School district assessment of public opinion toward selected school practices: an exploratory study

Glenn Estus Primmer Jr.
Iowa State University

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School district assessment of public opinion
toward selected school practices: An exploratory study

by

Glenn Estus Primmer, Jr.

A Dissertation Submitted to the
Graduate Faculty in Partial Fulfillment of
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For the Graduate College

Iowa State University
Of Science and Technology
Ames, Iowa
1974

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Problem</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose of the Study</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Definitions</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delimitations</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE</strong></td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment of Attitudes, Opinions and Needs</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criticisms of Public Education</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevancy/irrelevancy of the school curriculum</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanizing/de-humanizing characteristics of the Public Schools</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accountability</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>METHODS AND PROCEDURES</strong></td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description of the Instrument</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction of the Instrument</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selection of the Sample</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collection of the Data</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treatment of the Data</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FINDINGS</strong></td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration of the Survey</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Findings of the Opinion Sections</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How Categories Differed from Total Response</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section</td>
<td>Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Findings of the Vision Section</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Findings of the Knowledge Section</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Findings of the Demographic Information Section</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correlations</td>
<td>151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suggestions of Urbandale School Administration</td>
<td>155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUMMARY, LIMITATIONS, CONCLUSIONS, DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limitations</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusions</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td>167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendations</td>
<td>170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACKNOWLEDGMENTS</td>
<td>190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX A. APPROPRIATENESS SURVEY</td>
<td>199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX B. PILOT SURVEY</td>
<td>215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX C. RESPONSE TO VISION SECTION</td>
<td>231</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX D. URBANDALE (IOWA) SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION LETTER</td>
<td>233</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Table 1.</td>
<td>Item No. 1, Satisfaction with schooling being received</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 2.</td>
<td>Item No. 2, Ways in which local schools are good (Total sample)</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 3.</td>
<td>Item No. 2, Ways in which local schools are good (Knowledgeable)</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 4.</td>
<td>Item No. 2, Ways in which local schools are good (Not knowledgeable)</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 5.</td>
<td>Item No. 2, Ways in which local schools are good (Elementary)</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 6.</td>
<td>Item No. 2, Ways in which local schools are good (Secondary)</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 7.</td>
<td>Item No. 2, Ways in which local schools are good (Satisfied)</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 8.</td>
<td>Item No. 2, Ways in which local schools are good (Dissatisfied)</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 9.</td>
<td>Item No. 3, Should children start school at age of four?</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 10.</td>
<td>Item No. 4, Discipline in the local schools</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 11.</td>
<td>Item No. 5, Number of educational changes being made</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 12.</td>
<td>Item No. 6, Is the board of education working hard?</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 13.</td>
<td>Item No. 7, Is the school administration working hard?</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 14.</td>
<td>Item No. 8, Are the teachers working hard?</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 15.</td>
<td>Item No. 9, Is the extra-curricular program good?</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 16.</td>
<td>Item No. 10, Adequate job of teaching basic skills?</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 17. Item No. 11, Adequate job of preparing students for college?  

Table 18. Item No. 12, Adequate job of preparing students for "world of work"?  

Table 19. Item No. 13, Adequate job of preparing students to be good citizens?  

Table 20. Item No. 14, Adequate job of preparing students for parenthood and family life?  

Table 21. Item No. 15, Adequate job of providing individual needs?  

Table 22. Item No. 16, Rights and privileges being given students  

Table 23. Item No. 17, Biggest problems facing the local schools (Total sample)  

Table 24. Responses to Vision section (Total sample)  

Table 25. Number of correct responses to Knowledge section  

Table 26. Item No. 62, How many members on the board of education?  

Table 27. Item No. 63, Name two school board members (Total sample)  

Table 28. Item No. 64, Approximate enrollment, within 200  

Table 29. Item No. 65, How many elementary schools?  

Table 30. Item No. 66, How many elementary principals?  

Table 31. Item No. 67, Purpose of the new building under construction  

Table 32. Item No. 68, Name your child's principal  

Table 33. Item No. 69, What is the superintendent's name?
Table 34. Item No. 70, Amount of current budget, to the nearest million

Table 35. Item No. 71, Name two sources of school funds

Table 36. Item No. 72, To whom would you go with your child's school problems?

Table 37. Item No. 73, Age

Table 38. Item No. 74, Sex

Table 39. Item No. 75, Highest grade or class completed in school

Table 40. Item No. 76, Occupation

Table 41. Item No. 77, 1972 family income, prior to taxes

Table 42. Item No. 78, Religious preference

Table 43. Item No. 79, Number of children enrolled in public school

Table 44. Item No. 80, Number of children in private or parochial school

Table 45. Correlations of .400 or greater
STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Introduction

One of the major thrusts of educational criticism in recent years has been in the area of "accountability." It is difficult to place an exact definition on the term "accountability." Glass (29) contends that the term has been used far too broadly and too loosely and has been applied to: (1) the statement of educational objectives, (2) performance contracting, (3) the voucher system, (4) economic input-output analysis, (5) accreditation and (6) community participation. He feels that all of these fall short of the real meaning of accountability for various reasons and says that the proper paradigm is a buyer-seller relationship -- no more, no less. Thus Glass contends that accountability simply means that the educational buyer should get his money's worth. The overabundance of definitions and descriptions is also recognized by Lieberman (55), who feels that all of the definitions can be grouped into two general categories: (1) "input-output" type and (2) consumer-choice type (voucher system), which is based on the belief that the consumer choice will introduce a measure of effectiveness.

Determining exactly what teachers, administrators, school boards and school systems are accountable for necessitates establishing local goals and priorities. This is the first accountability step and is "needs assessment translated into
goals and objectives" (93). The problem of "needs assessment", ascertaining local goals and priorities, has been the subject of study of the Center for the Study of Evaluation (CSE) at the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA) (9). An elementary school needs assessment kit has been developed and field-tested which can be used to determine: (1) ratings of 106 different educational goals and (2) differences in goal ratings of teachers, parents and board members.

The CSE approach was adapted by Manatt for a study of goals at the Ayrshire Consolidated School District at Ayrshire, Iowa as part of a federal Title III grant (58). Opinions of community members, parents, students and educators were surveyed toward 108 educational goals. The CSE model was used by Brittingham in a seven-district approach in Iowa testing semantic differential of the CSE goals. A similar model program for involving the community and the professional school staff in establishing local educational goals and objectives has been developed by the Commission on Educational planning under the sponsorship of Phi Delta Kappa (PDK) (11).

The Problem

The major problem of this study is to develop and test an instrument which can be used by local public school authorities to assess public opinion toward various selected
educational practices. To accomplish that it will be necessary to achieve the following objectives:

1. To determine educational practices which are subject to criticism and to praise and thus are of sufficient importance to be included.

2. To determine the feasibility of measuring public opinions toward selected educational practices at the local school level.

3. To develop an opinion scale that may be used in measuring public opinions toward selected educational practices at the local school level.

4. To determine the validity of and to analyze the scale items.

The educational practices to be included in the study have been identified through a search of current critical literature about the public schools and have come from books, periodicals, newspapers and speeches. Educational practices have been a favorite target of recent school critics, many of whom have attacked what they consider to be irrelevant and/or oppressive practices in the schools. Robinson (78), (79) found "teaching methods" to be one of 12 major areas of school criticism. Gish (28), in adapting the Gallup/C. F. Kettering poll for use in the local school district asked the people being interviewed what kinds of information they would like more of about the local public schools and found "how children are taught" to be one of 13 concerns.
Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to add an additional dimension to the needs assessment methodology presently being used by local and state educational agencies for the first step in a five-step model. The five-step CSE model includes:

1. Major goals determined by various publics using a Q-sort technique.
2. Hooking major goals to hierarchical objectives.
3. Determining behavioral objectives appropriate for the hierarchical objectives (which are appropriate for course and unit goals).
4. Selecting and/or developing instructional and learning materials, activities and experiences to reach the goals.
5. Selecting and/or developing test items appropriate to determine accomplishment of the goals. (9)

The PDK approach is a three-step one which includes:

1. Ranking of educational goals in order of their importance.
2. Assessing how well current educational programs are meeting these goals.
3. Development of program level performance objectives by the professional staff designed to meet the priority-ranked goals. (11)

The CSE and PDK approaches attempt to establish educational goals and objectives for the local schools by determining opinions toward selected goals, thus establishing what goals the public wishes the schools to achieve. Developing programs to accomplish these goals is another step in the needs assessment process and involves establishing the educational practices to be used to reach the goals. So far as the writer has been able to ascertain, no studies have yet been conducted to determine public opinion toward educational
practices or to assess whether the public has any particular preferences regarding which educational practices should be used in the local public schools.

Harrison (33) contends that school officials too often assume that they know what the public is thinking and make no effort to really learn. Harrison and Woodington (93) both stress the need to poll public opinion and assert that failure to do this has probably been responsible for many school bond issue failures. Gallup (23) sees the public opinion poll as being a means of determining the will of the "inarticulate majority" as opposed to that of the "articulate minority" and warns that "leaders who do not know what the public thinks, or the state of the public's knowledge on any issue are likely to be ineffective and unsuccessful leaders." Gallup and Harrison agree on the need for two-way communication in order for the public to be informed enough to make intelligent decisions about important issues.

Gallup (22), (24), (26), (27) and Harris (32) have both conducted national polls of public opinion toward public schools in recent years and have both found that different segments of the population hold differing views on the issues covered. Identifying which of these segments holds which views is recognized by the pollsters as being of importance to local public school authorities. Therefore, an attempt will be made to build into the system developed by this research a means of identifying certain characteristics of the surveyed
sample such as age, sex, amount of formal education, income level, occupation, religion, and whether or not the subjects are parents of public school children.

Definitions

Vanden Branden (88, 22) conducted an extensive review of definitions of attitude and opinion. He quoted Thurstone as making the following distinction:

Attitude is the sum total of a man's inclinations, feelings, prejudices, bias, preconceived notions, ideas, fears, threats, and convictions about any specified topic.

Opinion is the verbal expression of attitude. Actually, then, an opinion is a symbol of an attitude. Opinions may be used for measuring attitudes.

Vanden Branden observes that attitude is internal, whereas opinion is the external manifestation of attitude and offers his own definitions:

Attitudes are predispositions to act in a given direction in response to a certain object or value. They include a cognitive component, an emotional component, and an action component.

Opinion is the verbal expression of attitude.

For the purpose of this study the following definitions are made:

1. Educational Practices Opinion: The response of a survey subject to the educational practices or criticisms stated in the survey instrument.

2. Survey instrument: The device used to measure
opinion toward selected educational practices or criticisms of the public schools.

3. Educational practices: Procedures and/or instructional systems employed to instruct or to control pupils in the public schools. Instructional systems include people, processes and things.

4. Criticism: A dissatisfaction with some particular aspect of the public school system as expressed in current publications or speeches.

Delimitations

The scope of this study will be confined to field testing the system developed for ascertaining public opinion toward selected educational practices in a selected Iowa public school district. The practices to be included in the study are limited to selected items found in a search of current critical literature, speeches and national polls. Survey subjects will be limited to parents of public school pupils in the selected school district. The social and economic characteristics of sample surveyed will be limited to age, sex, amount of formal education, income level, occupation and religion.
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The need for a study to develop an instrument to determine public attitudes toward certain teaching methods as a part of needs assessment was stated in the preceding chapter. Chapter two cites literature and research pertinent to the problem and will be divided into two general categories: (1) assessment of attitudes, opinions and needs and (2) criticisms of public education.

Assessment of Attitudes, Opinions and Needs

Attitudinal surveys have been employed in several recent studies. Huntington (46) surveyed student attitudes and achievement levels in six Iowa high schools, three of which were regarded as innovative and three as conventional. The High School Characteristics Index was used to assess attitudes while scores on the Iowa Test of Educational Development and student grade point averages were used to measure achievement. He concluded that the attitudes of students in innovative schools were no more positive than were those of students in conventional schools. Student achievement was found to be higher in the conventional schools.

A study of attitudes toward the "New Design" of flexible modular scheduling conducted by Mahaffey (57) showed principals to have more positive attitudes than teachers and teachers more positive attitudes than students, although all had
positive attitudes. Students of lower ability seemed more secure in Large Group and Small Group modes, while average and above average students found Independent Study to be most enjoyable. Students of all abilities liked Open Labs.

The variables of sex, age and experience were found by Patzwald (70) to make a difference in teachers' values. Males were more concerned about better administrative procedures and proper dress, while females were more concerned with student motivation. Younger and less experienced teachers expressed more concern about failures, faculty unity, better counseling, better vocational offerings and better faculty and departmental meetings whereas older and more experienced teachers were more concerned about uniform discipline and favored more stringent rules, although better counselors and better faculty meetings were the only statistically significant differences.

Bogard (8) found that teachers spend their unscheduled time differently in a flexible modular scheduled school than in a conventional one. Teacher use of unscheduled time in a flexible modular school was more apt to be activity-centered, while in a conventional school it was more apt to be location centered. More unscheduled time was spent in flexible scheduled schools in working with students on independent study projects and in class preparation. Bogard concluded that teachers use their unscheduled time more productively in flexible scheduled schools than in conventional ones.
Vanden Branden (88) surveyed religious attitudes of pre-service teacher candidates in three Iowa teacher-training institutions. Significant differences were found in attitudes between the students of the three institutions, between those people of different religions and between members of different Protestant sects. No differences were found between the attitudes of men and women and no differences were found between those enrolled in different academic areas of concentration.

A number of public opinion polls have been conducted to attempt to ascertain attitudes toward schools and school related issues. Gallup (22), Harris (32), Harrison (33), Hooper (43), Hoyle and Wiley (44), Marshall (59) and Nagel (62) all hold that the schools could be remarkably more effective if they knew the will of the people they serve, the taxpayers and students. Gallup, Harrison and Nagel also stress that two-way communication is necessary since the public cannot be expected to render valid judgments about issues unless it is well-informed.

The size of the sample being surveyed is of less importance than the representativeness of the persons chosen, according to both Gallup (23) and Payne (71). No more than 2,500 persons were surveyed in each of the five national polls conducted in the past four years to determine attitudes toward public schools (22), (24), (26), (27), (32). Only 417 persons were surveyed in the Metro Poll of the Des Moines, Iowa
area (34).

In 1969 the Louis Harris organization polled 2,500 students, parents, teachers and principals in 100 schools representing all population-size groups on the questions of: (1) student involvement in policy-making, (2) topics for class discussion, (3) what adults like about students, (4) what students like about adults, (5) what adults think schools should be doing, (6) what adults think about discipline, (7) what adults and students think about teachers, curriculum and grading, and (8) attitudes toward racial integration of schools (32).

On most issues students and teachers tended to have opinions similar to each another and, on the whole, the more highly educated parents tended to agree with them. The main exception to this was the matter of deciding school policy and curriculum where 66 per cent of the students felt they should be more involved as contrasted to 40 per cent of the teachers and 24 per cent of the parents. The traits adults liked best about students were that they are "smart", well-educated, ambitious and deeply concerned about social problems. The characteristics they liked least were lack of respect for authority, lack of discipline and lack of motivation.

All groups agreed that the major function of high school is to "prepare children for greater education," i.e. college, with 64 per cent of the parents, 65 per cent of the students and 69 per cent of the teachers indicating this. The major
role of the high school should be to "teach the skills to live in a fast-changing society' according to 46 per cent of the students and 54 per cent of the teachers. Only 36 per cent of the parents agreed, with 46 per cent still regarding preparation for college as the main role with which the high school should be concerned.

Maintaining discipline was regarded by 62 per cent of the parents to be more important than encouraging intellectual curiosity, while only 27 per cent of the teachers felt this way. More homework requiring memorization was desired by 70 per cent of the parents, but only 46 per cent of the teachers. Schools should "crack down" on unruly students according to 63 per cent of the parents and 50 per cent of the teachers, while only 41 per cent of the principals and 37 per cent of the students agreed. More understanding was preferred by 56 per cent of the students and 54 per cent of the principals rather than stricter discipline. Teachers and principals were considered to be doing a good job according to 78 per cent of the parents, 81 per cent of the students and 87 per cent of the teachers. Teachers were not asked to rate principals, but 73 per cent of the students and 79 per cent of the parents rated principals good to excellent.

School facilities, grading systems, specific courses and scheduling were all rated high by all groups. School racial integration received a vote of confidence from students and teachers with 56 per cent of the students and 60 per cent
of the teachers favoring more such integration. Parents were less sure, with only 32 per cent favoring more integration, 31 per cent opposed and 37 per cent unsure.

In 1969, 1970, 1971 and 1972 national polls of public opinion toward public schools were conducted by Gallup International under the sponsorship of C. F. Kettering, Ltd. (22), (24), (26), (27). Since the exact questions asked and the precise percentage answers received varied slightly from year to year, only general findings will be reported here.

The top five problems facing the public schools were thought by the public in each year to be:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1969</th>
<th>1970</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>discipline</td>
<td>discipline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>facilities</td>
<td>integration/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>teachers</td>
<td>segregation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>finances</td>
<td>finances</td>
</tr>
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<td>teachers</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1971</th>
<th>1972</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>finances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>segregation</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>discipline</td>
<td>segregation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>facilities</td>
<td>teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dope/drugs</td>
<td>large school/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>large classes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Complaints about discipline were a major concern, with the strongest criticism coming from people with no children in school. Students felt that discipline was "about right" in
the schools. The top five things considered by the public to be "right" about the schools were teachers, curriculum, facilities, up-to-date teaching methods and extra-curricular activities.

Teachers were believed to be doing a good job and there was wide agreement that when a child does poorly in school the "chief blame" rests with his home life.

In general adults approved: (1) the use of national tests to assess school progress, (2) sex education in the public schools, (3) paying teachers according to the quality of their work, (4) the concept of non-graded school, (5) compulsory attendance, (6) more use of community resources outside of school and (7) the job being done by the local school board. Adults were about evenly divided on the idea of a voucher system, with parochial school parents tending to like the idea and public school parents being slightly opposed.

Opposition was expressed toward: (1) tenure for teachers, (2) more student involvement in curriculum, policies, rules and teacher selection, and (3) increased taxes.

If the schools voiced a need for more money the majority indicated they would vote against a tax increase, although younger and better-educated people would be more likely to vote in favor of such an increase than would older or less-educated people. Although opposed to further tax increases, most people also opposed the following measure to lower costs: (1) reducing services such as speech, hearing or reading therapy, (2) re-
ducing the number of teachers thereby increasing class size, (3) cutting all teachers' salaries a set percentage, (4) re-
ducing janitorial and maintenance services, (5) elimination of
kindergarten, (6) elimination of extra-curricular activities, (7) keeping present textbooks longer, (8) eliminating twelfth
grade, (9) reducing the amount of teaching supplies and
materials, (10) reducing the number of subjects offered,
(11) charging rent for textbooks, (12) eliminating school
transportation, (13) reducing the number of counselors, and
(14) year-round school. The only measures favored as cost
reductions were: (1) canceling any subject not having a
minimum number of students enrolled and (2) reducing the number
of administrative personnel.

Similar attitudes toward finances were expressed in the
Iowa Metro Poll (34). Des Moines, Iowa area residents favored
spending more tax money to: (1) replace old buildings, (2)
build new schools in growing neighborhoods, (3) buy more
equipment and (4) hire more teachers. They were opposed to
spending more to increase salaries of either administrators or
teachers.

