session. I generally prefaced the question by revealing my understanding of the position they held. For example, I asked: "It is my understanding that you served as Legislative Liaison for the Department of Education in 1987. Could you describe what it was like to serve in that position?"

Two other general questions were included to set the stage for more specific questions about the Educational Excellence Program. The first asked informants to describe the general climate of the legislature in 1987. The other asked them to describe the climate with regard to educational issues more specifically. Again, these questions were prefaced with information I learned from a review documents and/or other interviews. For example, I asked: "The Legislative Summary for 1987 suggested that the farm crisis continued to be major concern during the legislative session. Is this consistent with your perception? Could you describe to
me what the general climate of the legislature was like?" This was followed be a question such as..."What about the climate with regard to education in particular?"

The next general question was intended to focus the interview specifically on the Educational Excellence Program. In general, I asked informants: "Could you share with me more about the Educational Excellence Program itself...where the idea came from, things you thought about while developing the policy, debates that occurred...?" The general question was modified slightly depending on the role of the specific informant.

Finally, if informants had not referred to other people who were actively involved in the development of the policy, I asked them: "Who would you consider were other key players in the development of the policy?" When necessary, this question was followed by: "Could you tell me more about their role?" If informants mentioned other individuals, I asked more confirmatory questions with regard to this issue such as..."You mentioned (name). Would you consider (him/her) to be a key player in the development of the policy? Were there others? What were their roles?"

The interview protocol just described represents the ideal scenario. Rarely were the questions presented in such a linear fashion. Presentation depended upon the subjective sense of how comfortable respondents were with their recollections. In most cases, the scope and significance of the Education Excellence Program was such that respondents required little assistance recreating their perceptions of its development.

Prompts. A variety of techniques were used to supplement the general questions and prompt informants to examine the specific elements of policy design more deeply. Techniques used included clarifying questions to confirm my understanding and encourage the informant to elaborate on a topic. Examples of clarifying questions included: "And that was Governor Branstad's promise? Can you tell me more about the collaborative approach?"

I also used paraphrasing, rephrasing the content of the informants comments, to help focus the informant on a particular aspect of his/her response. As an example: "It sounds like
the relationship between the Governor, ISEA, and IASB was a pretty strong force" directed the informants attention to the political power of educational associations.

Reflecting the emotional tone of the informants' comments encouraged informants to concentrate on the affective elements of the policy climate. For example, the comment "I also hear an element of distrust of local schools to do what was in their best interest" encouraged respondents to provide a richer description of the values on which education legislation is based.

Summarizing statements were particularly useful in pulling together the theoretical framework of the informant. They tied key pieces of the informants' response and gave the informant an opportunity to confirm or correct my perceptions. As an example: "...the education problem was the lack of accountability...and you weren't concerned so much about accountability to the state, you were concerned about accountability to the local communities."

**Documents**

Documents were used for two primary purposes in this study. The first was in preparation for interviews with informants. Research indicates that elites expect that the researcher has studied all public documents pertinent to the topic (Hunt et al., 1964; Kincaid & Bright, 1957; Spector, 1980). An attempt was made to become familiar with the record of the 1987 legislative session and in particular with those developments associated with H.F. 499, the Omnibus Reform Bill. Although the records were incomplete, they were sufficient to provide adequate preparation for the interviews.

The second purpose for reviewing documents was to enhance the insights of the informants. Most of the documents reviewed for this purpose were those offered or mentioned by the informants. A key document in this category was the final report of the First in the Nation in Education Task Force. Other documents of this nature included literature describing the education associations, the legislative procedures of the Iowa General Assembly, the Code of Iowa (State of Iowa, 1987b), and The Des Moines Register.
On occasion, informants mentioned topics or issues that were described in other documents. These generally included comments about government bodies such as the Legislative Council, that were created by statute, and provisions of the code that were considered in the development of the Educational Excellence Program. Rather than asking for details of these topics during the interview, I maximized use of my time by focusing on the significance of these issues on the development of the program and referred to the documents at a later time.

When possible, the documents, or relevant portions of the original documents constituted the actual data included in the analysis. If it was not feasible to obtain a copy of the original document, detailed descriptions were entered into the filed notes used for data analysis.

Data Analysis

Organizing the Data

The data for this research project included transcripts of tape recorded interviews, field notes, and documents. The Non-numerical Unstructured Data Indexing Searching and Theorizing (NUD*IST) computer software was used to organize and analyze the text provided from these sources (NUD*IST, 1993). The management and organization components of NUD*IST are accomplished through the development of a flexible index system. The index system consists of categories and subcategories arranged in a hierarchical structure. Index trees show the relationship between the categories and subcategories. They are displayed inverted with the root or most general category positioned at the top of the tree. Nodes are points where a branch on an index tree splits. Index categories are located at nodes on an index tree. NUD*IST keeps index categories, memos about the categories and references to documents. Index systems can be redesigned during the life of the projects to express emerging ideas and theories.
Generating Categories, Themes, and Patterns

Codes are abbreviations or symbols applied to a segment of words that facilitate sorting and clustering word segments relating to a particular topic or question (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992; Miles & Huberman, 1984). Clustering initiates the process of analysis (Miles & Huberman, 1984). Some categories come from research questions, hypotheses, and the existing body of knowledge. The elements of Policy Design provided the basic structure for this study. General categories included values, structures, and procedures under the more broader category of context of the policy environment; policy instruments; and models of causation, evaluation, and intervention under the broader category of theoretical framework.

Subcategories under the basic structure emerged from the field. These were generated by noting values, issues, topics, and key words that appeared regularly in the raw data (Marshall & Rossman, 1989). Passages (responses following a question or prompt by the researcher) and paragraphs from the text of documents, served as the unit of analysis.

A variety of techniques were used to draw out details of subcategories. Properties of each of the subcategories were identified by comparing and contrasting passages and paragraphs pertaining to a given subcategory (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992). It was evident from this process that some properties represented discrete factors or aspects of a subcategory. Other properties were characterized by an underlying dimension (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). For example, it was evident in the passages of informants that local control, the belief that school districts should be allowed to make their own decisions, was one of the values that affected educational policy in Iowa. It was also evident that faith in local schools to make "good" decisions was a property of local control. The amount of faith demonstrated by informants (and by their account, Iowa policy makers in general) toward local schools varied on a continuum from none to complete faith.
Testing Emergent Hypotheses

Consistent with the qualitative research paradigm, data analyses occurred throughout the data collection process (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992; Marshall & Rossman, 1989; Strauss & Corbin, 1990; Wolcott, 1990). Official government documents were reviewed prior to interviewing respondents to get a preliminary picture of the context, instruments and theoretical framework of the Educational Excellence Program. Aspects of this preliminary picture were confirmed, enhanced, or challenged by the recollections of the policy makers during the interviews. Other official reports, The Des Moines Register, and miscellaneous documents were reviewed following the interviews to provide additional confirmation and clarification of emerging themes. The process of constantly comparing information from various sources provided a rich description of the evolution of the Educational Excellence Program.

Investigating things that weren't readily apparent in the passages became as important as the topics and issues that were. For example, respondents systematically omitted reference to other educational associations known to have registered lobbyists. Pursuing this omission helped clarify the power structure of the educational policy environment, as well as identified additional values at play in the decision making process. During analysis conducted after the data had been completed, this approach also helped identify gaps and inconsistencies in the theoretical frameworks associated with the individual provisions that constitute the Educational Excellence Program, as well as the program in general.

Indicators of Rigor

Credibility

Peer Debriefing

Credibility addresses the extent to which the interpretations can be substantiated by the data sources (Guba & Lincoln, 1983). Three methods were used to continually test for credibility. Peer debriefing involves using uninvolved peers to confirm that the data substantiate a researcher's conclusions. Peers might be used to test insights about the data.
check methodological steps in the design as they emerge, review an audit trail, and process personal feelings, anxieties, and stresses which might otherwise affect the inquiry adversely (Guba & Lincoln, 1983). Given the complexity of the school reform issue, the nature of qualitative methodologies, and the complexity of policy studies in general, peer debriefing was an important component of this project.

I relied primarily on a colleague at Iowa State University for assistance with peer debriefing. This colleague has experience with qualitative methodologies, but not with policy studies. She provided invaluable feedback regarding methodological issues. In addition to confirming the reasonableness of some interpretations, the peer debriefer, on occasion played "devil's advocate" to offer alternative interpretations of the data. This challenged me to defend my interpretations and highlighted gaps in my thinking.

Triangulation

Triangulation is the use of a variety of data sources, theories, methods, or investigators to validate the interpretation of data (Guba & Lincoln, 1983; Mathison, 1988). One of the advantages of interviewing public officials is the availability of public records to test against the contents of the interview. On the other hand, the nature of the research questions, and the use of in-depth interviews provided the opportunity to explore areas, and issue that the informant may not have previously considered. As such, the results of the interviews were occasionally inconsistent with the opinions, perspectives, and values expressed in public documents.

Mathison (1988) contends that researchers should expect to find inconsistencies and even contradictions, as well as consistencies, when examining the same research questions with different data sources or methodologies. The value of triangulation is not simply the convergence of various sources of data, but a more complete explanation of the social phenomena under investigation. I attempted to highlight both consistencies and inconsistencies between and among data sources in the presentation of the results (chapters 4 and 5).
Member Checking

Member checking is the process of checking the data and interpretations with members of groups from which the data were obtained (Guba & Lincoln, 1983). Given the historical orientation of this study, I was particularly interested in confirming the plausibility of my interpretations of the events described in the data. The fourth chapter contains a reconstruction of the events surrounding the development of the Educational Excellence Program. This chapter was distributed to respondents with a cover letter explaining that I would be calling them for feedback (Appendix D). I attempted to contact each of the respondents accordingly. Member checking interviews were conducted with four of the seven respondents. During the interviews, respondents supported my interpretation of the events, provided additional information to enhance different aspects of the account, highlighted structural errors (i.e., grammar, spelling, punctuation, etc.), and on occasion expressed concern about the way something was quoted that was attributed to them. While the basic content of the passage remained the same, changes were made to address their concerns.

Transferability

Transferability is the qualitative equivalent to generalizability in the quantitative paradigm (Guba & Lincoln, 1983). It is established through the sampling procedures and by providing a complete description of the research setting to allow readers to evaluate the extent to which it is similar to their own setting. The goal of Policy Design is consistent with that of transferability. The sampling design was used to ensure that the views of those policy makers who were instrumental in the development of the policy were obtained. The document search and interviews with key informants and reformers were designed to obtain a "thick description" of the context in which education reform was/is evolving in Iowa.

Dependability

Dependability refers to the stability of the data and interpretations (Guba & Lincoln, 1983). The process of triangulation yielded evidence to substantiate dependability. In
addition, field notes and the records of category and index searches provided an audit trail of the methodology used in the collection and analysis of the data.

**Confirmability**

Confirmability relates to the extent to which the conclusions were affected by the researchers assumptions or biases (Guba & Lincoln, 1983). Three methods were used to monitor the objectivity of my observations about the policy environment. To identify and examine the underlying assumptions, reasons for formulating the study, and biases and prejudices about the policy environment I included reflections about the process or information that I experienced in the field in my field notes. I began by writing a brief explanation of my career experiences and how I arrived at the problem for this study (Appendix E). I also included my thoughts about the school reform movement and what I thought the state's governing role should be. This served as a baseline. I then compared the reflexive entries in my field notes to this baseline.

The process of triangulation also provided a method of ensuring the objectivity of the conclusions. The explicit documentation of the data collection process, the data themselves, and the generation of the interpretations provides a sufficient trail to allow readers to confirm the interpretations.
CHAPTER 4
THE EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE PROGRAM: A CONFLUENCE OF EVENTS

Introduction

Interviews with key policy makers provided a description of the circumstances surrounding the development of the Educational Excellence Program. The policy makers were those individuals involved in the development and passage of the Educational Excellence Program. These included representatives from the Iowa Department of Education, the Legislative Service Bureau, educational associations, and legislators.

One of the respondents described the development of the Educational Excellence Program as a "confluence of events." Closer examination of the remarks of the respondents revealed that the Educational Excellence Program was a confluence of four major events. These included the movement to raise teachers' salaries, the movement to reform education, a change in attitude among policy makers, and a change in the financial circumstances of the state. These events are described in this section. The descriptions are presented, as much as possible, in the words of the policy makers interviewed for this study.

Most of the policy makers referred to the final report of the First In the Nation in Education (FINE) Task Force as an important element of the reform movement in this state. The importance of this document was evident in the similarities between the language of the report, the language of the informants, and the language of the Educational Excellence Program. As such, it is also summarized in this section to provide additional insights into the context surrounding the development of the Educational Excellence Program.

Teachers' Salaries

According to respondents, the Iowa State Teachers Association (ISEA) and the Iowa Department of Education had been monitoring the status of teachers' salaries for a number of years.
A representative of the Department of Education explained:

...That's just a known amount that is requested every single year. This is where we are. This is what it would take to bring us up to the national average. We probably provided that in '84, '85, and '86. You could see that there was a very clear trend line that salaries of Iowa teachers were slipping. We were not growing as fast as the nation. (5)

As a result, the lobbyist for ISEA explained that teachers' salaries "had been a campaign issue of the association for three or four years, trying to get salaries up to the national average" (4).

The Department of Education estimated that it would cost the state approximately $100 million to raise the average salary to the national average:..."To do that required 100 million dollars because we were about three thousand dollars below the national average" (5). Part of the problem stemmed from activities taking place in surrounding states.

One of the things that was going on in surrounding states, they were setting minimum salaries, they had already done that. We could see the impact it was having in southern Iowa. Teachers were going to Missouri because they had a minimum salary. It definitely had an impact on recruitment. (5)

Growing concern about the status of teachers' salaries among key political agents including representatives of ISEA, legislators, and the governor, moved this issue to the political agenda. Their activities are summarized in the following sections.

Iowa State Education Association

The Democratic party took control of both houses of the Iowa General Assembly in the 1982 election. Because the ISEA traditionally supported Democratic candidates, it found itself with a lot of friends in influential places. The lobbyist for ISEA recounted:

The Democrats took control in the election of '82 so you know here we were with people we had supported in the '82 election in charge of the legislature. So we're going to take advantage of that opportunity. So we ran huge changes in the collective bargaining law, separate contracts, teacher certification. (4)

Although some progress was made in these areas, ISEA's efforts also strained its relationship with the Republican Governor. According to the association lobbyist:

Our first four years with (Governor) Branstad had not been necessarily a pleasant working relationship because we had advanced a couple of pieces of legislation...one specifically dealing with teacher certification and establishing some sort of independent
licensure commission similar to what we have, the professional standards board. We had also advanced successfully legislation to expand the scope of bargaining that had been vetoed... (4)

ISEA also pursued raising teachers' salaries with what one legislator called a "well-orchestrated campaign waged in the media." The issue received its greatest exposure in the 1986 gubernatorial election. There was competition between candidates for the endorsement of the ISEA. One of the legislators recalled:

There was sort of a competition for the endorsement of the teachers association, ISEA, and I think there was even some, well...you have to kind of go back to sort of the politics of education. The ISEA is a very potent political force because of their numbers and because of their money...and the activists in ISEA are predominantly Democrats...and there are several very highly placed Republicans in the ISEA structure, including the executive director. So Governor Branstad made a pitch for the endorsement. (1)

The lobbyist for ISEA explained why the endorsement was given to the Democratic candidate.

We had endorsed Lowell Junkins. And in making that endorsement we drew up some criteria that we used in terms of that endorsement that were in the interest of the members of this association. Lowell Junkins had promised specifically to put some money into teachers' salaries. (4)

The Republican incumbent won the 1986 election and ISEA's campaign to raise teachers' salaries focused again on the legislature. The association's lobbyist described what happened:

I had a meeting shortly before that with Don Avenson, then Speaker of the House, and Don essentially said that if we could get the Governor on board with something like a plan to raise teachers' salaries we, the Democrats, will support it. But your problem is getting the Governor's signature...So you know the Democrats in the legislature were telling us your problem really in getting something through is not with the Democratic majority...Your problem is getting something through that the Governor will actually sign. (4)

Given prior experience and the recent election, the lobbyist was not optimistic about securing the support of the Governor.

**The Iowa State Legislature**

The issue of teachers' salaries was also receiving the attention of the state legislature. Members of the legislature were concerned about the inability to compete for quality teachers and its impact on the quality of education in the state. One of the legislators remarked:
The thing that precipitated that particularly was the fact that we felt that we had a problem with the fact that teachers salaries were so low in comparison to other states and surrounding states. That we were in jeopardy of, and in fact actually, losing people to surrounding states. We wanted to stem that tide and we wanted to be able to hire and hold...I think one of our biggest fears is that we be able to retain, to hire the people we wanted to hire and make it attractive to stay in the profession. That's really what underlies that whole thing. (1)

The other legislator interviewed echoed these sentiments: "But there was general support for that. You know, we were loosing competitive position as far as teacher salaries and it became a general public policy concern of people" (7).

An interim committee of the legislature had been established to examine issues related to school finance. One of the issues considered by the joint committee was teachers' salary. One of the legislators interviewed was a member of that committee and described a proposal under consideration:

We had been chairing an interim committee on school finance and had been discussing the same question. Discussing bringing teachers' salaries up. And we were preparing to develop a bill that would do a staged increase where we would work our way up to a hundred million dollars. Where it would be thirty million one year, sixty million the next year, and a hundred million...something like that. (1)

The Governor

The 1986 election raised public awareness of education and teachers' salaries. According to the ISEA lobbyist, the governor responded to Junkins promise to raise teachers' salaries "by saying he wanted to do the same thing" (4). Some time during the later part of 1985 or early 1986, the governor's executive assistant contacted the lobbyist for the Department of Education (then the Department of Public Instruction). According to the lobbyist, she was asked to: "start thinking about something the governor could do that would cost about $100 million and might result in some improvements in education that could in fact be seen" (2). The program was announced in January of 1987, and it was described as "a funding proposal by the governor to raise teacher salaries to the national average" (5) in four years.
Education Reform

Should Education Reform be a Political Issue?

The second major event that contributed significantly to the Educational Excellence Program was the education reform movement that was taking place nation-wide. Remarks of the respondents suggested that the national reform movement was having a more significant impact on policy makers within the political system than on the general public in Iowa. The respondents agreed that the problems cited in the national reports were not characteristic of the education system in Iowa. The lobbyist for the Department of Education observed, for example:

And in Iowa there were persons who were interested in reform when perhaps we didn't have as many things [that] needed reforming. But yet they were interested in doing some things because the public expected something to be done. (2)

The lobbyist for ISEA agreed:

...because you know in '83, when the "At Risk" report came out, we were not really doing anything in the state mostly because a lot of the conditions that report spoke to simply were not true in Iowa. (4)

The general impression of most respondents was that "school districts were doing well" (1). "Our dropout rates had always been low, our inclusion rates are good, our achievement is good..."(2). And there was apparently no constituent group pushing for reform. The representative from ISEA explained:

Where were the constituent groups pushing the issue? In Iowa the business community [was] not dissatisfied with schools. They (the Iowa Legislature) had no constituents out there telling them that schools were rotten, we weren't telling them, the school board association wasn't telling them... (4)

On the other hand, respondents suggested that the Governor had strong political reasons for passing legislation of the magnitude of the Educational Excellence Program. The lobbyist for ISEA suggested:

This is my perception of what the Governor wanted. The Governor was either, he wasn't at the time, but it was shortly after, chair of the (National) Governor's Association and ECS (Education Commission of the States). And I think it was becoming embarrassing for the Governor to travel to these meetings being from a state
which has a strong tradition of good education and not having anything to talk about in terms of what we were doing... (4)

The implication was that the Governor needed a major program that could be attributed to his administration to improve his reputation and credibility in these national organizations.

There also seemed to be growing interest in reform among state level policy makers.

All of the respondents referred to the national reform movement while setting up the context for the Educational Excellence Program. Most mentioned A Nation At Risk, released in 1983, specifically. One legislator was particularly concerned about what was happening in other states.

We needed to do something to keep pace with what's happening. We could see, particularly those of us who were involved in education and went to national meetings, we could see there were a lot of states that were taking very significant steps to improve their standing. Now a lot of those states were doing things we had been doing for years and so it was a matter of their closing the gap between where they were and where we were and the argument was that if we don't take some action now, some of these states were going to start moving a head of us in terms of student achievement...And you could demonstrate that it's in jeopardy, I don't think anybody wants to suffer the political consequences that we dropped to number three in ACT scores. (1)

According to the lobbyist for the Department of Education, legislators wanted to do something, but did not want to "somehow inadvertently undo something that we were doing correctly in this state" (2).

**Defining Reform**

**Iowa Excellence in Education**

Because conditions in Iowa were not the same as those in other states, the national definition of the education crisis and its solution were not applicable. If education reform was going to occur in Iowa, the problem and possible solutions had to be defined within the context of this state. To this end, the Legislative Council, the executive committee of the legislature, created the Iowa Excellence in Education Task Force. It later became known as the First in the Nation in Education (FINE) Task Force.
The Task Force was created in 1983 to: "Conduct an in-depth study of the state's education system and to set an agenda for Iowa education in the next decade" (Iowa Excellence in Education Task Force, 1984, p. 5). The Task Force issued its report of findings and recommendations in October of 1984. Most of the respondents credited the report with providing the real impetus and direction for the reform movement in Iowa. As one of the Department of Education representatives stated:

When the FINE report came out, that was reform. That's when people were really looking at reform for the first time...looking at significant changes in courses being offered, opportunities for children, [staff development] for teachers...things that we had not seen before. (5)

The Task Force consisted of six members. Each member agreed to assume responsibility for a subcommittee to address one of six areas. The areas included: The relationship between the schools and higher education institutions, school curriculum, teacher quality, student responsibility, and educational framework. Each subcommittee developed a report that included belief statements, rationales, and recommendations. In the end, the Task Force added its own recommendations based on issues the "transcended the subject areas" of the subcommittees. The final report contained the reports of each of the subcommittees and the Task Force in general. This section summarizes those areas addressed in the Task Force report that most directly relate to the Educational Excellence Program: teachers and teaching, curriculum, and the governance structure.

Major Themes

Teachers and teaching. Unlike many national reports, the FINE Task Force report expressed high regard for the quality of teachers. This view was introduced in the preamble:

We strongly believe that expectations that are too low, poorly articulated goals, and standards, as well as conditional commitment of time by students and parents, are more important explanations for the inadequacies in education than poor teaching quality or poor curricula. (Iowa Excellence in Education Task Force, 1984, p. 2)

However, the degradation of the status of teaching was described as an impediment to education change:
In addition, there are significant impediments to educational change in Iowa: An aging population, perceived cost of schooling, disagreements on goals, low professional status of teachers and administrators, low levels of expectations in the community, and difficulties in measuring quality education. (Iowa Excellence in Education Task Force, 1984, p. 2)

The Task Force believed that reestablishing the value of teaching as a profession was vital to the quality of education:

Teaching must again be valued as a profession if we are to help Iowa achieve its long-term growth goals... We must continue to retain, rebuild, and motivate our teaching staff. We must attract the 'best and brightest' if teaching is to help us achieve our goals. (Iowa Excellence in Education Task Force, 1984, p. 3)

The preamble framed the problem as one of teacher quality. The Subcommittee on Teaching Quality of the FINE Task Force agreed and defined the determinants of a quality teacher:

There are no more important determinants of the quality of American Education than 1) the caliber of the individuals it attracts and retains and 2) the excellence of the preparation they receive. (Iowa Excellence in Education Task Force, 1984, p. 28)

The recommendations of the subcommittee were intended to provide comprehensive guidelines for addressing a total set of considerations related to teaching quality: The educators, their initial preparation, their on-going preparation, their support systems and their compensation. (Iowa Excellence in Education Task Force, 1984, p. 28)

With regard to the preparation of teachers, the report called for strengthening teacher preparation programs by concentrating on competencies to be mastered and enhancing fieldwork experiences. Preparation programs were encouraged to ensure teachers demonstrate mastery of "generic teaching competencies such as communication skills, critical thinking skills, and problem solving skills" (Iowa Excellence in Education Task Force, 1984, p. 29). The Task Force did not endorse state wide examinations for admissions or certification, but placed the responsibility for accountability on the teacher preparation programs. Field experiences were to provide student teachers with opportunities to teach in a variety of diverse settings.
There were also recommendations to strengthen provisions for continual improvement of existing teachers. These included extending teacher contracts and providing funding for professional development and enrichment programs, eliminating permanent professional licenses and requiring 10 continuing education units every 5 years to maintain certification, and adding staff development to local school planning requirements to coordinate staff development with general district goals.

Recommendations to improve teaching conditions focused on eliminating duties that distracted teachers and applying a professional model to salaries and contracts. A teacher's time was to be maximized by eliminating nonteacher related duties, increasing preparation time, and/or reducing the number of formal preparations required. The professional model for contracts and salaries included establishing salaries based on comparable worth studies, establishing career ladders based on responsibilities, and implementing evaluation systems that included provisions to reward improvement and allow termination. The Subcommittee on Teaching Quality did not endorse merit pay systems:

38. Given the negative experience and lack of research on merit pay plans, the subcommittee cannot make a recommendation in favor of merit pay. However, the subcommittee encourages further study, research, and experimentation into merit pay and other alternative methods of compensating educators. (Iowa Excellence in Education Task Force, 1984, p. 36)

Curriculum. There was general consensus among the Task Force that improving student achievement in Iowa would require shifting the focus from the number of courses taken or credits earned (i.e., process factors), to defining skills and competencies to be learned and ensuring students mastered those competencies (i.e., outcome factors). This sentiment was expressed in the preamble:

It is not enough to recommend four years of English or four years of math. We must define the skills and competencies we expect to be learned during four years of English or four years of math. This report recommends new institutions and processes to define detailed educational goals and to evaluate progress toward those goals. (Iowa Excellence in Education Task Force, 1984, p. 3)
The report of the Subcommittee on Curriculum described the "mastery" concept most succinctly: "...the focus must be on clearly defined and intentionally taught concepts that lead to specifically planned outcomes" (Iowa Excellence in Education Task Force, 1984, p. 39). A number of subcommittees referred to various reports to help identify the concepts to be taught. These included: The Paideia Proposal (Adler, 1982), Academic Preparation for College (College Board, 1983), and the Final Report of the Joint Committee on Instructional Development and Academic Articulation in Iowa (Iowa State Board of Regents and Department of Public Instruction, 1984).

Although there were some concepts that were unique to a particular subcommittee, most agreed outcomes should be established for reading, writing, speaking, listening, reasoning, mathematics, and studying. Characteristic of these areas was that they crossed disciplines and prepared students for continuous learning. As such, they would require changes in the way courses were articulated, horizontally and vertically, and different instructional methods.

Identifying competencies was only part of the equation to improve student achievement. The other elements implied in the preamble were processes to define educational goals and to evaluate progress toward those goals. The Curriculum Subcommittee noted that provisions already existed that required local school districts to conduct ongoing curriculum planning. Section 280.12 of the Code of Iowa was passed in 1975. At the time the Task Force convened, the section required the board of directors of each school district and the authorities in charge of each nonpublic school to:

1) Determine major educational needs and rank them in priority order. 2) Develop long-range plans to meet such needs. 3) Establish and implement continuously evaluated year-by-year short-range and intermediate-range plans to attain the desired levels of pupil achievement. 4) Maintain a record of progress under the plan. 5) Make such reports of progress as the superintendent of public instruction shall require. (§ 280.12, Code of Iowa, 1987)

However, the Curriculum Subcommittee found that this section was implemented "haphazardly" and rarely on an ongoing basis (Iowa Excellence in Education Task Force,
1987, p. 40). The subcommittee recommended the state develop multiple enforcement options, such as withholding state aid, to address deficiencies in the implementation of this section. The Subcommittee on Educational Framework agreed and believed that "evaluations of progress toward meeting the needs of the districts should be required on an annual basis and should include statements of goals and priorities" (p. 53).

A number of the subcommittees agreed that current measures of student achievement were inadequate and/or misused, and that measures should correlate more closely with substantive education goals. Competency testing was considered a more appropriate compliment to the recommended curriculum goals. The competency assessments were to be established locally. The Higher Education Subcommittee report stated specifically: "The subcommittee does not presently recommend that the Legislature mandate a uniform testing procedure as a graduation or promotion requirement" (Iowa Excellence in Education Task Force, 1987, p. 14).

The Framework Subcommittee described the functions of the State Board and the Department of Education as general leadership, regulatory authority, and enforcement. Recommendations of the Task Force focused on strengthening the state's regulatory role by increasing and clarifying state standards and strengthening procedures to monitor and enforce state standards. For example, the Task Force included the following among elements to be required of all school districts: 1) Conduct needs assessments and develop long-range plans...
as provided for in section 280.12 of the Code of Iowa. 2) Implement an effective personnel evaluation process for teachers, administrators, and support service personnel. 3) Provide adequate time for staff development and adopt a staff development process. 4) Issue full-time contracts for educators. The additional time can be used for planning, developing, implementing, and evaluating programs as well as for developing staff and added instructional time. 5) Make progress toward a career ladder concept with differential salaries. 6) Develop objectives for teaching specific competencies related to effective learning, working, and living; assess student achievement in acquiring these competencies; and provide students with a transcript of these competencies. 7) Integrate computer literacy into the curriculum. 8) Involve community and parents in the educational process.

To strengthen procedures to monitor and enforce state standards, the Task Force recommended establishing consequences for failing to comply with state standards in general:

The State Board will assume control over the school districts that do not meet the standards and either operate the districts from the state level or attach the districts to one or more contiguous school districts that have met the standards. (p. 60)

The Task Force, and in particular the Subcommittee on Framework, emphasized the leadership and service functions of the state. Leadership responsibilities included establishing statewide committees for things such as strengthening vertical and horizontal articulation, and developing models of curriculum, assessment, and curriculum implementation processes. There was also considerable emphasis placed on research and development activities such as disseminating research and development findings to educational professionals, setting up pilot programs, and conducting a statewide educational needs assessment to determine state direction.

Both the Task Force and the Subcommittee on Framework placed local school agencies at the center of the reform movement. However, both groups agreed that: "stronger leadership, expertise, increased planning, resources, and time are imperative at this level for effective development, implementation, and evaluation of a well integrated education program
for all students" (Iowa Excellence in Education Task Force, 1987, p. 7). Particular emphasis was given to local planning and accountability.

An important element of the processes of planning and accountability was the involvement of local community members. The report of the Framework Subcommittee expressed this sentiment most adamantly: "The general public at the local school district level demands the right to determine the standards and quality of education for its children, and Iowa's educational framework has allowed this" (Iowa Excellence in Education Task Force, 1987, p. 50). The Task Force couched the importance of community involvement in terms of continuing support:

Iowans want results. Any request for increased taxes to support education must be accompanied by a plan to improve the system. That plan must be long range in nature and create internal methods of evaluation which will let the citizens measure progress...To the degree that each constituency--school boards, teachers, administrators, and students--are unwilling to submit to reasonable and fair evaluation by the citizens of Iowa, they will lose the citizens' support. To the degree that constituencies welcome fair evaluation and pull together, all Iowa will pull with them. (Iowa Excellence in Education Task Force, 1987, p. 3)

Attitude Change: From Adversaries to Partners

Introduction

The third major event that contributed to the evolution and passage of the Educational Excellence Program was a change in the attitudes of policy makers. According to the respondents, the political environment had gotten quite adversarial. Recall that ISEA did not have a "pleasant working relationship" with the Governor prior to 1986. And the lobbyist for the IASB described that his association had developed a reputation for being "obstructionists" prior to 1986: "...but I think there was at least a perception that the School Boards, as an association and an organization were more obstructionist then they were helpful..." (6). One of the legislators interviewed described the resistance from many policy makers to any innovation in education:

Back then (i.e., when the Democrats assumed control of the General Assembly in 1982), the State School Board of Public Instruction said "no" to everything. Every
idea we came up with they just said no...Of course lots of the ones they just basically sided with the school boards...It was a Republican controlled appointed State Board of Public Instruction. It was a Democratic legislature. Republicans were tied to small schools...and wanted to leave things the way they were. (7)

The remarks of the ISEA representative suggest the extent to which this adversarial atmosphere affected the policy process: "...up to that time (i.e., when the Governor invited the associations to work on the Educational Excellence Program), we really had not worked on anything together, we had just come off four years of fighting each other bitterly on some issues" (4). It also had an impact on the way legislators approached governance of local school districts. Legislation had become increasingly centralized and regulatory. The lobbyist for IASB provided the most complete description:

I think that coming out of the early '80s up to 1987, because the approaches the legislature had previously used in the early 1980s had more of a tendency to be prescriptive and to solve problems at the state level, they probably didn't have as much faith or belief in the ability of community leaders to make good decision. (6)

The mood began to change in the mid 1980's. The representative from IASB suggested that policy makers were becoming frustrated with the gridlock that resulted from adversarial relationships:

I think everybody got a little tired of fighting each other and arguing over micro management issues, and we wanted to actually accomplish something...There was a desire to move on to more productive activity and actually be in a position to accomplish something. (6)

Increasingly, policy makers were more willing to work together to find solutions to education problems. Interviews with key policy makers suggested that three factors were particularly instrumental in influencing this change: The release of the FINE Task Force report, the Democratic take over of the legislature, and the efforts of key individuals.

The Iowa Excellence in Education (FINE) Task Force

According to one of the association representatives, the report of the FINE Task Force and the national reform movement encouraged educational associations to become more proactively involved in education reform:
I would have to say following FINE...the positions that the...I don't want to say that they were just a reactive organization by virtue of their role that emerged for them and all associations, as a result of education reform [was more proactive]. You have to understand the context of the times...After the '83 Nation at Risk, a lot of things changed not because the associations changed...I think all of the associations have grown since the 1970's when so much of the focus was on property tax relief...I don't have a vivid recollection of the late '70's, but it wasn't until 1983 that things really started to take off. (6)

In addition, the Task Force chair took an active role in promoting bipartisan cooperation in the legislature in codifying the recommendations. A representative from the Department of Education recalled:

And I remember when we first passed the very first piece of legislation after the FINE Committee finished its work. Tom (Tom Urban, Chair of the FINE Task Force) actually had to come onto the floor of the House one evening because there were these questions about who's agenda is this and is it really just Governor Branstad's? You know Urban came to the capital and came down and met with leaders and said "this is from my report." And of course Tom is a very very respected Democrat. So you know people were saying this issue is larger than partisan politics. (2)

The Democratic Influence

Another source that appears to have contributed to the change in attitude among policy makers was the Democrats who took control of the General Assembly. Democrats appeared to be more interested in educational issues than Republicans. This was clearly the perception of one of the legislators interviewed: "And quite frankly, you have to excuse a certain amount of partisanship, but the Democratic agenda tends to be more favorable toward funding public education than the Republican Party" (1). In addition, recall one legislator's description of the resistance he perceived among Republicans to any education policy Democrats tried to develop.

On the other hand, one of these legislators described his Democratic colleagues as "innovators":

There were some innovative leaders there like Rich Groth. He was the chair of the education committee in the House and I worked with Richard a lot. He was a very innovative, ahead-of-his-time kind of person. Really saw a lot of failings of small school districts in not giving opportunities and said, you know we have to give these people some opportunities. We just can't go out there and say "you're bad", we have to put some pressure on, we also have to give them some incentives to work with other people and to help them...You had to push from the top and pull from the bottom. (7)
Also recall that it was the Democratically controlled Legislative Council that established the FINE Task Force.

**Key Individuals**

The change in attitude may also have been the result of efforts and interests of key individuals involved in the development of the Educational Excellence Program. These included the lobbyist for the Department of Education, the lobbyists for IASB and ISEA, and the Governor. For example, the consensus among respondents was that the Department of Education and the State School Board had not been active players in education policy in general. Recall one legislator's description of the State Board of Public Instruction's resistance to change. The other legislator described the role of the State Board and Department of Education in educational innovation as "a pretty flat line during {the state superintendent's} tenure" (1).

The Department lobbyist was credited with turning this situation around and enhancing the influence of the Department of Education on the General Assembly. One of the legislators referred to her as "one of the bright spots in {the state superintendent's} administration" (1). The other legislator believed that "there wouldn't have been anything happening" with regards to school reform if it weren't for the Department lobbyist: "That's what I mean. I mean {the lobbyist} made the deals and then she'd explain them to {the superintendent} later" (7).

The Department lobbyist had also staffed the curriculum subcommittee of the FINE Task Force and was therefore aware of the recommendations in the report. She explained: "See, I staffer the Curriculum Subcommittee of the First in the Nation in Education Report. I was the person assigned to that subcommittee and we spent a lot of time on learning to learn skills" (2).

The lobbyists for the educational associations and the Governor had vested interests in changing the working relationships among policy actors. In each case, collaboration allowed
them to pursue their respective political agendas. IASB had made a conscious decision to become less "obstructionist" and more facilitative:

and our role, my role at that point in time was designed to try and shift our position to one of facilitation and assistance to the General Assembly to help them accomplish something...but to try and do it in a way that was going to be [less] onerous or cumbersome to local school boards or administrators to deal with. (6)

The IASB lobbyist was also apparently quite effective in his efforts. One of the legislators credited him with "stretch[ing] the envelope on what the school boards...would normally have done and [getting] them into new areas of activity" (7). The lobbyist's success may have been due in part to his experience at the local level. He was a member of a local school board during the implementation of the revised collective bargaining laws.

The ISEA lobbyist was pursuing the association's political agenda. Recall that the Democratic Speaker of the House had committed his support to a plan to raise teachers' salaries. The problem was "getting something through that the Governor would actually sign" (4). Participating in the development of the Educational Excellence Program guaranteed the Governor's support to raising teachers' salaries. However, when the program was announced, many Democrats felt betrayed by the lobbyist's participation in the development of the Republican Governor's initiative. The lobbyist for ISEA recalled:

And ISEA took the brunt of that problem. Because, I mean obviously, we had been aligned with, you know we had a very close relationship with the Democrats in the legislature. And the day that was announced, you would not have wanted to have been with me when I walked into {the Speaker of the House's} office. He was furious. Absolutely furious that we had pursued these negotiations with the Governor's Office without telling him...That somehow we had betrayed our working relationship by going in and cutting a deal with the Governor. That's what we were told to do, but that did create some problems for us... (4)

The reactions described by both legislators were consistent with the lobbyist's perception. One of them described feelings of betrayal:

I think it was probably more intense among Democrats because I think there was the feeling that they had been betrayed, had been cut out of the discussion and that the ISEA, which has been traditionally a part of the Democratic constituency, sort of went over, for purely selfish purposes, which is true and they will admit to that. They're in
business to do things for their members and they saw a chance to do it, that momentary ascendancy to the Republicans by the ISEA... (1)

The other legislator described the resentment:

Well that was pretty much, that whole plan came out of the Governor, the ISEA, and the School Boards and that was like 'Here, bless it! We have come down from the mountain. We have the tablets carved. What do you mean you don't want to pass it?' And so there was a lot of resentment about that. (7)

The perceptions of one of the legislators suggests that the anger and resentment may have generated some attempts to undermine passage of the program:

...especially most Democrats were furious that the ISEA had cut a deal with the Governor. And just plain didn't want to do it for political reasons. Didn't want to give that kind of program to the Governor, wanted to punish the ISEA for that--there were several. And as a matter of fact, we actually did--in the original bill we passed 92 and a half million dollars, and the original was 100 million dollars. And so it was nipped a little bit just because of that. (1)

However, the other legislator, who sat on the appropriations committee that reduced the original request provided an alternative explanation:

We ended up robbing some money from phase III in that appropriations conference committee...I liked the idea (of phase III) generally, I mean I also, there were other things that I wanted to do in that particular budget bill and it provided a ready source of cash. (7)

Ultimately, the Democrats capitulated. One of the legislators suggested that they recognized that the program was well constructed and provided an opportunity to put a substantial amount of money into education. They also realized that voting against the bill would be perceived as voting against education. In his words:

...the thing that really sold it ultimately is the fact that the underlying arguments were true. We were not competing very well nationally with salaries which something needed to be done. And we had anticipated something a little bit less dramatic than that that would have been a little bit more within our affordability over a three year period. And I think that he (the Speaker of the House) realized that this was an opportunity to put significant money into education. I don't think that a lot of people realized that it was put together in a relatively good way, the minimum salary, the money for the phase II part which went to practicing teachers, then the experimental part...It's the sort of thing that once it gets out in the open, you know, people are forced to confront whether it was a good idea or not, whether we should do it or not, people just said "Well, OK, we're going to do it"...And it would have been a bad move to vote against it. I think it would have been viewed as a vote that was hostile to public education if you voted against it, indicating that we were going to vote against teachers and the whole
 Finally, the Governor had some powerful political reasons for passing a major education bill. According to one legislator, "Branstad [had] not been traditionally known as a supporter of public education" (1). Recall that one of the lobbyist suggested that he needed to improve his credibility in some national associations. The Governor's motivation was evident to most of the respondents. For example, the lobbyist for IASB talked about the "strong desire and motivation that the Governor's Office did want it to be a big announcement" (6). One of the representatives of the Department of Education recalled that "this clearly came off as a coup for the Governor and it was pretty well orchestrated" (5). Included in that orchestration was the fact that the Governor announced the program accompanied by representatives for IASB and ISEA, the two most politically powerful educational association in the state. One of the legislators suggested that the Governor accomplished his goal: "And he reversed his image to a large degree" (1). The lobbyist for IASB described his perception of the impact of this new alliance:

And there were two elements of that surprise. One was the size and scope of the program and the amount of resources we are talking about and what the proposal was itself in terms of how those resources were to be used. But the other surprise was the players that were there with the Governor to announce the program. And this was a surprise because those folks, along with everybody else, knew what the history was. They had been through wars on the a couple of previous issues and they had been aware of back to the 1970's that on some big issues the school boards and the teachers association were going to be at loggerheads. And I think that they had, many people had pigeonholed the organizations to say that that's the way they are and they are always going to be like that. And then suddenly, it wasn't like that any more. It was almost a bit of a culture shock for some...I think that the reaction was how are we supposed to respond to this now? We never thought we would have to respond in a political or any other sense to the ISEA, the School Boards, the Governor all standing together. How are we going to say no to this...I think it was more a consternation, or uncertainty or suddenly the world was a lot more ambiguous than it was the day before. (6)

"Windfall"

The fourth major tributary to this "confluence" was an unexpected receipt of substantial revenues. Most of the respondents provided description of the economic condition of the state
prior to 1987. For example, one of the lobbyist remarked that "first of all the early '80's were a difficult time financially for the state" (6). And one of the legislators described the state's economy as being in a recession: "Plus in addition, when this came, this came at a time when Iowa was in the midst of a recession" (1).

The descriptions of respondents included examples of how the economic conditions affected state budgets. One legislator recalled that the Educational Excellence Program "came at a time when we were cooking the books to make things look like we were better off than what we were" (1). The IASB lobbyist recalled experiencing across the board budget cuts (6). And the lobbyist for ISEA recalled that efforts to generate new revenue provided little relief: "...we had passed the sales tax increase prior to that...what '83? And that money was just all sucked up because we had a deficit" (4).

The financial situation limited options policy makers could use to affect education change. The lobbyist for IASB provided a complete description of the dilemma he perceived the legislature experienced through the middle 1980s.

The opportunity to really make a lot of gains in educational policy or educational reform were very limited at that time. Because of those limitations, the opportunity for the Governor or the General Assembly to respond to issues raised in the Nation at Risk report and the FINE Foundation report were fairly limited. And consequently, most of the discussion and emphasis legislatively was on new standards, or mandates or requirements for local schools or, where limited resources were available, the establishment of some pilot projects or just something, some way to get something going to try something...In the mid 1980s, part of the response, particularly in, I recall, '85 or '86, we did a number of incremental school improvement pieces of legislation but hardly anything could be comprehensive. And my role and the purpose at that time was, and I would really say this is where the dynamics began to change, was that the legislature, people in the legislature, did really want to do something to improve education but the tools that they had to do it with were fairly limited...They had very limited tools at their disposal, particularly financially. And so they proceeded to work through a number of programmatic policy, mandated-oriented, regulatory-oriented issues, to try and foster some change in education. (6)

The legislators interviewed both agreed that early attempts at school reform were "top down" and prescriptive. One of them recalled:

Our essential response to a Nation at Risk, that rash of reports that triggered all this, was an increase in standards of the course offerings that they had to offer, some
staffing—elementary school counselors and media specialists, and things like that. So in that sense it was top down. (1)

The other legislator also characterized early efforts as top down: "But against the backdrop from where we’ve come? Which was an extremely top down, loaded approach with standards and with efficiencies" (7).

Sometime during 1986 the Governor’s Office learned that the state was to receive a “windfall”. One of the legislators explained the source of unexpected funds:

The issue was tax expenditures not appropriations, expenditures. What should we be doing with this so called windfall? We called it a windfall because of federal changes that led to a higher amount that was going to be paid by state people right?...Actually the argument was your overall tax bill wasn’t going to change it’s just that more of it would stay, would go to your state government and less would go to your federal government...It was the tax reform act, that’s what it was, the tax reform and equity act of 1985. (7)

There was general agreement that the additional revenues made it possible to put together the Educational Excellence Program. Most agreed that "something was going to happen" (7) during the legislative session, to add money to teachers' salaries. One of the Department of Education representatives predicted:

We would have received some smaller amount. Something was going to happen. I think the minimum amount would have been 30 to 35 million that would have been phased in over three years. I don’t think there was a question about that. There was going to be a major movement toward increased funding for education and for teachers in particular. However, if the funding had gone the route let's say 30 million dollars instead of 100 million dollars, you probably would not have had a three phased program. And it would have been a debate between phases I and II as we know them right now. And phase III would not have been an option. All the money would have been filtered into teacher salary increases in one form or another. So having a one time approach I think gave us the opportunity, gave the legislature and the executive branch the opportunity to promote phase III. (5)

One of the legislators offered a broader perspective for the opportunity that the additional revenue provided:

The sort of checkered history aside, it was a good thing. The fact that it is literally the only thing in Iowa, particularly during the first few years, I think it is still true, and probably one of the few things in the nation where you have that level of commitment on the part of state government to educational reform, educational improvement. (1)
Summary and Conclusion

Descriptions provided by key policy makers and a review of the report of the FINE Task Force suggest that the movement to raise teachers' salaries, the education reform movement, the emergence of a more collaborative attitude among policy makers, and unexpected windfall revenues came together in 1986-87 to allow the development of the Educational Excellence Program. The movement to raise teachers' salaries provided the policy problem. There was evidence to substantiate the fact that Iowa teachers' salaries continued to fall below the national average and that this was compromising Iowa's ability to compete for quality teachers. Policy makers could also point to specific causes for the problem as well as alternative approaches to solving the problem (e.g., activities taking place in other states). There was a certain inevitability that the issue of teachers' salaries was going to be addressed in the 1987 legislative session. Finally, a considerable amount of money was being provided specifically for the purpose of raising teachers' salaries. One of the legislators expressed this point clearly: "Well, there was a reason we were doing this right? We weren't passing a hundred million dollars for education in general, we were passing a hundred million dollars for salaries" (7).