General approval was expressed for: (1) the open enrol-
ment policy of the Des Moines schools which allows a student
to attend the school of his choice, (2) the open-space
concept of school building design, (3) allotting more money
for schools in low-income neighborhoods. They were about
evenly divided on the question of whether or not teachers
spend enough time on discipline problems, although parents of school-age children were more apt to think that they did than was the general public. The same results were obtained on the question of whether teachers spend enough time on academic problems.

On almost all questions parents of school-age children were more inclined to support the schools than was the general public. The two exceptions to this were the questions of whether more money should be spent to increase administrators' salaries and whether more should be spent to increase teachers' salaries. All groups overwhelmingly said "no" to both questions.

National or state polls were seen as providing general information rather than the specific information needed by local schools by Hoyle and Wiley (44) and by Nagel (62). Both assert the need to poll the local public on important local issues. Nagel warns that many educators have run into trouble because they thought they had measured the public's pulse when, in fact, they had only touched on one part of it, the opinion aspect. To be effective a poll must include three types of questions: (1) opinion (such as "how well do you think the schools are doing the job of _____?")

The feasibility of adapting the Gallup/Kettering poll for
use in the public schools was studied by Gish (28). The questions from the 1969 poll were used to survey opinion in Richmond, Virginia and local findings were compared with national results. He concluded that the Gallup/Kettering poll questions could be used effectively at the local level for a reasonable cost. In addition to the questions covered in the 1969 poll, people were asked what kinds of information they would like to have about the schools and their answers fell in the categories of: (1) schools in general, (2) curriculum, (3) school problems and proposed solutions, (4) integration in the public schools, (5) school rules and regulations, (6) how children are taught, (7) information about the different special schools, like the new technical school, (8) pupil-teacher relationship, (9) how to enroll 5-year olds, (10) how parents can help children, (11) costs of schools, (12) qualifications of teachers and (13) new programs, like the new math.

Although thoroughly convinced of the need to assess the public's attitudes on any given issue, Gallup (25) warns of a very real danger in this area:

Many people reserve for themselves the right to say one thing and think another. Caught off guard, an individual may disclose his innermost attitude, but the direct frontal attack which many psychological enquiries make provokes him to give merely a conventional answer. For this reason the task of investigating attitudes is difficult and hazardous.

In constructing an attitude scale, the initial step is to collect statements from a variety of sources which are truly
representative of the areas to be surveyed. These sources may be books, newspapers, periodicals, speeches and others. It is also possible for the researcher to prepare questions personally. Edwards (19) presents the following criteria for use in editing such statements:

1. Avoid statements that refer to the past rather than to the present.
2. Avoid statements that are factual or capable of being interpreted as factual.
3. Avoid statements that may be interpreted in more than one way.
4. Avoid statements that are irrelevant to the psychological object under consideration.
5. Avoid statements that are likely to be endorsed by almost everyone or by almost no one.
6. Select statements that are believed to cover the entire range of the effective scale of interest.
7. Keep the language of the statements simple, clear and direct.
8. Statements should be short, rarely exceeding 20 words.
9. Each statement should contain only one complete thought.
10. Statements containing universals such as all, always, none and never often introduce ambiguity and should be avoided.
11. Words such as only, just, merely, and others of a similar nature should be used with care in writing statements.
12. Whenever possible, statements should be in the form of simple sentences rather than in the form of compound or complex sentences.
13. Avoid the use of words that may not be understood by those who are to be given the completed scale.
14. Avoid the use of double negatives.

Gallup (23) holds that a question's position in a list has no influence on the answer it receives. Payne (71) disagrees with this assumption and feels that the answer to a question can be influenced by the questions preceding it.

The two techniques most often used in the construction of an attitude survey are those of Thurstone and Likert. Edwards
and Kenney (18) conducted a comprehensive comparison of the two and found a high correlation between the results of the two methods. They concluded that the two would yield substantially the same results, but that the Likert method was less time consuming and less laborious than the Thurstone.

The Likert "method of summated ratings" (18) assumes that each statement in the survey covers the entire attitude continuum and that an individual's choice of degree acceptance or rejection determines his position on the continuum. The individual is typically asked to select one of five possible responses to each item, ranging from "strongly agree" through "neutral" to "strongly disagree." Responses are assigned numerical values of 1 through 5 and the scores for each item are correlated with the total score. Those with low correlations are eliminated.

Robinson (78) lists the following steps for constructing a Likert "scale".

1. Numerous statements are collected.
2. These statements are edited and revised to eliminate irrelevant or ambiguous items, rational judgment being the criterion.
3. A trial scale of statements is administered to a sample group.
4. A graphic item count of the number of subjects responding to the respective options to each statement is made for high and low score groups.
5. Scoring weights for the alternate responses to each statement are determined by sigma-deviate weighting, standard-score weighting or arbitrary unit weights.
6. The total trial score is scored.
7. Item internal consistency calculations are made, i.e., item responses are correlated with total test score.
8. The non-reliable or inconsistent items are dropped from the scale, the criterion being item correlation with total score.
9. The final form of the scale is rescored.
10. Norms are prepared.

The Thurstone method is primarily aimed at securing equal units on a scale of measurement (18). The selected statements are anchored to specific points on the attitude continuum while the attitudinal distance between statements is theoretically equal. A respondent checks only those statements with which he concurs. To prevent regression on the mean, pulling both extremes to a mean value by averaging their values when a wide range of statements is endorsed, the respondent usually is limited to marking only five items. This listing of response spread serves to concentrate his marks near his average position. The Thurstone procedure is as follows:

1. A large number of statements are collected.
2. Judges rate these statements as to scale values, usually along an eleven point scale of equal intervals.
3. Scale values are determined by an averaging of all judges' ratings.
4. The more ambiguous statements are eliminated, the criterion being the discrepancy in assigned scale positions.
5. Irrelevant statements are eliminated, the criterion being the degree of statement consistency with other statements in trial administration.
6. Selection is made of a final list of attitude statements, usually two at each scale position, for a total of 22 items.
7. The scale is administered to the group and normative tables prepared, an individual's score or position on the attitude continuum being the median of the scale values he endorses.
8. The scale reliability and validity are determined.
Criticisms of Public Education

The public schools have long been favorite targets for criticism. This may be desirable when the criticism is sincere since it helps to focus attention on areas which need scrutiny. Unfortunately, some critics are not so sincere and are primarily interested in having their criticisms published for their own financial gain or to further some partisan goal or program (56), (78). Many, however, are the result of a sincere and honest concern for and interest in the welfare of the public school students.

Lucas feels that American educators are much too slow to act upon such criticism and notes an unfortunate time lag between the expression of criticism and any action on the part of the local schools to answer.

Even the most casual observer of the passing American educational scene cannot help noting a recurrent time lag between the advent of a wave of criticism leveled against the schools and educators' response to that criticism. . . . If anything, today's schoolmen are still busy answering their critics of ten years ago (56).

Robinson reviewed criticisms of the public schools as part of his study in 1966 and found that "the criticisms have come from many sources and have been directed against every aspect of public education" (78). He categorized the major criticisms into twelve areas: (1) policy making, (2) teaching methods, (3) philosophy, (4) curriculum, (5) discipline, (6) teacher training, (7) textbooks, (8) religion, (9) costs,
programs for exceptional children, teacher loyalty and the extension of the school program. It will not be the purpose of this section to replicate Robinson's review of school criticisms nor to attempt to cover the entire spectrum of criticisms of the public schools but rather to review current criticisms which have a bearing on how and what children are taught in the public schools.

The advent of the Russian Sputnik in 1957 led to a wave of criticism of the public school curriculum of the 50's and a demand for a "return to excellence" meaning a discipline centered curriculum. Many new curriculum designs were developed and the amount of criticism temporarily subsided. Robinson observed: "The introduction and expansion of new ideas and programs in the past five years appear to have blunted the dissatisfaction with the nation's public schools" (78). The fact that the United States was successful in reaching the moon before the Russians may also have been a factor in blunting the dissatisfaction. In recent years, however, the number and the intensity of criticisms has again increased.

Knezevich (49) postulates a "law of attack on social institutions," proclaiming a positive correlation between a nation's social or physical duress such as depression, 'cold' wars, and shooting wars and the degree of attack upon its social institutions.
Throughout history in almost every country at any period of time, the social institutions responsible for education of children and youth have been prime targets during periods of social upheaval. This viewpoint has predictive value, because one can almost predict that schools will be criticized when difficult times are being experienced. The waxing and waning of criticism of public education will follow a cycle indicating periods of unrest.

The current increase in the amount of criticism of the public schools coincides with such social problems as:
(1) civil rights, including such problems as race and/or sex discrimination and individual rights to modes of hair or dress, (2) ecological concerns, (3) inflation, (4) the Vietnam War, including dissatisfaction with conscription laws, (5) increased crime rate and (6) sexual permissiveness.

Hoyt et al. (45) comment that "many of American education's problems are the consequence of success, and its strengths outweigh its weaknesses." He sees much of the dissatisfaction with education as reflecting an attitude of over-expectation -- the false belief that education was the panacea for all of America's problems. Silberman agrees that the level of achievement of today's public school pupils is the highest it has ever been, as measured by standardized tests, but finds the schools to be oppressive and irrelevant to today's world (85).

There are critics falling into the category Hooper (43) calls the "status quo coalition," who believe in traditionally oriented schools. Some prefer a return to very conservative schools. A group of "disgusted parents" at St. Charles,
Missouri started their own school in the fall in 1972 because of "socialistic and anti-religious" teachings in the public schools (15). Particularly objectionable, in their view, were discussions of such controversial issues as abortion, marijuana, intermarriage of races, women's equality, unionism and treatment of the American Indian. Recently conflict has developed between advocates of the opposing theories of creation and evolution regarding what shall be taught in the public schools concerning the way the earth was formed and how life developed on it (60). Centered mainly in California, a movement has spread to several other states to demand either that the religious explanation of creation be given "equal time" to evolutionary explanations or that evolution be labeled as a theory, or both.

However, the great bulk of current criticism of public education seems to be concentrated in three general areas: (1) relevancy/irrelevancy of the school curriculum, (2) humanizing/de-humanizing characteristics of the public schools and (3) accountability.

Relevancy/irrelevancy of the school curriculum

The historic aims of education are seen by Wees (89) to be: (1) to acquire a body of knowledge, (2) to develop good character, (3) training for good citizenship, (4) creating a national resource for the development of manpower and (5) intellectual development (added in the 1960's). He
contends that number five unfortunately turned out only to be number one under another name and sees the major flaw in the aims as being, "whatever knowledge children gain they create themselves; whatever character they develop they create themselves." Ryan and Cooper (82), Reimer (76), Gross (31), Fisher and Smith (21), Decker (12), and Baldwin (6) all agree that one of the main aims of education is to perpetuate the existing society. This is seen by Baldwin as being in conflict with the stated aim of intellectual development. "This creates a paradox since the aim of education is to create in a person the ability to make his own decisions and decide for himself whether or not things are as they should be, and societies really want citizens who will simply obey the rules of society." Decker (12), Fisher and Smith (21) and Ryan and Cooper (82) also recognize this conflict between the educational aims. Fisher and Smith call schools conformist institutions and advance the theory that the successful students may actually be a minority group. "Rather than being the example of success we admonish others to emulate, they may actually be a brainwashed group of teacher-pleasers."

The historic aim of creating a national resource for the development of manpower was badly needed during the period of time when America was developing as an industrial society largely because of the number of immigrants who needed to be taught to read and write English so that they could function more efficiently as workers (45), (85). This is no longer
seen as a necessary factor in what Hoyt, Evans, Mackin and Magnum (45) call a "post-industrial society" in which white collar workers outnumber blue-collar ones.

Glasser (30), Helling (36), Hoyt, Evans, Mackin and Magnum (45), Rogers (80), Ryan and Cooper (82) and Williams (90) all accuse the public schools of being oriented toward preparing the student to meet college entrance requirements and of emphasizing knowledge of facts and acquisition of skills unrelated to daily living. They claim that this makes the present school curriculum irrelevant to the needs of today's students.

At the heart of the problem is a false societal attitude that worships a college degree as the best and surest route to occupational success. This attitude is as dangerous as it is false. When less than 17 per cent of the population can attain what close to 100 per cent of the population has been led to believe is desirable, it is inevitable that the majority must be dissatisfied with their lot (45).

Ryan and Cooper (82) report that out of every 10 pupils who entered 5th grade in the 1959-60 school year: 9.7 entered 9th grade in 1963-64; 8.5 entered 11th grade in 1965-66; 7.2 graduated from 12th grade in 1966; 4.0 entered college in 1967; 2.0 graduated from college in 1971.

An educational approach based on preparation for college is apt to be strongly oriented toward: (1) much use of drill to develop skills (41), (2) rote memory of an "essential body of knowledge" (41), (31), (85), (89), (90), (3) emphasizes "right" answers to questions (30), (42), (72), (85),
(4) having as a central philosophy the perpetuation of the "establishment" and maintenance of the status quo (12), (21), (31), (76), (82), and (5) basically ignoring those not preparing for college entry (36), (45), (54), (81), (86), (91).

Holt (41) contends that drill must be accompanied by understanding or it is meaningless, but that most school drill is "mumbo-jumbo" without stressing any understanding on the part of the student. He further states that skills, to be meaningful, must be related to real life and that the teacher has an obligation to make such a relationship clear to the student, "... though this will be difficult when in fact these skills, like many of the 'essential' skills in arithmetic are not used to do anything. Who, in real life, divides one fraction by another?"

Glasser (30) agrees that skills must be meaningful as does Niell (66) who uses as an example the fact that, apart from his job as a teacher, he has never had to do a square root nor diagram a sentence in his life. He expresses the doubt that many of the world's finest authors would be able to tell the difference between "a noun clause and an adverbial clause of time."

The idea of an "essential body of knowledge" is attacked by Gross (31) and by Holt (41) as being outdated since there are now too many facts and too many disciplines to arbitrarily decide that certain ones are most important. Rote memory as an educational technique is questioned by Glasser (30)
who contends that it uses a "lesser function of the brain, memory, while neglecting its major function, thinking." Rote learning also promotes the idea that there is one "right" answer to every question, an idea labeled by Glasser as the Certainty Principle. Holt (42) and Silberman (85) contend that the search for a "right" answer and giving the teacher that answer becomes a game which extends from kindergarten all the way through college and even into graduate level studies. Silberman laments the fact that the technique of seeking "right" answers is often employed by many "innovative" programs which are supposed to be individualized, such as programmed instruction, computer-assisted instruction and Individually Prescribed Instruction (IPI). He makes the following criticism of IPI, which he then also applies to both programmed instruction and computer-assisted instruction:

What is crucial to the system called Individually Prescribed Instruction is not the adjective 'individually' but the verb 'prescribed;' and what the individual does must be prescribed in terms so narrow as to leave no room whatsoever for the exercise of individuality. The system simply cannot accommodate a student who wants to strike out on his own. . . . The result -- the ultimate irony -- is that IPI forces students into a passive, almost docile, role under the name of individualization. Because the material is presented in programmed instruction form, the student not only cannot specify his own goals, he cannot reach them in his own way; he is limited to the program with its preordained answers. . . . The rigidity of the structure, moreover, implies that there is only one right answer and only one route to it; but what the students (and teachers) may need to learn most is that some questions have more than one answer -- and that others may have no answer at all.
Postman and Weingartner (73) see the adherence to a single right answer as being a strong argument against the use of textbooks, which they contend stress that "question-asking is not very important; that answer-giving and, in particular, memorizing, are the preeminent intellectual skills." Ashton-Warner (3) and Niell (66) also question the strong reliance on textbooks, feeling that a textbook approach leaves little room for considering a student's individual needs and too arbitrarily fosters the "essential body of knowledge" and "right answer" concepts.

Glasser (30) and Holt (41) point out that a child learns much of real significance to him before ever entering school because his problems were relevant to his life. They hold that students learn best when the things to be learned come from personal experiences and interests or when they can be shown that the things to be learned do have some meaning for their lives.

I do not say that everything in school needs to be immediately and instantly related to the student and his world outside of school, but I do say that nothing should be taught in school that is not in some way relevant to the life of the student. **But this relevance must be taught.** Neither asking the child to think about irrelevant subjects nor asking him to memorize relevant facts will work; we must educate him to think about relevant subjects (30).

Ryan and Cooper (82) agree and list six guidelines for the development of a meaningful and relevant curriculum:

1. A curriculum should not be pre-packaged, rigidly scheduled or uniform throughout a school system.
Instead, it should be flexible and geared to the unique needs of the student.

2. A curriculum should start from an "experience" base rather than from a "symbol" base.

3. A curriculum should be immediate-oriented rather than past-oriented.

4. A curriculum should emphasize why rather than what.

5. A curriculum must be based on reality rather than fantasy or sterility.

6. A curriculum must give equal emphasis to affective and cognitive content.

Much student concern at the high school level has been directed toward what the students consider to be the irrelevancy of the curriculum. The American Institute for Research surveyed attitudes of eleventh graders in 1960 and again in 1970 and reported that 55 per cent indicated a lack of interest in their studies in 1970 as compared to 40 per cent in 1960. In 1970 28 per cent of them said they felt their courses would be of little value to them after graduation, as compared to 23 per cent in 1960 (64). Student Mark Klieman of Cubberly High School in Palo Alto, California was quoted by Williams as feeling that the curriculum was outmoded, based on fact memorization and ignored the real world of the present (90).

Observations that the curriculum lacks relevancy and suggestions that students should be more directly involved in planning the curriculum have been answered by those supporting the status quo on the basis that the taxpayers and parents have a right to set the rules and determine the curriculum, (75), (77), (90). Williams (90) reported one parent group as observing that "the whole premise of education is that any
older generation, having not only professional training, but the therapy of experience, has something of value to pass on to youth."

Silberman (85) noted that several attempts to revise curriculum content have been conducted in specialized areas and have resulted in such programs as Physical Science Study Committee (PSSC) physics, Biological Sciences Curriculum Study (BSCS) biology and others. These new curricula are designed to develop understanding of concepts, with less reliance on memorization. He reported Thompson as noting in 1964-65 that the use of the new curricula were not widespread and that only "modern math" seemed to have made any real inroads. He concluded that one major problem with this approach to curriculum reform was that it tended to attack curricular problems piecemeal as if all that were needed were new courses or new material when what really was needed was almost complete change.

A National School Public Relations Association publication in 1972 reported a "new survey" as showing that traditional high school courses and scheduling are giving way to specialized courses and scheduling which reflect increased interest in social problems and environmental protection (63).

Career education advocates contend that one facet of public education's irrelevancy is its lack of adequate emphasis upon preparation for the world of work (36), (45),
Career education is usually defined in terms of what its goals are rather than through any clear-cut definition. Swanson (86) reports that "Career education is almost impossible to define and its implementation is subject to many interpretations and numerous compromises."

He lists the essential features of career education as being:

1. Career education is for all students.
2. Career education is included as an instructional objective at all grade levels.
3. Career education is intended to provide job-entry skills for all students prior to or upon completion of compulsory school attendance.
4. One hundred per cent placement is both a feature and a goal of career education.