The education reform movement, and the FINE Task Force report in particular, provided the solution to the problem. Increasing teachers' salaries was among the recommendations of the Task Force to professionalize teaching and attract the best and the brightest teachers to Iowa schools. Phase III operationalized many of the other recommendations in the report such as providing for better coordinated staff development and establishing a professional model of teacher contracts. The provision of the Educational Excellence Program that established section 280.18 embodied the Task Force recommendations to focus on student outcomes rather than educational processes and learning competencies rather than subject area content. The provision also attempted to codify the Task Force's recommendations regarding meaningful assessment and community involvement.
The change in attitude among policy makers and the windfall moneys allowed the program to evolve. The change from adversaries to partners had two important implications for the development of Educational Excellence Program. The first is that it fostered the collaboration among policy makers necessary to develop the program and navigate it through the political process. This was evident in the willingness of the lobbyists to work together and with the Governor to develop the program. It was also evident in their commitment to see it through the political process. The ISEA lobbyist explained their level of commitment:

...we had pledged to the Governor our support for the plan that had been agreed to. And we had agreed to work that process through the legislature and keep it intact as much as possible. And so when the Democrats wanted to break apart certain pieces of it, we and the school board association (were) pretty much in agreement that we were going to try and keep the changes minimal. (4)

The second implication of the change in attitude is that it fostered reconsideration of the approach policy makers used to govern local school districts. Policy makers appeared to come to the conclusion that top down, centralized control was largely ineffective, and they were interested in finding alternatives that were less "onerous" to local school districts. The availability of substantial resources made it possible for policy makers to explore alternative policy approaches. It was clear policy makers believed that without the additional revenues, they would not have been able to develop such comprehensive legislation.
CHAPTER 5
THE POLICY DESIGN OF THE EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE PROGRAM

Introduction

Interviews with key policy makers and a review of relevant documents showed that the evolution of the Educational Excellence Program was a confluence of the movement to raise teachers' salaries, the educational reform movement, increased desire among policy makers to work together for change, and the availability of windfall revenues. The story of the evolution also provides a foundation on which to base an examination of the design of the policy that established the Educational Excellence Program. According to the theory of Policy Design, such an examination begins with identifying the elements that contribute to the design. This chapter constructs and evaluates the design of the Educational Excellence Program by answering the research questions. Aspects of the story of the policy's evolution are supplemented with additional remarks of the policy makers interviewed in this study, additional citations from the FINE report and the Code of Iowa (State of Iowa, 1987b), the provisions of the policy itself as it appeared in the Acts and Joint Resolutions (State of Iowa, 1987a), and articles from The Des Moines Register.

Values

Teachers

One of the strongest values inherent in the Educational Excellence Program was the importance of teachers. The language of the program suggests that policy makers assumed excellence in education depended upon the quality of teachers and that the quality of teachers depended upon compensation. The first of these assumptions was evident in the description of the purpose of the program.

The purpose of this chapter is to promote excellence in education. In order to maintain and advance the educational excellence in the state of Iowa, this chapter establishes the
Iowa educational excellence program. The program shall consist of three phases addressing the following:

1. Phase I--The recruitment of quality teachers.
2. Phase II--The retention of quality teachers.
3. Phase III--The enhancement of the quality and effectiveness of teachers through the utilization of performance pay. (Appendix A)

The relationship between the quality of teachers and the quality of education was clearly stated in the report of the Teaching Quality Subcommittee of the FINE Task Force (e.g., "there is no more important determinant of the quality of American Education than the caliber of individuals it attracts and retains and the excellence of the preparation they receive" (Iowa Excellence in Education Task Force, 1984, p. 28)). It was also evident in the remarks of one of the legislators interviewed of the study and in the Governor's inaugural address. The legislator said

It (the Educational Excellence Program) was predicated on the notion, which I think is a sound notion, that the teacher is the key to the quality of education. It didn't matter--the quality of the program you've got--if you have a poorly prepared person or someone who is not psychologically suited, or somebody who is [not] really into it. I think one of our biggest fears is that we be able to retain, to hire, the people we wanted to hire and make it attractive to stay in the profession. That's what really underlies that whole thing. (I)

The Governor explained

However, these dollars will not be scattered recklessly to the educational wind. Instead, they will be targeted to meet our three most important goals: attracting qualified people into the teaching profession, keeping our best teachers and providing for their development and finding ways to enhance the quality and effectiveness of our schools. ("Branstad's Vision", 1987, p. 13A)

The language of the provisions of the Educational Excellence Program also reflects the assumptions that the quality of the teaching force was dependent upon the level of teachers' salaries. The goal statement of the first phase of the program was

to provide for establishment of pay plans incorporating sufficient annual compensation to attract quality teachers to Iowa's public school system. This is accomplished by increasing the minimum salary. A beginning salary which is competitive with salaries paid to other professionals will provide incentive for top quality individuals to enter the teaching profession. (Appendix A)
The goal statement of the second phase of the program tied teachers' salaries to the retention of quality teachers: "The goal of phase II is to keep Iowa's best educators in the profession and assist in their development by providing general salary increases" (Appendix A). And the goal statement of the third phase of the program ties teacher quality to compensation.

The goal of phase III is to enhance the quality, effectiveness, and performance of Iowa's teachers by promoting teacher excellence. This will be accomplished through the development of performance-based pay plans and supplemental pay plans requiring additional instructional work assignments which may include specialized training or differential training, or both. (Appendix A)

As noted above, the themes of recruitment, retention, and enhancing were consistent with the themes of the Task Force. The subcommittee on Teacher Quality tied the quality of teachers to compensation. It recommended that the Department of Education (then the Department of Public Instruction), "document the compensation level for teachers through a comparison of the skills and qualities required in teaching and those required in other jobs and professions" (Iowa Excellence in Education Task Force, 1984, p. 36).

Both assumptions were evident in the Governor's description of the program as well

To meet this goal of attracting qualified people into the teaching profession, we must raise the salaries of our entry level teaching positions. Last year, we graduated only nine teachers in all of the foreign languages and only 33 teachers in all of the science in Iowa. Yet, foreign language and science instruction are critical to the economic future of our state.

We must take action to attract more of our top achievers to the teaching profession. That is why I am recommending that we establish an $18,000 minimum teacher salary to be funded by the state. This minimum salary should be put into place for the beginning of the next school year.

Our second goal must be to keep our best teachers and provide for their development. I believe we should strive to treat teachers in Iowa as professionals, reward them for good work, penalize them for failures and provide them with an opportunity to participate in the setting of goals. ("Branstad's Vision", 1987, p. 13A)

The language of the program, the FINE Report, and the Governor's speech described two dimensions to the recruitment issue. One dimension was recruiting quality people to the profession. The other dimension was recruiting quality teachers to Iowa schools. These dimensions were reflected in the concerns of at least two of the respondents. Recall the
observations of the Chief of the Bureau of Planning, Research, and Development that low minimum salaries relative to surrounding states "definitely had an impact on recruitment" (5). One of the legislators remarked: "Because of concerns over competitiveness and attracting people to the profession, teachers shortages, we were concerned about that" (7).

Education

The concern for the quality of teachers inherent in the language of the program also reflects the value policy makers had for education. More than one source suggested that education was an important value within the culture of Iowa. For example, it was listed among Iowa's strengths in the preamble of the FINE report: "Each state has its own geographic, economic, and social strengths and weaknesses. Iowa's population is homogeneous, work and education oriented, and relatively small in size" (Iowa Excellence in Education Task Force, 1984, p. 2). The Governor cited it in his 1987 inaugural address.

Our commitment to education is not new. It is as old as our territory and began with the first territorial governor, Robert Lucas...We can take pride in our education record our commitment to excellence in education. I know governors in other states have fought to achieve that kind of excellence in education. Governors...would give their right arms for the kind of commitment to education that Iowan's have given our young people throughout our state's history. ("Branstad's Vision", 1987, p. 13A)

One of the legislators described the value of education as a contributor to the political power he perceived the education community to have in the state.

It was pretty clear that the educational community was pretty much of one mind (about the Educational Excellence Program) and that's a very powerful, powerful combination, especially in a state like Iowa who holds that (education) in such high esteem in the first place. (1)

The association representatives also mentioned the Governor's growing interest in education. The lobbyist for the Iowa Association for School Board (IASB), interviewed for this study recalled hearing the Governor say in public forums that he realized during his first term in office that economic development was not dependent upon the creation of new jobs alone, but also on a strong educational system. The Governor's interest was confirmed in his 1987 inaugural speech. According to The Des Moines Register.
Instead of a traditional inaugural message touching on a variety of issues, the Governor devoted his entire 30-minute speech to an outline of what he described as a "program of unprecedented scope and direction in education." (Yepsen, 1987b, p. 1A)

Excerpts from his speech highlight his concerns.

Why focus on education? The answer is simple: jobs. If Iowa is going to attract the jobs of the future, we must make an extraordinary commitment to be the best in the nation in education. A sound, basic education will be the cornerstone of Iowa's economic development plan. ("Branstad's Vision", 1987, p. 13A)

**Politics**

The focus on teachers' salaries, at the center of the Educational Excellence Program, reflects policy makers' concern about politics or staying in power. The remarks of respondents suggest that the value of politics had two important dimensions. One dimension was recognition. Policy makers were concerned about pleasing their constituents. The importance of political recognition was evident in the Governor's need for a significant piece of education legislation to improve his image in national organizations such as the National Governors' Association and Education Commission of the States. It was also evident in the remarks of one of the legislators who was concerned about the appearance of not supporting the program:

I think it would have been viewed as a vote that was hostile to public education if you voted against it, indicating that we were going to vote against teachers and the whole educational establishment, the PTA, the administrators...everybody was pretty much on board on this thing. I don't think anybody wants to suffer the political consequences of dropping to number three in ACT scores." (1)

The other dimension associated with the value of politics was accountability. The documents and interviews suggested that accountability was considered important at two levels of the educational system. State policy makers were accountable to the citizens for ensuring that government works efficiently and effectively. State accountability was evident in the report of the FINE Task Force subcommittee on Framework. Recall the subcommittee's recommendations for improving the regulatory role of the State Board and the Department of Education, including strengthening procedures to monitor and enforce state standards. It was
also evident in the Governors inaugural speech: "However, these dollars will not be scattered recklessly to the educational winds...Iowans will get results for their investment in education" ("Branstad's Vision", 1987, p. 13A).

The concern for state accountability was reflected in the reporting requirements associated with the provisions of the program. Districts were required to submit plans and progress reports describing how the moneys for phases II and III of the program would be distributed among teachers and describing the status of student achievement. It was also reflected in the efforts to tie teacher performance (phase III) to student achievement (section 280.18).

The analysis of the value of politics also revealed the diversity of the constituents to whom policy makers must respond. Lobbyists for the Iowa Association of School Boards (IASB) and the Iowa State Education Association (ISEA), for example, were concerned about forwarding the interests of their particular association membership (local school board discretion and teachers' salaries respectively). The constituent groups of interest to legislators and the Governor were more diverse. For legislators, particularly Democratic legislators, constituents included teachers via the ISEA ("the ISEA is a very potent political force because of their numbers and because of their money...and the activists in ISEA are predominantly Democratic" (1)); and the community in general ("There was general support that we were losing competitive position as far as teachers' salaries and it became a general public policy concern of people" (7)). The constituents of the Governor reached beyond the state's boarders to national political groups.

Accountability was also considered important at the local level. Recall that local accountability was a strong theme of the Framework Subcommittee of the FINE Task Force: "The general public at the local school district level demand the right to determine the standards and quality of education for its children" (Iowa Excellence in Education Task Force, 1984, p. 50). There was a general perception that local school boards were not keeping the local
communities informed of the activities and quality of the schools. The lobbyist for the
Department of Education placed local accountability at the center of the reform movement in
Iowa

The one thing that perhaps we weren't doing as good a job of is...we may not have been providing the kinds of information necessary for the public to independently come to that conclusion (that our schools were good). For many years in Iowa, educators and others said: "trust us, everything is going fine in the schools." That was sort of expected. I think the way the reform movement somewhat played out in Iowa was citizens and the general public wanted to come to that conclusion independently. They didn't want us to just tell them that, they wanted to come to that conclusion. (2)

Two sources cited problems with local compliance to an existing statue (section 280.12) designed to ensure local accountability. The Framework Subcommittee found that "Section 280.12 of the [Code of Iowa] requires local school districts to conduct a needs assessment and evaluation of their educational programs. These processes occur haphazardly and are rarely done in an ongoing basis" (Iowa Excellence in Education Task Force, 1984, p. 40). The Chief of the Bureau of Planning, Research, and Development explained: "and because it (section 280.18) wasn't being used, wasn't [being] responded to, wasn't [being paid] attention to, one of the ways we developed to make people pay attention to it was to tie phase III plans to that" (5).

The position of the subcommittee suggested that local accountability included involving constituents in decision making as well as local reporting. Both aspects of local accountability were evident in the Educational Excellence Program. Constituent involvement in decision making was required in the development of plans for phases II and III and section 280.18. Local reporting was required in section 280.18.

Local Control

Recall that the FINE Task Force supported continuation of a decentralized governance structure characteristic of Iowa's educational system: "A decentralized secondary educational system can and will continue to serve a state which has the size and social cohesion of Iowa" (Iowa Excellence in Education Task Force, 1984, pp. 2-3). All of the respondents reflected a
similar belief and described local control as an important value affecting education policy in Iowa. One respondent placed it at the center of educational policy making: "I think local control is what probably drives us more than anything else. Both at the legislative branch and the executive branch" (5). The Governor suggested that it was one of the strengths of Iowa's school system.

If you adopt this plan, we will set in motion education reform activity in every school district in our state. We will use the best of Iowa's present education system: local control, commitment to quality and community support to make Iowa's education even better. ("Branstad's Vision", 1987, p. 13A).

One of the legislators provided the clearest definition of local control:

Well the essential notion of local control is that individual school districts will have the freedom and authority, and to some degree the resources to implement education programs as best fit their local districts, within general parameters established by the state legislature and the state department of education. (1)

The assumption underlying the definitions of local control provided by respondents was, as the lobbyist for ISEA said, that "solutions that are made at the lowest level are the best decision" (4). This assumption was evident in the explanation given by the lobbyist for IASB:

Well, if you want my definition for it (local control), it's I think that human systems and organizations are far too complex to develop a single solution or set of strategies on how best to accomplish goals and individual classrooms, school buildings, school districts. And the role of state policy is to establish the parameters and direction and to provide support and assistance and resource where appropriate to help those systems that you are trying to change get the job done. And the recognition that there is no one best solution to any one problem. And that different communities, different schools, can come up with different solutions, different approaches that are all legitimate. They may not be the ones that you as an individual would design, but if you can show that, if you can construct a piece of state policy that can move the larger system in the right direction, and is flexible enough to make allowances for different strategies and approaches at the local level, then you have achieved your goal. Or at least you have made progress toward that goal.

And fundamentally, I believe that you will achieve greater progress by establishing a framework and flexibility, and inviting the communities and individual schools and teachers, and administrators and all the other stakeholders to be partners in the process to give them a share of the decision making process even through they may not have directly participated in writing the state policy. If you provide the opportunity to participate, they will have more ownership and they will accomplish more than if you tried to dictate too much or micro manage from the state level. (6)
There appeared to be some variation in the idea of who actually constituted the "local community." Some of the informants referred primarily to local school boards and administrators. This was evident in the definition provided by the legislator. Other policy makers, such as the lobbyist for IASB, included representatives of the community at large.

The key policy question was the balance between local and state authority. The Department of Education lobbyist described:

The only debate is the tensions between local control and state responsibility. I have NEVER heard a debate that suggests that we eliminate local control. It's just what are the proper constraints, tensions? (2)

Two factors seemed to affect this balance. The first was the degree of trust policy makers had in local education agencies to make sound educational decision. Respondents described a long standing tradition of trust in local school districts. One of the legislators described the trust policy makers had in local schools: "...but in Iowa it's been a long standing principle...there is a great deal of trust and confidence placed in local school boards in doing things" (1). Later he added that school districts were "expected to comply with state standards and if they didn't, well that was their problem too" (1). Recall from chapter 4 however, that this trust appeared to wane by the early 1980s. Remember the lobbyist for IASB perceived that policy makers "at this time didn't quite have as much...faith or belief in the ability of community leaders to make good decisions" (6). Also recall a legislator's observation that the concept of local control "eroded somewhat over generations" (1).

The other factor that seemed to affect the tension between state and local authority was the willingness of local education agencies to accept responsibility for local control. Respondents suggested that there may be some variation among constituents in this regard. It was relatively clear that IASB had a vested interest in promoting local control, however, one of the respondents suggested that school board members talked about local control ("the state shouldn't tell us what to do" (4)), but resisted any proposal that actually increased their authority because they did not want the associated responsibility. In her words: "I mean they
prefer in most cases to blame the legislature" (4). One respondent believed ISEA appeared "satisfied with the local control issue" (5). It was clearly not a concern among teachers according to the lobbyist for ISEA: "our members don't really care about local control accept in terms of their own classrooms and their own curriculum decisions" (4).

The value of local control was evident in the amount of discretion school districts were given to implement the Educational Excellence Program. In phase II of the program, districts were allowed to develop their own plans for distributing funds. Even greater discretion was provided phase III of the program. Application for funds was voluntary. There were few specifications districts had to satisfy in the development of the plans required for funding. The remarks of a representative from the Department of Education suggest that the language of the provision was purposefully kept vague to allow districts greater flexibility: "...the issue was to have high quality teachers and to have some way of addressing rewarding the better teachers...to do that without defining for people what better was going to be" (5).

The lack of specificity inherent in the provision suggests that policy makers were willing to trust local schools to respond to their own needs. Such trust was most evident in the definition of "additional instructional work assignments" included in the provision:

...and other plans locally determined in the manner specified in section 294A.15 and approved by the Department of Education under section 294A.16 that are of equal importance or more appropriately meet the educational needs of the school district. (Appendix A)

Reform

Recall from chapter 4 that the national movement to reform education was creating pressure among state policy makers in Iowa to do something to improve education. However, the quality of the education system in Iowa failed to suggest that the educational system needed to be reformed in terms of the national reform movement. To justify action, policy makers needed to frame the reform issue in terms that more accurately reflected the conditions of the state. This was accomplished by defining the issue in terms of continuous improvement rather
than remediating deficiencies in the system. The continuous improvement framework was evident in the preamble of the FINE Task Force report.

Iowa can and must have the finest kindergarten through college, public and private educational system in the country. Our goal should be the recognition by educators nationwide that "Iowa stands first in education." The level of education in our society is perceived as a reliable index of civic competence. An increase in that level is a step toward fuller citizenship. The nation's youth is its future. Iowa has a tradition of educational excellence. We have a head start, we owe it to ourselves and our youth to continue that tradition. (Iowa Excellence in Education Task Force, 1984, p. 2)

Maintaining the tradition of excellence was of particular concern to at least one of the legislators interviewed. Recall from chapter 4 the observation that other states "were taking very significant steps to improve their standing" (1). The legislator expressed concern that "if we don't take some action now, some of these states were going to start moving ahead of us in terms of student achievement." This legislator recognized the political consequences associated with failing to maintain our status: "I don't think anybody wants to suffer the political consequences that we dropped to number three in ACT scores" (1). These sentiments were expressed by the Governor in his inaugural speech.

If we fail to take action now, we will be placing the children of Iowa at a severe disadvantage. In Japan, I saw young people who attended more days of school and were exposed to more foreign languages than our American students...Our challenge today is to use our historic commitment to education as a springboard to further reform designed to make Iowa's educational system the best in education...Today we have the opportunity to shape our future. If we seize the initiative, we will ensure a place for our state in the competitive global economy of the 21st century. If we fail to act, the work could pass us by. ("Branstad's Vision", 1987, p. 13A)

Phase III of the program represents most clearly, the dilemma policy makers faced with regard to reform described in chapter 4. Recall that policy makers felt a need to "do something" with regard to reforming education, but did not want to "somehow inadvertently undo something that we were doing correctly in this state" (2). Approaching phase III from the perspective of continuous improvement allowed policy makers to resolve the dilemma by letting school districts determine the reforms that were in the best interest of their schools. The
fact that policy makers wanted to encourage "reform" was expressed in the statement of intent included in the provision:

It is the intent of the general assembly that school districts and area education agencies incorporate into their planning for performance-based pay plans and supplemental pay plans, implementation of recommendations from recently issued national and state reports relating to the requirements of the educational system for meeting future educational needs, especially as they relate to the preparation, work conditions, and responsibilities of teachers, including but not limited to assistance to new teachers, development of teachers as instructional leaders in their schools and school districts, suing teachers for evaluation and diagnosis of other teachers' techniques, and the implementation of sabbatical leaves. (Appendix A)

Many of the policy makers interviewed recognized the "experimental" nature of phase III. It was expressed in the Governor's inaugural address.

Iowa will become a laboratory for educational innovation; born of a desire for excellence, nurtured by a process yielding consensus and matured by a continuing commitment to our future. Iowans will get results for their investment in education. ("Branstad's Vision", 1987, p. 13A)

A representative of the Department of Education explained:

What was new was what would it take to set a minimum salary of 18,000 dollars. That was totally new. And then the concept of the phase III approach was also new. The phase III approach in some ways it was an experiment. It was an experiment with respect to the state will provide the money to allow you to try a merit type of system, a reward system. The state will provide money for staff development. That was, in lots of ways, really an experiment. (5)

One of the legislators expressed his perceptions of the provision:

All I'm saying is that this one part of it, part III was the experiment in that...There were guidelines that came out, but when it was first issued there was 47 million, 45 million dollars of experimental money laid on the table, collaborative decision making at the local level with no rules: "Rules in a knife fight? We don't want any rules." (7)

Efficiency

The efficiency with which schools operate was a particular concern among legislators.

Efficiency was defined as districts spending relative to its student achievement.

Well you look at your spending is reasonable and your quality is high. So you're not wasting money on peripheral activities. You have a reasonable amount of administration [and] other spending...And you are also producing pretty good scores. That's pretty good balance don't you think? You get more for your money. (7)
It was also the major theme of the remarks of the Speaker to the Iowa House on the opening day of the 1987 session.

...We have not seen a mere deviation in course--we have witnessed fundamental change. The loss of 60 percent of our agricultural wealth and the resulting ripples through our state economy has had a profound effect on the way we live...I sense that pupil now want to take a look at what we have in place, the resources still in our command. And to look at them in the harsh light of this new reality. They are not looking for big and shiny and new. Instead, they want to stretch our assets to make what we have better, to do what we do better. It is evident...by the educator who thinks classroom days and teaching assignments can be changed to make schools more efficient. (Avenson, 1987, p. 15A)

The inefficiencies were perceived to be the result of failing to respond to changing demographics. For example, the Speaker of the House continued:

We must summon the courage to challenge old assumptions, as difficult for us as that might be. Does the school aid formula that served us well in 1972 still provide support necessary for an education system with 25-percent fewer students but only 5-percent fewer school districts? (Avenson, 1987, p. 15A)

In a rare floor speech made by the Speaker to the House in March, he reiterated the impact of changing demographics.

"Iowa is a different place than it used to be" said Speaker Don Avenson in a rare floor speech. Noting the loss of 130,000 students in the last decade, Avenson said the state can't afford to continue financing an increasingly inefficient statewide school system. "Iowa has fewer people," said Avenson. "Its people are older, its people are poorer and its people are tired of business as usual." (Fogarty, 1987f, p. 2A)

A Des Moines Register editorial also suggested that the school system had not responded to changing demographics.

Iowa ranks 19th in per pupil spending among states, but lags 39th in teachers salaries. Why the discrepancy? The answer, sadly, is that Iowa has too many teachers. As a result the available money is divided among too many paychecks...This has happened because Iowa has failed to shrink its teacher corp in proportion to the shrinkage in the number of students...Iowa has too many teachers (and administrators) because it has too many school systems. After 17 years of declining enrollment, it is long past time to face up to that hard reality. ("Too Many Teachers", 1987, p. 14A).
Structure

Actors

The description of the evolution of the Educational Excellence Program suggests that a number of individuals had instrumental roles in its development. Primary actors included the Governor and lobbyists from the Department of Education, the Iowa State Education Association (ISEA), and the Iowa Association for School Boards (IASB). These actors were assisted by Department of Education staff and a state legislator.