Career education, unlike vocational education, is intended to extend from kindergarten throughout the life of the individual (36), (45), (54), (81), (91). This concept recognizes a need to re-train workers several times during their lifetimes. Vocational education was often considered to be basically for the benefit of slower students and never succeeded in reaching over 25 per cent of the student body, whereas the emphasis in career education is for all students to be included (45). Feldman is quoted by Helling (36) as asserting:

We can no longer tolerate an educational system (1) that ignores the world of work, (2) where occupational studies are considered inferior to general studies, and (3) where youngsters in vocational tracks do not receive the training necessary for entry into college and those in college preparatory tracks are denied a vocational experience which relates their living to reality.
Laramore (54) states that the career education concept should be integrated into all curriculum areas rather than being regarded as a separate curriculum. Wolansky (91) agrees and contends that students must be provided with occupational information and experiences at all levels of their education.

Herndon (37), (38), Kohl (50, (51), Kozol (52), (53), Silberman (85), Schwartz (83), Jencks (47) and Dennison (13) all find that the curriculum in most public schools is oriented toward a white, middle-class society and is quite irrelevant to black residents of ghetto areas, and that the black students fall farther behind in academic achievement year after year. Many compensatory programs have been designed to raise the educational level of such "disadvantaged" students. Most of these programs were based on the belief that the "disadvantaged" students did not have as many or as varied home resources as "advantaged" students, and tried to elevate them through such programs as racial integration, remedial reading, remedial mathematics or Head Start. Many of these were federally funded and sponsored (83). The Coleman Report, as quoted by Silberman (85) and Jencks (48), concluded that neither compensatory programs nor integration did much to close the "black-white achievement gap." The child's home life was seen to be the most important factor in his academic achievement rate. Jencks concluded that altering the way in which parents deal with their children at home is the "most
promising" way of raising their achievement levels, while the "least promising" is to increase expenditures for compensatory programs since there is "little evidence" that this has an "appreciable effect on achievement scores."

The best approach to developing a relevant curriculum in ghetto schools is to first develop a warmer and more humane atmosphere and a freer environment, according to Herndon (38), Kohl (51), Kozol (53) and Silberman (85). Positive reinforcement and encouragement prevail in the schools that are succeeding with lower-class children in ghetto areas, according to Silberman, who observes that the "defects and failures of slum schools are but an exaggerated version of what's wrong with all schools."

Humanizing/De-humanizing characteristics of the Public Schools

Another major criticism of the public schools is that they are so organized and so operated as to be de-humanizing to the students enrolled. The main areas of concern or practices considered to be de-humanizing are: (1) authoritative operation with oppressive and petty rules, (2) ability grouping or tracking, (3) age or grade grouping, (4) student marks (A, B, C, D, F) (5) pre-determined curriculum, (6) standardized tests, (7) excessive homework and (8) compulsory attendance.

American public schools were found by Silberman (85) to be "grim, joyless places with oppressive and petty rules"
regulating such things as talking, hall passes, use of libraries, lavatory passes and walking in lines. He concluded that such rules exist for administrative convenience and because schools operate on the basis of distrust.

Postman and Weingartner (73) reprint a document entitled "Wanted: a Humane Education" produced by the Montgomery County Student Alliance of Montgomery County, Maryland. The main conclusions of this document are that the operation of the public school is based on fear, that it compels students to be dishonest, that it destroys the "natural" joy of learning and that it promotes obedience to authority.

Glasser (30), Herndon (37), Kohl (50), Postman and Weingartner (73), Rogers (80) and Silberman (85) all accuse the schools of being too authoritarian and obsessed with silence and order. Teacher competence is too often judged on the basis of how quiet and orderly the students are rather than by how much they have learned. Glasser contends that such silence and order are detrimental to a good educational environment:

Laughing, shouting, loud unison responses, even crying, are a part of any good learning experience and should be heard from every class. A totally quiet, orderly class is rarely learning; quiet and order have no place in education as all-encompassing virtues. To the degree that I have seen them practiced, they do more harm than good as they increase the gap between the school and the world (30).

Holt (42) observes that the students need the most practice in talking, but that the teachers get the most; in most classes the students talk only to the teacher and then
only when called upon. He points out that the result of this may be that a child will talk little better after a few years in school than he did when he started. This can effect every subject in the curriculum since the child who does not talk skillfully will not know how to express himself or interpret well the expressions of others. He contends that such "discussions" as do take place are usually "answer-pulling" in which the teacher asks pointed questions designed to get the student to respond with the "right" answer.

Ryan and Cooper (82) report that the Flanders Interaction Analysis studies indicate that there is an inverse relationship between the amount of teacher talk and student learning, and that teachers of classes rated to be "superior" tend to be less directive in their talk. These studies indicated that teachers of "superior" classes tend to talk 50 to 60 per cent of the time with 40 to 50 per cent of their talk being directive. Teachers of below average classes tend to talk over 75 per cent of the time with over 75 per cent of their talk being directive.

Rafferty (75) disagrees with these views of order and contends that children should learn to think and act in an "orderly, disciplined manner" to prepare them to face the "realities of a hard life."

Some other "petty rules, such as regulation of hair and dress styles, are seen as moot questions by Harrison (33) because "recent court decisions have altered the school's
role in this area." He feels that school officials should do more to inform the general public of this state of affairs.

Glasser (30), Herndon (37), (38), Holt (41), (42) and Postman and Weingartner (74) view the practice of ability grouping or tracking as a demeaning process which accomplishes little, if any, good. Glasser points out that some natural grouping will occur in secondary school as the better students select more difficult classes, but that this type of grouping is not necessarily bad since it occurs by choice rather than by assignment. Students placed in the lower groups are often made to feel stupid and worthless. They are made to feel that they are failures, and failure builds upon itself (41).

Postman and Weingartner (74) and Holt (42) state that students will do as well as they are expected to do according to how they are "labeled" and that teachers will teach to get the results expected of "labeled" groups. The Rosenthal study is cited by Postman and Weingartner as indicating that children do as expected. In this study elementary teachers were informed that certain children were either "fast" or "average" with the labels being randomly assigned. For ethical reasons no children were labeled "dull". Results of teacher evaluation of student achievement indicated that the students did as they were labeled.

Holt (41) contends that once children have been labeled as failures many teachers really do not try to make them succeed:
For, after all, if teachers have been saying for years that these children can't learn and don't want to learn and then someone comes along and shows that they both can and want to, it threatens the other teachers' alibi. It is easier and safer to go on teaching the children in ways that you know won't work, because they have never worked, and then go on blaming the children.

Rickover disagrees and contends that the tracking system is to be desired (77). He sees it as a means of assuring that students with greater abilities will not be held back by slower students who might impede their progress.

The practice of grouping students according to a particular age into grade levels is questioned by Silberman (85) and by Ryan and Cooper (82). The graded school first came into existence in America in 1848 at the Quincy Grammar School in Boston, Massachusetts and was patterned after graded schools in Germany which, in turn, were patterned after the military. This concept is now under fire as being too rigid and unable to provide for individual differences. Classes are taught toward a mythical average student with the result that they are stifling to the faster students and frustrating to the slower (89). Ryan and Cooper recommend the non-graded school as being more responsive to individual students' needs. In the non-graded school each student can progress in different subjects at his own level of achievement rather than because of his chronological age.

Decker (12), Divoky (16), Glasser (30) and Kohl (51) find the process of assigning student marks (A, B, C, D, F) to be
arbitrary and a poor educational practice:

This system seeks to measure in terms of grades those qualities which cannot be measured in these terms. By limiting educational material to what can be measured in grades, they eliminate from the classroom such goals as the development of ability to know oneself, to enter into serious, mindbending conversations, to think independently, to relate knowledge to obligation and so on -- all of which are necessary for responsible decision making. On the other hand, by pretending to measure the immeasurable (many teachers, for example, try to rate the value of student effort when they make out grades) teachers, through grades, can falsely reduce all experience to a search for facts (16).

Glasser (30) relates student marks to what he terms the "measurement principle" which is that nothing is really worthwhile unless it can be measured and assigned a numerical value. This ignores such areas as the arts, feelings, emotions and creativity. Marks are supposed to stimulate the child to work harder and to learn more, and Glasser states that this works with some students, but that studies indicate that marks are not a good indicator of high performance in later years except in terms of succeeding in college. He lists these objections to grades:

1. they identify "failures" which build upon themselves.
2. they are limiting and damning for life.
3. they encourage cheating.
4. they encourage students to study and learn only what is necessary to get a good grade.
5. they are disliked by teachers.

Glasser recommends that the only type of marking to be used should be "pass, fail and superior." He further states that all students should be passed in elementary school and that in secondary school only passing marks should be
recorded on a student's transcript. There should be no record on the official transcript of courses not passed.

A pre-determined curriculum with certain standards to be met by each child is seen as failing to meet the needs of the individual student by Ashton-Warner (3), Dennison (13), Glasser (30), Gross (31), Perrone (72), Postman and Weingartner (74), Rogers (80), Silberman (85) and Wees (89). All of these writers feel that for learning to have any real significance for the student it must be based upon his own experience and come at a time when he is ready for it. Perrone states that, "Children should be encouraged to ask their own questions rather than waiting to find out what questions they ought to ask." He proceeds to observe that teachers need to be free to respond to a child's individual interests, to be free from standardized subject matter, to be free to participate actively in the making of a learning community. "As a corollary to this kind of independence there must be a move away from the growing pressure of achievement and intelligence tests."

Rogers (80) agrees that a "prescribed curriculum, similar assignments for all children, lecturing, standardized tests and instructor-chosen grades" are stifling to the "elements of significant learning," which he lists as:

1. It has a quality of personal involvement.
2. It is self-directed.
3. It is pervasive.
4. It is evaluated by the learner.
5. Its essence is meaning.
Ashton-Warner (3) deplores the use of pre-written reading materials for beginners, preferring to use what she terms "organic" reading and "key" vocabulary -- that which the child uses naturally and in which he has an interest. Dennison (13) comments that, "The causes of learning are within the child rather than the result of teaching or the internal relationships of curriculum." Gross (31) urges that students be permitted to help shape their own learning experiences since it is "now generally agreed that students do learn more and better" when permitted to do so. A child has no stronger desire than to make sense of the world, to move freely in it and to learn according to Holt (42) who comments that, "There must be something very wrong with much of what we do in school, if we feel the need to worry so much about what people call 'motivation'." Silberman (85) calls the "adherence to a timetable" one of the most stringent controls on the curriculum, since activities must often begin before interest is aroused and end before it wanes or before the task at hand is completed.

Holt (41) favors eliminating tests. He argues that children are too often prepared specifically for the tests and that the tests do not do what they were meant to do:

Two arguments are put forward in favor of tests. One is that the threat of a test makes children work harder and therefore better. The other is that the test tells the teacher how much the children have actually learned. Both arguments are false. To the extent that children really feel threatened by tests, they work worse, not better. And tests do not show what children have learned. Not only do they fail
to show how much able children do know, but they fail to show what one might have expected them to do -- expose the child who knows nothing at all.

Glasser (30) relates testing to his previously stated "measurement principle" and notes that tests can be passed by memorizing facts and regurgitating them with little or no understanding. Closed book examinations are condemned by him as being based on the "fallacy that knowledge remembered is better than knowledge looked up."

Rafferty (75) and Rickover (77) disagree with the aforementioned statements concerning curriculum and testing. Rafferty asserts that schooling is not a natural process, that children must be closely guided and directed by their teachers and that the child cannot be expected to have valid judgments regarding what should or should not be included in his learning experiences. Rickover favors the establishment of national standards to be met by all students before they are permitted to receive a high school diploma.

Excessive, tedious homework is too limiting, according to Glasser (30) who believes that students need some time away from school for other pursuits. He feels that limited amounts of homework can be valuable, but that too much of what is assigned is nothing more than busywork.

Student Mark Klieman is quoted by Williams (90) as stating that compulsory attendance is an oppressive practice which would be unnecessary if school were "worthwhile".
In commenting on the "policelike" tactics used to enforce compulsory attendance he said:

If so great and complex a structure is needed simply to insure physical attendance, we may legitimately be concerned about why we are willing even to place our bodies in school, let alone what happens there. There is one primary cause behind why we set trashcans on fire: High School is not worth the time we spend there.

Several attempts have been made to make the schools more relevant and/or more humanistic. Some of these attempts have been aimed at changing the curriculum and its content, others at completely reorganizing the structure of the school and/or teaching methods (82), (85). Ryan and Cooper (82) offer the following list of educational changes that some schools have made:

1. Non-grading. Students progress in different subjects at their own level of achievement rather than because of age.
2. Team teaching. Groups of teachers assume responsibility for planning, executing and evaluating the instructional program for a group of students.
3. Differentiated Staffing. There are many varieties but all basically depend upon differing responsibilities for staff members.
4. Flexible Scheduling. Allows for varying times of both students and teachers as needed.
5. Middle School. An alternative to the junior high, generally encompassing grades 5-8 or 6-8. Offers unique opportunity for curriculum experimentation.
6. Competitive Education and Accountability. Teachers are held responsible for what students learn. Parents may become involved in planning.
7. Performance Contracting. Private educational companies contract with the school to assume at least a snare of the teaching load on a "no learn, no pay" basis.
8. Programmed Instruction. Material to be learned is broken down into a series of small discrete steps with stimulus, response and confirmation supplied.


10. Individually Prescribed Instruction (IPI). Students' needs are prescribed on the basis of diagnostic tests, then each moves through the curriculum at his own rate.

Silberman (85) reports that high schools are responding to student demands for more freedom and more relevant materials by three types of changes:

1. Modest changes in school regulations designed to create a freer and more humane atmosphere outside the classroom.

2. Somewhat bolder attempts to humanize the schools as a whole -- for example, by cutting the number of required courses, leaving students with a third or more of their time unscheduled, to be used for independent study, for taking more elective courses, for fulfilling some course requirements outside the classroom, for relaxation and leisure.

3. Radical experiments involving changes of the most fundamental sort -- re-ordering the curriculum and the entire teaching-learning process, and in some instances broadening the very concept of what constitutes a school.

Most changes, Silberman says, have been of the first sort (dress, hair codes), often because of legal action. Some are trying to accomplish the second change principally through the medium of modular scheduling which divides the day into smaller segments and allows for differing class times and more unscheduled time. He warns that modular scheduling is simply an administrative technique that makes it possible for a freer and less restrictive educational atmosphere to develop but does not guarantee it. "All too often, in fact,
the technique turns out to be a kind of gimmickry in which nothing much changes but the length of the periods (and not always that) and the vocabulary with which the program is described." He notes that some high schools are permitting students to complete a course on the basis of passing an examination rather than spending a certain amount of time in a class, some are offering "mini-courses" of varying lengths, and some have eliminated grades and are using a pass-fail system.

Many other types of experimental programs are being attempted in the public high schools. Colver and Richter report that the adoption of an open-campus plan in which students are free to be in school or not when they do not have classes, combined with a "self-directive day", in which each student decides for himself on most of his day's activities has resulted in improved attendance, a decrease in vandalism, improved grades, an increase in library usage, and a decrease in discipline problems at Niles East High School in Skokie, Illinois (10).

"Alternative types of high schools" are reviewed by Gross (31). One of the most "free" of these is the Parkway School of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, sometimes called a "school without walls." No school buildings exist and students use the entire community as a resource. Each student plans his program with a teacher who acts as his advisor. Student and faculty participation is on a voluntary basis and the
school now has a waiting list of students. Adaptations of the "school without walls" concept have been made by schools in Kansas City, Toronto and Chicago. The Murray Road school in Newton, Massachusetts assigns no grades, has no set curriculum and no compulsory attendance. Other schools mentioned as being "alternative types" include the John Adams High School in Portland, Oregon, the Other Ways school in Berkeley, California and the Lower Eastside Action Project (LEAP) in Manhattan, New York. Student involvement in program planning, student responsibility and a "free" atmosphere are central themes of all of these schools, most of which also have relatively small enrollments. A recent unpublished survey by Larry Moeller of Iowa State University reveals that most alternative high schools close within two years of their inception.

A major change at the elementary school level has been the development of a type of school that has variously been called: open classroom, informal classroom, integrated day, Leicestershire Plan, open education and free school (7), (40), (50), (53), (85). Many of these have been patterned after the English Informal Schools in which the stress is upon allowing the student to learn when he is ready and has an interest in learning. One of the best known of the English schools is Niell's Summerhill School, founded in 1921 (84). At Summerhill the students attend classes only if and when they wish, have freedom to do pretty much what they want.
so long as they do not infringe upon the rights of others and meet as a group to make decisions concerning infractions, punishments and rules (66), (84). Niell states that the Summerhill theory is that when a child has played enough he will start to work and face difficulties, "and I claim that this theory has been vindicated in our old pupils' ability to do a good job even when it involves a lot of unpleasant work."

He points to Summerhill alumni who have been successful in a wide variety of occupations and professions (66). The idea that a child learns more when the distinction between play and work are "not so sharp" is also expressed by Holt (41), Glasser (30) and Perrone (72).

Hechinger (35) contends that Summerhill is more of a family than a school and works only because of Niell and his presence. He thinks it will "fall apart" when Niell is gone. Holt (39) answers critics of Summerhill's "permissiveness" by stating that "permissiveness" is a matter of degree since no one permits a child to do just anything it wishes and no one permits a child to do nothing. Ames (2) sees the Summerhill approach as possibly being useful for problem children, but not for most and lists her reasons:

1. I don't believe that the ordinarily constituted child needs this much freedom.
2. I see no value in everyone being brought down to the same level.
3. I agree with Vance Packard that in matters of sexual expression, young people must know what adult standards are.
4. I do not agree with Niell that the aim of life is happiness.
5. I do not share Niell's apparent contempt of books and of formal learning.

Silberman (85) points out that the majority of English Informal Schools reject the notion that children should simply be turned loose to "do their own thing." In most, teachers guide children into areas teachers feel are important to be learned. He cites several studies which indicate that children learn at least as much in the Informal Schools in the academic areas as they do in traditional schools, and are superior in initiative, work spirit and critical thinking. He reports that several Informal Schools, some patterned after the English schools, but many developed independently, are operating successfully in the United States.

Dennison (13) writes that the newer style "free" or "informal" classrooms have their roots in Dewey's philosophies of education. He cites Niell, Tolstoy, Dewey, Bruner, Goodman and Shapiro as all upholding one basic truth: "That the educational function does not rest upon our ability to control, or our will to instruct, but upon our human nature and the nature of experience."

Wees (89) contends that it is impossible to teach anyone anything and that whatever a child learns he learns on his own:

The teacher may think that he is teaching him when he tells the child thus and so, but all he is really doing is making vibrations in the air with his breath, vocal cords, pharynx, tongue, nose, teeth and lips. . . . .Whatever change occurs in the child's mind, (any change that we may call educational)
occurs only because the child himself makes it happen. . . . Thinking is the child's own prerogative; nobody else can do his thinking for him. Even in the perception of such basic components as those provided by the senses, the meaning of the sense experience is the child's own creating.

Rogers (80) basically agrees and prefers not to use the term "teacher." He prefers the word "facilitator".

Barth (7), Holt (40), Kohl (50), Kozol (53) and Silberman (85) all warn that there has been a great deal of misunderstanding regarding what is meant by a "free" or "informal" classroom, and that no school should just adopt another school's program. Holt points out that freedom does not mean the absence of any limits or constraints and that clearly-defined constraints may actually increase freedom. He states that students who have been used to a more conventional program may need to have freedom of choice introduced to them gradually, first as a choice between two alternatives, then three, then more until complete freedom of choice is achieved. Also, materials and equipment must be available to choose from or no choice is possible.

Kozol (53) rejects the idea that "you can't teach anyone anything" and cites examples of "free schools" that have failed because children were not required to learn to read until they asked -- and they never asked. Parents became disillusioned and withdrew their children from school, thus closing it:

It is not necessary, in speaking of reading, to adhere to either of two irresponsible positions.
It is as much an error to say that learning is never the consequence of conscious teaching as it is to imagine that it always is. The second error belongs most often to the public schools, the first to many of the Free Schools. The truth of the matter is that you can teach reading. Lots of people do. I have taught children to read on a number of occasions, and I have done this in situations where they very likely would not have learned to read for several years if I had not assumed a clear initiative. Where it is not necessary, it is obviously ill-advised. Where it is necessary, but where in the name of Joy and Freedom it is not undertaken, then I believe mothers and fathers have very good reason for their anger.

Kozol contends that many well-meaning teachers working especially with black ghetto youngsters have misunderstood completely that these youngsters need most to learn in order to compete in a white-oriented world and that this is what their parents want them to do. Often the teachers who are telling ghetto parents that their children do not need competitive skills are white holders of college degrees who can return to the white middle-class life any time they wish. Such teachers are considered by Kozol to be "innocent, naive, and dangerous."

Bartn (7) holds that too many educators are so eager to assimilate new ideas that they often distort the original conception without realizing it because they fail to determine how well the new ideas fit their own perception and hence change only the vocabulary and rhetoric. He points out that many attempts to implement open classrooms in America have failed and been discarded with describing epitaphs of "sloppy
permissiveness," "neo-progressive," "Communist," "anarchial" or "liassez-faire." He states that such success in developing an "Open Classroom" depends upon satisfactory answers to these questions:

1. For what kinds of people -- teachers, administrators, parents, teachers -- is the open classroom appropriate and valuable?
2. What happens to children in open classrooms?
3. Can teachers be trained for open classrooms?
4. How can resistance from children, teachers and parents -- inevitable among those not committed to open education's assumptions -- be surmounted?
5. Should participation in open classrooms be required of teachers, parents, children and administrators?

Accountability

The high rate of school bond issue failures in recent years is interpreted by Woodington (93) as being the public's way of demanding more accountability from the schools. Glass (29) holds that the term "accountability" has been used far too broadly and too loosely and has been applied at various times to: (1) the statement of educational objectives, (2) performance contracting, (3) voucher systems, (4) economic input-output analysis, (5) accreditation and (6) community participation. He says that none of these is adequate for the real meaning of accountability, which is simply a buyer-seller relationship with the buyer wanting assurance that he is getting his money's worth. Lieberman (55) agrees that there are far too many definitions and descriptions of accountability, but states that they can all be grouped into two general
categories: (1) "Input-output type, which relates cost and method to results and (2) Consumer-choice type (voucher system), which is based on the belief that consumer choice will introduce a measure of effectiveness. Both Glass and Lieberman agree that accountability is usually "defined" in terms of what it does rather than what it is, and both agree that what it does is to demand that school personnel, particularly teachers, be held accountable to the public for what pupils learn. Usually accompanying demands for accountability are demands or recommendations that teachers be paid according to results obtained (5), (20), (29), (55).

Teacher groups in general have rejected the concept of accountability for student learning on the grounds that teachers have little or no control over the factors which render accountability either feasible or fair (5), (20). The National Education Association has insisted that before such measures as performance contracting, voucher plans and other alternatives to a single salary schedule are acceptable, teachers must first gain self-governance. This position is based on the belief that only when teachers have a voice in determining qualifications for entry into the profession and continued membership and a voice in setting educational policy should they be held accountable for the results of the educational methods being used.

Woodington (93) asserts that accountability must start by determining local priorities and calls this process "needs
assessment translated into goals and objectives." He lists eight "essential steps": (1) establishing goals, (2) setting specific objectives, (3) devising programs to meet the objectives, (4) carrying out the programs, (5) measuring the degree of success, (6) comparing costs and performance under alternate programs, (7) revising, and (8) trying again.

Attempts at national or state-wide assessment of student achievement have been underway for the past two decades (92). During this period of time the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) project, under the auspices of the Education Commission of the States (ECS) has been gathering information nation-wide on student achievement levels in the various subject matter areas. Womer and Mastie (92) point out that national assessment was never meant to provide information about individual districts but to provide decision-makers with information for curriculum decisions and priority-setting as a starting point for local assessments:

The original and basic purpose of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) project was to assess change in knowledge and skills that relate to important objectives of American education. This purpose cannot be met for some years, not until a subject is assessed a second time.

Some subjects have not yet been assessed for the first time. Womer and Mastie (92) state that the NAEP project was "designed to describe levels of achievement, not to ascribe reasons," and the NAEP role should not be to prescribe remedies but to serve as a catalyst, triggering local action.
Dyer (17) writes that much thought has been given in the past 20 years to establishing goals of education and much thought to what should be evaluated, but little thought to the evaluation process itself. The consequence of this is that the states now find themselves unprepared to meet the rising demand for some procedure to be utilized in holding local school districts accountable for the effectiveness and efficiency of their operations. He lists, in priority order, six main purposes that a state-wide evaluation program should serve:

1. Provide basic information for helping each student assess his own program.
2. Provide teachers and administrators with information to assess effectiveness of their programs.
3. Provide state educational authorities with information needed for allocating state funds.
4. Provide research agencies with data for generating and testing hypotheses concerning improvement of all aspects of the educational process.
5. Provide each school system with strong incentives to experiment.
6. Provide the state legislature and the general public with readily interpretable information concerning progress.

Tyler (87) relates the purposes of assessment mostly to the individual student or local school:

1. One purpose of assessment of the individual student is to determine his readiness to pursue the next step of learning.
2. Another basic purpose of assessment is diagnostic.
3. Another purpose of assessment is to provide individual guidance.
4. Another purpose is to discover problems before it is too late to deal with them.
5. Another purpose is college admission placement.
Tyler warns of the following problems in accepting too readily the findings of an assessment program:

1. Mean relative standing has very limited usefulness.
2. Predictions are often based on a static criterion.
3. The idea that everything we find out through testing is to be fitted into a grade or award or punishment.
4. Limited too much to paper and pencil tests because of the desire for a test that can be administered to all students at once.
5. Limited by overuse of selection-type tests such as multiple choice or true-false.

Many attempts have been and are being made to initiate one or more of the various aspects of accountability in the schools, such as needs assessment for establishing goals, performance contracting, vouchers and differentiated staffing.

The Center for the Study of Evaluation at UCLA in Los Angeles, California has developed and field-tested a kit for ascertaining local goals and priorities in the public schools. A Q-sort technique was used and the people being surveyed were asked to sort goals into five groups ranging from "unimportant" to "very important" to determine:

(1) ratings of 106 different educational goals and (2) differences in ratings of the goals by teachers, parents, and board members. The determination of goals is only one part of the total CSE needs assessment program, which is still in the process of being developed. The complete CSE process includes:

1. Major goals determined by various publics using a Q-sort technique.
2. Hooking major goals to hierarchical objectives.
3. Determining behavioral objectives appropriate for the hierarchical objectives (which are appropriate for course and unit goals).
4. Selecting and/or developing instructional and learning materials, activities and experiences to reach the goals.
5. Selecting and/or developing test items appropriate to determine accomplishment of the goals (58).

The CSE process included a series of sampling booklets sent to survey participants one after another. In addition to determining which educational goals were considered of importance, the kit also attempted to discover: (1) where planning was done, (2) what pressure groups or individuals demanded changes, (3) how the principal went about finding out the attitudes of others and (4) standardized tests used, and now selected. In assessing the results obtained it was found that:

1. Directions were not always clear (vocabulary was often difficult for parents).
2. The greatest pressure for curricular change was from administrators and teachers, with parents a weak third.
3. Most standardized tests used are mandated by the district or the state.
4. The tallying process was tedious.
5. Most of those surveyed prefer a check-list approach to the Q-sort approach.
6. The attrition rate was high as more booklets were introduced.

Manatt adapted the CSE approach for an assessment of goals at the Ayrshire Consolidated School in Ayrshire, Iowa as a part of a federal Title III grant (58). Only steps one and two of the complete CSE process were included in the planning grant. A Q-sort technique was used to assess attitudes of community members, parents, students and educators toward 108
selected educational goals. Each person sorted the goals into five categories: (1) unimportant, (2) below average importance, (3) average importance, (4) above average importance and (5) very important.

All groups at Ayrshire generally favored the following educational goals:

1. Healthy personality with a high self-concept.
2. A good citizen who could get along with others.
3. Ability to communicate, especially print media.
4. One who tries hard, strives for excellence and has positive attitudes toward school and learning.
5. One who is ready for career entry, appreciating the social value of his work and that of other groups.

All groups at Ayrshire generally rated the following educational goals as being unimportant:

1. Singing by staying on key, keeping a tune, aural identification of types of music.
2. Rote memory.
3. Writing fluency in a foreign language.
4. Familiarity with children's literature.
5. Learning and using a variety of artistic techniques.
7. Recognition of literary devices.

Another approach to needs assessment has been developed by the Commission on Educational Planning under the sponsorship of Phi Delta Kappa (11). The program involves members of the community and the professional school staff and consists of three steps:

1. Ranking of educational goals in order of their importance.
2. Assessing how well current educational programs are meeting these goals.
3. Development of program level performance objectives by the professional staff designed to meet the priority-ranked goals.
Performance contracting as an accountability measure is based on the idea of paying for education only if a set amount of learning actually can be shown to have taken place. Page (69) lists the following essentials of performance contracting:

1. A contractor signs an agreement to improve students' performance in certain basic skills by set amounts.
2. The contractor is paid according to his success in bringing students' performance up to those prespecified levels. If he succeeds, he makes a profit. If he fails, he doesn't get paid.
3. Within guidelines established by the school board, the contractor is free to use whatever educational techniques, incentive systems and audiovisual aids he feels can be most effective.

The performance contracting concept was dealt a severe blow by the results of a carefully controlled experiment conducted by the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) during the 1971-72 school year (69). Earlier performance contracting experiments appeared to be successful, although they were strongly criticized as lacking controls and of teaching toward the tests. The OEO designed controls, selected pre and post tests and accepted bids from private educational companies. Thirty-one companies presented bids and bids from six were accepted, each for three cities. Six grade levels were covered, 1-3 and 7-9, across all major low-achieving ethnic groups. The companies were not informed of which tests were to be used so that there could be no teaching toward the tests. The final test results showed no differences between achievements of the experimental and the control groups; all
did badly. All of the companies lost money on the project and four of the six went out of business. Page sees this failure as also reflecting upon American belief in compensatory education, programmed instruction and behavioral modification, which he holds are based on the same main concept used by the companies in their efforts, the reinforcement theory.

The voucher system has been promoted as a means of improving education (47), (48), (61), (68). Under this system parents would be provided with slips of paper called "vouchers" which they could "spend" for the school or program they chose for their children. The school would present the vouchers it collected to the proper governmental agency for funds to run its program and would be obligated to accept the voucher as full payment. Theoretically the process of competition would force schools to improve their educational offerings.

The voucher plan most favored by the OEO is the Jencks plan, which has these features (61):

1. Parents choose between competing schools.
2. Schools must be open to all applicants.
3. Schools must accept the vouchers as full payment for the cost of a child's education. Parents may not add money to the value of a child's voucher.
4. Each school must make information available which will enable parents to make wise decisions.
5. A new independent agency, the Education Voucher Agency (EVA) enforces these regulations and administers the voucher program.
6. The value of the voucher is supplemented for the poor to enable schools to develop special programs for these children.
7. All kinds of schools are included -- private and religious schools as well as public.

Overlan (68) reports that several objections to voucher
plans have been raised from various sources. These objections are based on beliefs that:

1. Every voucher plan would promote racial and economic segregation.
2. Voucher plans would lead to unconstitutional public support of religious schools.
3. Voucher plans would spur "huckstering" and false claims among teachers and administrators.
4. Voucher plans would overtax the interest and intelligence of some parents, especially low-income parents.
5. If both public and private schools are eligible for government money, private schools will expel or suspend problem students, making public schools "schools of last resort."

The Center for Study of Public Policy considered these objections and worked to build safeguards into a voucher system. The Alum Rock School District of San Jose, California began an experimental program using vouchers in the fall of 1972, sponsored by the OEO, after these compromises were reached (61): (1) Only one-third of the elementary schools in the district are involved and for only one year, after which either the OEO or the Alum Rock School District may cancel the experiment, (2) Only public elementary school programs are involved, (3) The Alum Rock Board of Education retains control, although advised by an Educational Voucher Advisory Committee (EVAC) and (4) Parents choose between competing school programs, not competing schools.

Joel Levin, director of the voucher system for the school, had estimated that probably 15 per cent of the parents would choose non-traditional programs and had observed that, "Twenty per cent would demonstrate without question the value of a
voucher system. We would have proven our major contention, that many parents would choose differently for their children if given the opportunity to choose (61)." In June of 1972, with 2,500 of the district's 4,000 elementary students pre-enrolled for fall, the percentage of parents choosing non-traditional programs was running close to 40 per cent. Twenty-one choices of elementary programs were offered, although not all were offered in every school. Traditionally-oriented programs were given such names as Traditional, Developmental Reading, Basic Skills, Three R's Plus, Academic Skill Development and Enrichment. Non-traditional programs were given such titles as Open-activity Centered, Individualized Learning, Continuous Progress Non-graded, Sullivan Individualized Language Arts, Fine Arts -- Creative Expression, Fine Arts and Creative Arts, Math-Science, Cultural Arts and Multi-cultural. Prior to the start of the voucher program the Alum Rock schools had been oriented basically toward traditional programs. Hecklenburger observes that schools across the nation will be watching this experiment with a great deal of interest (61).

Differentiated Staffing is a process which attempts to distinguish between different roles in the teaching process, assigns different responsibilities and rewards accordingly. Olivero (67) reports that there are many different definitions and interpretations of differentiated staffing. He cites plans now in use in such places as Englewood, Colorado, Kansas City, Missouri and Temple City, California. Dwight Allen, as cited
by Olivero, points out that there are three conditions essential to any differentiated staffing pattern: (1) a minimum of three staff teaching levels, each having a different salary range, (2) a maximum salary at the top teaching category that is at least double the maximum at the lowest and (3) substantial direct teaching responsibilities for all teachers at all salary levels, including those in the top level.

Olivero offers his own observation of five ingredients necessary for a successful differentiated staffing program: (1) assessment of student needs, (2) definition of roles, (3) training for differentiated roles, (4) evaluation of performance and (5) reward system.

Teachers and other instructional personnel may be given such titles as master teacher, senior teacher, curriculum associate, staff teacher, associate teacher, clerk or others, with the terminology varying from program to program.

Olivero warns that differentiated staffing can become an end rather than a means and can evolve into a more rigid hierarchical system than now exists. He also sees it possibly perpetuating the "current sin" of "promoting" good teachers out of the classroom. He further warns that, while a pay differential is essential to make such a system work, it should not become a cover-up for merit pay.
Summary

Pollsters have found a number of things the general public likes about the public schools and a number of items the public is concerned about in regard to the schools. Interestingly, "teachers" and "facilities" were high on both lists.

Items receiving public approval were:

1. students are "smart," well-educated
2. students are concerned about social problems
3. teachers
4. facilities
5. marking systems (A, B, C, D, F)
6. curriculum
7. scheduling
8. job being done by administrators
9. job being done by school boards
10. extra-curricular activities
11. up-to-date teaching methods
12. small classes
13. special services, such as speech, hearing, reading therapy
14. up-to-date materials
15. transportation
16. concept of non-graded school
17. paying teachers according to quality of work done
18. standardized tests
19. sex education
20. compulsory attendance

Items about which the public expressed either concern or disapproval included:

1. discipline
2. lack of student respect for authority
3. lack of student motivation
4. teachers
5. facilities
6. integration
7. finances
8. dope/drugs
9. year-round school
10. too many administrators
11. large classes
12. tenure for teachers
13. involvement of students in policy making, curriculum decisions, establishing rules or teacher selection

Most current published criticism of public school educational practices fall into three categories: (1) Relevancy/irrelevancy of the school curriculum, (2) Humanizing/dehumanizing characteristics of the public schools and (3) Accountability.

Criticisms falling in the relevancy/irrelevancy category include:

1. The main aim of education is to perpetuate the present society rather than to develop the ability to think.
2. Public schools are too oriented toward college entrance.
3. There is too much meaningless drill on skills unrelated to real life.
4. Rote memory of "right" answers is outdated and uses a lesser function of the brain, memory, while neglecting its major function, thinking.
5. A curriculum should emphasize why (concepts) rather than what (facts).
6. Textbooks leave little room for considering a student's individual needs.
7. Students should be more directly involved in planning their own learning activities.
8. The school curriculum should be flexible and geared to the unique needs of the student.
9. Student experiences, rather than teacher-directed facts, should form the base of learning.
10. More emphasis is needed on preparation for the world of work at all levels of education.
11. The curriculum in most public schools is oriented toward a white, middle-class society.
12. Compensatory programs accomplish little or nothing.
13. Students should be informed as to what will be on a test.

Public school practices or procedures considered to be dehumanizing to the students included:
1. Authoritative operations with petty and/or oppressive rules made mainly for administrative convenience.
2. Ability grouping or tracking -- labels lower groups as failures.
3. Age or grade grouping -- teaches toward a mythical average and ignores both faster and slower students.
4. Student marking systems (A, B, C, D, F) -- encourage cheating and cause students to learn just for grades (marks).
5. Pre-determined curriculum -- fails to meet individual needs.
6. Standardized tests -- students too often prepared just for the tests -- can be passed by memorizing facts and regurgitating them with little or no understanding.
7. Excessive homework -- students need time away from studies for leisure and/or socializing.
8. Compulsory attendance -- shows lack of trust in students.
9. Schools are obsessed with silence and order.
10. Students are not permitted to pursue individual goals.
11. Students are not permitted any voice in policy-making decisions.

The following measures were proposed as leading to better accountability.

1. Determine local priorities.
4. Performance contracting.
5. Vouchers.
6. Differentiated staffing.
METHODS AND PROCEDURES

Introduction

The major problem of this investigation was to develop and test an instrument which can be used by local public school authorities to assess local public opinion toward various educational practices. The practices to be included were identified through a search of results of public opinion polls about the public schools conducted in recent years and of critical literature about the public schools and include procedures and/or instructional systems employed to instruct or to control pupils in the public schools.

This chapter describes the methods and procedures used to develop and test the instrument and is divided into five parts: (1) Description of the Instrument, (2) Construction of the Instrument, (3) Selection of the Sample, (4) Collection of the Data and (5) Treatment of the Data.

Description of the Instrument

The opinion sampling instrument was designed to consist of four parts. Parts one, two and three were designed to incorporate the concepts expressed by Nagel (62) and utilized by both Gallup (22) and Harris (32). Nagel contends that for a public school opinion poll to be effective it must include three types of questions: (1) opinion (such as "how well do you think the schools are doing the job of..."),
(2) knowledge (such as "how many pupils are there in the school district?"), and (3) vision (such as "indicate your agreement or disagreement with the following statements.")