The Governor

The Governor was responsible for initiating the process to develop the program. He had expressed his desire during the 1986 campaign to bring the average teachers' salary in Iowa to the national average and was willing to allocate the resources estimated to be necessary to accomplish this goal. The lobbyist for ISEA recalled: "...you know, he wanted something that he could talk about that was achieved in his administration in the state. He was willing to spend money to do it" (4).

It was clear to the policy makers interviewed, that the Governor wanted something to show for the investment. The Department of Education lobbyist explained,

The Governor really wanted to do something in terms of putting some additional moneys into schools. But he did not want to simply put it in and lose it into the coffers. He wanted to be able to somehow trace that which was being done. So early on Doug (the Governor's executive assistant) had called me and asked if I would start thinking about some kind of...something the Governor could do that would cost about 100 million dollars and might result in some improvements in education that could in fact be seen. (2)

The Governor made his intentions clear in his inaugural speech. "Iowans will get results for their investments in education" ("Branstad's Vision", 1987, p. 13A).

Lobbyist for the Department of Education

The lobbyist for the Department of Education was primarily responsible for the original conceptualization of the Educational Excellence Program. She was the initial person to be contacted by the Governor's Office and developed the outline from which the lobbyists worked.
to develop the details of the program. The Department lobbyist had a long association with the Department of Education. According to the department's Educational Directories (1974-1975 through 1986-1987), the lobbyist worked as a Consultant for Learning Disabilities, and Chief and later Administrator, of the Instructional Services Division prior to assuming the position of lobbyist. Recall that she staffed the Curriculum Committee of the FINE Task Force. As a result, the Department lobbyist's interests were much more closely aligned with education reform in general. The lobbyist used the opportunity provided by the Governor to codify the recommendations of the Task Force.

Lobbyist for ISEA

By 1987, the representative from ISEA had been a lobbyist for some seven years. In 1986-87 she was chief lobbyist of a team of three for the association. The lobbyist was instrumental in promoting an increase in teachers' salaries. She worked with legislators and the Department of Education to raise awareness of the issue and to explore alternative approaches. The lobbyist was so focused on the issue of teachers' salaries that she could recall little of the other elements of the Educational Excellence Program; namely, the provision that established section 280.18.

Well, you may not appreciate what I am going to tell you, but I have very little recollection of any discussion of the 280.18 piece... You know maybe that's just because I didn't focus on it, but I can't remember anything... (4)

Lobbyist for IASB

The lobbyist for IASB also had a number of years experience with the association. He began as a Government Relations Specialist for IASB in 1980. By 1986-87 he had clearly developed a desire to change the adversarial climate of the political environment. This desire was a dominant theme during the interviews with this lobbyist. For example, he spoke of the frustration with the gridlock:

...today they call that gridlock, but the fact of the matter is that the organization did what is was supposed to do and that was represent its membership. [It] acted in the best, or at least the interest that they said was the best, interest and having gone through
a few of those issues in the early '80s, I think there was a desire to move on to more productive activity and actually be in a position to accomplish something. (6)

He also described his desire to accomplish something:

I always wanted to be in the position of saying to the legislature, "you are rightfully and truly motivated [to propose what you are proposing] but you are going about it in the wrong way...I want to help you achieve your goals according to the philosophy of education of the School Board Association. (6)

The impression was that his approach changed the way he represented the interests of the association's membership. Rather than, or in addition to, forwarding specific agenda issues, he worked to maximize the local discretion of school boards in whatever policy was being developed. In addition, he brought his experience as a school board member to bear in the development of policies that reflected consideration of contextual factors at the school district level. The Department of Education lobbyist provided an example of his efforts: "...I remember when we did the cross reference for the committee, he said, 'Look, there aren't enough people in some of these towns to have three committees!'" (2).

Chief of the Bureau of Planning, Research, and Development

Important contributions were provided by individuals who were less directly involved with the development of the Educational Excellence Program. These players were also interviewed for this study. The Chief of the Bureau of Planning, Research, and Development of the Iowa Department of Education, served as "confidante" to the Department of Education lobbyist. He too had a long association with the Department of Education, primarily in positions that dealt with the collection and dissemination of research and other information (such as teacher's salaries) to facilitate policy decision making. The stamp of his experience and expertise was evident in at least six major characteristics of the Educational Excellence Program.

First, the chief was involved in monitoring the status of teachers' salaries as described in chapter 4. Second, he was also involved in determining the estimated amount of money it would take to bring Iowa's average teachers' salary up to the national average. Third, he
helped determine the optimal level of the minimum salary that would improve Iowa's ability to compete with neighboring states for new teachers. The representative explained:

...part of that debate was do you make that a minimum salary or do you make that a minimum amount on the schedule? That had very different implications. So every salary schedule in the state was collected and those were keyed in and a data base was built of salary schedules. So, making certain assumptions, you could then look at what an $18,000 minimum would cost you. (5)

Fourth, the chief worked to coordinate provisions of the new program with existing legislation. He was particularly concerned with coordinating phase III with section 280.12 of the Code of Iowa.

Some people started saying: "What are you talking about?" They hadn't looked at that in years. So that was kind of bringing then everything together by doing that...And that, I would really say, came from the Department's initiative. If you're going to have this (section 280.12) then let's figure out a way to make people realize that it's there and put some...you've got both dollars tied to it and you've got some teeth in it by doing it this way...(the lobbyist) and I talked about how to build 280.12 in there. That probably came from the two of us as much as any place (5).

Fifth, the chief was concerned about protecting the state's tradition of local control. He observed what was happening nationally with regard to assessment.

So there was this national movement on assessment from a comparative standpoint. The Council of Chief State School Officers, in their annual meeting made a decision, by very close vote to start with, that they would endorse National Assessment of Educational Progress state-by-state comparisons. That was a significant step because prior to that time, there was only the endorsement that it was appropriate to have a national type of an assessment, but a lot of the chiefs really believed they were moving in the wrong direction going state-to-state comparisons.

We were one of the few states that had a voluntary assessment system. There were quite a number of states that didn't have state assessment systems, no other state had one like ours, where we had a voluntary one, which put us in a different position. Bob Benton (then State Superintendent of Public Instruction) took a very very strong stance and said that it was not necessary to move to state-to-state comparison and that assessment is not what should drive reform and the other part of the debate and discussion and so on. And nevertheless, they did end up taking the position that they would endorse state-by-state comparisons and altered the direction that they had gone and were currently going. (5)

Finally, the chief described what he believed to be the precursor to the state reporting requirements in the provision that established section 280.18.
One of the things that also occurred, and I don't remember if it was tied to this bill, but I tend to think it was, was that we were required as a department to provide a lot of profiling information on the school districts. We provided a profile to every district in the state, compared to districts of a similar size, compared to a state average...So there was extensive information provided to school districts and that was also part of what I would say led to 280.18 in terms of local reporting. (5)

The State Legislator

One of the legislators interviewed in the study had a significant impact on the Educational Excellence Program as well. According to the legislator, he served in the House of Representatives between 1983 and 1986 and was elected to the Senate for the 1987 legislative session. The lobbyist for the Department of Education and this legislator appeared to have a comfortable working relationship. The lobbyist referred to him by a nick name, they were quite complimentary of each other, and the lobbyist mentioned specifically that this legislator was one of the few, if only, other policy maker who shared her comprehensive view of the entire program.

One of this legislator's particular interests was budget and finance issues: "And for somebody like me who loves that sort of stuff it was exciting" (7). This legislator made two significant changes to the Educational Excellence Program. The first was with respect to section 280.18. He was a key player in introducing the specific skill areas around which districts were required to develop goals and assessments. He drew heavily from the FINE recommendations and incorporated his own particular interests.

Those came from kind of the unachieved FINE goals I thought...I'm pretty sure they were the ones identified by the First in the Nation in Education goals. And they were also ones that were identified by various other reports. Ones that were key skills: reading, writing, speaking, listening, mathematics, reasoning, studying. I added technological literacy personally. Yea that was mine. (7)

He was also responsible for reducing the original $100 million requested to fund the Educational Excellence Program, and phase III in particular. That year he sat on the appropriations conference committee that "robbed some money from phase III." He claimed: "I was probably the first one to take money out of phase III before it even passed" (7).
Political Organizations/Associations

Democratic Party

The 1982 elections gave control of the General Assembly to the Democrats. Recall from Chapter 4 that Democrats were perceived as more supportive of education in general and more willing to shake up the status quo than Republicans. Democrats created the FINE Task Force to define a reform agenda. In addition, Democrats had been pursuing a variety of different reform initiatives such as open enrollment (allowing students in living in one school district to attend schools in another school district), sharing incentives (encouraging two or more local school districts to share resources), modified block scheduling (allowing school districts to experiment with course scheduling), and the post secondary enrollment options act (allowing students to enroll in courses at institutions of higher education), for some time. One of the legislators reflected: "Those different ideas had been floating around for a long time" (7). The other legislator reflected upon specific initiatives: "We had been trying to get sabbaticals funded for a long time (1)...Open enrollment came up in many incarnations for about a four or five year period" (1). Recall from chapter 1 that the Educational Excellence Program provided Democrats the opportunity to get these initiatives passed.

Republican Party

Republicans, on the other hand were perceived as resisting change. Recall resistance was evident among the Republican controlled State Board of Education ("...back then the State Board of Public Instruction said 'no' to everything"). It was also perceived among Republican legislators. According to one of the legislators interviewed:

...The Republican philosophy is more efficient government, small government, etc. But the Republicans back then were completely tied to the small schools because the predominant portion of their districts were small schools. Well, they sided with the small schools. They wouldn't support standards, they wouldn't support incentives, they wouldn't support anything. They just wanted to leave things the way they were and let the district go along... (7)
The Iowa State Education Association

A key driving force behind the movement to raise teachers' salaries was the Iowa State Education Association (ISEA). Recall that the ISEA was considered one of the two most powerful educational associations in the state and continues to grow in numbers and strength ("The ISEA is a very potent political force because of their numbers and because of their money. They have more money now than they had then but even so..."). It has a rather sophisticated organizational structure that includes an Executive Board, an executive director, and staff at the main offices in Des Moines, and regional offices throughout the state. In addition, every local school district who has organized with the ISEA for collective bargaining purposes elects local officers.

According to the lobbyist interviewed, lobbyists for the association are responsible for developing annual legislative goals based on a legislative program developed through a delegate assembly (4). Teachers' salaries is "sort of a continuous program" (4). The lobbyist described other issues that were on the agenda of the association in 1987.

We had advanced a couple of pieces of legislation, one specifically dealing with teacher certification and establishing some sort of independent licensure commission similar to what we have, the professional standards. We had also advanced successfully, legislation to expand the scope of bargaining. (4)

The Iowa Association of School Boards

According to respondents, the other politically powerful education association in the state is the Iowa Association of School Boards (IASB). It was established in 1946 and, according to the lobbyist for the Department of Education, the association derives its power from the inherent political nature of its constituents and the manner in which the educational system is structured in this state. The IASB represents local school boards whose members are locally elected..."They stand before the electorate in the same way a representative or a senator does" (2). This makes the membership inherently more political.
In addition, because "Iowa believes in local control and yet accountability too, for the large resources that are placed there" (2), legislation tends to focus on powers and duties of school boards rather than administrators. This emphasis creates competition between the state and local boards for power and authority, and an incentive for IASB to remain politically proactive. The lobbyist for the Department of Education summed up the primary concern of IASB in her description of the IASB lobbyist's role: "(The lobbyist's) main task at that time was to preserve the autonomy of the local school board" (2).

Just prior to the announcement of the Educational Excellence Program the IASB released the results of a study commissioned on the effectiveness of schools. The report concluded that Iowa public schools provided unequal educational opportunities and called for local officials to close the gap (Lantor, 1987, p. 1A). According to the article, the report recommended reorganizing school districts, sharing programs, and more use of computers to teach students. In an interview with The Des Moines Register, the chair of the task force that conducted the six month study warned local school districts to take action before the legislature did it for them. "We cannot wait for someone else to solve our problems. We know what needs to be done and local school board members should take the responsibility." The report was "well received" by state policy makers (Lantor, 1987, p. 1A) and was endorsed by some 165 school officials at a statewide meeting held in January 1987 (Flansburg, 1987).

Executive Offices/Departments

The Office of The Governor

The Office of the Governor initiated and provided oversight to the process to develop the Educational Excellence Program. Once the program was developed, members of the Governor's Office campaigned in support of performance-based pay plans. One respondent explained: "I always hesitate to speak for the Governor's Office, but what came through the presentations made by the Governor's Office staff is that they were looking at more the merit pay, rewarding the better teachers" (5). The respondent's perceptions were reinforced by The
Des Moines Register: "The Governor wanted merit pay for outstanding service..." (Yepsen, 1987a, p. 1A).

**Legislative Bureaus and Committees**

**The Legislative Council**

The Legislative Council was responsible for establishing the FINE Task Force. The council is established by statute and consists of 20 members including the leadership of both houses, five appointees from president of the senate and five appointees from the speaker of the house. According to the *Code of Iowa* (State of Iowa, 1987b), the council has oversight, governance, and research functions. For example, the council is responsible for determining the rules and operating procedures for the legislature; overseeing the Legislative Service Bureau, the Legislative Fiscal Bureau, the Citizen's Aide, and the Oversight Bureau; and conducting studies and making recommendations for legislative or administrative action. These functions are carried out by three standing committees. The Legislative Service Committee determines the policies relating to the operation of the Legislative Service Bureau. The Legislative Fiscal Committee determines policies for the Legislative Fiscal Bureau. And the Legislative Administration Committee performs duties as assigned by the council.

**The Legislative Service Bureau**

According to the *Code of Iowa* (State of Iowa, 1987b), the Legislative Service Bureau drafts bills and amendments, conducts legal and legislative research, and staffs committees of all members of the General Assembly. It also prepares and publishes the *Iowa Acts*, the *Code of Iowa*, the *Iowa Administration Bulletin*, the *Iowa Administrative Code*, the *State Roster*, and the *Iowa Court Rules*. The Legislative Service Bureau staffed the FINE Task Force and was responsible for translating the Educational Excellence Program proposal into the bill that was introduced into the House. It was also responsible for incorporating bills passed during a legislative session into the *Code*. The representative from the Service Bureau interviewed for this study provided insight into this complicated process.
I think of it like a jigsaw puzzle. You have to fit the pieces together. Sometimes you have to remold the pieces to make them fit. Sometimes you say to yourself "I have no idea how to make this work!" Then the answer comes to you. You might be driving down the highway and say "oh yeah, that is what I can do!" (3)

This responsibility was dependent upon knowledge of the context. The informant reported advising new employees that

it is the fourth year before you know the code, process, people, lobbyist, how legislators think. There are lots of pieces to fit together. I sometimes say to myself that I just don't know enough about this. The ideas come from research and other sources. You always have to keep up with the jargon. (3)

**The Iowa Excellence in Education (FINE) Task Force**

The Legislative Council established the Iowa Excellence in Education Task Force (also known as the FINE Task Force) through its authority to conduct studies. The Task Force was chaired by Mr. Tom Urban, Chairman and President of Pioneer Hi-Bred International, Inc.

One of the Department of Education representatives had high praise for Mr. Urban.

We were fortunate in having Tom Urban chair the First in the National in Education Committee. Tom Urban is probably one of the most enlightened...and I am obviously expressing a value here, but for a CEO of an international company, a large international company, Tom Urban is as an enlightened a business person as one could find about education issues. He understands their complexity. (2)

As reported in Chapter 4, Task Force members chaired subcommittees to investigate six specific areas. Each subcommittee consisted of six to eight other people and determined the process it would use to develop recommendations. According to the report: "In all, 54 individuals served on the Task Force or on its subcommittees. The subcommittees held 62 days of meetings and heard presentations from 144 persons. Seven surveys were sent to over 12,000 Iowans..." (Iowa Excellence in Education Task Force, 1987, p. 5):

**Procedure**

**Development of the Original Proposal**

Development of the Educational Excellence Program was initiated by a call from the Governor's Office to the lobbyist for the Department of Education. According to the lobbyist,
it was not unusual for legislators to contact lobbyists (including the lobbyist for the Department of Education), with ideas about legislation:

Ideas almost always come from legislators. But almost every piece of legislation that effects lots of people in different groups will be lobbyists. That's what they are there for. And it would be the lobbyists who are potentially affected or are the affectors...

(2)

However, it was unique for the Governor to contact the Department of Education lobbyist to develop the proposal. This change in procedure seemed to be the result of a reorganization of state government that was being developed at this time and actually passed through the legislature in 1986. The Department of Education lobbyist explained the impact of the government reform bill on the relationship between the Governor’s Office and the Department of Education:

In the '86 reorganization of state government, the Governor acquired the ability to appoint the state superintendent. That had previously been held to the state board of education. When the Governor acquired the capacity to appoint the state department and the fact that the Governors executive assistant called the state department and said you know I want to do a program, you knew that a program was going to be done, so if you had any hope of influencing it at its genesis you got busy doing that. That wouldn't have happened in 1984. It would not have happened that way. So one of the things that goes on in subsequent to '86 and even now is the relationship between the State Board of Education, the State Department of Education, and the Governor's Office is a different relationship than it was previously. (2)

The lobbyist described her initial activities:

After I had worked with (the Governor's assistant) for a bit on it, I asked his permission to take it to the state superintendent (of then public instruction). I took it to the state superintendent and we worked on it a bit more and eventually (the Governor's assistant) was ready to show it to ISEA and the School Boards Association. (2)

Although there was no documentation available to reveal the specifics of the original proposal, the most consistent recollections of respondents from the Department of Education and ISEA suggest that the proposal included the general ideas to raise the base salary of teachers’ and to provide some sort of performance based pay system. For example, the lobbyist for the Department of Education explained: "We wanted to improve the basic starting
salary which we did to $18 thousand...We wanted to basically develop the phase III proposal, that which is now known as phase III" (2). The lobbyist from ISEA recalled:

...there was an outline ready at the time we were called in. And I assume (the Department of Education lobbyist) helped put that together. I mean it wasn't just a group grope to what we were going to do. There was an outline of how we were going to proceed. My recollection is that the Governor wanted salaries [for people who wanted to go into teaching]...And I don't remember if they had the outline for phase...I know they had part of the outline for phase III done. (4)

At the end of November 1986, the Governor's assistant invited the lobbyists from ISEA and IASB to participate in developing the details of the proposal. The lobbyist from ISEA recalled that initial meeting.

I can't give you the exact date, but I know that it was the end of November...We had the initial meeting in the Governor's office, you know right where he has his press conference, downstairs? And there were representatives there from the Department of Ed. There were representatives there from IASB. There were representatives there from ISEA. (4)

The Governor imposed a considerable amount of control over the process to develop the program to raise teachers' salaries. The individuals to be involved in the development seemed to be selected with care. The collaboration among lobbyists in the development of a piece of legislation was not unusual:

If a major piece of banking legislation is being discussed, I mean I can walk into the rotunda and tell you what group of lobbyists is missing and know that they are either in a back room someplace or they're downtown or somewhere where they can get together and work on the words. (2)

But all of the lobbyists involved in the development of the Educational Excellence Program noted that the invitation to collaborate on this piece of legislation was unique, particularly given the recent history of the relationship between these associations. For example, the ISEA lobbyist explained:

No, I think that was unique to the process actually. In terms of the Governor asking IASB and ISEA to work together. That was the unique piece because up to that time we really had not worked on anything together...We had come off of four years of fighting each other bitterly on some issues. So that was the unique piece. (4)
The collaboration marked a major change in the process of developing education legislation. The IASB lobbyist explained:

So if you go back to that history and then look at '87, what happened in '87, I think that was just an extension of the growth in, not only that organization, School Boards, but the other organizations as well. I think it (the collaborative process) had its roots earlier on, but I think that was really the first manifestation of the change. (6)

The ISEA lobbyist noted that the change had some longevity: "Ah, and it worked so well and the Governor got such a thrill out of it that we did it again in '89 with the school finance revision" (4).

The Governor's actions brought together representatives of the executive branch and the two most powerful education associations in the state. Notably absent from the discussion was representation from School Administrators of Iowa (SAI). The lobbyist for ISEA recalled that the Governor felt strongly about not including them.

They were not included. And I think that was intentional on the part of the Governor's Office...It was the Governor's decision not to include administrators. I don't know the Governor's reasoning for it. The Governor was adamant that the administrators not be involved in the process. (4)

Respondents speculated about the reasons representatives from SAI were not invited to participate in the development of the program. The lobbyist for ISEA suggested: "They didn't want to give any of the money to administrators" (4). Some pointed out that SAI was not as politically powerful as ISEA and IASB. For example, one of the legislators explained:

I was trying to remember when they actually became SAI. See they used to be the principals and superintendents were two different groups and since they came together, they have much more influence than they had. They were very easy to play one off the other. They really were powerless. They really weren't part of the equation come to think of it. They were really miffed too. They have since gotten their act together. I think if this ever happens again (the development of a major piece of legislation) I don't they would have the kind of role the School Board Association has or the teachers association, but they are much more organized. (1)

The representative of the Department of Education suggested that they were not included because education policy in this state rarely involves "management issues":

Sometimes School Administrators of Iowa has to be there but not always. Sometimes the issues don't really, as strange as this sounds, directly affect school
administrators...The principal or the superintendent is management. They are management of the company...Perhaps it's more that because Iowa believes in local control and yet believes in accountability too, for the large resources that are placed there, that they tend not to get into the inner workings of the schools. So you don't see much legislation that is really getting into the kind of things that principals and superintendents have control over. They tend to be more things that school boards would do or not do or we preclude or add or take away from powers and duties of school boards. (2)

The Governor also imposed a number of conditions on participating in the development of the proposal. Most importantly, all deliberations were to be kept confidential. The Department of Education lobbyist was contacted and conducted her preliminary work in confidence. When asked when the Governor's assistant contacted her, the Department of Education lobbyist responded: "Confidentially, and said start working on something here" (2). While there was some discrepancy in the participants' recollection about how blatant the Governor was in expressing his desire to keep the development of this program confidential, it was generally understood by all participants that they weren't to go "blabbing to the legislature." The ISEA lobbyist recalled: "We were asked by the Governor to keep our discussions in confidence. In other words don't go blabbing this to the legislative leaders that we're working on this" (4). The lobbyist for IASB recalled:

Well, my recollection specifically with respect to the Educational Excellence Program is that there was not a lot of communication that occurred with those folks (legislators) prior to the Governor's announcement...I think those of us who were involved in crafting that kept those issues generally fairly close to our vest. (6)

Other conditions included timeliness and consensus. All of the participants knew they had to have the proposal prior to the legislature's convening in January 1987. The ISEA lobbyist explained:

...at the end of November we were all called in, and we had the meeting at night, we were asked if we wanted to participate and we were asked if we thought we could be timely, because the Governor...we found out very shortly thereafter, the Governor indeed wanted to focus his entire [state of the state address] on education. (4)
There also had to be consensus among the parties on the general provisions of the program: "And we had to have agreement, we had to have agreement prior to the legislature convening" (4).

The Bureau Chief from the Department was the only respondent to offer much information about the development of phase I of the Educational Excellence Program. Although the idea for raising the minimum salary was part of the original proposal, this respondent suggested that nothing was definite:

There were many discussions that occurred here in the Grimes Building of how to work through this. There was not consensus at all to start with that we should have a minimum salary of $18,000...So the department along with ISEA and the School Board Association in a series of meetings discussed various ways of approaching this. Do you do it just as an across the board to all teachers? Do you do it as a multiple year phase in? Just how should it be done? How do you manage this in small districts? How do you do this in large school districts? What was going to be the overall intent or approach? (5).