The first section of the instrument deals with the opinion aspect. Areas covered are primarily those found by Gallup and by Harris to be those about which the publics they surveyed expressed either approval and/or praise or disapproval and/or concern. Items in this section deal primarily with currently existing conditions in the local public schools and are designed to provide local public schools administrators and school boards with a means of determining public opinion toward the schools as they are at the time the survey is conducted.

The second part of the instrument deals with the vision aspect and was designed to assess reactions to items identified through a search of current critical literature. Criticisms so identified fall into three general categories: (1) relevancy/irrelevancy of the school curriculum, (2) humanizing/de-humanizing practices in the public schools and (3) accountability. Responses to items in this section can indicate to those responsible for developing local educational programs the types of educational practices preferred by the local public.

The third section of the instrument deals with the knowledge aspect. Questions are of a factual nature and were designed to determine how knowledgable the respondents are
about selected items related to the local public schools. This section provides a means for local public school authorities to ascertain whether local patrons are knowledgeable about the items in this section. By comparing answers received in this section to those received in the first section it becomes possible to distinguish between the respondent who is either critical or approving of the schools but ignorant of their operation and the respondent who is either critical or approving of the schools but has knowledge to support his opinions.

Gallup (22) has found that opinions tend to vary between people possessing different social or economic characteristics. Therefore the fourth section of the instrument provides a means of identifying certain social and economic characteristics of the respondents. These include age, sex, amount of formal education, annual gross family income, occupation, religious affiliation, and number of children enrolled in the public schools.

Construction of the Instrument

Items to be included in the first section of the instrument were primarily identified through a search of public opinion polls of the public schools conducted by both Gallup (22) and Harris (32). Those items about which public approval and/or praise or about which public disapproval and/or concern were expressed were included. These items were edited into
two types of questions: (1) open-ended questions to which the survey subject expressed an answer in his own words and (2) choice-type questions to which the survey subject responded by choosing one of the alternatives given. These two types of questions were patterned after those employed by the professional pollsters, Gallup and Harris.

Items for the second section of the instrument were identified through a search of critical literature about the public schools. They cover the general areas of: (1) relevancy/irrelevancy of the school curriculum, (2) humanizing/de-humanizing practices in the public schools and (3) accountability. The statements used in this section come primarily from books, periodicals, newspapers and speeches. Collected items were edited into statements of opinion reflecting either a positive or a negative opinion to which the survey subject responded by agreeing or disagreeing.

Items of both sections one and two were submitted to a judgment panel of 21 professional educators and 21 lay persons to ascertain the content validity of each item, thus facilitating determination of which ones were to be included in the final instrument. The professional educators included seven public school superintendents, seven college-level educators and seven educators in the employ of the Iowa State Department of Public Instruction. The lay members of the panel consisted of seven parents, seven school board members and seven students. All of the professional educators were personally known to
the researcher. Lay persons from Bondurant were personally known to the researcher, but names of those from other communities and other school districts were obtained by contacting administrators in those districts for recommendations. All persons on the judgment panel were contacted personally and asked to participate and all agreed to do so. Personal contacts were made after three weeks had passed to remind those who had not yet returned their evaluations. After two more weeks the results of the judgment panel evaluations were compiled. All the lay persons had returned their evaluations and all but two professional educators. The evaluations of one professional educator were unusable. He re-wrote all but 14 of the items and wrote a notation to the effect that his evaluations were based on the items as he had re-written them. He thus did not evaluate the same items as the rest of the panel.

A total of 94 items was submitted to the judgment panel and the panel was asked to rate the appropriateness of each item by checking one of five responses to indicate the degree with which they agreed or disagreed with the appropriateness of the item. The responses were: (1) very inappropriate, (2) somewhat inappropriate, (3) undecided, (4) somewhat appropriate and (5) very appropriate. Items were rank-ordered according to the acceptance level of each item. The rankings were used as a guide in the selection of items to be included in the final form of the instrument. With 21 lay persons' and
18 professional educators' evaluations being used, the maximum total a single item could receive was 195 if everyone evaluated it as being very appropriate (39 x 5). Actual ratings ranged from a high of 185 to a low of 102.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Professional Educators</th>
<th>Lay Persons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>148.4</td>
<td>77.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The midpoint between "undecided" and "somewhat appropriate" was 3.5. Any item with an average evaluation of 3.5 or more (total of 136.5 or more) was considered to be appropriate and acceptable. Of the 94 items submitted to the judgment panel 72 were rated 137 or higher and 26 were rated below 137.

Sixty-one items were included in the opinion and vision sections of the final form of the opinionnaire. Fifty-five of the rated items were used, with two of them being divided into two items each in response to recommendations from judgment panel members. One of these became items 37 and 38 and the other became items 49 and 50. Four items (No's. 23, 46, 51 and 52) were added to cover areas for which no valid items were found.

Wording changes were made in some items in response to recommendations by judgment panel members. In items 10, 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15 the word "good" was changed to "adequate".
In items 61, sections c, f and h the words "cut out" were changed to "eliminate".

For the second section (Vision) a scale was adopted to enable survey subjects to respond to each item on a continuum of from one (completely disagree), through 50 (undecided, neither agree nor disagree) to 99 (completely agree). The basic assumption is that each of the statements covers the entire opinion continuum and that an individual's choice of degree acceptance or rejection determines his position on the continuum. This type of response measurement was recommended by Professor Roy Hickman and was the type used by the Iowa State University Statistical Laboratory in a recent survey of student opinions toward driver education courses conducted on behalf of the Iowa State Department of Public Instruction. The major advantage of this type of response scale is that it permits for a more exact expression of opinion on the part of the respondent.

No uniform questions were developed for the third section of the instrument. Since the prime purpose of this section is to assess the level of knowledge toward those factors considered to be important in the local district, the section has been left open-ended to permit local public school authorities to ask questions about factors considered to be important locally. These factors may vary from district to district. Items to be included in the third section of the pilot instrument were identified by contacting the administration of the
Urbandale Community School District, the pilot district used to test the instrument, and were those considered by the Urbandale administration to be important for the patrons of the Urbandale district to know. The administration was provided with those items used by Nagel (62) as examples and, with that as a starting point, developed their own questions for this section.

Items 62, 63, 66 and 69 were designed to determine how "visible" certain school officials were, items 64 and 65 were intended to determine parental familiarity with certain logistical aspects of the school's operation, item 67 to ascertain whether people knew the purpose of the bond issue, items 70 and 71 to measure familiarity with aspects of school finance and item 72 to determine how successful the school's campaign had been to educate the public regarding whom to approach with children's school problems.

The fourth part of the instrument was constructed to provide information on the social and economic characteristics of the survey respondents. The selected characteristics include age, sex, amount of formal education, occupation, religious affiliation, annual gross family income and number of children attending public schools. Backstrom and Hursh (4) recommend that demographic information be collected last in a survey. They contend that when collected last such information tends to be less threatening to the respondents.
Selection of the Sample

On Friday, February 9, 1973, a conference was held between Roy Hickman of the Iowa State University (ISU) Statistical Laboratory, Richard Manatt of the ISU College of Education and the writer to discuss this investigation and determine the best methods of proceeding with it. Another conference was held on Friday, February 23 between Jack Menney of the ISU Student Testing Service and the writer to discuss validation of the instrument and treatment of data. The recommendations forthcoming from these two conferences were incorporated into this chapter.

It was decided to sample the opinions of one population of one school district as a means of testing the instrument. A sample size of 150 persons was recommended and the population decided upon was parents of public school pupils.

The central office of the Urbandale school district was contacted and a list of families having students enrolled in the public schools was requested. Since 150 survey subjects were desired the list was numbered and the total number of 2,159 families divided by 150 to establish the "skip interval" of 14 (4). Numbers one through 14 were written on slips of paper which were placed in a hat. Number 13 was drawn from the hat, establishing the 13th family as the first to be included in the survey. The "skip interval" was then used to determine the remaining families to be included. The Urbandale school superintendent, Lyle Kehm, sent letters to the families
chosen to be included in the survey informing them that they had been selected.

Collection of the Data

At the aforementioned conference with Professor Roy Hickman the personal interview was recommended as the most satisfactory method of collecting survey information from lay persons, thus rejecting both the telephone and the mail surveys. Telephone surveys have been found to be very limited. It is necessary to keep the number of items to be covered quite short or run a high risk of having those being interviewed become irritated or impatient and hang up whereas such is not usually the case with the personal interview. The mailed questionnaire has been found unsatisfactory in dealing with lay persons both because of a small percentage of returns and because of a strong possibility of bias on the part of those who do return such questionnaires.

In the personal interview method the interviewer reads the survey items to the survey subject and makes a written notation of each response (1), (14). The interviewing procedures outlined by Adams (1) were followed in collecting data for this study.

1. The interviewer must introduce himself and state the purpose of his call.
2. The interviewer must make the respondent feel that the interview situation is permissive.
3. The interviewer must make the respondent feel that the survey is important.
4. The interviewer must make the respondent feel
that his answers are important.

5. The interviewer's appearance must be neutral.

6. The interviewer must attempt to obtain an interview at the time of his first call, or, if this is not possible, make definite arrangements to obtain the interview at a later time.

7. The interviewer's approach must be flexible.

8. The interview must be conducted in a quiet, comfortable place.

9. The respondent must be interviewed alone.

10. The questions must be asked precisely as specified on the questionnaire.

11. The questions must be asked in the order presented on the questionnaire.

12. Every question on the questionnaire must be asked.

13. When a question is not understood or is misinterpreted it must be repeated in the same words, not paraphrased.

14. Questions which the respondents hesitate or refuse to answer initially must be handled tactfully in order not to destroy rapport.

15. Instructions to the interviewer on the questionnaire must be carefully followed.

16. The questionnaire must be handled informally and with ease.

17. Rapport must be maintained throughout the interview.

18. Probes must be used (a) when the response is irrelevant to the question asked, (b) when the answer is unclear, (c) when an answer seems incomplete and (d) when an answer is suspected of being untrue.

19. Probes must not suggest responses.

20. The use of probes presumes good rapport and requires tact.

21. The respondent must be thanked for his participation in the survey and left with a feeling that the interview has been a pleasant and interesting experience.

22. Responses must be recorded at the time they are made.

23. A respondent's own words must be recorded.

24. Non-responses must be accounted for in detail.

25. All interview probes must be recorded in parenthesis.

26. Significant events during the course of the interview must be recorded.

27. Recorded responses must be clearly legible.
28. Before a questionnaire is returned to the supervisor it must be checked for completeness, understandability and legibility.

The Women's Society for Christian Service (W.S.C.S.) of the Altoona United Methodist Church of Altoona, Iowa was hired to conduct the interviews. A training session for the twelve ladies who did the interviewing was held on May 14, 1973, and the interviews were conducted during the next four weeks. The letters previously sent to the selected parents were followed up by telephone calls placed by the interviewers to arrange for specific interview times. In the event that no contact could be made at the time of the initial call two callback attempts were made before the subject was eliminated from the survey. Six potential interviewees could not be contacted, five refused to participate and two were never at home when interviewers arrived. A total of 137 interviews were conducted.

The interviewers were instructed to note any items which were worded in such a manner as to result in difficulty of interpretation during the interview. Any such items reported by two or more interviewers were subjected to close scrutiny to determine why such difficulty in interpretation existed and were re-worded in the final form of the instrument.

Treatment of the Data

The services of the Iowa State University Computation Center were utilized to process the data collected. The basic
statistical program used for this purpose was the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

An item analysis was performed to establish an inter-item correlation matrix. This was utilized to reveal relationships which existed between items. For each item basic descriptive procedures were utilized. Specifically, this provided the three measures of central tendency, (a) mean, (b) median and (c) mode as well as the measures of dispersion (a) standard deviation, (b) range and (c) variance. Frequency counts and percentage distribution were also tallied for each item. Correlation coefficients (r) found to be highly significant (i.e. significant at the .01 level) were computed as coefficients of determination ($r^2$) to ascertain the proportion of the distribution which was due to the relationship between the correlated items so that in any pairing where 50 per cent or more of the distribution was directly attributable to the relationship one of the items could be eliminated from the survey form without adversely affecting the results.

The total sample was then divided into sub-samples for each of three additional computer runs of the data. These sub-samples were:

Knowledgeable or Not knowledgeable parents
Parents of Elementary or Secondary students
Satisfied or Dissatisfied parents

The Knowledgeable or Not knowledgeable parents division was made on the basis of the number of Knowledge items (items
62 through 72) which could be answered correctly. The parents of Elementary or Secondary students division was based on responses to item 68, "Name your child's principal."

Responses to the first item, dealing with satisfaction with schooling being received, were used to the Satisfied or Dissatisfied parents division.
FINDINGS

Administration of the Survey

The concepts expressed by Nagel (62) were incorporated into the instrument developed for this study. Nagel asserts that for a local public school opinion poll to be effective it must include three types of questions: Opinion (such as "How well do you think the schools are doing the job of . . .?"), Knowledge (such as "How many pupils are there in the school district?") and Vision (such as "Indicate your agreement or disagreement with the following statements.")

Recent public opinion polls about the public schools and critical literature directed toward public schools were searched and 94 items were identified for inclusion in the Opinion and Vision sections of the instrument, requiring 116 responses (some items required more than one response). The 94 items were submitted to a judgement panel which was asked to rate the appropriateness of each item. The results of the ratings were tabulated and utilized in selecting the 61 items to be included in the form used for this study. The 61 items required 80 responses.

The administration of the Urbandale Community Schools developed 11 items requiring 13 responses for the Knowledge section of the questionnaire covering areas considered to be of local importance and/or interest.

A section on Demographic Information was added including
eight items, bringing the total number of responses to 101 in the survey form used in the Urbandale schools. The finished questionnaire as used in this study can be found in Appendix A.

A random sampling of 150 sets of parents of Urbandale public school students was drawn and a letter was sent to each pair from the Urbandale school superintendent informing them of the survey and requesting their cooperation. The Women's Society for Christian Service (WSCS) of the Altoona United Methodist Church in Altoona, Iowa was contracted to conduct the interviews at the rate of two dollars and 50 cents per completed interview. Twelve women volunteered to do the work for the organization, resulting in 12 or 13 interviews being assigned to each.

Personality, perseverance, dependability and drive seemed to have an effect on the success the interviewers had in the completion of their assignments. Three of the interviewers completed their assignments within five days, obtaining interviews from 100 per cent of their assigned subjects. Four others obtained a combined total of only 12 interviews before dropping out of the survey, offering a variety of reasons for withdrawing. Their remaining assignments were taken over by three of the other interviewers who contacted those who had reportedly earlier refused to participate as well as those who had not yet been contacted and were successful in obtaining interviews from some who had reportedly earlier declined. Of
the 150 parents selected for the survey, six could not be contacted. Of the 144 contacted, five declined to participate and two were not at home when the interviewers arrived. Interviews were successfully completed in 137 cases. At two dollars and 50 cents per completed interview, the total cost for interviews was $342.50.

The interviewers reported very few problems in conducting the interviews, with the major difficulty being that of arranging for several interviews in succession so that one trip to Urbandale could include several interviews. Most of the Urbandale parents were found to be cooperative and helpful. The interviewers reported that they believed the letter sent from the school was an important factor in obtaining cooperation from the interview subjects. Such problems as did arise during the interviews were mostly because of interruptions due to such things as telephone calls, children going and coming, meals cooking, and neighbors and friends coming to visit.

After the data for the total sample were collected and tabulated the total sample was subdivided into two groups for each of three additional analyses. These sub-groups were:

- Knowledgeable or Not knowledgeable parents
- Parents of Elementary or Secondary students
- Satisfied or Dissatisfied parents

Knowledgeable parents totaled 61, accounting for 44.5 per cent of the total sample, while Not knowledgeable totaled 76,
accounting for 55.5 per cent. The number of Elementary parents was 79, or 57.6 per cent of the total sample, while the number of Secondary parents was 27, or 19.7 per cent. Satisfied parents far outnumbered Dissatisfied by 93 to 15, accounting for 67.9 per cent of the total sample as contrasted to 11 per cent for the Dissatisfied.

Three weaknesses in the design of the instrument and/or methodology became apparent at this point. The first of these was that 31 of the survey subjects, 22.6 per cent, could not name their child's principal and so were not included in either the Elementary or Secondary category. The second problem was that some parents may have had children in both levels but were included in only one, with the one depending upon which principal they chose to name. The third problem was that 29 parents, 21.1 per cent, expressed neither satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the schooling their children were receiving and therefore were not included in either division. Possibly a third category of "Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied" should have been designated for that particular categorization.

There were more similarities in the responses from one group to another that there were differences. Excepting the items used to establish the divisions, Knowledgeable interviewee's responses differed from those of the total sample on only four items (3.9 per cent), Not knowledgeable on only six items (5.3 per cent), Elementary on five items (4.9 per cent), Secondary on eight items (7.9 per cent) and Satisfied
on five items (4.9 per cent). Dissatisfied parents' responses differed from those of the total sample on 25 items (24.7 per cent).

Findings of the Opinion Sections

Responses to the items in the Opinion Section are shown in Tables 1 through 23. Items in this section were designed to assess opinions toward existing conditions in the schools at the time of the survey. The items dealing with starting school at the age of four, discipline in the schools, the number of educational changes being made, the efforts of the board of education, the efforts of the administration, the efforts of the teachers, extra-curricular activities, the number of rights and privileges being given students, ways in which the local schools are good, and problems facing the local schools (items 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 16 and 17) have been used repeatedly by national polls. The items dealing with satisfaction with schooling, teaching the basic skills, preparing students for college, preparing students for the "world of work", preparing students to be good citizens, preparing students for parenthood and family life, and providing programs to meet individual needs (items 1, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15) were developed to assess opinion toward areas identified by Nagel (62), the Urbandale administration or the researcher.

Tables 1 through 8 were developed to provide an overview
of the respondents' satisfaction with the district and a listing of ways the Urbandale schools are good. The classifications used in Table 1 continue throughout this chapter. Respondents have been categorized as Knowledgeable - Not knowledgeable, Elementary - Secondary (parents of elementary or secondary students), Satisfied - Dissatisfied. A substantial portion of the parents (67.9 per cent) were satisfied or very well satisfied.

Each of the respondent categories were used to generate a listing of ways local Urbandale schools are good.

When asked to name the ways in which they felt the local schools were particularly good the interviewees gave 28 different responses (Table 2). The top five were:

- Students permitted to advance at own rate.
- Students are treated as individuals.
- Progressive and/or innovative programs.
- Wide variety of subjects.
- Good teachers.

Nationally the top five ways in which schools are good were found to be:

- Teachers
- Curriculum
- Facilities
- Up-to-date teaching methods
- Extra-curricular activities

Three of the responses are similar between the Urbandale and the national surveys. The Urbandale response of "good teachers" is similar to the national response of "teachers", the Urbandale response of "wide variety of subjects" could be considered similar to the national response of "curriculum", and the Urbandale response of "progressive and/or innovative programs" could be considered similar to the national response of "up-to-date teaching methods".
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sample</th>
<th>Very well satisfied</th>
<th>Satisfied</th>
<th>About half and half satisfied</th>
<th>Dissatisfied</th>
<th>Very dissatisfied</th>
<th>No opinion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total sample</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>27.0</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>40.9</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>20.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Knowledgeable</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>26.2</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>44.3</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>21.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not knowledgeable</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>27.6</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>38.2</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>19.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>30.4</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>46.8</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>15.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>44.4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>25.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfied</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>39.8</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>60.2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissatisfied</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
and the Urbandale response of "progressive and/or innovative programs" is similar to the national response of "up-to-date teaching methods."

The responses for each group to the question of the ways in which the schools are good are shown in Tables 2 through 8. The leading responses for each group were:

**Ways Local Schools Are Good**

**Total sample**
- Students permitted to advance at own rate
- Students are treated as individuals
- Progressive and/or innovative programs
- Wide variety of subjects
- Good teachers

**Knowledgeable**
- Students permitted to advance at own rate
- Students are treated as individuals
- Take personal interest in students
- Progressive and/or innovative programs
- Wide variety of subjects

**Not knowledgeable**
- Students permitted to advance at own rate
- Students are treated as individuals
- Progressive and/or innovative programs
- Wide variety of subjects
- Take personal interest in students

**Elementary**
- Students permitted to advance at own rate
- Students are treated as individuals
- Progressive and/or innovative programs
- Wide variety of subjects
- Take personal interest in students

**Secondary**
- Wide variety of subjects
- Students permitted to advance at own rate
- Good teachers
- Good band program
(Next six each have two responses)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>1st Answer</th>
<th>2nd Answer</th>
<th>3rd Answer</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(No response)</td>
<td>9 6.6</td>
<td>83 60.6</td>
<td>125 91.2</td>
<td>37 27.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students permitted to advance at own rate</td>
<td>28 20.4</td>
<td>9 6.6</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students are treated as individuals</td>
<td>19 13.9</td>
<td>2 1.5</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
<td>21 15.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Progressive and/or innovative programs</td>
<td>14 10.2</td>
<td>4 2.9</td>
<td>2 1.5</td>
<td>20 14.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wide variety of subjects</td>
<td>11 8.0</td>
<td>2 1.5</td>
<td>1 0.7</td>
<td>18 13.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good teachers</td>
<td>7 5.1</td>
<td>2 1.5</td>
<td>4 2.9</td>
<td>13 9.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take personal interest in students</td>
<td>5 3.6</td>
<td>6 4.4</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
<td>11 8.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good band program</td>
<td>5 3.6</td>
<td>5 3.6</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
<td>10 7.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open-space schools</td>
<td>5 3.6</td>
<td>3 2.2</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
<td>8 5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good communications between school and home</td>
<td>2 2.2</td>
<td>3 2.2</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
<td>6 4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The children like the school</td>
<td>3 2.2</td>
<td>2 1.5</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
<td>5 3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good counseling</td>
<td>3 2.2</td>
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### Table 8. Item 2, Ways in which local schools are good (Dissatisfied)

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Satisfied
Students permitted to advance at own rate
Students are treated as individuals
Progressive and/or innovative programs
Wide variety of subjects
Take personal interest in students

Dissatisfied
Good band program
Good sports program
Nothing is good
(No other with more than one response)

Next respondents were asked a series of questions intended to provide comparisons with national samplings and to identify crucial opinions regarding current school procedures and practices. Table 9 data were used to examine the issue of kindergarten education for four-year-olds.

The interviewers reported only one item in this section as causing any interpretation problems. Item three, Table 9, regarding whether children should start school at the age of four, was interpreted by some as meaning pre-school and by others as referring to kindergarten. Therefore the results obtained to this item may be subject to question. However it should be noted that all groups disapproved of the concept regardless of the interpretation.

Generally speaking, the Opinion section can be summarized by a rank ordering of satisfactions or dissatisfactions (Tables 10 through 22).

Respondents in most categories believed that discipline was not strict enough (Table 10). Not surprisingly, the Dissatisfied were most certain that discipline must toughen.
Table 9. Item No. 3, Should children start school at age of four?

<table>
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Table 10. Item No. 4, Discipline in the local schools

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The question remains, "What did they mean by discipline?"

In response to items in the Opinion section Urbandale parents expressed satisfaction with or approval of (in rank order):

- The efforts of the administration (Table 13).
- The efforts of the board of education (Table 12).
- Extra-curricular activities (Table 15).
- The job of meeting individual needs (Table 21).
- The efforts of the teachers (Table 14).
- The schooling children are receiving (Table 1).
- The job of preparing good citizens (Table 19).
- The job of teaching basic skills (Table 16).
- The job of preparing students for college (Table 17).
- The number of educational changes being made (Table 18).

Dissatisfaction or disapproval was expressed with (in rank order):

- Starting school at the age of four (Table 9).
- Discipline in the schools (Table 10), indicating that discipline is not strict enough.

No majority opinion was expressed on the questions of:

- The job of preparing for parenthood and family life (Table 20).
- Number of rights and privileges given students (Table 22).

One half of the Urbandale parents interviewed thought that the number of educational changes being made by the school district were "about right." Table 11 outlines the responses of each category. Secondary and Dissatisfied parents felt too many educational changes were being made, with Secondary respondents being much less sure that the Dissatisfied.

All categories of interviewees expressed belief that the board of education and the administration were working hard to
### Table 11. Item No. 5, Number of educational changes being made

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Too many No.</th>
<th>Not enough</th>
<th>About right</th>
<th>No opinion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% No.</td>
<td>% No.</td>
<td>% No.</td>
<td>% No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total sample</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>35.8</td>
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<td>0.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Knowledgeable</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>44.3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not knowledgeable</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>28.9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>31.6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>51.9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfied</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>22.6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissatisfied</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>93.3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 12. Item No. 6, Is the board of education working hard?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Yes No.</th>
<th>Yes %</th>
<th>No No.</th>
<th>No %</th>
<th>No opinion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Total sample</td>
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<td>83.2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Knowledgeable</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>82.0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not knowledgeable</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>84.2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>88.6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>77.8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfied</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>89.2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissatisfied</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>60.0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
improve education in the schools, as indicated by the responses shown in Tables 12 and 13. Dissatisfied parents were less sure on both questions, however, than any other group.

As illustrated by the data displayed in Table 14, teachers were believed by Urbandale parents who were interviewed to be working hard to help the students they teach, with Dissatisfied parents dissenting from the majority view on this issue.

The extra-curricular program in the Urbandale schools received general approval (Table 15), with all groups indicating by a ratio of at least three to one that the program was good.

Examination of the data contained in Table 16 reveals that most Urbandale respondents felt that an adequate job was being done of teaching the basic skills (the Three R's) in the Urbandale schools. Secondary parents were slightly inclined toward the opposite viewpoint and Dissatisfied parents were unanimous in their belief that the job being done was not adequate.

As shown by the responses outlined in Table 17, all categories of interviewees except the Dissatisfied were of the opinion that the job being done of preparing Urbandale students for college was adequate. Interestingly, parents of secondary students, whose children are nearer to college age than are the elementary students, were more satisfied with the job being done of preparing students for college than were the parents of elementary students, although
### Table 13. Item No. 7, Is the school administration working hard?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Yes No.</th>
<th>% No.</th>
<th>No opinion % No.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>53</td>
<td>86.9</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Not knowledgeable</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>88.2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>93.7</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>77.8</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfied</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>94.6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissatisfied</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 14. Item No. 8, Are the teachers working hard?

<table>
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<th>Group</th>
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<th>% No.</th>
<th>No opinion % No.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>27</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Not knowledgeable</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>78.9</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>81.0</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>63.0</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfied</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>84.9</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissatisfied</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 15. Item No. 9, Is the extra-curricular program good?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Yes No.</th>
<th>% No.</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>% No.</th>
<th>No opinion</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>12</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>11.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledgeable</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>88.5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not knowledgeable</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>75.0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>13.2</td>
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<td>11.8</td>
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<td>81.0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
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<td>88.9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfied</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>83.9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11.9</td>
</tr>
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<td>11</td>
<td>73.3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 16. Item No. 10, Adequate job of teaching basic skills?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Yes No.</th>
<th>% No.</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>% No.</th>
<th>No opinion</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total sample</td>
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<td>42</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledgeable</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>57.4</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>37.7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not knowledgeable</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>71.1</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>74.7</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>20.3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>44.4</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>55.6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfied</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>78.5</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>15.1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissatisfied</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
respondents categorized as Elementary were more satisfied with the job being done of teaching basic skills (Table 16). This raises the question of what relationships, if any, the parents perceive between preparation in the basic skills and preparation for college.

The value those interviewed attributed to preparation in the basic skills was further confused by the responses to the issue of whether an adequate job was being done of preparing students for the "world of work" (Table 18). The Not knowledgeable and Dissatisfied respondents were not satisfied with the job being done in this area, although all other groups were. The Not knowledgeable, however, indicated satisfaction with the job being done of teaching basic skills (Table 16) while one-third of the Dissatisfied, who were unanimous in their dissatisfaction regarding preparation in basic skills, felt that an adequate job was being done of preparing students for the "world of work." This situation raises the question of what sorts of career routes these parents envision for their children not requiring preparation in the basic skills.

Parents categorized as Dissatisfied also disagreed with the majority of those interviewed on the responses shown in Table 19, and contended that the school was not adequately preparing students to be good citizens whereas all other groups expressed satisfaction with the job being done in this area.
Table 17. Item No. 11, Adequate job of preparing students for college?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No opinion</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total sample</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>56.9</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>19.7</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>23.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledgeable</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>57.4</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>19.7</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>23.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not knowledgeable</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>56.6</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>19.7</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>23.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>53.2</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>15.2</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>31.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>17</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>29.6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfied</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>67.7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>26.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissatisfied</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>53.3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>26.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 18. Item No. 12, Adequate job of preparing students for "world of work"?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No opinion</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>32</td>
<td>23.4</td>
<td>33</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>16.4</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>24.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not knowledgeable</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>47.4</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>28.9</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>23.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>53.2</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>17.7</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>29.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfied</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>55.9</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>28.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissatisfied</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>53.3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 19. Item No. 13, Adequate job of preparing students to be good citizens?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Yes No.</th>
<th>% No.</th>
<th>No opinion No.</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>38</td>
<td>62.3</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>31.1</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>21.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>59.3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>37.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Satisfied</td>
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<td>79.6</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>15.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dissatisfied</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>46.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 20. Item No. 14, Adequate job of preparing students for parenthood and family life?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Yes No.</th>
<th>% No.</th>
<th>No opinion No.</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total sample</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>39.4</td>
<td>39</td>
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<tr>
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<td>9</td>
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<td>37.0</td>
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<td>Satisfied</td>
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<td>39.8</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>25.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dissatisfied</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>26.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
All groups were unsure of whether students were being adequately prepared for parenthood and family life, as revealed by the responses displayed in Table 20.

The Urbandale School District, a district generally noted for innovative educational practices designed to meet individual needs, was believed by all groups except Dissatisfied parents to be doing a satisfactory job of meeting individual needs, as shown by the responses included in Table 21.

The question of the number of rights and privileges being given students (Table 22) elicited a wider variety of responses among the groups than any other Opinion item. Respondents categorized as Dissatisfied and as Secondary contended that too many rights and privileges were being given students; Knowledgeable parents were not sure; Not knowledgeable and Satisfied parents also felt that discipline in the schools was about right. It is interesting to note that Not knowledgeable and Satisfied parents also felt that discipline in the schools was about right (Table 10) although a slight majority of the Elementary indicated that discipline was not strict enough.

Urbandale parents gave 38 different responses when requested to name the biggest problems facing the schools. There were less agreement in the responses to this question than to the question concerning the ways the school was good. The top five problems identified (Table 23) were:
Table 21. Item No. 15, Adequate job of providing for individual needs?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Yes No.</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No No.</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No opinion No.</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
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<td>83.6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.7</td>
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<tr>
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<td>94.6</td>
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<td>1.1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissatisfied</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>33.3</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Table 22. Item No. 16, Rights and privileges being given students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Too many No.</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Not enough No.</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>About right No.</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No opinion No.</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>47.5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Not knowledgeable</td>
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<td>0.0</td>
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<td>50.0</td>
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<td>6.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>38.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>58.2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>29.6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfied</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>34.4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>60.2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissatisfied</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>80.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Discipline
Inadequate space and/or facilities
Too much freedom
Finances
Not enough teachers and/or classes too large

Opinions expressed by Urbandale parents were similar to those found in the national polls on all but one of the items common to both surveys. At the national level opinion was about evenly divided on the question of the number of educational changes being made while Urbandale parents felt the number was about right.

The major problems facing the schools were thought nationally to be:

Discipline
Finances
Integration/segregation
Teachers
Large school/large classes

Interestingly, 13 people indicated "good teachers" as one way in which local schools are good (Table 2) while four replied "poor teachers" in response to the question of the biggest problems facing the school (Table 23). "Communications between school and home" also appeared on both lists with six interviewees indicating communications were good and four saying communications were a problem. Teacher aides and athletics both received diverse opinions in the listing of problems with more teacher aides being preferred by two people whereas one felt there were too many. One respondent replied that weak athletics was a problem while another declared that there was too much emphasis on athletics.
Table 23. Item No. 17, Biggest problems facing the local schools (Total sample)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>1st Answer</th>
<th>2nd Answer</th>
<th>3rd Answer</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(No response)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>48.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discipline</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>17.5%</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inadequate space and/or facilities</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>17.5%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Too much freedom</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10.2%</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finances</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10.2%</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not enough teachers and/or classes too large</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drugs/narcotics</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of concern on part of parents</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rapidly changing society</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need swimming pool</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student's lack of respect for others and property</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Too much experimentation</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need recreation center</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Should get back to basics</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Know of no problems</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need dress code</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor communications between school and home</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vandalism</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor teachers</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copyrt decisions limit school's authority</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need sex education program</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need to work with individuals more</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need more teachers' aides</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need stricter requirements to pass courses</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Too rapid growth</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 23 (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>1st Answer</th>
<th>2nd Answer</th>
<th>3rd Answer</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inadequate materials, textbooks, etc.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open classrooms</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing for non-college-bound students</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need to teach morals</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need special programs — like Tech High</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lyle Kehm</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weak athletics</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor coordination between elem. and sec.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Too much emphasis on athletics</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transferring to or from different school</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School blames the parents for problems</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Too many teachers' aides</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need learning disabilities program</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weak elem. physical education program</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need more male teachers in elementary</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The responses given by the total sample to the question of problems facing the schools and for each group were:

**Biggest Problems Facing Local Schools**

**Total sample**
- Discipline
- Inadequate space and/or facilities
- Too much freedom
- Finances
- Not enough teachers and/or classes too large

**Knowledgeable**
- Discipline
- Inadequate space and/or facilities
- Finances
- Too much freedom
- Need swimming pool

**Not knowledgeable**
- Too much freedom
- Discipline
- Inadequate space and/or facilities
- Not enough teachers and/or classes too large
- Finances

**Elementary**
- Inadequate space and/or facilities
- Discipline
- Finances
- Too much freedom
- Not enough teachers and/or classes too large

**Secondary**
- Discipline
- Too much freedom
- Finances
  (Next five all have three responses each)

**Satisfied**
- Inadequate space and/or facilities
- Discipline
- Finances
- Not enough teachers and/or classes too large
- Need swimming pool
Of the 17 items in the Opinion section of the instrument, only five elicited majority responses from two or more sub-
groups differing from the majority responses of the total
sample. The largest number of such differences was given in
response to item 16, the number of rights and privileges being
given students, with five of the six sub-groups, all but
knowledgeable, differing from the total sample (Table 22).
Three such differences were expressed on item five, the number
of educational changes being made (Table 11), with Knowledgeable,
Secondary and Dissatisfied respondents varying from the total
opinion. Two groups, Elementary and Satisfied, varied from the
total opinion on item four, discipline in the public schools
(Table 10); two groups, Secondary and Dissatisfied, held
different opinions than the total sample on whether an ade-
quate job is being done of teaching basic skills (Table 16); two, Not knowledgeable and Dissatisfied, expressed different
opinions from those of the total sample on item 12, the job
being done of preparing students for the "world of work"
(Table 18).
How Categories Differed from Total Response

Knowledgeable parents agreed with opinions expressed by the total sample on all but one item in the Opinion section of the questionnaire. They indicated no majority opinion on the number of educational changes being made (Table 11).

Interviewees categorized as "Not knowledgeable" voiced similar opinions to those of the total sample on all but three items in this section. The view was taken by the Not knowledgeable types that discipline was about right (Table 10), no majority opinion was registered on whether the schools are doing an adequate job of preparing students for the "world of work" (Table 18), and the number of rights and privileges being given students was considered to be about right (Table 22) by half of this group.

The opinions of Elementary parents were similar to those expressed by the total sample on all but one Opinion item. Elementary parents believed that the number of rights and privileges being given students was about right (Table 22).

Secondary parents held views differing from those of the total sample on three Opinion section items. Secondary parents believed that too many educational changes are being made (Table 11), contended that the school is not doing an adequate job of teaching basic skills (Table 16) and expressed the belief that students are being given too many rights and privileges (Table 22).
Only two differences were found between the viewpoints of the total sample on Opinion section items and those of respondents classified as Satisfied with the Urbandale schools. Discipline in the schools was thought by Satisfied parents to be about right (Table 10) as was the number of rights and privileges being given students (Table 22).

In addition to different responses to the items used for the purpose of making the categorization, Dissatisfied parents held majority opinions differing from those of the total sample on ten items in the Opinion section. Dissatisfied respondents' opinions indicated that too many educational changes are being made (Table 11), teachers are not working hard (Table 14), the school is not doing an adequate job of teaching basic skills (Table 16), of preparing students for college (Table 17), nor of preparing students for the "world of work" (Table 18). Dissatisfied parents were not sure whether the school is adequately preparing students to be good citizens (Table 19) or adequately meeting individual needs (Table 21), but were certain that too many rights and privileges are being given students (Table 22). The opinions expressed by Dissatisfied persons also varied from those of the total sample on the ways the school is good and the biggest problems facing the school. The viewpoint of the Dissatisfied parents was nearly unanimous that too many educational changes are being made (Table 11) with 14 of the 15 indicating this belief, and was unanimous that the school is not doing an adequate job of
teaching basic skills (Table 16). It is interesting to note that while 100 per cent of the Dissatisfied parents say that the school is not doing an adequate job of teaching basic skills only a slight majority, 53.3 per cent, feel that an inadequate job is being done of preparing students for college (Table 17) or for the "world of work" (Table 18). This would seem to indicate that at least some of these parents perceive little relationship between preparation in the basic skills and preparation for either college or the "world of work".

Findings of the Vision Section

Responses to the Vision section, items 18 through 61, are summarized in the data shown in Table 24. A more detailed report of the data is shown in Appendix C.