Both of the department representatives took the position that the minimum salaries of teachers had to be raised, however they did not know what level to set. One of them explained:

What was new was what would it take to set a minimum salary of $18,000 dollars? That was totally new. Now a compromise that was reached—the $18,000 was clearly a compromise for the smaller, for the rural districts. So it wasn't so much that West Des Moines or Des Moines needed 18,000 dollars because they were well above that. That was a compromise for the smaller districts. (5)

According to respondents, phase II was developed as a compromise to ISEA. Recall the ISEA lobbyist's opposition to the original proposal:

The negotiations really involved the language, how we were going to work it out. The Governor wanted some kind of merit pay. We were adamant that you know we could accept pay for performance (extra pay for extra duties) but merit pay just conjures up all these negative connotations. (4)

The teachers association was far more interested in across the board salary increases: "Phase II, I think, was in the outline initially as well. That may have been someone realizing that we were going to demand that something be done for experienced teachers" (4). The Department of Education lobbyist described the compromise:
...eventually the (Governor's assistant) was ready to show it (the proposal) to ISEA and the School Boards Association and that's when phase II gets entered into. The compromise in terms of getting the whole thing through was increase the basic salary. We get phase III which is additional performance for additional pay, and we do a general across the board salary improvement in the middle piece, that's phase II. In effect...most things are a compromise and we got the three pieces. (2)

Once the participants agreed to include phase II, they had to determine how to distribute the money. As indicated above, rather than specifying that districts must use the same particular method, disbursement procedures were left to the discretion of local school districts. The Department of Education representative continued:

They did separate salary schedules for phase II. Some rolled it in some...So a lot of different things have happened there. That flexibility was clearly there and you had districts that were not organized, did not have a union representing them so that accommodation was made as well. It was left to the local districts, that here's your money this is how we determined how much money should be received. You have to pay a least $18,000, but you decide how you want to do it from there. So it was all left up to the local boards and negotiators to decide. (5)

Recall that the original proposal included the provision that later became known as phase III. The basic idea was to promote school improvement by rewarding teachers for their performance. However, there was a definite difference of opinion among policy makers regarding the definition of the term "performance." A representative of the Department of Education described the two positions:

And there was some people that were really pushing for merit pay--better teachers should be paid more. And there were other people that were pushing just simply that if you are going to require more work out of teachers, you need to pay them more. (5)

The IASB and the Governor supported merit pay systems. The lobbyist for IASB explained his position: "...as a part of the Educational Excellence Act there were a couple of principle issues that were trying to be achieved. One was to establish a means of rewarding teachers for performance" (6). A Department of Education representative explained the Governor's position:

There was a clear intent from the Governor's Office that they were supportive of merit pay. They were expecting quality improvement with this, with respect to teachers... (5)
The representative speculated about the Governor's expectations of the implementation of merit pay systems:

I always hesitate to speak for the Governor's Office, but what came through the presentations made by the Governor's Office staff is that they were looking at more the merit pay, rewarding the better teachers. And what does it imply when you have a better teacher? They are more satisfied with their education. That their peers agree that this is a better teacher for a variety of reasons? All of those types of things I think they were looking at as a reasonable outcome or an expected outcome of phase III. (5)

The ISEA and Department of Education supported supplemental pay systems. The lobbyist for ISEA described: "Well yes, that was our point of view, that performance pay was extra pay for extra duties" (4). The Department of Education lobbyist described her position: "That piece became the performance, increased performance for more pay side...The question was not really one of merit pay, it was of additional pay for additional functions, additional work" (2).

Rather than debate the issue, phase III was drafted to include both options. The Department of Education representative described: "So phase III ended up being a compromise, that it was going to be a local decision" (5). The ISEA lobbyist described her comfort with this compromise:

I think everybody felt more comfortable—the school boards association and ISEA—with there being that kind of local control and it's sort of been a principle philosophy as well because we could sell it to our members by saying look the state isn't telling you what you have to do other than these general guidelines that must be followed in putting together the phase III plans...There was a lot of appeal for that. I mean it may have been a political consideration as much as anything else, because it gave IASB and ISEA a way to sell it to their members. (4)

In addition to the issue of merit vs. supplemental pay plans, the respondents described other issues that were considered during the development of the phase III provision. Another important issue was collective bargaining. The lobbyist for ISEA explained:

And we have staff in the state in our field offices. They had a real concern and when they have a concern it gets translated to the members, about what that impact would be on the collective bargaining process. So that was the biggest piece prior to getting it submitted to the legislature. That was probably the toughest aspect of it to work out with the School Board Association, because wages is a mandatory subject of bargaining and we are dealing with wages, and how are we going to do that in the
context of collective bargaining without expanding the scope of bargaining and without
narrowing the scope of bargaining. Because that was pretty much what the Governor's
Office had outlined as acceptable to him was that neither side should take a loss or a
gain in collective bargaining. So members should not lose the right to bargain for the
things they already had the right to bargain for; neither should it be necessary to bargain
for everything. That was really the crux of the negotiations for phase III. (4)

In accordance with the association's new goal to facilitate the policy making process,
the IASB lobbyist was particularly concerned with the language of the phase III provision. He
was sensitive to the concerns of ISEA:

I never, in describing what we were trying to accomplish, used the term merit pay
because remember we were working on this legislation in the context of a collaborative
effort with ISEA and we generally agreed that we weren't trying to accomplish merit
pay in the traditional sense, but we did want to provide the means for teachers to devise
their own means of rewarding...we stayed away from using the term merit pay, but we
accomplished it in a different way and that was to have teachers and teachers'associations [develop their own plans]. (6)

In addition to recognizing the sensitive position of ISEA, the lobbyist for IASB was
also concerned about the timing of implementation:

We had to come up with a way that we were going to allow school districts to quickly
implement the program, knowing that the bargaining process would, by the time the
legislature adjourned, would have been essentially completed. So if you look at the
sections of the code that say that there is a bargaining unit that they still had to reach
mutual agreement on THE plan in that first year. And also in the context of not wanting
to make reference to compensation for teachers based on their performance in using the
language of merit pay, but instead calling it performance-based plans, in our desire to
keep everybody comfortable and moving along and still making progress...You know,
frankly, it was ISEA that we were...and not just the ISEA, you have to look at this in
the context of putting yourself in their shoes. And their shoes were pretty
uncomfortable with their own membership if you started waving a merit pay flag too
broadly then how do they respond to their membership if they got too far out in front
on a merit pay type of an issue. (6)

As was mentioned, there was some concern among the representatives from the
Department of Education, to coordinate phase III with an existing statute (section 280.12). The
Chief of Planning, Research, and Development explained how phase III could be used to
increase compliance to section 280.12.

Nevertheless, the process was set up that this is how you apply, and this is how much
money you're going to receive, and these are the plans you must have in place. And
when you do your planning and reporting, you must tie this back to 280.12. (5)
Now when we looked at it as a department, I think one of [the] things that we had as an expectation is that if you tied this back to 280.12 and you tied this back to forcing the district to think about it's planning, thinking about setting goals and evaluating that you're going to improve education and you're going to do this at the local level...going to be tied back to local expectations. (5)

He also recognized the intention to use phase III funds to support staff development activities associated with the plans developed in compliance with section 280.12.

The state will provide money for staff development. That was in lots of ways an experiment. That initially, there was clearly pent-up demand for that type of thing so it wasn't difficult to get teachers to go along with that and support it in schools and so on. (5)

Recall from chapter 4 that lobbyists from the Department of Education, ISEA, and IASB stood with the Governor when he announced the Educational Excellence Program. By all accounts the announcement was a surprise to the legislature. The lobbyist for IASB indicated that the surprise was two fold, the first aspect was the sheer size of the program. The second aspect was the coalition of previous adversaries that effectively co-opted the support of the legislature. The remarks of other informants supported the perceptions of the IASB lobbyist. For example, one legislator recalled:

And they just kind of sprung it...It was done quite in secret. There were no public hearings or any thing like that. There was sort of an elite group of people who got together and put this down. (1)

Other informants described how their hands were tied. Recall for example, the reaction of one of the legislators.

Well that was pretty much, that whole plan came out of the Governor, the ISEA, and the school boards and that was like "Here, bless it. We have come down from the mountain. We have the tablets carved. What do you mean you don't want to pass it?" (7);

and the remarks of a representative of the Department of Education: "This clearly came off as a coup for the Governor and it was pretty well orchestrated" (5).

The coalition received considerable attention in the press. Prior to the official announcement, one article reported:
As lawmakers gather today at the Capital to convene their 1987 session, they will be greeted by two strange political bedfellows: Gov. Terry Branstad and the Iowa State Education Association calling for breakthrough legislation for higher teacher pay. The Iowa Association of School Boards also is likely to support the $100 million plan to raise teachers' pay. (Yepsen, 1987a, p. 1A)

The agreement was called "significant" because the groups had "waged fierce quarrels in the past over how to spend additional money for schools. The Governor wanted merit pay for outstanding service, the ISEA wanted all teachers to get raises, and the school boards insisted on local control of the merit pay plans." The significance of this relationship was cited in many articles updating the process of the bill throughout the legislative session.

The article reporting the official announcement of the Educational Excellence Program provides additional insights into the unique nature of the alliance.

The alliance between Branstad and the ISEA is especially unusual. The teachers association generally prefers Democratic politicians...Adding to the oddity of the alliance is the teachers' groups opposition to home schooling and tax deductions for private school tuition, views that directly conflict with Branstad's views. (Fogarty, 1987a, p. 1A)

The Legislative Process

The proposal, written by the lobbyists and announced by the Governor, was submitted to the Legislative Service Bureau (LSB) where it was drafted in the form of a study bill. This was supported by the notes and recollections of the representative from the LSB. "The education excellence piece was a study bill introduced by the Governor" (3). She later provided more specificity. "The Governor's bill was House Study Bill 112" (3). This reference was confirmed by the records of the legislative session.

The development of the section 280.18 was less clear than the development of other provisions of the Educational Excellence Program. It does not appear as though the provision was part of the original draft proposal developed by the Department of Education lobbyist or the draft announced by the Governor. The department lobbyist did not mention it as part of the proposal and the lobbyist from ISEA remembered very little about the provision at all. The
other Department of Education representative remembered it being a distinctly separate issue from the Educational Excellence Program:

But the Educational Excellence act, setting up the minimum salaries, setting up across the board increases and then the one for more work for more pay and for rewarding for excellence, merit incentive, all of that. Those things were done separately and that was a separate discussion. It was not tied to 280.18 because they were addressing the issue of teachers salaries and improving the educational programs for teachers. (5)

There was some evidence to suggest that the provision had been developed by the time the proposal was prepared for the legislature as a study bill. The representative from the Legislative Service Bureau (LSB) interviewed for this study recalled that the original Educational Excellence Program included a "fourth phase" that addressed student achievement goals. She later indicated that, according to her notes, the provision was an amendment to the Governor's bill that "just appeared" in the third draft of the Governor's study bill (3).

Although the LSB representative suggested confirming her recollections against the original study bill, state agencies did not begin to retain study bills until 1989.

Once the study bill was prepared, leadership of the legislature determined which house of the legislature would consider the bill first. Respondents described different strategies for distributing bills. One option was to introduce a bill in the chamber that is least likely to support it. One legislator explained: 

Well quite often with pieces of legislation like that, there will be an agreement that it will be the most difficult house because the feeling is that if it is going to be killed in one house there is no sense in the other house spending a lot of time on it. (1)

The other legislator interviewed for this study explained other factors considered in determining which house will hear initial bills:

...leadership chooses...they pretty much divide it up who is going to start what in most cases. Leadership sits down and says "what do you want to start with? We have some people doing this and we should start that." Sometimes it's based on where it can get the best hearing first or it might be "pick your toughest chamber first so that you make sure you can pass it." It's more often who do you have? What's your bench like? What are the feelings of the people in that chamber? What does leadership want to get out of the bill? There are all kinds of strategies and reasons why you do things but they are all situational. (7)
He also provided an example:

You eventually want to pass a good bill. Like ground water, they started with the bill in the House because they could pass a really strong ground water bill, knowing that the Senate would weaken it. So they had to pass it strongly in the House. Then the senate took their junk out of it. Then you get to a conference. Then a reasonable bill would eventually pass. (7)

None of the respondents were involved in the decision to introduce the Governor’s bill into the House. However, their remarks suggested two possible explanations. The first is that the House was perceived as the most difficult chamber in which to pass the bill. Democrats, and in particular the speaker of the house, were very angry about the way the proposal was developed. One of the legislators explained:

Don Avenson (then Speaker of the House) was very unhappy with the [way the bill was developed]...I think had Don been given his own lead on that, that it probably wouldn’t have come up for debate. He was just very upset with the whole process. (1)

A quote in an article in The Des Moines Register supports the legislator’s perceptions.

"This is not Don Avenson’s program and this is not a Democratic majority program," Avenson said. "This is Terry E. Branstad’s package." (Fogarty, 1987c, p. 2A)

On the other hand, the House was also the chamber that was most likely to produce a "good bill." One of the lobbyist noted: "And the people that made up the House, I would say, in fairness, were more receptive to this proposal than some senators were actually" (6). One of the legislators recalled that there was a core of Democratic representatives that supported the proposal. And even the speaker ultimately realized the merits of the proposal:

I mean I think he (the speaker) realized the merit of the program. He also realized the level of dominance of teachers that were in the Democratic constituency. And I think...the thing that really sold it ultimately is the fact the underlying arguments were true. We were not competing very well nationally with salaries which something needed to be done...And I think he realized that this was an opportunity to put significant money into education. I don’t think a lot of people realized that it was put together in a relatively good way. (1)

The study bill was assigned to the House Committee on Education. In addition to generating tensions between Democrats and Republicans, the Governor’s bill divided loyalties among Democrats. According to The Des Moines Register:
Avenson (Speaker of the House) acknowledged that the positioning for new money has caused some divisions between two traditional elements of the Democratic party constituency—welfare advocates and public school teachers. "Right now there is some tension," Avenson said. (Fogarty, 1987b, p. 2A).

One of the legislators also recalled the tension.

The teachers in the Democratic caucus weren't all that popular, myself included, during that time. We just kind of represented the forces of evil that participated with this and the Governor. It was just by association. (1)

Democrats loyal to both issues attempted to influence the proposal. Democrats interested in education took the opportunity presented by the Governor's proposal to further the efficiency agenda. Some of the legislators recognized the opportunity from the beginning. In an interview given on the day the Educational Excellence Program was announced, the chair of the Senate Education Committee commented:

...the teachers' pay bill could become a vehicle for a variety of education measures. Its popularity with lawmakers "makes it a good train to latch onto because it's pulling everything else through" Murphy said. (Fogarty, 1987a, p. 2A)

In fact, the representative of the Legislative Service Bureau recalled that the House Education Committee "began looking at the Educational Excellence Program and then started looking at things to add on" (3). In March, the House Education Committee approved an amended version of the original proposal. While the House version left many of the original provisions in tact, it included a number of provisions aimed at improving the efficiency of schools by encouraging the consolidation of school districts. The author of the amendment expressed his intentions in an interview with a Des Moines Register journalist.

Representative Mark Haverland, a Polk City Democrat and committee member who offered the extensive amendments to the pay raise bill, acknowledge that forcing the consolidation of small districts was one of his major aims. "If we do it in the right way, we'll put enormous financial stress on some of the small districts," he said of the committee version of the bill. (Fogarty, 1987e, p. 2A)

One of the legislators interviewed in the study described the additions as provisions that the legislature had been working on but had not been able to pass.
See a lot of these things were revisions of existing programs, the administrative incentives, the sharing incentives, yea the year round schools, the sabbatical program, we had been trying to get sabbaticals funded for a long-time. This was just another attempt...These were just sort of a conglomeration of ideas that people had...In this case, I think, anything that was pretty closely related to the subject of public education was included. (1)

At least one of the lobbyists perceived the amendments as an attempt by the Democrats to "put their stamp" on the Governor's proposal. "The efficiency section was the Democrats in the legislature attempting to put their stamp on this" (4). The IASB and the Governor concerned about the amendments. The IASB expressed their concern by withdrawing their support for the proposal to raise teachers' salaries. The lobbyist for the association explained the position of the association in an interview with The Des Moines Register:

...the organization withdrew its support because lawmakers, with their amendments to the pay plan, are using the bill as a vehicle for other changes in public education that his organization opposes. (Fogarty, 1987d, p. 2A)

According to the Governor: "I share the same concern the school board association has. I don't think we should give them money with one hand and take it away with the other" (Fogarty, 1987e, p. 2A). However, the Governor appeared to count on the consensus previously established to see the pay plan through the legislature. "I don't want to lose the major consensus we've achieved. I want to improve the bill and get it back to the original proposal we had." According to the newspaper, the chair of the House Education Committee was optimistic that the amended bill would pass.

Citing the unanimous approval by the committee, chairman C. Arthur Ollie was upbeat about chances for the bill. "I think we are destined before we go home this session to take action that will have some very long-term, sound, beneficial effects on education in Iowa," Ollie said. (Fogarty, 1987d, p. 2A)

In the process of compiling the legislator's amendments, and the teacher pay plan into the Omnibus Reform Bill (H.F. 499), the provision that created section 280.18 was placed among the efficiency incentives. None of the respondents suggested that this was the result of anything more than drafting considerations. The lobbyist for the Department of Education explained:
That probably would have been drafters suggestions and (the LSB representative) was the drafter. It may have been that...I just don't know, I mean she may have thought that a specific topic needed to have another heading. When I draft possible legislation, I'm not usually so interested in how it gets codified as I am that the words get placed somewhere. And the drafter is the person who has the technical competence who works for the service bureau to decide where to put things. And subject matter in bills can be a question of is the topic broad enough to carry the subject matter...the title has to be broad enough that the subject matter appropriately belongs there. (2)

Latter she speculated:

One other possibility is that they really wanted a clean bill on educational excellence. In fact that's probably what happened. But you will have to get someone else to verify it. When you are passing a hundred million dollar program, like the Educational Excellence Bill, you want as clean a bill as you can possibly get so that it can't attract any more amendments than are absolutely necessary. So what we probably did was keep it pure by taking all the other things out otherwise, you could write all kinds of amendments to 280.18 and stall the debate on the Educational Excellence Bill, by virtue of having that section in it. (2)

The lobbyist for IASB also speculated about why the provision creating section 280.18 may have been placed among the efficiency incentives:

...it's not uncommon, it was all part of the same bill, chapter 224, House File 499, it was all part of the same bill and by construction sometimes, and I have to defer to people in the Legislative Service Bureau to explain this, but they will deal with certain issues at the front part of the bill and other issues separately later in the bill even though they may not always follow each other. The code sections, when they do that, don't necessarily always follow each other in chronological order. So I think you have to view 280.18 was incorporated with the Act. It may have appeared in a different section of the bill, but when you create a new section of the code, section 294A. When you begin to look at making amendments or addition as to other sections of the code, then those appear next, and appear in numeric order. And that's the way that that works. So you would be reading too much into it, over interpreting it, to say why was something not in 294A and included in 280.18? It's because there already was a provision in chapter 280 that addresses similar subject matter and that made sense because that's a section of the code relating to uniform school standards where you would put something like that. That just happens to be where they put it...So that's more of a bill drafting issue. (6)

The Omnibus Reform Bill passed the House on March 25, 1987 with a vote of 87 to 12. Republicans in the House attempted to strip away the efficiency incentives, but the attempt failed. The Des Moines Register summarized the bill that passed the House.

At the end of debate Tuesday, the bill still called for $97.5 million in state money to be spent on increased pay for teachers. Under the plan, the minimum pay for teachers would be set at $18,000 annually and an average annual pay increase of $3,000 would
be provided for each of the state's 32,000 public school teachers. In terms of school efficiency, the bill would freeze at 32,000 the number of "phantom students," non-existent students counted for purposes of the state school formula to mitigate financial losses to school districts with declining enrollments. The bill also would allow parents to enroll children in neighboring school districts, thereby introducing the element of competition among public schools. (Fogarty, 1987f, p. 2A)

According to The Des Moines Register, modifications made in the Senate Education Committee restored the provisions closer to their original form. The Senate Education Committee's version provided a permanent guarantee of state funding for a minimum salary of $18,000. The whole Senate accepted the version of the Senate Education Committee but made additional salary increases contingent upon a separate state allocation and modified the allocation of phase III funding such that 1/2 of the allocation to districts would be based on the number of students and 1/2 of the allocation would be based on the number of teachers in a district. The Senate version left the pay increases and efficiency incentives largely intact. However, it minimized some of the most controversial efficiency provisions. For example, provisions allowing open enrollment and reducing the number of intermediate agencies were modified to studies and the freeze on phantom students was softened. The Senate version went back to the House where it was amended to tie phase III to tax revenues. This version of the bill was approved by the Senate in May of 1987.

Democrats loyal to welfare programs attacked the funding mechanisms of the Governor's proposal. The Governor's original plan included revising the state tax code to be consistent with the federal tax code, resulting in the $170 million windfall, and raising the sales tax on cigarettes 10¢. The sales tax increase was expected to generate and additional $25 million in revenues. In February, the House Democrats introduced their spending proposal. The proposal called for diverting $30 million of the $100 million targeted for teachers' salaries to increasing spending for welfare programs. That month, the Senate defeated the Governor's proposal to change the state tax code and the House defeated the proposed sales tax increase on cigarettes.
The first House version of the Governor's proposal included an amendment to fund teacher's salaries out of the state aid to schools rather than with new revenues. The Senate removed the funding issue from the bill completely and initially incorporated it into the education spending bill. The funding issue was complicated by uncertainties about the amount of windfall money the state would actually receive as a result of the changes in the federal tax code. The original estimate was $170 million. However, according to The Des Moines Register, lawmakers received word in April that the state would receive only $100 million. Senators decided to guarantee the minimum salary increase, but made the allocations for phases II and III contingent upon the level of funding actually received. The bill called for 43 percent of the new allocation to fund phase II and 57 percent of the new allocation to fund phase III. The Senate later separated the teachers salary plan from the rest of the school spending bill because of questions about the windfall revenues.

The funding issue was taken up by a House-Senate conference committee in April. The committee voted to raise $155 million in taxes to pay for tax revisions and teachers' salary increases even though they weren't sure of the source of the money. In May the conference committee agreed to provide $92.2 million for salary increases. Although the spending bill was vetoed by the Governor in June because he felt total spending was too high, the Governor promised that the $92 million for teachers' salaries would be "preserved." "'Everything is on the list, but I'm especially looking for new programs and increased spending,' said Branstad. 'I will say one area that is not going to be cut is education'" (Norman & Fogarty, 1987, p. 1A).

Instruments

The Educational Excellence Program consists of a cluster of capacity building provisions (phases I and II), inducements (phase III), and mandates (section 280.18). However, in its general conceptualization, the program has characteristics most consistent with capacity building instruments. Recall that capacity building instruments invest money to
enhance the capacities of material, intellectual, or human resources (McDonnell & Elmore, 1987). They are often used in response to the perception that institutions or individuals continue to perform below the expectations of policy makers or society because of insufficient resources. They are also characterized by long-term, intangible benefits rather than short-term, concrete outcomes.

It was clear from the provisions of the program and the comments of respondents that the intent was to raise teachers' salaries under the assumption that investing in teachers would enhance the quality of the current capacity. The evidence available to policy makers demonstrated that the average teachers' salary in Iowa was falling further behind the national average. This suggested that local school agencies either lacked the capacity or will to raise teachers' salaries by their own volition. Providing additional state revenues addressed the possible lack of capacity among local agencies. Controlling how the revenues could be spent addressed the possible lack of will.

The program was characterized by long-term, intangible rather than short-term, concrete outcomes (McDonnell & Elmore, 1987). According to the assumptions underlying the value of teachers, policy makers believed that investing in teachers would ultimately improve the quality of education in the state. However, little was said to clarify what policy makers meant by "quality" or "improvement". The ambiguity of these expectations was also evident in the general provisions of the program. The first section indicated that the purpose of the program was to "maintain and advance the educational excellence in the state" (Appendix A). Although the second section of the bill includes definitions for constructs important to the interpretation and implementation of the program (i.e., teacher, certified enrollment, specialized training requirements, etc.), no definition was provided to clarify policy makers' expectations regarding maintaining and advancing excellence in education.
Theoretical Framework

Model of Causation

The recollections of the respondents suggest that the problem underlying the Educational Excellence Program was quite complex. Of primary concern was the status of teachers' salaries. There was substantial evidence that the average teacher salary for Iowa was well below the national average and that the gap continued to widen. The conditions of teachers' salaries was generating pressure to act. However, policy makers were also becoming increasingly interested in education reform. The Governor wanted to improve his standing in national associations and other policy makers were motivated by concerns about Iowa's ability to maintain its national reputation for quality education or by the desire to continuously work to improve education.

Policy makers could address both sets of concerns by framing the model of causation in terms of the quality of Iowa's schools. In effect, the Educational Excellence Program was founded on the assumption that the quality of Iowa's educational system was being compromised by the failure to recruit, retain, and improve the quality of teachers. The inability to establish and maintain a quality teaching force was due to the status of teachers' salaries.

Model of Evaluation

Since low teachers' salaries were compromising the quality of Iowa's education, raising salaries should secure the quality of education. Therefore, according to the lobbyist for IASB: "...the purpose of the bill was to raise teachers' salaries which I think was an issue, and in many respects still is an issue in Iowa" (6). Some of the respondents recalled that the Governor's goal was specifically to raise Iowa's average teachers' salary to the national average in four years. One of the legislators stated: "...basically his promise was to bring teachers' salaries to the national average in four years" (1).

Policy makers framed the solution to the goal in terms quite consistent with the recommendations in the FINE Task Force report. Namely, the Educational Excellence
Program attempted to "professionalize" teaching by using money to improve the recruitment, retention, and development of quality teachers. Recruitment was defined in terms of raising the minimum salary of teachers to a more competitive level. Retention was defined in terms of improving the average teachers' salary across the board. And development was defined in terms of providing money to enhance the quality of teachers through continuous improvement.

**Model of Intervention**

The analysis of the remarks of respondents and the provision suggests that the Educational Excellence Program was essentially a capacity building instrument. The first three components (phases I, II, and III) provided money to school districts to raise teachers' salaries and improve the quality of the teaching force. The fourth component (section 280.18) was included to support the implementation of phase III. Student progress toward district achievement goals served as a criteria on which to base performance pay as defined by superior performance:

So the solution, the organizational and political solution, was to include the reference of student achievement as a potential measure of a teacher's performance in 294A and then latter on, in a separate section of the code, strengthen the uniform school requirements on what the expectations were for local school districts to establish their own student achievement goals. (6);

or defined as rewarding teachers for performing extra duties. These duties, such as curriculum development and/or instructional improvement activities would target areas where students failed to meet achievement goals.

Now, what are you going to base your proposal on? Well maybe you ought to base it on something you really know about how students are achieving...so we build the adjustments into 280.18 and we say, OK as part of school reform everyone is going to do an assessment...Ideally, out of that body of information would come the basis for determining what it is you want your phase III plan to focus on. (2)

Policy makers also recognized that the feedback regarding student achievement provided through section 280.18 also provided accountability for the Educational Excellence Program in general. The lobbyist for the Department of Education explained:
And then it came from just this notion of we have a program here where we're going to infuse money into the salary structure. We are going to do it three different ways. Well how are we going to know if we are getting anything for it? And what are they going to build this on? (2)

Evaluation Criteria

Internal Consistency

Context v. Instrument

The constellation of capacity building provisions, inducements, and mandates supports the Department of Education lobbyist's observation that Iowa believes in local control, but believes in accountability for the amount of resources appropriated to education (2). The first three components provided resources and support to local school districts with minimal barriers, at least from the perspective of policy makers. The fourth component of the Educational Excellence Program was intended to provide accountability for the program. However, the specifications of section 280.18 reflect a conflict in the values inherent in the policy environment. While the requirement for local reporting was consistent with the value of local control, it undermined policy makers' ability to gain political recognition or insure accountability via state level reporting. The lack of uniform reporting made it far more difficult to determine the extent to which the Educational Excellence Program was achieving its intended goals.

Context v. Theoretical Framework

Comparing the theoretical framework of the Educational Excellence Program to the context of the policy environment is complicated by the relatively abstract nature of the framework. Such a comparison does raise some questions with regard to consistency. First, there appeared to be a discrepancy between the definition of the problem and the evidence on which it was based. There was consensus among respondents that the quality of education was not a problem in the state, at least according to traditional measures. There was also general agreement that the average teacher salary was losing ground relative to the national
average. Yet, the problem on which the Educational Excellence Program was based was framed in terms of the quality of education.

Second, to make the connection between the quality of education and teachers' salaries, policy makers had to assume that the quality of education depended upon the quality of the teaching force and that the quality of the teaching force was a function of teachers' salaries. While the assumptions may have some intuitive logic, there was little evidence to support them. Nor did policy makers really believe the assumptions. One of the legislators expressed his skepticism.

If you look at phase III and the other elements of this it showed that there was just as much desire both to make schools more efficient and to make them better. And to make sure, they thought that maybe paying teachers more might have that kind of an impact, but they didn't really believe that. They didn't really believe that paying teachers more would necessarily make schools more efficient or make teaching better necessarily. They thought it might have and impact, but they weren't convinced. Otherwise, they would have just passed teacher salary increases and left it at that. (7)

One representative of the Department of Education described how he responded to inquiries about these assumptions:

I don't think the people who were really close to this would expect that student achievement was going to increase because of educational excellence. We weren't going to see a one-to-one relationship there. And that question was clearly raised in the field. "Is this the expectation?" It was probably raised by the research community. How are you ever going to prove the effectiveness of phase III as it relates to student achievement? Our response was: "The issue here is improving the quality of teachers, just following the goals of retention and recruitment and by what's in phase III as rewarding the best, as looking at additional work, additional pay, that you are going to see increased staff and that may or may not result in increased achievement." We're not going to naively assume that that is indeed what has happened. So yeah, some people may have felt that this would result in higher achievement and so on, but I don't feel that's where people were coming from generally. (5)

Instrument v. Theoretical Framework

The three phased approach to raising teachers' salaries seemed inconsistent with the theoretical framework given the importance of teachers to the quality of education and the relationship between the quality of teachers and teachers' salaries. The use of capacity building instruments, as specified in phases I and II, and inducements (phase III) may have undermined
the program’s ability to effect the average teachers’ salary. The failure of the program was implied in the remarks of at least one of the legislators: "And the fact that we were 39th in the nation and we haven't increased that much since that happened, which is part of the reason by (the Governor) didn't get the endorsement [in the 1990 election]" (1). Phase I was expected to affect only a few teachers. The bulk of the anticipated $100 million was devoted, in the original proposal to phase III. Although phase III presented a compelling incentive, participation was still voluntary and the plans developed did not necessarily guarantee all teachers a raise. Phase II, introduced as a compromise to the ISEA, guaranteed teachers a raise, but because the moneys were now divided among the three phases, the amount each teacher received through phase II was drastically reduced. Furthermore, the introduction of phase II, drastically reduced the moneys available for phase III. The reduction in funding may have affected the appeal of phase III which may have made it less likely that teachers received money through that provision.

The consistency between the instrument and the theoretical framework may have been further undermined when section 280.18 was separated form the other phases of the program. The unintended effect of separating the 280.18 provision from the other provisions of the Educational Excellence Program was to minimize the relationship between student achievement and phase III. The Department of Education lobbyist explained:

Ideally, out of that body of information (i.e., 280.18) would come the basis for determining what it is you want you phase III plan to focus on. They can connect...and that is why one was part of the bill and when it gets dropped out and placed somewhere else, it lost the direct connection. But the pieces are still there...At one point all of this is together in (Senator) Varn’s mind and in mine. (2)

However, the emphasis on providing for the learning needs of local policy makers may have undermined the success of the program to encourage local reform. Although local agencies were required to submit plans and progress reports to the state, state policy makers incorporated no uniform reporting requirements. As a result, compliance officers could readily determine compliance with the processes specified in the provisions of the program, but could
not determine information about the impact of the provisions without additional time consuming analyses of the reports.

**Robustness**

The results of the analysis of the robustness of the designs of the Educational Excellence Program indicate that the designs bear a striking resemblance to the models described by Schneider and Ingram (1989). For example, recall from chapter 2 that policy learning designs are typically used in situations when there is little consensus about the appropriate actions to improve a problem (Schneider & Ingram, 1989). The goal of such designs is not necessarily to solve a problem, but rather to look for what works. Policy learning designs encourage innovation by limiting rules and regulations and by insuring that policy implementers have sufficient capacity and incentive to learn about the effects of their actions.

The description of policy learning designs characterizes the design of the Educational Excellence Program. The quality of the education system posed a dilemma for those policy makers who wanted to promote education reform. Rather than dictating the direction, policy makers wanted to encourage school districts to "experiment" with concepts and recommendations advanced in the reform literature. The program provided resources to enhance the capacity of local school districts and incentives (additional resources and reporting requirements) to motivate districts to try new things. Save for the accountability piece (section 280.18), the designs of the provisions were broad and open ended, yet provided general direction. Finally, there were specifications included throughout the component provisions to help, particularly, policy makers monitor the impact of their actions.

The unique feature of the program was the emphasis on local accountability. Provisions for local accountability, both in terms of participating in decision making and reporting progress, were included in all of the elements of the program. That fact that each of the elements was designed around different policy instruments (capacity building provisions,
inducements, and mandates), suggests that local accountability is a transferable feature of a design and one that does not appear to compromise the robustness of a policy design.

One legislator commented on the difficulties associated with monitoring phase III of the program. "In the case of phase III it was a difficult thing to monitor because it was so massive" (1). He indicated that he relied on sources other than the state Department of Education for information about phase III, some of which were less than objective.

The Des Moines Register did kind of a negative review of phase III a couple of years after it had been in existence and I think it was pretty unfair. In journalistic fashion they...I mean some people (districts) tried to do some dumb things, people going out to Colorado skiing I think was one thing. But they (the journalists) didn't really focus on the good things. The auditors office did an analysis of phase III and had somewhat similar kinds of criticisms, it was not very well focused, it was all over the board and that kind of thing. I think these criticisms were valid if overstated. (1)

Interestingly, there was no discussion about denying districts phase III funds for noncompliance or abuses. There were only discussions about "tightening" the policy (i.e., clarifying the intentions of the policy makers through increased regulation). One legislator explained: "Some of the things that we have changed in phase III in four years have focused that spending on school reform and school improvement" (1). Another legislator added: "...phase III was the experiment that and it was reigned in fairly quickly after this when you saw some of the abuses of this" (7). The provision was "reigned in" by diverting funds to specific educational innovations.

In addition to that, a couple of years ago, two or three years ago, we took a million dollars out of phase III and appropriated it to the New Iowa Schools Development Corporation. And then they are using it for similar kinds of things. But their use of that is exclusively for school transformation projects. (1)

There was also a move to use the funds for a statewide staff development program.

Now there were people after the fact, several years after the fact, that felt that those funds should have been focused. That they should all have been spent on staff development, staff development for change. (5)
Level of Design

The third criteria described in the literature to evaluate policy designs is the level of design (Ingraham, 1987). Evaluating the extent to which the designs of the Educational Excellence Program were systematically constructed was compromised by the methodology of the study. Time constraints associated with interviewing "elite" informants prohibited in-depth discussion of the deliberations surrounding the development of the program. Furthermore respondents' recollections of the deliberations had faded over time. As most of the deliberations occurred in confidential informal meetings, there were no documents to review. This analysis was based on the information obtained under these constraints. The factors identified by Ingraham (1987) were used to evaluate the level of design of the Educational Excellence Program.

Structure of the Problem

It was clear that the primary problem around which the Educational Excellence Program was designed was teachers' salaries. However, the problem, as stated in the statute, was improving education (i.e., education reform). Defining the problem around a more abstract issue such as the quality of education provided policy makers greater latitude to incorporate a number of ideas forwarded in the reform literature. One the other hand, diffusing the focus may have compromised achievement of the more concrete goal, raising teachers' salaries.

The analysis of the theoretical framework of the program suggests that the level of design was also affected by the attributions of the policy problem. Attributing problems to deficiencies in the system (i.e., capacities and resources) provided greater chances for incorporating flexibility into the provisions than attributing problems to noncompliance of target groups. System problems fostered consideration of ways state government could provide assistance and support to school districts such as providing additional resources and/or encouraging experimentation. Non-compliance issues (reorganization and/or accountability) generated increased regulation.
Goal Consensus/Level of Conflict

Goal consensus has to do with the purposes of a policy and the extent to which there was general agreement that a problem should be solved. There appeared to be general support for the idea of raising teachers' salaries: It was a major campaign issue in the previous election and legislators were working on plans to raise salaries gradually. The major controversy arose around the scope of the program and investing a significant proportion of new revenues into raising teachers' salaries.

Opposition was raised by an odd cluster of special interests. There was a contingency that questioned the focus on teachers, especially during a recession: "Why are we spending a hundred million dollars on teachers who are, already in a lot of small towns, the highest paid people in town" (1)? Representatives of the Iowa Association of Business and Industry were quoted in an interview in The Des Moines Register:

I personally question whether it takes $100 million when we're one of the best educated states in the nation," said Albert Jennings of Des Moines, chairman of the association and president of Economy Forum Corp.

It would be nice if we could do these things," said Farnsley Peters, president of the association. "But the people in the state of Iowa are not having the best of times. Personal income and jobs are in tough shape." (Norman, 1987, p. 1M)

Recommendations from this contingency called for scaling back the program and using the money for property tax relief and welfare programs. Recall, for example, the desire of the speaker of the House to use the money for welfare programs. Part of his rationale was that "Among the underfunded groups in Iowa, the teachers are the relatively well-off" (Fogarty, 1987b, p. 2A). Members of the business community shared this sentiment.

...business leaders are interested in quality education and higher salaries for educators. But he (Farnsley Peters) added: "We may not be able to get there all at once because of the economic conditions of the state, and we will work to do it as quickly as we can. But we can't do it all in one year." (Norman, 1987, p. 1M)

This contingency was supported by the general public. The results of a poll sponsored by The Des Moines Register in February indicated the 72 percent of Iowans supported the
proposal to raise the base salary of teachers to $18,000. But only 51 percent favored the provision to raise all teachers' salaries, and 48 percent favored the plan to develop merit pay systems (Pins, 1987). It should be noted that the survey asked specifically about merit pay systems. The plan allowed districts to develop supplemental-based pay plans.

A second contingent among the "no" coalition was Democrats who were concerned about the efficiency of schools. The actions of this coalition jeopardized support for the program by one of the most politically powerful organizations (IASB). The actions would also have changed the role of state government in the reform movement from supporter to regulator. The change in the spirit of the bill was evident in the opening paragraph of the article announcing the actions of the House.

If school districts are to receive $97.5 million from state government to increase their teachers' salaries, they must also abide by a series of changes in school law intended to promote efficiency, the House decided Tuesday. (Fogarty, 1987f, p. 2A)

It was also evident in the remarks of the intent of the legislator who prepared the amendments. Recall the quote in The Des Moines Register. "If we do it in the right way, we'll put enormous financial stress on some of the small districts" (Fogarty, 1987e, p. 2A).

A third contingent was opposed to reform initiatives in general. Some were concerned about increased state control.

While it was not as strong as it is right now, when ever the state requires assessment, there's always a group of people who are very very worried about state control of curriculum. And are very worried about what kinds of values that we're inculcating into the curriculum without telling anybody...It was not nearly as powerful as it is now. But there were proponents of that view even at that time who were worried about any kind of state required assessment. (2)

Legislators from districts with urban school districts wanted to eliminate phase I and increase funding for phases II or III because the minimum salary in most of these districts made them ineligible for phase I moneys. Finally, recall one legislator's description of the Republican's resistance to change of any kind, even changes that would have benefited their constituents:

"...they wouldn't support standards, they wouldn't support incentives, they wouldn't support
anything. They just wanted to leave things the way they were and let the districts go along..." (7).

The strength of the coalition that supported the Educational Excellence Program (and the Omnibus Reform Bill) prevailed. The bill made it through the legislative process relatively intact. One of the legislators summarized the process:

And even though we tacked a lot of things on to this, the program did not change very much in the legislative process. The basic Educational Excellence Program did not change, there were things tacked on to it, we nipped a little money out of it, but for the most part it didn't change. The internal discussions were very acrimonious and there was a lot of very raw feelings about the whole thing...I can't remember what the final vote was, but I suspect it probably wasn't very close. It's the sort of thing that once it gets out in the open, you know, people are forced to confront whether it was a good idea or not, whether we should do it or not, people just said well OK we're going to do it. (1)

Placement on the Agenda

The issue of teachers' salaries progressed to the political agenda in a way consistent with that described in literature (e.g., Anderson, 1976; Eyestone, 1978; Gerston, 1983). There was considerable evidence to substantiate the fact that the average salary of teachers in Iowa was losing ground relative to the national average. There was also evidence to suggest that low minimum salaries were affecting the ability of some school districts to compete for new teachers. Mounting evidence increased the importance of salaries on the political agenda of the teachers' association. The campaign efforts of the association to raise awareness and concern about the problem attracted the attention of candidates for the 1986 gubernatorial race. Both candidates pledged their commitment to raising teachers' salaries. This commitment established the issue of teachers' salaries on the political agenda.

However, none of the characteristics of the evolution of a political problem were evident with regard to education reform. There was no evidence to suggest that the quality of education was in jeopardy. In fact, all indications suggested that the quality of education continued to be quite high. Policy makers described no widespread dissatisfaction with the quality of education in the state. And no political interest group was demanding that something
be done to reform education. The push for reform was motivated by the political needs of state level policy makers; including the need for political recognition for a significant piece of legislation and/or for political accountability (i.e., protecting the state's reputation for having a quality educational system).

Range of Alternatives or Instruments Considered

Although interviews with respondents failed to indicate alternative avenues to raise teachers' salaries discussed in the development of the Educational Excellence Program, alternatives were discussed in the larger political community. Recall from chapter 4 for example, the proposal to phase in salary increases over a three year period being developed by the interim education committee. According to one respondent, another group of legislators argued that the plan violated collective bargaining laws. One of the legislators interviewed in the study agreed with this observation.

...A number of legislators have ties to labor and the collective bargaining process. Considered conceptually, this was a very major step to take because this represented the first and only direct payment of teachers by a state. Prior to this enactment, no money went directly from the state to teachers. It went to school districts and they sat down and negotiated for it. Now we are paying teachers more or less directly even though they do some negotiating for phase III, but phase II and phase I were going directly from the treasury to teachers' pockets literally. And a lot of people thought we were violating the principles of collective bargaining and we are, there is no doubt about it. (1)

They suggested giving all of the money to districts and letting them negotiate its expenditure.

Diversity of Stakeholders

The analysis demonstrated that consideration was given to a number of stakeholders in the education community. The three phases of the program were compromises to urban and rural school districts, ISEA (teachers), and IASB (school boards). In addition, provisions were made to facilitate immediate implementation of the plan by local school districts (i.e., adjusting time lines, minimizing rules, and coordinating the program with existing policies). Considerable attention was given to increasing the importance of local community members as stakeholders in the education system.
Locus and Level of Expertise Required

One of the most unique features of the development of the Educational Excellence Program was the collaboration between the Governor's Office, the Department of Education, the ISEA, and the IASB. The selection of individuals to design the program was strategic and explains the link between the program and the recommendations of the FINE Task Force, the coordination between components of the program and other existing statutes, and the overwhelming support that the program ultimately received.

The composition of policy designers also explains potential shortcoming of the program. In general, policy designers seemed to recognize the limits of their expertise and deferred specific operational issues to local school districts. The notable exception to this tendency was the specificity included in section 280.18. There was little evidence that policy makers gave much consideration to the capacity of local schools and state department personnel to implement the mandates. It is unlikely that districts had personnel with the expertise to develop quality assessments and that the state department had personnel to provide adequate technical assistance. The reporting requirement also placed new demands on state department personnel to determine how to use the reports submitted by districts to monitor compliance and the effects of the program.

Availability of Resources

The results of the analysis also support the significant influence of available resources on the design of a policy. It was evident that the Educational Excellence Program could not have been created without the additional revenues supplied by the changes in the federal tax code. The irony was that while the reform aspects of the program would have been eliminated, failure to receive new revenues would have forced policy makers to focus more directly on the primary goal of raising teachers' salaries. In other words, a substantial infusion of money allowed policy designers to broaden the policy problem and diffuse the solution which
decreased the certainty that all teachers would receive a meaningful salary increase. Limited resources forced policy makers to focus specifically on the issue of teachers salaries.

Responsibility for Implementation

The emphasis on local discretion inherent in the program suggests that policy makers were counting on local school districts to guide education reform in the state. This appeared to be the intent of the Governor. Recall the following passage in his inaugural address.

If you adopt this plan, we will set in motion education reform activity in every school district in our state. We will use the best of Iowa's present education system: local control, commitment to quality and community support to make Iowa's education event better. Schools will be encouraged to break new ground, explore new territory and develop new ideas. ("Branstad's Vision", 1987, p. 13A)

So intent were policy makers to stimulate local activity they may have overlooked the needs of policy makers. The long-term outlook associated with capacity building instruments suggests that immediate feedback regarding the impact of the program would simply not be available for policy makers to "get credit" for the program. In addition, local discretion, theoretically if not necessarily, eliminated uniform performance or outcome measures. Without a single measure, policy makers have a much more difficult time determining the impact of the program on the state.

Policy Design

The last question of guiding this research project asked: To what extent did the model of Policy Design facilitate this investigation? The design approach proved useful in every stage of the research study. It provided the foundation from which research questions were generated. It served as a framework to organize a review of a broad body of literature. It provided a basis to formulate questions to ask policy makers as well as review relevant documents. The elements of the model also facilitated the organization, analysis, and interpretation of the data. The elements of the model, including the evaluation criteria, provided a structure to yield an extremely comprehensive analysis of the evolution of the Education Excellence Program. The results of this study provided insights into the nature of
designs and the designing process. For example, the results suggest that there are alternative avenues for social issues to reach the political agenda.

There was evidence to support the notion that policy problems are approached through a series of successive approximations (Majchrzak, 1984). It could be argued that the design of the Educational Excellence Program with its component parts represents a successive approximation to raising teachers' salaries. In addition, policy makers described modifications that were made to the program shortly after its creation to "tighten" things down. However, unlike research that suggests that modifications to policies confuse the goals and intentions of policy makers (Dunn, 1988), the results of this study suggest that successive approximations (particularly to policy learning policies) are made to clarify the intentions of policy makers and standardize the behavior of target groups.

The results of this study provide considerable insights into the process of designing. The literature often uses the model of rational decision making to describe the design process (e.g., Bobrow & Dryzek, 1987). The results of this study provide a much less systematic picture and supports a more "ad hoc" description of the process (e.g., Schneider & Ingram, 1989). This study demonstrated that policy makers brought their personal knowledge base, expertise, experience, and value systems to the design process. However, contrary to the descriptions of rational decision making models, policy makers had not synthesized their personal knowledge and experiences into a design to address a policy problem prior to being invited to participate in the development of the program. Rather than a process of generating and selecting among alternative designs, the process of design appeared to be the creation of a collective world view around the problem, the solution, and the appropriate actions of government.

In addition, while literature gives considerable attention to the nature and definition of the problem in the development of a policy (e.g., Linder & Peters, 1984; McDonnell & Elmore, 1987), the results of this research suggest that policy makers focus on solutions and
shape the problem (and the design) around the solution. The design process is the process of packaging the desired actions in such a way as to "sell it" to constituents and other policy makers. This was most evident in the explanation for incorporating local control in phase III and in the number of times compromises were made to satisfy more than one of the constituent groups.

While the results support the need for consensus regarding the values inherent in the political environment, they raise questions about the need for factual information. McDonnell and Elmore (1987) suggest that a basic set of facts was a prerequisite for policy issues to reach the political agenda and help define the problem as well as the solutions. It has already been demonstrated that information was helpful in defining the problem and solution associated with teachers salaries. It was also demonstrated that the issue of education reform was not based on a basic set of facts. The results suggest that values (in particular, political recognition) may have a more influential role in the definition of policy problems and solutions than factual information.