Little difficulty was reported by the interviewers in administering and scoring items in the Vision section. Only three of the 44 items were reported by two or more interviewers as causing any problems of interpretation: items 18, dealing with student involvement in planning learning experiences; 34, with students being encouraged to do more free, undirected exploration and 40, independent study, were all subject to the same problem in interpretation, with the observation being made that some survey subjects indicated their responses might vary according to the grade level of the students. However, all three concepts received general approval from Urbandale parents.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item No.</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>St. Dev.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Students should help plan their learning experiences.</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>76.31</td>
<td>78.75</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>25.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Courses should be on a &quot;pass-fail&quot; basis.</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>33.77</td>
<td>13.10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>35.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>High school students should be able to &quot;pass out&quot; of a course.</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>49.82</td>
<td>50.51</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>34.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>More aides should be hired to help teachers.</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>72.31</td>
<td>91.10</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>37.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Open campus plan.</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>72.67</td>
<td>22.27</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>34.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Compulsory attendance to age 18 or through high school.</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>77.79</td>
<td>91.49</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>32.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Students who fall behind should be placed in remedial classes.</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>88.63</td>
<td>95.92</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>26.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>More emphasis should be placed on concepts than on memorization.</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>86.98</td>
<td>96.05</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>24.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>A textbook should be used as only one source.</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>91.45</td>
<td>96.20</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>17.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>All high school classes should be &quot;electives&quot;.</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>59.1</td>
<td>67.20</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>33.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Students should be informed what will be in a text.</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>64.40</td>
<td>69.51</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>34.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Homework should be kept at a minimum.</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>61.91</td>
<td>66.96</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>32.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item No.</td>
<td>Item Description</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Median</td>
<td>Mode</td>
<td>Standard Dev.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Small classes of 25 or less should be maintained.</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>91.17</td>
<td>95.96</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>National tests should be used to measure achievement.</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>13.9</td>
<td>71.24</td>
<td>78.80</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>High school students should be involved in policy-making decisions.</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>71.26</td>
<td>76.72</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>Differentiated staffing should be used.</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>83.30</td>
<td>88.15</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>Children should be encouraged to do more free, undirected exploration.</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>77.19</td>
<td>82.66</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>Non-grading concepts should be used.</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>73.11</td>
<td>85.63</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>Voucher system should be used.</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>21.9</td>
<td>31.47</td>
<td>7.51</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>There is too much emphasis on &quot;right&quot; answers.</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>17.5</td>
<td>47.08</td>
<td>43.54</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>More emphasis should be placed on reasoning and developing opinions.</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>16.8</td>
<td>76.35</td>
<td>80.27</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>Students should be given more opportunity to talk.</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>74.82</td>
<td>82.94</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>More time should be given to independent study.</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>66.30</td>
<td>75.44</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>Teachers should be paid on the basis of the quality of their work.</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>20.4</td>
<td>66.28</td>
<td>76.97</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item No.</td>
<td>Item</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Neither agree</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Median</td>
<td>Mode</td>
<td>St. Dev.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>School should be in operation all year long.</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>30.6</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>54.7</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>36.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>Work-study programs should be developed for high school students.</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>97.8</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>44</td>
<td>Performance contracting should be used.</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>50.3</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>33.6</td>
<td>32.64</td>
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<td>45</td>
<td>Team-teaching concepts should be used.</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>73.6</td>
<td>24</td>
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<td>12</td>
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<td>72.25</td>
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<tr>
<td>46</td>
<td>Schools have too many petty and/or oppressive rules.</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>73.7</td>
<td>16</td>
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<td>Too much emphasis is placed on extra-curricular activities.</td>
<td>25</td>
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<td>Rigid academic standards, the same for all pupils, should be used for promotion.</td>
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<td>More drill is needed in elementary school in such fundamentals as arithmetic and spelling.</td>
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<td>68.5</td>
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<td>24.0</td>
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<td>More practice is needed in elementary school in such skills as penmanship.</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>66.4</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>22.5</td>
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<td>More emphasis should be placed on developing reading skills.</td>
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<td>72.1</td>
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<td>There is too much emphasis on science in the schools.</td>
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<td>13.9</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>64.2</td>
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Table 24 (Continued)

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<th>Agree</th>
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<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>St. Dev.</th>
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<tr>
<td>53</td>
<td>Some classes should be taught even if enrollment in them is small.</td>
<td>119</td>
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<td>The school curriculum should be flexible.</td>
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<td>Occupational information should be provided at all levels.</td>
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<td>Sex education should be a part of the curriculum.</td>
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<td>57</td>
<td>Agree or disagree with idea of ability grouping.</td>
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<td>Agree or disagree with idea of teacher tenure.</td>
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<td>40.8</td>
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<td>59</td>
<td>Local citizens should be polled on their opinions.</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>9</td>
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<td>79.85</td>
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<td>There should be separate curriculum offerings for minority groups.</td>
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<td>COST CUTTING MEASURES</td>
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<td>a</td>
<td>Increase class size.</td>
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<td>12.80</td>
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<td>b</td>
<td>Cut all teachers' salaries a set percentage.</td>
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<td>c</td>
<td>Eliminate extra-curricular activities.</td>
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<td>3.6</td>
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<td>d</td>
<td>Operate schools year-round.</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>45.3</td>
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<td>45.39</td>
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<td>e</td>
<td>Make parents responsible for transporting students.</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>64.2</td>
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<td>9.5</td>
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<td>78.62</td>
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<tr>
<td>Item No.</td>
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<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Median</td>
<td>Mode</td>
<td>St. Dev.</td>
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<td>f 20</td>
<td>Eliminate kindergarten.</td>
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<td>3.6 18.11</td>
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<tr>
<td>g 86</td>
<td>Charge rent for textbooks</td>
<td>86 68.8</td>
<td>37 27.0</td>
<td>2 10.2</td>
<td>63.07</td>
<td>72.73</td>
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<tr>
<td>h 15</td>
<td>Eliminate twelfth grade.</td>
<td>25 18.2</td>
<td>102 74.5</td>
<td>10 7.3</td>
<td>22.37</td>
<td>.87</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>i 25</td>
<td>Cancel subjects with less than specified minimum registered.</td>
<td>48 35.0</td>
<td>72 52.6</td>
<td>17 12.4</td>
<td>40.87</td>
<td>32.50</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>j 42</td>
<td>Reduce number of subjects.</td>
<td>42 30.6</td>
<td>82 59.8</td>
<td>13 9.5</td>
<td>34.62</td>
<td>15.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>k 23</td>
<td>Reduce janitorial and maintenance services.</td>
<td>23 16.7</td>
<td>88 64.2</td>
<td>26 19.0</td>
<td>26.82</td>
<td>5.07</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>30.74</td>
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<tr>
<td>l 25</td>
<td>Keep textbooks and library books longer.</td>
<td>25 18.2</td>
<td>101 73.7</td>
<td>11 8.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>m 50</td>
<td>Reduce number of guidance counselors.</td>
<td>50 36.4</td>
<td>59 43.1</td>
<td>28 20.4</td>
<td>42.40</td>
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<tr>
<td>n 31</td>
<td>Reduce amount of teaching supplies and materials.</td>
<td>31 22.7</td>
<td>88 64.2</td>
<td>18 13.1</td>
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<td>32.95</td>
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<tr>
<td>o 13</td>
<td>Reduce special services such as speech, reading, hearing.</td>
<td>13 9.4</td>
<td>114 83.2</td>
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<td>p 68</td>
<td>Reduce administrative personnel.</td>
<td>68 49.6</td>
<td>47 34.3</td>
<td>22 16.1</td>
<td>55.22</td>
<td>49.88</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>34.75</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Responses tended to cluster around the two extremes of the 99 point scale with either one, completely disagree, or 99, completely agree, being the mode of the distribution on every item but one. Item 20, concerning whether a high school student should be permitted to "pass out" of a course, received a bi-modal response with both 50 and 99 being the modes. Only one group, Dissatisfied, gave responses which produced distributions showing modes other than one or 99. Nine items had such distributions: item 18, student planning of learning experiences, had a mode of 80; item 27, "elective" high school classes, had a mode of 20; item 29, keeping homework at a minimum had three modes, 30, 50 and 99; item 35, non-grading concepts, had modes of 1, 60 and 99; item 61, reducing the number of subjects to cut costs, a mode of 10; item 61, reducing the number of guidance personnel to cut costs, modes of 10, 70 and 99; item 61, reducing the amount of teaching supplies and materials to cut costs, a mode of 70; item 61, reducing the number of administrative personnel to cut costs, modes of 70 and 99.

Thirty of the items included in this section were identified through a search of critical literature, 14 were found in the national polls and seven were developed to cover areas identified by the Urbandale administration or the researcher. This total of 51 exceeds the total number of 44 items in the section due to the fact that seven items were identified both in the national polls and in critical literature.
The 44 items required 59 responses.

The 39 items identified through a search of critical literature were:

Item 18, student involvement in planning learning activities.
Item 19, use of student marks (A, B, C, D, F).
Item 20, "passing out" of courses for high school students.
Item 22, open campus plan.
Item 23, compulsory attendance to age 18.
Item 24, remedial or compensatory education.
Item 25, stressing concepts, not memorization.
Item 26, the use of textbooks as only one source.
Item 27, "elective" classes in high school.
Item 28, informing students about what will be in an examination.
Item 29, amount of homework.
Item 31, national tests to measure local achievement.
Item 32, student involvement in policy decisions.
Item 33, differentiated staffing.
Item 34, experience curriculum.
Item 35, non-grading concepts.
Item 36, voucher systems.
Item 37, emphasis on "right" answers.
Item 38, placing emphasis on reasoning.
Item 39, giving students more opportunities to talk.
Item 40, independent study.
Item 43, work-study programs (career education).
Item 44, performance contracting.
Item 46, petty and/or oppressive rules.
Item 48, uniform standards for all students.
Item 54, flexible curriculum.
Item 55, occupational information at all levels (career education).
Item 57, ability grouping.
Item 59, local needs assessment.
Item 60, minority curriculum offerings.

The 14 Vision section items found in the national polls were:

Item 19, use of student marks (A, B, C, D, F).
Item 23, compulsory attendance to age 18.
Item 30, class size.
Item 31, national tests to measure local achievement.
Item 32, student involvement in policy decisions.
Item 35, non-grading concepts.
Item 36, voucher systems.
Item 41, merit pay.
Item 42, year-round school.
Item 44, performance contracting.
Item 47, extra-curricular activities.
Item 56, sex education.
Item 58, teacher tenure.
Item 61, cost cutting measures (requiring 16 responses)

Those items concerned with student marks, compulsory attendance, national tests, student involvement in policy decisions, non-grading, vouchers, and performance contracting were common to both critical literature and national polls.

The seven items developed to cover areas identified by the Urbandale administration or the writer were:

Item 21, use of teacher aides.
Item 45, team teaching concepts.
Item 49, elementary school drill in fundamentals.
Item 50, elementary school practice in penmanship skills.
Item 51, emphasis on elementary school reading skills.
Item 52, emphasis on science.
Item 53, class enrollment size and the class's continuation.

In rank order, and with agreeing percentages shown,

Urbandale parents agree with statements that:

Work-study programs should be developed for high school students (97.8 per cent).
Classes should be small (94.0 per cent).
Classes should not be strictly textbook-oriented (92.6 per cent).
Remedial classes (compensatory education) should be conducted for students needing help in such basic skills as reading or arithmetic (90.4 per cent).
Concepts should be stressed over memorization (87.6 per cent).
The curriculum should be flexible (86.9 per cent).
Some classes should be taught even if a smaller number enroll in them than the minimum specified (86.9 per cent).
Differentiated staffing concepts should be used (84.7 per cent).
Sex education should be a part of the curriculum (84.7 per cent).
The local public should be polled to establish local school educational priorities (83.3 per cent).
Students should be involved in planning their learning experiences (81.8 per cent).
Students should be provided with occupational information at all educational levels (81.8 per cent).
Students should be encouraged to do more free, undirected exploration (78.8 per cent).
High school students should be involved in policy decisions (76.6 per cent).
Students should be given more opportunity to talk (75.2 per cent).
Students should be compelled to attend school until 18 years of age (74.5 per cent).
Non-grading concepts should be used (73.6 per cent).
More emphasis should be placed on reasoning and developing opinions (73.6 per cent).
Team teaching concepts should be used (73.6 per cent).
More emphasis should be placed on reading skills in elementary school (72.1 per cent).
More use should be made of teacher aides (70.8 per cent).
National tests should be used to measure local achievement levels (69.4 per cent).
More drill is needed in elementary school in such fundamentals as arithmetic and spelling (68.5 per cent).
More practice is needed in elementary school in such skills as penmanship (66.4 per cent).
More time should be given to independent study projects (65.6 per cent).
Students should be informed in advance exactly what will be included in an examination (64.2 per cent).
Teachers should be paid on the basis of the quality of their work (60.5 per cent).
Homework should be kept at a minimum (59.9 per cent).

In rank order and with disagreeing percentages shown, interviewees expressed disagreement with statements that:

- Schools have too many petty and/or oppressive rules (73.7 per cent).
- There is too much emphasis on extra-curricular activities (64.2 per cent).
- Too much emphasis is placed on science in the public schools (64.2 per cent).
- Courses should be marked on a "pass-fail" basis (59.1 per cent).
All high school courses should be "electives" (59.1 per cent).
Voucher systems should be established (58.5 per cent).
High school students should be required to be in school only when they have classes (57.6 per cent).
School should be in operation all year (54.7 per cent).
Separate curriculum offerings should be available for members of minority groups (54.0 per cent).
There should be uniform standards for promotion to the next grade or level (51.0 per cent).
Performance contracting should be employed by the schools (50.3 per cent).

No majority opinions were expressed either way on the questions of:

Allowing high school students to "pass out" of courses.
Whether there is too much emphasis on memorizing "right" answers.
Whether students should be grouped according to ability.
Whether teachers should be granted tenure.

Even if faced with a lack of sufficient funds, Urbandale parents were opposed to making the following cuts (rank ordered, with opposing percentage given):

Increasing class sizes (88.3 per cent).
Reducing special services such as speech, reading and hearing therapy (83.2 per cent).
Eliminating kindergarten (81.8 per cent).
Eliminating twelfth grade (74.5 per cent).
Eliminating extra-curricular activities (73.8 per cent).
Keeping textbooks and library books longer (73.7 per cent).
Cutting all teachers' salaries a set percentage (69.4 per cent).
Reducing janitorial and maintenance services (64.2 per cent).
Reducing the amount of teaching materials and supplies (64.2 per cent).
Reducing the number of subjects offered (59.8 per cent).
Cancelling any subject not having a minimum number of students enrolled (52.6 per cent).

Two cuts were favored by the respondents if faced with the necessity of taking cost cutting steps. In rank order
and with favoring percentage shown, these were:

Make parents responsible for transporting children to and from school (64.2 per cent).
Charge rent for textbooks (62.8 per cent).

No majority opinion was expressed on the following as possible means of cutting costs in the event of a lack of sufficient funds:

Conduct school all year.
Reduce the number of guidance counselors.
Reduce the number of administrative personnel.

Agreement was voiced with findings of national polls on use of national tests to measure local achievement levels, paying teachers according to the quality of work done, including sex education in the school curriculum, approving non-grading concepts, compulsory attendance to the age of 18, approval of marking systems (A, B, C, D, F), approval of extra-curricular activities, favoring small classes and opposing year-round operation of the schools. The opinions expressed in Urbandale differed from those expressed nationally on the issues of teacher tenure, student involvement in policy decisions and performance contracting. Student involvement in policy decisions was opposed nationally but favored in Urbandale; teacher tenure was opposed nationally while Urbandale respondents expressed no majority opinion; nationally opinion was about evenly divided on performance contracting while opposition was voiced in Urbandale.

Only two items were approved nationally as cost cutting measures in the event of an insufficiency of funds and only
two were approved in Urbandale, but a different two. Nationally approval was given for reducing the number of administrative personnel and for cancelling any subject with less than the minimum specified number enrolled whereas in Urbandale the two items to receive approval were to make parents responsible for transporting their children to and from school and to charge rent for textbooks.

The various sub-groups agreed with the total sample's majority views on most of the items in the Vision section, with the following exceptions: Knowledgeable parents disagreed with the idea of ability grouping, disagreed with the idea of teacher tenure and agreed with the thought of reducing the number of administrative personnel as a cost-cutting step; Not knowledgeable parents could reach no majority view on the matter of performance contracting and approved rigid academic standards for advancement to the next grade or level; Elementary parents believed that high school students should be permitted to "pass out" of a course, expressed no majority opinion on separate curriculum offerings for minorities, disagreed with the idea of ability grouping and reached no majority view on whether subjects without a minimum number enrolled should be cancelled as a cost-cutting step; Secondary parents disagreed with the idea of teacher tenure, approved of the year-round school and reducing the number of administrative personnel as cost-cutting measures, and expressed no majority opinion on reducing the number of subjects to cut
costs; Satisfied parents felt that a high school student should be permitted to "pass out" of a course and reached no majority opinion on performance contracting nor on cancelling subjects with less than a minimum enrollment to cut costs; Dissatisfied parents registered no majority opinions on all high school courses being "electives", on whether students should do more free, undirected exploration, on non-grading concepts, on giving students more opportunities to talk, on the idea of independent study, on performance contracting, on team-teaching, on whether too much emphasis is placed on extra-curricular activities and on using textbooks and library books longer to cut costs, disagreed with keeping homework at a minimum, with the idea of teacher tenure and with the year-round school as a means of cutting costs, and approved reducing the number of guidance counselors, the number of administrative personnel and the amount of teaching materials and supplies to reduce costs. In general, the Dissatisfied interviewees were less likely to agree with the opinions of the total sample or to reach internal agreement than was any other group, as evidenced by the six areas of outright disagreement with the total sample opinion and the nine areas in which no Dissatisfied majority opinion could be found in the Vision section.

Seven items in the Vision section received responses from two or more sub-groups varying from those of the total sample. Elementary and Satisfied parents favored permitting
high school students to "pass out" of a course while the total opinion was in opposition; Not knowledgeable, Elementary, and Dissatisfied parents were uncertain regarding performance contracting as compared to disapproval of the concept from Urbandale parents as a whole; while no majority opinion was expressed by the total sample on the idea of ability grouping, Knowledgeable and Elementary parents opposed the concept; teacher tenure was disapproved by Knowledgeable, Elementary, and Dissatisfied parents whereas no agreement was reached by the total sample; operating schools year-round to cut costs found disfavor in the eyes of Secondary and Dissatisfied parents while the total sample was undecided; the total sample disapproved cancelling subjects with a smaller number enrolled than the minimum specified but Elementary and Satisfied parents were not sure; Knowledgeable, Secondary and Dissatisfied parents favored reducing the number of administrative personnel if cost reductions became necessary as compared to no majority opinion from the total sample.

Findings of the Knowledge Section

The development of a section of a school district opinionnaire to assess the knowledge of the interviewees was recommended by Nagel (62) as a means of determining whether those holding either approving or disapproving opinions possess knowledge about the school district on which to base their approval or disapproval. Such items, according to Nagel,
should be those considered to be of importance or interest locally. The items developed for the Knowledge section of this study were developed by the Urbandale administration and consisted of 11 items, requiring 13 responses for a perfect score.

The questions dealing with the number of members on the board of education (item 62), the names of two of them (item 63), the number of principals (item 66), the name of the respondent's child's principal (item 68), and the name of the superintendent (item 69) were designed to indicate how "visible" the people indicated were to the school patrons. Those items asking about enrollment (item 64), the number of elementary schools (item 65), and the size of the budget (item 70) were intended to assess the amount of parental knowledge about some of the logistical aspects of the school's operation. Item 67, concerning the new school building under construction, was meant to measure whether people really did know the purpose of the bond issue passed; item 71, the two main sources of school funds, was designed to show whether the interviewees were aware of this aspect of school finance; item 72, regarding whom to approach with a child's school problems, was developed to show how effective the school's campaign had been to persuade parents to approach the teacher, principal or counselor rather than the central administration or the school board with children's specific problems.