Finally, the results demonstrate that vulnerability of policy designs to dissolution throughout the political process. Clarification of the interrelationship between the provisions of the program was compromised as early in the legislative process as transforming the proposal into a legislative bill. Recall that section 280.18 was separated from phases I, II, and III and placed among a number of miscellaneous provisions "tagged on" by Democratic legislators when the original bill was transformed into an omnibus bill. The action separated the provision from the program in the minds of some of the policy makers interviewed in this study and may have had the same effect on local school district officials.

The other opportunity to dissolve a policy design is during legislative debate. It was only the strength of the political coalition consisting of the Governor's Office, the Department of Education, and the two most politically powerful professional associations in the state that protected the program throughout the political process.
Summary

Values

The analysis of the Educational Excellence Program according to the model of Policy Design revealed that at least six values affected the development of the program. The value of teachers assumed that excellence in education depended upon the quality of teachers and that the quality of teacher depended upon compensation. The value of education was considered a core value of the culture of Iowa. Its importance accounted for the political power of educational issues and members/constituents of the education community. The value of politics appeared to have two dimensions. One was recognition for innovative policies and the other was accountability for the operation of state government. The value of local control was considered a key operational value in the state, but it was defined as a balance between state and local authority. Two factors seemed to affect the balance: The degree of trust policy makers had in local school officials to make sound decisions, and the willingness of local agencies to accept responsibility for local control. The value of education reform in Iowa was defined not as a need to remediate a deficient system, but as a need to maintain a quality system through continuous improvement. The value of efficiency was defined as district spending relative to its students' achievement. There was a widely held perception that the educational system in Iowa had become inefficient because it had not responded to a long-term declines in enrollment.

Structure

The analysis revealed that a number of actors/agencies affected the development of the Educational Excellence Program, both directly and indirectly. Individuals, particularly lobbyists, were instrumental in the development of the specific piece of legislation. They were supported by offices and departments in the legislative and executive branches of government. Legislators and professional organizations were instrumental in supporting the program through the legislative process.
Procedure

The development of the Educational Excellence Program did not follow the traditional procedures for developing legislative proposals. The Governor held tight reign over the development of the proposal. His control of the process seemed to accomplish four things. First, it increased the likelihood that the money would go to teachers and would not be dispersed among other professional (i.e., administrators) or operating costs. Second, it increased the likelihood that a plan would be developed that was acceptable to teachers and school boards. Third, the support of three lobbyists increased the chance of getting the policy through the legislative process intact. Finally, it shook up the political environment in the legislature by forming new alliances among previous adversaries.

Instruments

In general, the Educational Excellence Program was a program to build the capacity of the teaching force. It included a constellation of capacity building provisions, inducements, and mandates to achieve the specifications that met the intentions of policy makers (i.e., recruiting quality teachers, retaining quality teachers, enhancing the professional development of teachers, and providing accountability).

Theoretical Framework

The framework of the program assumed that the quality of Iowa education was being compromised by the quality of the teaching force. Low salaries, relative to other professions, were limiting the state's ability to attract and retain quality people to the profession in general, and to Iowa schools in particular. "Professionalizing" teaching by raising teachers' salaries offered the chance to improve the state's ability to recruit, retain, and continuously improve the quality of the teaching force and therefore, the quality of education in the state. Policy makers used capacity building, inducements, and mandates to reach their goal.
Evaluation Criteria

Internal Consistency

An examination of the design of the Educational Excellence Program according to the criteria associated with the model of Policy Design presented mixed results. The results of the analysis of the internal consistency of the elements of the program suggested that the use of a capacity building instrument was consistent with the values of the policy environment and with the goals of the program. However, the analysis suggested that the values of local control and politics came into direct conflict when mandates were used (section 280.18). Inconsistencies were noted between the definition of the problem and the evidence on which it was based. While there was evidence to substantiate a problem with teachers' salaries, there was little evidence to challenge the quality of education, yet the program was framed around the quality of education. There were also discrepancies between the assumptions about the relationship between the quality of education, teachers, and teachers' salaries inherent in the program, and the beliefs of policy makers. Finally, a three phased approach to improve the recruitment, retention, and development of teachers may have undermined the chances of raising teachers salaries to the national average.

Robustness

Schneider and Ingram (1989) describe common policy designs that are used to develop public policies. To the extent that the components of the Educational Excellence Program as well as the program in general, are consistent with one of the designs described, it is likely that the policies involved in the program are robust. The analysis suggests that the program was consistent with policy learning designs.

The characteristic that consistently distinguished the designs associated with the Educational Excellence Program from the prototypes described by Schneider and Ingram was the focus on local accountability. Local accountability had two dimensions. One was the involvement of stakeholders or constituent groups in the development of the plans associated
with the provisions. The second dimension of local accountability was the requirement to report back to those stakeholders regarding the implementation of those plans. The fact that local accountability was incorporated into each of the provisions of the program suggests that it is a transferable feature of a design. However, providing for local accountability to the exclusion of state accountability may have undermined the effectiveness of the Educational Excellence Program to encourage local reform.

**Level of Design**

The Educational Excellence Program was affected by the way the problem was structured, characteristics of the individuals who were involved in the designing process, the level of consensus among policy makers regarding the goals and the solutions to the problems, the availability of resources, and expectations of designers regarding implementation and feedback about the program (i.e., the level of design). Framing the problem in abstract (e.g., education reform) rather than concrete terms (teachers' salaries), and attributing problems to deficiencies in the system rather than noncompliance, may have allowed designers to maximize the opportunity to test reform ideas, but in doing so, they lost sight of the concrete goal. Recall that the general perception of policy makers was that the Educational Excellence Program was not successful in raising teachers' salaries to the national average.

The results of the analysis of the level of design suggested that consensus regarding the nature of the problem was not as crucial as consensus about the solution to the problem. The intent of policy makers from the beginning of the development of the program was to raise teachers' salaries. Therefore, the discussions surrounding the development of the program were not what to do, but how to raise salaries. Defining the policy problem in terms of attracting, retaining, and enhancing the quality of teachers allowed policy makers to capitalize on the opportunity provided by the need to raise teachers' salaries to accomplish additional goals (i.e., education reform). The relative unimportance of the lack of consensus regarding the nature of the problem and its place on the political agenda was also demonstrated by the
ultimate support for the program. Although policy makers disagreed with the definition of the problem (i.e., education reform), they supported the program because it was put together "in a relatively good way."

The results also demonstrated that the expertise and experience of individuals were key factors in the design process. The experiences of policy makers allowed them to incorporate many of the characteristics of the policy environment into the policies (e.g., the recommendations of the FINE Task Force, other statues, constraints at the local school level, stakeholder needs, etc.). The limitations of their experiences were also reflected in the program, most notably in the design of section 280.18.

There appeared to be direct correspondence between the level of resources, the frame of the problem, and the willingness of designers to "experiment" with new ideas. The availability of additional moneys allowed policy makers to broaden the scope of the problem from teachers' salaries to education reform. Broadening the scope of the problem broadened possible solutions to the problem. Because there were no obvious answers, policy makers were more willing to let districts experiment.

Policy Design

The model of Policy Design proved useful in every stage of the research study. In addition to identifying and evaluating the design of the Educational Excellence Program, the analysis guided by this model provided insights into the nature of the policy process and the process of design. These insights supported and enhanced the results of previous research regarding the evolution of a political agenda and the manner in which policies address policy problems. The results of this study challenged the rational decision making conceptualization of the design process, attention to the definition of the policy problem in the design process and the integrity of a policy design.
CHAPTER 6
SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS

Summary

The release of *A Nation At Risk* in 1983 launched a nationwide movement to reform education. State governments responded to the call in large part by stiffening existing standards in the areas of course requirements, teacher licensure, and accountability. Although implemented by 1988, there was little evidence that the initial response was successful in improving student achievement. Educators began promoting recommendations that came out of qualitative studies of education agencies. Recommendations from these reports placed the school district and, in some cases, school buildings, at the center of reform. If local schools were to be successful, state governments needed to eliminate regulations that hindered local school reforms. The recommendations posed a dilemma for state governments: How do governments decentralize education and satisfy the other social mandates such as assuring quality, equity, and access?

The reform movement in Iowa followed the general pattern of many states in the nation. The Iowa Excellence in Education Task Force (also known as the FINE Task Force) was created to study and develop recommendations to improve the quality of education in the state. Many of these recommendations were codified in an omnibus reform bill passed in 1987. The core of the bill was the Educational Excellence Program. The program included three phases. Phase I was intended to raise the minimum teachers' salary to $18,000. Phase II provided salary increases to all experienced teachers. Phase III made money available to districts to develop plans to enhance the quality of teachers. The program also included a provision (section 280.18) that required school districts to develop student achievement goals and an assessment system to monitor progress toward those goals. This provision was intended to support implementation of phase III and provide feedback about the effectiveness of the program in general.
The purpose of this study was to identify factors that affected the development of the Educational Excellence Program. Interviews were conducted with those individuals who were instrumental in the development of the program. These included former lobbyists for the Department of Education, the Iowa State Education Association (ISEA), and the Iowa Association of School Boards (IASB); the former Chief of the Bureau of Planning, Research, and Development of the Department of Education; legislators from the House of Representatives and the Senate; and a former staff member of the Legislative Service Bureau assigned to educational legislation. Documents pertaining to the development of the bill were also reviewed to corroborate and enhance the remarks of the policy makers.

Policy Design provided the structure for the study. Policy design is a comprehensive model of policy development that attempts to identify relationships between contextual factors, the characteristics of policy instruments, and the theoretical framework that underlies a policy (Bobrow & Dryzek, 1987; Dryzek, 1983; Linder & Peters, 1984). The model was used in this study to identify and evaluate the design of the Educational Excellence Program.

Preliminary results indicated that the impetus for the program was the confluence of four events. The movement to raise teachers' salaries provided the policy problem. The education reform movement, and the recommendations of the FINE Task Force in particular, provided the solution to the problem. The change in attitudes among key policy makers fostered the collaboration necessary to develop the program and navigate it through the political process. It also fostered reconsideration of the top down regulatory approach policy makers had been using to govern schools. The receipt of windfall revenues, as a result of changes in the federal tax code, made it possible for policy makers to explore alternative approaches to education policy.

Results of the analysis of the design of the Educational Excellence Program indicated that the values of teachers, education, politics, local control, education reform, and efficiency shaped the development of the program. The design of the program was also affected, directly
and indirectly, by a number of individuals and actors/agencies. Development of the program did not follow traditional procedures. The Governor invited lobbyists from the Department of Education and the two most politically powerful education associations to collaborate in the development of a $100 million dollar program. The collaboration of former political adversaries was key to the development of the program and maintaining the integrity of the program through the political process.

The Educational Excellence Program was essentially a capacity building instrument, but included a cluster of capacity building instruments, inducements, and mandates. The capacity building provisions and inducements were used to provide additional resources to school districts. mandates were used to facilitate implementation and provide accountability for the program.

The theoretical framework of the program assumed that the quality of education was being compromised by the quality of the teaching force, and that low salaries, relative to other professions, were limiting the states ability to attract and retain quality teachers. Raising teachers' salaries was expected to improve the states' ability to recruit, retain, and continuously improve the quality of the teaching force and, therefore, improve the quality to education in the state. Capacity building provisions and inducements were incorporated into the Educational Excellence Program to raise teachers' salaries. A mandate to generate student achievement information was included to provide accountability for the program and to guide professional development activities.

The evaluation of the Educational Excellence Program revealed inconsistencies between all the elements of its design. More specifically, inconsistencies were noted between the values and characteristics of the political environment and the instruments used in the program; between the instruments used and the definitions of the problem and solution around which the program was designed (i.e., the theoretical framework); and between the characteristics of the
The design of the program was similar to policy learning designs described by Schneider and Ingram (1989). The program was intended to encourage local school districts to experiment with reform innovations and provide a feedback system to monitor and/or evaluate the impact of their actions. The most unique characteristic of the program was the emphasis on local accountability. While this feature of the program was incorporated into a number of the provisions, its emphasis, to the exclusion of consideration for state accountability, may have undermined the effectiveness of the program to encourage local reform.

Results of the analysis of the level of design of the Educational Excellence Program suggested that consideration was given to the structure of the problem and the solution, and that consensus regarding the solution to the problem was more crucial to the development of the program than agreement about the nature of the problem. The results also demonstrated that the expertise and experience of individuals were key factors in the design process. And that the level of resources available affected the way the policy was framed and the willingness of designers to "experiment" with new ideas.

Implications

Policy Learning Designs

The implications of this study for designing education policy may be summarized around two broad issues. The first is the potential of policy learning designs for establishing an optimal balance between state and local authority. Policy learning designs provide considerable discretion to local school districts and include feedback mechanisms to assure accountability. The results of this study suggested factors that may affect the development of policy learning designs.

The results indicated that policy makers were more willing to allow local schools to experiment with reform initiatives when there was a lack of consensus about the appropriate
solutions to policy problems. The results also indicated that policy makers "reined in" local
discretion in response to perceived misuse of funds. "Reined in" meant increasing regulations
of the use of the moneys and diverting the money available to support the provision into other
educational innovations. The process of events was similar to that described in the policy
implementation literature (McLaughlin, 1987; Peterson, Rabe, & Wong, 1991). Once policy
makers identified preferred reform innovations, policies were amended to increase uniformity
in implementation of an innovation across school districts.

If policy learning designs are to be a standard approach to education policy, ideas about
the conditions under which they are most appropriate must change. Rather than using learning
designs to identify reforms to standardize across districts, policy makers must be comfortable
with using learning designs to promote local discretion and experimentation. Using policy
learning designs under these conditions has implications for the values inherent in the policy
environment. In addition to local control, policy makers must develop an appreciation (i.e., a
value) for learning. Key to the success of policy learning designs is a feedback system that
promotes learning at the state, as well as, the local level. A good feedback system may
enhance appreciation for both the value of local control and the value of learning.

The results also suggest that capacity building instruments and inducements provided
policy makers the greatest flexibility to incorporate local discretion. However, closer
examination of the instruments used in the Educational Excellence Program suggests that it is
not the instrument per se, but how the instrument is used that influences local discretion. For
example, a capacity building instrument was used in phase II of the program to provide
resources to schools to raise teachers' salaries according to a plan they developed. However,
the same instrument was used in phase I to essentially regulate a minimum salary for teachers.

In addition, all of the provisions regardless of the instrument used, included
opportunities for local discretion. Phase I allowed local schools to determine how to establish
a minimum salary of $18,000. Phase II required districts to develop a plan for distributing the
funds among teachers, but left the details of the plan to the discretion of local schools. Phase III allowed districts to determine whether or not to apply for funding and, if they decided to apply, allowed them to develop plans for distributing the money in ways that best responded to the needs of the districts. Even mandates, which intuitively provide the least discretion to local schools, were incorporated into section 280.18 in such a way as to promote decentralization (at least from the perspective of policy makers). Local schools were allowed to determine their own student achievement goals and assessment systems in section 280.18.

Results of the study suggested that framing the policy problem in abstract rather than concrete terms, and attributing the problem to deficiencies in the system rather than noncompliance, provided greater flexibility to policy makers to incorporate opportunities for local discretion into the program. However, the results of the evaluation of the design suggested that the ambiguity in the definition of the problem undermined the internal consistency of the program's design. With a program of this size, including multiple provisions, limited internal consistency of the design may actually provide greater flexibility to school districts. Recall that research suggests local school districts attempt to incorporate state policies into educational process(es) that exist in the district (McLaughlin, 1987).

Implementing the provisions of the program in a coordinated manner, as intended by policy makers may have limited the flexibility of local school districts to implement the provisions in ways that best met local needs.

Finally, the purpose of policy learning designs is to create an environment that encourages experimentation (Schneider & Ingram, 1989). Creating that type of environment includes ensuring districts have sufficient capacities and incentives to try innovations. The results of the analysis of the level of design of the Educational Excellence Program suggested that financial resources may not be the only resource to consider when attempting to create an environment that encourages experimentation. The extent to which the broader educational
system has the capacity to support local experimentation may have a significant impact on the success of policy learning designs.

**The Importance of Values**

The other major area for which this study had implications is the role of values in the design process. The results of this study demonstrated that values, and in particular the value of politics, played a significant role in every stage of the design process. The value of politics allowed policy makers to circumvent normal avenues to get a social issue introduced to the political agenda, overrode factual information in defining the social problems and its solution, and created an incentive for political adversaries to collaborate on the design of a major piece of education legislation. Political interests seemed to mediate information needs and trust in local schools. Policy makers more concerned about political recognition were less concerned about feedback regarding the implementation and effects of the program and were more comfortable with extending local authority than policy makers who were concerned about political accountability.

In addition, the results of this study suggested that values did not just explain the actions of policy makers, but were variables manipulated in the design process. The value of local control was used by policy makers to defer decision making, to build compromises, and as a marketing tool to "sell" the program to their constituents. Further research is necessary to clarify and substantiate the role of values in the process of designing policies.

**Limitations**

Limitations of the study were imposed not by the theory of Policy Design, but by the nature of the policy environment in which the research was conducted. For example, while many of the formal elements of the development of a policy (i.e., bills submitted, amendments, proceedings of public hearings etc.) were a matter of public record, many of the most important deliberations took place in informal (and confidential) meetings among policy makers. As a result, description relied on recollections of policy makers that could not be verified. In
addition, there are a number of constraints associated with the use of policy makers as a primary source of information. The most significant of these constraints is the time limitations. While respondents for this study seemed to enjoy revisiting the development of such a significant piece of legislation, there were severe constraints on the amount of time they actually had available. Combined, these conditions resulted in a description of the policy design process wide in breadth, but short in depth.

An alternative approach to studying the process of policy design is to shadow a key policy maker through a legislative cycle. Assuming that complete entry could be granted and that the presence of the researcher would not affect the nature of the interactions between the key informant and other policy makers, such an approach would reveal in much greater detail the process of designing a policy.

Another methodological possibility is to interview policy makers and review relevant documents, but focus on specific aspects of policy design and/or the design process. The results of this study generated a number of areas for further research in all elements of policy design. Limiting a study to a specific, more narrowly defined question would provide the opportunity to broaden awareness and/or appreciation for the role of a particular element in the process of policy design.
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150


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APPENDIX A

THE EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE PROGRAM
EXCERPTS FROM CHAPTER 224 OF THE ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, 1987

H.F. 499

DIVISION I
EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE PROGRAM

Section 1. NEW SECTION. 294A.1 EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE PROGRAM.
The purpose of this chapter is to promote excellence in education. In order to maintain and advance the educational excellence in the state of Iowa, this chapter establishes the Iowa educational excellence program. The program shall consist of three major phases addressing the following:

1. Phase I—The recruitment of quality teachers.
2. Phase II—The retention of quality teachers.
3. Phase III—The enhancement of the quality and effectiveness of teachers through the utilization of performance pay.

Sec. 2. NEW SECTION. 294A.2 DEFINITIONS.
For the purposes of this chapter:

1. "Teacher" means an individual holding a teaching certificate issued under chapter 260. Letter of authorization, or a statement of professional recognition issued by the board of educational examiners who is employed in a nonadministrative position by a school district or area education agency pursuant to a contract issued by a board of directors under section 279.13. A teacher may be employed in both an administrative and a nonadministrative position by a board of directors and shall be considered a part-time teacher for the portion of time that the teacher is employed in a nonadministrative position.

2. "Teacher's regular compensation" means the annual salary specified in a teacher's contract pursuant to the salary schedule adopted by the board of directors or negotiated under chapter 20. It does not include pay earned by a teacher for performance of additional noninstructional duties and does not include the costs of the employer's share of fringe benefits.

3. "Certified enrollment in a school district" for the school years beginning July 1, 1987, July 1, 1988, and July 1, 1989, means that district's basic enrollment for the budget year beginning July 1, 1987 as defined in section 442.4. For each school year thereafter, certified enrollment in a school district means that district's basic enrollment for the budget year.

4. "Enrollment served" for the fiscal years beginning July 1, 1987, July 1, 1988, and July 1, 1989, means that area education agency's enrollment served for the budget year beginning July 1, 1987. For each school year thereafter, enrollment served means that area education agency's enrollment served for the budget year. Enrollment served shall be determined under section 442.27, subsection 12.

5. "Specialized training requirements" means requirements prescribed by a board of directors to meet specific needs of the school district identified by the board of directors that provide for the acquisition of clearly defined skills through formal or informal education that are beyond the requirements necessary for initial certification under chapter 260.

6. "General training requirements" means requirements prescribed by a board of directors that provide for the acquisition of additional semester hours of graduate credit from an institution of higher education approved by the board of educational examiners or the completion of staff development activities approved by the department of education for renewal of certificates issued under chapter 260.
Sec. 3. NEW SECTION. 294A.3 EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE FUND.

An educational excellence fund is established in the office of treasurer of state to be administered by the department of education. Moneys appropriated by the general assembly for deposit in the fund shall be paid to school districts and area education agencies pursuant to the requirements of this chapter and shall be expended only to pay for increases in the regular compensation of teachers and other salary increases for teachers, to pay the costs of the employer's share of federal social security and Iowa public employees' retirement system, or a pension and annuity retirement system established under chapter 294, payments on the salary increases, and to pay costs associated with providing specialized or general training. Moneys received by school districts and area education agencies shall not be used for pay earned by a teacher for performance of additional noninstructional duties.

If moneys are appropriated by the general assembly to the fund for distribution under this chapter the moneys shall be allocated by the department so that the allocations of moneys for phases I and II are made prior to the allocation of moneys for phase III.

DIVISION II
PHASE I

Sec. 4. NEW SECTION. 294A.4 GOAL. The goal of phase I is to provide for establishment of pay plans incorporating sufficient annual compensation to attract quality teachers to Iowa's public school system. This is accomplished by increasing the minimum salary. A beginning salary which is competitive with salaries paid to other professionals will provide incentive for top quality individuals to enter the teaching profession.

Sec. 5. NEW SECTION. 294A.5 MINIMUM SALARY SUPPLEMENT.

For the school year beginning July 1, 1987 and succeeding school years, the minimum annual salary paid to a full-time teacher as regular compensation shall be eighteen thousand dollars. For the school year beginning July 1, 1987 for phase I, each school district and area education agency shall certify to the department of education by the third Friday in September the names of all teachers employed by the district or area education agency whose regular compensation is less than eighteen thousand dollars per year for that year and the amounts needed as minimum salary supplements. The minimum salary supplement for each eligible teacher is the total of the difference between eighteen thousand dollars and the teacher's regular compensation plus the amount required to pay the employer's share of the federal social security and Iowa public employees' retirement system, or a pension and annuity retirement system established under chapter 294, payments on the additional salary moneys.

The board of directors shall report the salaries of teachers employed on less than a full-time equivalent basis, and the amount of minimum salary supplement shall be prorated.

Sec. 6. NEW SECTION. 294A.6 PAYMENTS.

For the school year beginning July 1, 1987, the department of education shall notify the department of revenue and finance of the total minimum salary supplement to be paid to each school district and area education agency under phase I and the department of revenue and finance shall make the payments. For school years after the school year beginning July 1, 1987, if a school district or area education agency reduces the number of its full-time equivalent teachers below the number employed during the school year beginning July 1, 1987, the department of revenue and finance shall reduce the total minimum salary supplement payable to that school district or area education agency so that the amount paid is equal to the ratio of the number of full-time equivalent teachers employed in the school district or area education agency for that school year divided by the number of full-time equivalent teachers employed in the school district or area education agency for the school year beginning July 1, 1987 and...
multiplying that fraction by the total minimum salary supplement paid to that school district or area education agency for the school year beginning July 1, 1987.

DIVISION III
PHASE II

Sec. 7. NEW SECTION. 294A.8 GOAL. The goal of phase II is to keep Iowa's best educators in the profession and assist in their development by providing general salary increases.

Sec. 8. NEW SECTION. 294A.9 PHASE II PROGRAM. Phase II is established to improve the salaries of teachers. For each fiscal year, the department of education shall allocate to each school district for the purpose of implementing phase II an amount equal to seventy-five dollars and ninety-three cents multiplied by the district's certified enrollment and to each area education agency for the purpose of implementing phase II an amount equal to three dollars and fifty-five cents multiplied by the enrollment served in the area education agency, if the general assembly has appropriated sufficient moneys to the fund so that pursuant to section 294A.3, thirty-eight million five hundred thousand dollars will be allocated by the department to school districts and area education agencies for phase II. If, because of the amount of the appropriation made by the general assembly to the fund, less than thirty-eight million five hundred thousand dollars is allocated for phase II, the department of education shall adjust the amount for each student in certified enrollment and each student in enrollment served based upon the amount allocated for phase II.

The department of education shall certify the amounts of the allocations for each school district and area education agency to the department of revenue and finance and the department of revenue and finance shall make the payments to school districts and area education agencies.

If a school district has discontinued grades under section 282.7, subsection 1, or students attend school in another school district, under an agreement with the board of the other school district, the board of directors of the district of residence shall transmit the phase II moneys allocated to the district for those students based upon the full-time equivalent attendance of those students to the board of the school district of attendance of the students.

If a school district uses teachers under a contract between the district and the area education agency in which the district is located, the school district shall transmit to the employing area education agency a portion of its phase II allocation based upon the portion that the salaries of teachers employed by the area education agency and assigned to the school district for a school year bears to the total teacher salaries paid in the district for that school year, including the salaries of the teachers employed by the area education agency.

If the school district or area education agency is organized under chapter 20 for collective bargaining purposes, the board of directors and certified bargaining representative for the certificated employees shall mutually agree upon a formula for distributing the phase II allocation among the teachers. For the school year beginning July 1, 1987 only, the parties shall follow the procedures specified in chapter 20 except that if the parties reach an impasse, neither impasse procedures agreed to by the parties nor sections 20.20 through 20.22 shall apply and the phase II allocation shall be divided as provided in section 294A.10. Negotiations under this section are subject to the scope of negotiations specified in section 20.9. If a board of directors and certified bargaining representative for certificated employees have not reached mutual agreement by July 15, 1987 for the distribution of the phase II payment, section 294A.10 will apply.

If the school district or area education agency is not organized for collective bargaining purposes, the board of directors shall determine the method of distribution.
Sec. 9. NEW SECTION. 294A.10 FAILURE TO AGREE ON DISTRIBUTION.
For the school year beginning July 1, 1987 only, if the board of directors and certified
bargaining representative for the certificated employees have not reached agreement under
section 294A.9, the board of directors shall divide the payment among the teachers employed
by the district or area education agency as follows:
1. All full-time teachers whose regular compensation is equal to or more than the
minimum salary for phase I will receive an equal amount from the phase II allocation.
2. A teacher who will receive a minimum salary supplement under section 294A.5 will
receive moneys equal to the difference between the amount from the phase II allocation and the
minimum salary supplement paid to that teacher.
3. The amount from the phase II allocation will be prorated for a teacher employed on
less than a full-time basis.
4. An amount from the phase II allocation includes the amount required to pay the
employers' share of the federal social security and Iowa public employees' retirement system,
or a pension and annuity retirement system established under chapter 294, payments on the
additional salary.

Sec. 10. NEW SECTION. 294A.11 REPORTS.
By August 15, 1987, each school district and area education agency shall file a report
with the department of education, on forms provided by the department of education,
specifying the method used to distribute the phase II allocation.
Reports filed by area education agencies shall include a description of the method used
to distribute phase II allocations to teachers employed by the area education agency working
under contract in a school district.

DIVISION IV
PHASE III

Sec. 11. NEW SECTION. 294A.12 GOAL.
The goal of phase III is to enhance the quality, effectiveness, and performance of
Iowa's teachers by promoting teacher excellence. This will be accomplished through the
development of performance-based pay plans and supplemental pay plans requiring additional
instructional work assignments which may include specialized training or differential training,
or both.

It is the intent of the general assembly that school districts and area education agencies
incorporate into their planning for performance-based pay plans and supplemental pay plans,
implementation of recommendations from recently issued national and state reports relating to
the requirements of the educational system for meeting future educational needs, especially as
they relate to the preparation, working conditions, and responsibilities of teachers, including
but not limited to assistance to new teachers, development of teachers as instructional leaders in
their schools and school districts, using teachers for evaluation and diagnosis of other teachers'
techniques, and the implementation of sabbatical leaves.

Sec. 12. NEW SECTION. 294A.13 PHASE III PROGRAM.
For the school year beginning July 1, 1987 and succeeding school years, each school
district and area education agency that meet the requirements of this section are eligible to
receive moneys for the implementation under phase III of a performance-based pay plan or
supplemental pay plan, or a combination of the two.
Sec. 13. NEW SECTION. 294A.14 PHASE III PAYMENTS.
For each fiscal year, the department shall allocate the remainder of the moneys appropriated by the general assembly to the fund for phase III, subject to section 294A.16B. If fifty million dollars is allocated for phase III, the payments for an approved plan for a school district shall be equal to the product of a district's certified enrollment and ninety-eight dollars and sixty-three cents, and for an area education agency shall be equal to the product of an area education agency's enrollment served and four dollars and sixty cents. If the moneys allocated for phase III are either greater than or less than fifty million dollars, the department of education shall adjust the amount for each student in certified enrollment and each student in enrollment served based upon the amount allocated for phase III.

If a school district has discontinued grades under section 282.7, subsection 1, or students attend school in another school district, under an agreement with the board of the other school district, the board of directors of the district of residence shall transmit the phase III moneys allocated to the district for those students based upon the full-time equivalent attendance of those students to the board of the school district of attendance of the students.

A plan shall be developed using the procedure specified under section 294A.15. The plan shall provide for the establishment of a performance-pay plan, a supplemental plan, or a combination of the two pay plans and shall include a budget for the cost of implementing the plan. In addition to the costs of providing additional salary for teachers and the amount required to pay the employers' share of the federal social security and Iowa public employees' retirement system, or a pension and annuity retirement system established under chapter 294, payments on the additional salary, the budget may include costs associated with providing specialized or general training. Moneys received under phase III shall not be used to employ additional employees of a school district, except that phase III moneys may be used to employ substitute teachers, part-time teachers, and other employees needed to implement plans that provide innovative staffing patterns or that require that a teacher employed on a full-time basis be absent from the classroom for specified periods for fulfilling other instructional duties. However, all teachers employed are eligible to receive additional salary under an approved plan.

For the purpose of this section, a performance-based pay plan shall provide for salary increases for teachers who demonstrate superior performance in completing assigned duties. The plan shall include the method used to determine superior performance of a teacher. For school districts, the plan may include assessments of specific teaching behavior, assessments of student performance, assessments of other characteristics associated with effective teaching, or a combination of these criteria.

For school districts, a performance-based pay plan may provide for additional salary for individual teachers or for additional salary for all teachers assigned to an attendance center. For area education agencies, a performance-based pay plan may provide for additional salary for individual teachers or for additional salary for all teachers assigned to a specific discipline within an area education agency. If the plan provides additional salary for all teachers assigned to an attendance center, or specific discipline, the receipt of additional salary by those teachers shall be determined on the basis of whether that attendance center or specific discipline, meets specific objectives adopted for that attendance center, or specific discipline. For school districts, the objectives may include, but are not limited to, decreasing the dropout rate, increasing the attendance rate, or accelerating the achievement growth of students enrolled in that attendance center.

If a performance-based pay plan provides additional salary for individual teachers:
1. The plan may provide for salary moneys in addition to the existing salary schedule of the school district or area education agency and may require the participation by the teacher in specialized training requirements.
2. The plan may provide for salary moneys by replacing the existing salary schedule or as an option to the existing salary schedule and may include specialized training requirements, general training requirements, and experience requirements.

A supplemental pay plan may provide for supplementing the costs of vocational agriculture programs as provided in section 294A.16A.

For the purpose of this section, a supplemental pay plan in a school district shall provide for the payment of additional salary to teachers who participate in either additional instructional work assignments or specialized training during the regular school day or during an extended school day, school week, or school year. A supplemental pay plan in an area education agency shall provide for the payment of additional salary to teachers who participate in either additional work assignments or improvement of instruction activities with school districts during the regular school day or during an extended school day, school week, or school year.

For school districts, additional instructional work assignments may include but are not limited to general curriculum planning and development, vertical articulation of curriculum, horizontal curriculum coordination, development of educational measurement practices for the school district, development of plans for assisting beginning teachers during their first year of teaching, attendance at summer staff development programs, development of staff development programs for other teachers to be presented during the school year, and other plans locally determined in the manner specified in section 294A.15 and approved by the department of education under section 294A.16 that are of equal importance or more appropriately meet the educational needs of the school district.

For area education agencies, additional instructional work assignments may include but are not limited to providing assistance and support to school districts in general curriculum planning and development, providing assistance to school districts in vertical articulation of curriculum and horizontal curriculum coordination, development of educational measurement practices for school districts in the area education agency, development of plans for assisting beginning teachers during their first year of teaching, attendance or instruction at summer staff development programs, development of staff development programs for school district teachers to be presented during the school year, and other plans determined in the manner specified in section 294A.15 and approved by the department of education under section 294A.16 that are of equal importance or more appropriately meet the educational needs of the area education agency.

Sec. 14. NEW SECTION. 294A.15 DEVELOPMENT OF PLAN.

The board of directors of a school district desiring to receive moneys under phase III shall appoint a committee consisting of representatives of school administrators, teachers, parents, and other individuals interested in the public schools of the school district to develop a proposal for distribution of phase III moneys to be submitted to the board of directors. The board of directors of an area education agency desiring to receive moneys under phase III shall appoint a committee of similar membership to develop a proposal. If the school district or area education agency is organized under chapter 20 for collective bargaining purposes, the board shall provide that one of the teacher members of the committee is an individual selected by the certified bargaining representative for certificated employees of the district or area education agency. The proposal developed by the committee shall be submitted to the board of directors of the school district or area education agency for consideration by the board in developing a plan. For the school year beginning July 1, 1987, if the school district or area education agency is organized for collective bargaining purposes under chapter 20, the portions of the proposed plan that are within the scope of negotiations specified in section 20.9 require the mutual agreement by January 1, 1988 of both the board of directors of the school district or area education agency and the certified bargaining representative for the certificated employees.
In succeeding years, if the school district or area education agency is organized for collective bargaining purposes, the portions of the proposed plan that are within the scope of the negotiations specified in section 20.9 are subject to chapter 20.

Nothing in this chapter shall be construed to expand or restrict the scope of negotiations in section 20.9.

Sec. 15. NEW SECTION. 294A.16 SUBMISSION OF PLAN.
A plan adopted by the board of directors of a school district or area education agency shall be submitted to the department of education not later than July 1 of a school year for that school year. Amendments to multiple year plans may be submitted annually.

If a school district uses teachers under a contract between the district and the area education agency in which the district is located, the school district shall make provision for those teachers under phase III.

The department of education shall review each plan and its budget and notify the department of management of the names of school districts and area education agencies with approved plans.

However, for the school year beginning July 1, 1987, a board of directors may submit a proposed plan and budget not later than January 1, 1988, and the department of education shall notify the school districts and area education agencies not later than February 15, 1988 that their plans have been approved by the department. Final approval of budgets for approved phase III plans shall be determined by the department of education after the certification required in section 294A.16B but not later than February 15, 1988. The department of education shall notify the department of revenue and finance of the amounts of payments to be made to each school district and area education agency that has an approved plan. Moneys allocated to a school district or area education agency for the school year beginning July 1, 1987 for an approved phase III plan that are not expended for that school year shall not revert to the general fund of the state but may be expended by that school district or area education agency during the school year beginning July 1, 1988. For school years thereafter, moneys allocated to a school district or area education agency for an approved phase III plan for a school year but not expended during that school year shall revert to the general fund of the state as provided in section 8.33.

Sec. 16. NEW SECTION. 294A.16A VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE.
A supplemental pay plan that provides for supplementing the costs of vocational agriculture programs may provide for increasing teacher salary costs for twelve month contracts for vocational agriculture teachers.

Sec. 17. NEW SECTION. 294A.16B DETERMINATION OF PHASE III ALLOCATION. On February 1, 1988, the governor shall certify to the department of education the amount of money available for allocation under phase III. If pursuant to any provision of law, the governor certifies an amount lower than the allocation that would otherwise be made under this chapter, the department of education shall, if necessary, adjust the amount for each student in certified enrollment and each student in enrollment served which are included in approved plans pursuant to section 294A.14 and shall review the budgets of the approved plans.

Sec. 18. NEW SECTION. 294A.17 REPORT.
Each school district and area education agency receiving moneys for phase III during a school year shall file a report with department of education by July 1 of the next following school year. The report shall describe the plan, its implementation, and the expenditures made
under the plan including the salary increases paid to each eligible employee. The report may include any proposed amendments to the plan for the next following school year.

Sec. 19. NEW SECTION. 294A.18 REVERSION OF MONEYS.
Any portion of moneys appropriated to the educational excellence trust fund and allocated to phase III under section 294A.3 for a fiscal year not expended by school districts and area education agencies during that fiscal year revert to the general fund of the state as provided in section 8.33.

DIVISION V
GENERAL PROVISIONS

Sec. 20. NEW SECTION. 294A.19 RULES.
The state board of education shall adopt rules under chapter 17A for the administration of this chapter.

Sec. 21. NEW SECTION. 294A.20 PAYMENTS.
Payments for each phase of the educational excellence program shall be made by the department of revenue and finance on a quarterly basis, and the payments shall be separate from state aid payments made pursuant to sections 442.25 and 442.26. For the school year beginning July 1, 1987, the first quarterly payment shall be made not later than October 15, 1987 taking into consideration the relative budget and cash position of the state resources. The payments to a school district or area education agency may be combined and a separate accounting of the amount paid for each program shall be included.
Any payments made to school districts or area education agencies under this chapter are miscellaneous income for purposes of chapter 442.

Sec. 22. NEW SECTION. 294A.21 MULTIPLE SALARY PAYMENTS.
The salary increases that may be granted to a teacher under phase III are in addition to any salary increases granted to a teacher under phase I or phase II.

Sec. 23. NEW SECTION. 294A.21B COLLECTIVE BARGAINING.
For the school year beginning July 1, 1987 only, section 20.17, subsection 3, relating to the exemption from chapter 21 and presentation of initial bargaining positions of the public employer and certified bargaining representative for certificated employees, does not apply to collective bargaining for moneys received under phases II and III, and an agreement between the board of directors and the certified bargaining representative for certificated employees need not be ratified by the employees or board.

DIVISION VI
EFFICIENCY INCENTIVES

Sec. 56. NEW SECTION. 280.18 STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT GOALS.
The board of directors of each school district shall adopt goals to improve student achievement and performance. Student achievement and performance can be measured by measuring the improvement of students' skills in reading, writing, speaking, listening, mathematics, reasoning, studying, and technological literacy.
In order to achieve the goal of improving student achievement and performance on a statewide basis, the board of directors of each school district shall adopt goals that will improve student achievement at each grade level in the skills listed in this section and other skills.
deemed important by the board. Not later than July 1, 1989, the board of each district shall transmit to the department of education its plans for achieving the goals it has adopted and the periodic assessment that will be used to determine whether its goals have been achieved. The committee appointed by the board under section 280.12 shall advise the board concerning the development of goals, the assessment process to be used, and the measurements to be used.

The periodic assessment used by a school district to determine whether its student achievement goals have been met shall use various measures for determination, of which standardized tests may be one. The board shall ensure that the achievement of goals for a grade level has been assessed at least once during every four-year period.

The board shall file assessment reports with the department of education and shall make copies of these reports available to the residents of the school district.
Consent To Record

The education reform movement of the 1980's began with an unprecedented amount of state legislation directed at improving the condition of education and student achievement in particular. Ten years later, there is general consensus among educators and the public, that most of these initiatives did not achieve their intended goals. While the reform movement in Iowa addressed issues that were being addressed in other states (e.g., leadership, time for instruction, teachers and teaching, and curriculum), the manner in which the Iowa State Legislature approached many of these issues was unique. For example, while most states revised or implemented state testing programs, Iowa legislation (Section 280.18) mandated local school districts to develop student achievement goals and an assessment program to monitor these goals. The purpose of this dissertation project is to examine factors that affected the development of Section 280.18 and their impact on the ultimate effectiveness of the initiative.

You were selected as a key resource in this study because of your role in the development and passage of the Omnibus Reform Bill (H.F. 499) in general, and/or with the development of Section 280.18 in particular. Participation in this study will consist of an interview that should last 1-1.5 hours. Follow up phone calls may be necessary to clarify information obtained in the interview, but will be kept at a minimum. You will also be given the opportunity to review and comment on interpretations made of the data collected for this study.

The interview will be tape recorded. Transcripts of the tape will be made to facilitate data analysis. While your name will be held in confidence, reporting descriptive information that makes your perspective unique, such as your role in the development of the legislative initiative, may reveal your identity. If you choose to remain completely anonymous, a pseudonym will be attached to the contents of the interview at the time transcripts are prepared and all descriptive information will be omitted from the report. All audio tapes will be erased and identifiers removed following completion of the project.

The results of this study will provide insights into effective state policy making. Your participation will be a valuable contribution to its success. I appreciate you assistance.

I have read this form and understand that the interview will be tape recorded. I also understand that my participation in the study is voluntary and that I may withdraw my consent to participate at any time.

[ ] I give my permission to use descriptive information regarding my role in the development of Section 280.18 recognizing that this information may reveal my identity.

[ ] I wish to remain completely anonymous. Please do not include descriptive information regarding my role in the development of Section 280.18 in any report of the data.

____________________________  ________________________
Signature of respondent        Date
APPENDIX C
INTERVIEW PROTOCOL
INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

General Topics

Personal

What was it like to be _____ in 1987?

General climate of 87 legislative session

Climate with regard to education in particular

Could you share with me more about 280.18 (where did the idea come from, things you thought while developing 280.18, debates that occurred, things like that...)

Other people involved in the development of the policy

Prompts

Clarifying questions--confirmation and further elaboration (Do you mean...)

Paraphrasing--content (So ... was considered important...)

Reflecting--emotion (You seem quite excited...)

Summarizing--confirm/correct my perceptions (So, to make sure I have this straight...)

Checklist of Key Elements of Policy Design

Context

Values: What values impacted the development of this policy?

Structure: Who were involved in the development of this policy? How was this policy expected to impact LEAs?

Procedure: Did the development of this policy follow normal procedures? If not, how did it deviate and what was the impact of this deviation on the development of the policy? To what extent did policy makers consider the effects of this policy on other existing policies and other policies within the reform bill?

Instrument

What instrument was selected? What instruments were considered to achieve the policy goal? On what basis was this particular instrument selected?
Theoretical Framework

Causation: What was the problem (initial v. desired state)?
Evaluation: What is the goal of the policy?
(If X is the goal Y should be the policy adopted)
Intervention: Given the instrument selected, who was supposed to do what?
APPENDIX D

COVER LETTER FOR MEMBER CHECKING
Dear {Respondent}:

I have spent much of the time since we visited last fall following leads and analyzing information regarding the Educational Excellence Program from a variety of sources. Enclosed is a description of the events that led up to the development and passage of the program. I am providing this to you for two reasons. First, to make sure that your experiences are reflected in the description. Second, to get your feedback regarding my interpretation of the events. I will contact you sometime during the week of June 26-30 for your feedback.

Thanks for your continued help with this project.

Sincerely,

Diane Schnelker
E016 Lagomarcino Hall
(515) 294-1941
APPENDIX E
PRE-STUDY PERSONAL REFLECTIONS
Personal Reflections

I will be the only instrument used to collect and analyze data. As such, extraordinary measures must be taken to monitor the extent to which my values and world view effect the data collection and interpretation processes. Walcott (1990) suggests recording initial perceptions as a type of baseline to begin this process. The basis of my perceptions, and my interest in the study, is the experiences I have had as program evaluator for a large public school district in the state, working with a professional association, and as the chief of the Bureau of Planning, Research, and Evaluation at the Iowa Department of Education.

As a program evaluator, I had the opportunity to research and evaluate programs in various departments (e.g., personnel, staff development, and specific curricular areas); for a variety of student populations (e.g., academically gifted, academically at risk, and limited English speaking students); at all grade levels (prekindergarten through grade 12). I was also involved with the development of a number of innovative programs based on current research in education. These experiences provided great appreciation, not only for the role research and evaluation plays in the development and implementation of quality education programs, but also for the importance of local participation in the development of quality programs that exploit the strengths of district resources to meet the needs of students in the district.

While working with the district, I became actively involved in an initiative of the Iowa Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (IASCID). In 1986, IASCID formulated a task force to develop procedures to sponsor and conduct analyses of educational issues and policies likely to affect Iowa education. I served on that task force and on the subsequent standing committee that was established to apply the procedures. I was involved in studies of the impact of raising entrance requirements at a regents institution on local schools, local district reactions to, and effects of, a state mandated accountability system, and the actual and intended impact of state-driven student outcomes as experienced by other states and perceived by leaders promoting a similar initiative in Iowa. These experiences provided two
important lessons. First, they gave me greater appreciation for the interdependence of the
elements within the education system. Second, I developed an appreciation for the egocentrism
of each of the institutions in policy decision making. Each agency in the education system
tends to make decisions that serve their immediate needs with little consideration of the impact
of those decisions on other agencies in the system.

As chief of the Bureau of Planning, Research, and Evaluation, I was responsible for
managing the annual collection and processing of state educational data bases and provided
research, evaluation, and statistical support to department staff. This support was generally
used to respond to requests from legislators, to comply with mandated studies, to facilitate
department planning, and to support positions of the department on various policy issues. I
was also responsible for satisfying some of the reporting requirements of the U.S. Department
of Education. Finally, I joined the Iowa Department of Education the year that the Governor
(Branstad) served as chair of the National Governor's Association (NGA) and education was at
the top of the political agenda of the NGA and the Republican party. Because of the
Governor's involvement, Iowa was actively involved in the development of the National
Education Goals. The bureau that I headed was responsible for facilitating and coordinating
state national Goals activities including a state conference on the National Education Goals, a
regional review of the National Goals and proposed indicators sponsored by the National
Goals Panel, and the first National Education Forum. These experiences broadened by
appreciation for the state and federal role in education, and in particular, sensitized me to the
responsibilities, possibilities, and constraints that state and federal governments face with
regard to working with local school districts.

The experiences I have had at both the state and local level have contributed to my
theoretical framework for the social problem of student achievement. Unlike any of the early
reformers, I believe the "problem" is not deficiencies in educational leadership or the abilities of
teachers, but rather that the education model in place since the Industrial Revolution no longer
satisfies society's needs. The solution will most likely require modifications to the governance
structure of the entire education system, the organizational structure of the system, and in
particular the K-12 system, and the pedagogy. Rather than driving the reform, I believe the
state's initial role in the reform movement should be providing the leadership, resources, and
technical assistance to allow representatives at all levels of the system to identify society's
needs and to develop the education system to meet those needs. The complete system must
identify appropriate agencies to meet all of the needs of the system and define the roles and
responsibilities of each agency.

While I believe that the current repertoire of policy instruments of state legislatures
contain the instruments to accomplish its initial role, they may not be appropriate for its role in
a new system. However, a complete evaluation of the current mechanisms and/or explorations
of new policy mechanisms cannot occur until the appropriate role has been determined.

I am convinced that educators at all levels truly value education and are interested in
providing the best education system they can, however, they frequently work at cross
purposes. This is due in part to the desire to resolve problems as quickly as possible.
Educators are beginning to realize that the kinds of changes required in the reform movement
will take a considerable amount of time to implement. It is also the result of very little
appreciation for the context within which they work. Each unit (building, district, state
department, legislature, etc.) has its own set of opportunities and constraints within which it
must operate. While the development of a new education system may alter or even eliminate
these conditions, all must be considered in the development of, and transition to, a new
education system.