The item asking for the principal's name, item 68, was
used for categorizing parents as either Elementary or Secondary, according to the level in which they had children enrolled as evidenced by which principal they named.

The number of items which each group could answer correctly is shown in Table 25. The number of correct responses was the basis for designating respondents as either Knowledgeable or Not knowledgeable. It is interesting to note that Secondary parents were able to correctly answer more questions than Elementary and Satisfied more than Dissatisfied.

Only 10 per cent of the parents in the survey knew that there were seven members on the board of education in the Urbandale school district (Table 26). Understandably, the largest number of correct responses was obtained from respondents categorized as Knowledgeable, although only one in five in this group could supply the correct answer. Secondary and Satisfied parents held a slight edge over Elementary and Dissatisfied, but a majority of no group knew the answer.

The responses displayed in Table 27 show that over half of all interviewees were unable to name a single director on the board of education and over 70 per cent unable to name two. The most frequently named director, Joe Haverty, was named 36 times while two directors, Richard Lynes and Nick Johnson, were each mentioned only six times.

Respondents in all categories were ignorant of the enrollment of the Urbandale schools, as indicated by the data
<table>
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<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>16.8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>30.3</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>21.1</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>16.8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>30.3</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>16.8</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>37.7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>32.8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>18.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>6.15</td>
<td>8.10</td>
<td>4.58</td>
<td>6.41</td>
<td>7.29</td>
<td>6.17</td>
<td>5.26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 26. Item No. 64, How many members on the board of education?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Correct response No.</th>
<th>Correct response %</th>
<th>Incorrect response No.</th>
<th>Incorrect response %</th>
<th>No response</th>
<th>No response %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total sample</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>54.7</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>35.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledgeable</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>21.3</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>65.6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not knowledgeable</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>46.1</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>52.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>64.6</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>25.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>55.6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>29.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfied</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>52.7</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>35.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissatisfied</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>60.0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Correct response: seven.

Table 27. Item No. 63, Name two school board members (Total sample)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School board member</th>
<th>First response No.</th>
<th>First response %</th>
<th>Second response No.</th>
<th>Second response %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Darrell Dickinson</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richard Lynes</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jack Nichols</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>13.9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joe Haverty</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nick Johnson</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joe Rodenberg</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary Oliver</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No answer/incorrect answer</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>51.8</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>73.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
displayed in Table 28. Incorrect responses or no responses were forthcoming from over 90 per cent of every group.

Examination of the data contained in Table 29 reveals that all categories of respondents were also unaware of the number of elementary schools in the district, although nearly half of the Knowledgeable and Secondary parents could correctly respond to the item.

Even fewer respondents knew the number of elementary principals than knew the number of elementary schools (Table 30), with only one in four correctly stating "six". There was a tendency for respondents to answer with the same number of elementary principals as they did the number of elementary schools although there were two less elementary principals than elementary schools since two principals presided over two schools each.

The data in Table 31 show that the purpose of the new school building under construction was well known to those parents interviewed. It is interesting to note that 100 per cent of the Knowledgeable and the Dissatisfied parents knew that the building was to be used as a junior high school.

The responses displayed in Table 32 were utilized to designate respondents as either parents of Elementary or Secondary students with those answering either "Doeringsfeld" or "Cox" categorized as Secondary and those responding "Hamlin", "Else", "Gustafson", or "Pack" as Elementary. Over 20 per cent could not name their child's principal and thus
Table 28. Item No. 64, Approximate enrollment, within 200°a

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Correct response</th>
<th>Incorrect response</th>
<th>No response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total sample</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledgeable</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not knowledgeable</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfied</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissatisfied</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*aCorrect response: 3,700.

Table 29. Item No. 65, How many elementary schools?°a

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Correct response</th>
<th>Incorrect response</th>
<th>No response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total sample</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>29.2</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledgeable</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>49.2</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not knowledgeable</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>26.6</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>44.4</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfied</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>30.1</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissatisfied</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

°aCorrect response: six.
Table 30. Item No. 66, How many elementary principals? a

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Correct response</th>
<th>Incorrect response</th>
<th>No response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total sample</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>24.1</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledgeable</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>34.4</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not knowledgeable</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>21.5</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>25.9</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfied</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>26.9</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissatisfied</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

aCorrect response: four.

Table 31. Item No. 67, Purpose of the new building under construction a

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Correct response</th>
<th>Incorrect response</th>
<th>No response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total sample</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>92.0</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledgeable</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not knowledgeable</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>85.5</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>97.5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>92.6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfied</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>91.4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissatisfied</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

aCorrect response: junior high school.
Table 32. Item No. 68, Name your child's principal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principal</th>
<th>Total sample</th>
<th>Knowledgeable</th>
<th>Not knowledgeable</th>
<th>Elementary</th>
<th>Secondary</th>
<th>Satisfied</th>
<th>Dissatisfied</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doeringsfeld</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>16.4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cox</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamlin</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>18.0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Else</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>18.0</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gustafson</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>20.4</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>16.4</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>23.7</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pack</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No answer/inorr. answer</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>22.6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>38.2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
were not categorized as either Elementary or Secondary.

The name of the superintendent of the Urbandale schools, Dr. Lyle Kehm, was known to two out of three respondents (Table 33). Only the Not knowledgeable respondents were unable to give his name.

Table 33. Item No. 69, What is the superintendent's name?\textsuperscript{a}  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Correct response</th>
<th>Incorrect response</th>
<th>No response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total sample</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>64.2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledgeable</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>95.1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not knowledgeable</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>39.5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>72.2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>81.5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfied</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>86.7</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissatisfied</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>60.0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{a}Correct response: Lyle Kehm.

As revealed by the data shown in Table 34, less than 10 per cent of the respondents and less than 15 per cent of any group knew that the current (1972-73) Urbandale school budget amounted to three million dollars. Responses ranged from two hundred thousand dollars to ten million dollars.

Although nearly everyone knew that property tax was a main source of school funds, less than half were aware of the role played by state aid (Table 35). Knowledgeable parents were the only ones able to give both responses to the question.
Table 34. Item No. 70, Amount of current budget, to the nearest million

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Correct response</th>
<th>Incorrect response</th>
<th>No response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total sample</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledgeable</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not knowledgeable</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfied</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissatisfied</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Correct response: $3,000,000.

Table 35. Item No. 71, Name two sources of school funds

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Property tax No.</th>
<th>Property tax %</th>
<th>State aid No.</th>
<th>State aid %</th>
<th>No answer/ incorr. ans. No.</th>
<th>No answer/ incorr. ans. %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total sample</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>91.2</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>40.2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledgeable</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>96.7</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>59.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not knowledgeable</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>86.8</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>13.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>91.1</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>44.3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>96.3</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>44.4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfied</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>91.4</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>44.1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissatisfied</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>86.7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Nearly everyone interviewed was able to give an acceptable answer to the question of whom to approach with a child's school problems. Table 36 data show that only three respondents failed to answer by indicating either the teacher, principal or guidance counselor.

Urbandale parents were able to give correct or satisfactory responses to the following Knowledge items (rank-ordered, with percentage of correct or satisfactory responses):

Almost all of the interviewees (97.8 per cent) correctly responded with the teacher, principal or guidance counselor as the one to approach with a child's school problems (Table 36).

Nearly all of the respondents (92.0 per cent) knew that the new school building under construction was to be a junior high school (Table 31).

Nine out of ten (91.2 per cent) correctly named property tax as one source of school funds, but only four in ten (40.2 per cent) were aware of the role state aid plays in school finance (Table 35).

Over three-fourths (77.4 per cent) could name their child's principal (Table 32).

About two-thirds (64.2 per cent) were able to identify Lyle Keim as the school superintendent (Table 33).

In rank order, and with the percentage answering correctly, those items which the majority of respondents could not satisfactorily answer were:

Only seven respondents (5.1 per cent) were able to come within 200 of the correct enrollment, which was 3700 (Table 28).

Three million dollars as the amount of the school budget was correctly answered by 12 people (8.8 per cent) (Table 34).

One in ten (10.2 per cent) knew that there were seven members on the Urbandale board of education (Table 26).

The number of elementary principals was correctly identified as four by 33 interviewees (24.1 per cent) (Table 30).
Table 36. Item No. 72, To whom would you go with your child's school problems?\(^a\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Principal</th>
<th>Counselor</th>
<th>Ed. of ed.</th>
<th>No answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No. %</td>
<td>No. %</td>
<td>No. %</td>
<td>No. %</td>
<td>No. %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total sample</td>
<td>93 67.9</td>
<td>31 22.6</td>
<td>10 7.3</td>
<td>1 0.7</td>
<td>2 1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledgeable</td>
<td>41 67.2</td>
<td>16 26.2</td>
<td>3 4.9</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
<td>1 1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not knowledgeable</td>
<td>52 68.4</td>
<td>15 19.7</td>
<td>7 9.2</td>
<td>1 1.3</td>
<td>1 1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td>63 79.7</td>
<td>13 16.5</td>
<td>1 1.3</td>
<td>1 1.3</td>
<td>1 1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>12 44.1</td>
<td>10 37.0</td>
<td>4 14.8</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
<td>1 3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfied</td>
<td>69 74.2</td>
<td>17 18.3</td>
<td>5 5.4</td>
<td>1 1.1</td>
<td>1 1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissatisfied</td>
<td>7 46.7</td>
<td>7 46.7</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
<td>1 6.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^a\)Acceptable responses: Teacher, principal, counselor.
Forty respondents (29.2 per cent) correctly answered that there were six elementary schools (Table 29). Almost half (48.2 per cent) could name one board of education member but only one-fourth (26.3 per cent) could name two (Table 27).

Except for the differences in responses between Knowledgeable and Not knowledgeable parents, only one item in the Knowledge section elicited any different responses from any sub-group than from the total sample. The teacher was identified as the person to approach with a child's school problems by a majority of all groups except Secondary and dissatisfied, who were divided on the question, although still giving satisfactory answers.

Knowledge of the answers to the items included in the Knowledge section did not appear to be the major factor. Nagel (62) believed it might be in influencing opinions or the wrong knowledge items may have been used. Only eight of the eighty responses in the Opinion and Vision section were different between the Knowledgeable and the Not knowledgeable interviewees.

Knowledgeable parents believed discipline was not strict enough. Not knowledgeable parents felt it was about right; no majority opinion was expressed by knowledgeable parents on the number of educational changes being made, but Not knowledgeable parents said the number was about right; an adequate job was being done of preparing students for the "world of work" according to the view held by knowledgeable parents, while the Not knowledgeable were not sure;
Knowledgeable respondents disapproved of performance contracting but not knowledgeable ones reached no majority conclusion; Knowledgeable parents disapproved of rigid standards for promotion while Not knowledgeable parents approved the concept; ability grouping received disapproval from the Knowledgeable people whereas the Not knowledgeable neither approved nor disapproved the concept; Knowledgeable respondents disagreed with the concept of teacher tenure although the Not knowledgeable ones could reach no majority opinion; the Knowledgeable approved of reducing the number of administrative personnel to reduce costs while the Not knowledgeable expressed no majority opinion.

Findings of the Demographic Information Section

The interview forms were filled out by the interviewers on the first three sections of the questionnaire, but the forms were handed to the respondents for the final section and the respondents filled in the answers. This procedure was recommended by Backstrom and Hursh (4) as being less threatening to the respondents and therefore more likely to elicit truthful answers.

It was reported by all interviewers that there was difficulty in arranging interviews with the fathers in the sample drawn but that interviews could easily be arranged with the mothers. Therefore over 80 per cent of the interviews were conducted with the mothers. This situation pointed up
another weakness in the methodology: the respondent was asked for his/her occupation and the majority of responses received were in the category of "housewife", giving a somewhat skewed distribution to the answers to that question. This did not permit any comparisons to be made concerning the occupation of the main wage earner of the family.

Responses to the items in the Demographic Information section of the survey are contained in Tables 37 through 44.

The majority of all but Secondary and Dissatisfied parents fell in the 30-39 age bracket as shown by the data displayed in Table 37. Secondary parents tended to be older whereas Dissatisfied parents had a more wide-spread age distribution.

Eighty-one per cent of the respondents were women, as shown by the data in Table 38. The relative distribution of male to female remained fairly constant except for Secondary and Dissatisfied parents. Seventy per cent of the Secondary and 60 per cent of the Dissatisfied were females.

The data in Table 39 indicates that the majority of Urbandale parents included in the study have received training or education beyond the high school level, with over 60 per cent of the Knowledgeable and Secondary parents indicating such training or education and over half of the Satisfied parents as compared to less than half of the Not knowledgeable, Elementary and Dissatisfied. The findings of the national polls also indicated that persons who were satisfied with the schools tended to be more highly educated than those who
### Tablo 37. Item No. 73, Age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Total sample</th>
<th>Knowledgeable</th>
<th>Not knowledgeable</th>
<th>Elementary</th>
<th>Secondary</th>
<th>Satisfied</th>
<th>Disatisfied</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under 20</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 - 29</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 - 39</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>59.1</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>52.5</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>64.5</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 - 49</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>30.7</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>45.9</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>18.4</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 - Over</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Tablo 38. Item No. 74, Sex

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Total sample</th>
<th>Knowledgeable</th>
<th>Not knowledgeable</th>
<th>Elementary</th>
<th>Secondary</th>
<th>Satisfied</th>
<th>Disatisfied</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>19.7</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>18.4</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>81.0</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>80.3</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>81.6</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade or class</td>
<td>Total sample</td>
<td>Knowledgeable</td>
<td>Not knowledgeable</td>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>Satisfied</td>
<td>Dissatisfied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H.S., Incomplete</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H.S., Complete</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>42.3</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>37.7</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>48.1</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tech., trade or business</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College, univ., incomplete</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>24.1</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>31.1</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>18.4</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College, univ., complete</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>19.7</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
were dissatisfied.

Table 40, containing information on occupations, shows that a majority of the interviewees were housewives, followed by professional or technical workers. This pattern was the same for all of the sub-groups. It is interesting to note that there were no farmers in the sample and that all of the unskilled workers were classified as Not knowledgeable.

Over half of all groups (except the Not knowledgeable) had family incomes of $15,000 or over, according to the answers displayed in Table 41. Contrary to the findings of the national polls, a larger percentage of Dissatisfied parents in Urbandale had higher incomes than Satisfied parents in spite of the fact that their mean level of education, as indicated in Table 39, was lower.

Religious preferences of the respondents are shown in Table 42. Strangely, no Jewish parents were included in the randomly selected sample, although the researcher knew personally of many Jewish families residing in the district.

The mean number of children the interviewees had enrolled in public school was 2.18, as indicated in Table 43. This held fairly constant for all groups except Dissatisfied parents, 60 per cent of whom had only one child enrolled in public schools.

Only twelve of the people interviewed, 8.7 per cent, had any children enrolled in private or parochial school according to the answers displayed in Table 44. Those who did have such
Table 40. Item No. 76, Occupation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Total sample</th>
<th>Knowledgable</th>
<th>Not knowledgable</th>
<th>Elementary</th>
<th>Secondary</th>
<th>Satisfied</th>
<th>Dism. satisfied</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional or technical</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>18.4</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-employed, manager, official</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skilled worker</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unskilled worker</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerical, sales</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farm</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housewife</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>58.0</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>65.6</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>52.6</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 41. Item No. 77, 1972 family income, prior to taxes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income</th>
<th>Total sample</th>
<th>Knowledgeable</th>
<th>Not knowledgeable</th>
<th>Elementary</th>
<th>Secondary</th>
<th>Satisfied</th>
<th>Dissatisfied</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under $2,999</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$3,000 - $4,999</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$5,000 - $6,999</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$7,000 - $9,999</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$10,000 - $14,999</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>35.0</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>34.4</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>35.5</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$15,000 - Over</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>54.0</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>63.9</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>46.1</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11 73.3
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Religion</th>
<th>Total sample</th>
<th>Knowledgeable</th>
<th>Not knowledgeable</th>
<th>Elementary</th>
<th>Secondary</th>
<th>Satisfied</th>
<th>Dissatisfied</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protestant</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>80.3</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>90.2</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>82.3</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>17.5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>23.7</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jewish</td>
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<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 43. Item No. 79, Number of children enrolled in public school

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>29.1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>38.0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>37.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>17.7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>25.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.8</td>
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<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>2.18</td>
<td>2.18</td>
<td>2.17</td>
<td>2.28</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>2.26</td>
<td>1.66</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 44. Item No. 30, Number of children in private or parochial school

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of children</th>
<th>Total sample</th>
<th>Knowledgeable</th>
<th>Not knowledgeable</th>
<th>Elementary</th>
<th>Secondary</th>
<th>Satisfied</th>
<th>Dissatisfied</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mean*         | .14 | .08 | .18 | .14 | .11 | .12 | .26 |
Mean**        | 1.58| 1.25| 1.75| 1.38| 1.50| 1.38| 4.00|

* Computed for all respondents in each category.

** Computed for those respondents having children in private or parochial school.
children enrolled had an average of 1.58 children attending private or parochial school. Because of the small number involved it is difficult to draw any comparisons between the various groups. For example, only one Dissatisfied parent had any children enrolled in private or parochial schools, but since this parent had four such children the mean number of children enrolled in private or parochial schools for this group was 4.00, a figure which could easily be misleading when compared to the mean number enrolled from families in the other divisions. A somewhat better comparison can be made when the entire group in each category is used in computing the mean, but even then the small number having children enrolled in private or parochial schools makes comparisons difficult.

Correlations

Correlation coefficients were computed between all possible pairings of responses. With 101 responses there were 5,050 correlation coefficients computed. The purpose in computing these was to determine whether there was a strong enough relationship between any particular items in the questionnaire that any of them could be eliminated from the final form without adversely effecting the results. As displayed in Table 45, there were only 20 pairings with correlation coefficient strengths (r) of .400 or greater. With 135 degrees of freedom (n - 2) all 20 were found to be highly significant, i.e. significant at the .01 level,
Table 45. Correlations of .400 or greater

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items correlated</th>
<th>Correlation coefficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>74 Sex</td>
<td>.574</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76 Occupation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42 Year-round school concept</td>
<td>.572</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64 Knowledge of enrollment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70 Knowledge of amount budgeted</td>
<td>.536</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38 Place more emphasis on reasoning and opinions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 Independent study concept</td>
<td>.523</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 Greater use of teacher aides</td>
<td>.518</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 Greater emphasis on concepts rather than memorisation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49 More drill needed in arithmetic and spelling</td>
<td>.505</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51 More emphasis needed on reading skills</td>
<td>.499</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Job being done by board of education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Job being done by administration</td>
<td>.490</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39 Permit students to talk more</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 Independent study concept</td>
<td>.442</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Satisfaction or dissatisfaction with schooling</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Number of educational changes being made</td>
<td>.441</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34 Experience curriculum</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 Independent study concept</td>
<td>.436</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63a Name a member of board of education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63b Name a second member of board of education</td>
<td>.435</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61a Cancel courses with small enrollment to cut costs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61j Reduce number of subjects offered to cut costs</td>
<td>.433</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49 More drill needed in arithmetic and spelling</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 More practice needed in penmanship</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 Greater use of teacher aides</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37 Too much emphasis on &quot;right&quot; answers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Significantly different from 0 p > .01.*
Table 45 (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items correlated</th>
<th>Correlation coefficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>62 Number of members on board of education</td>
<td>.421</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64 Knowledge of enrollment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>611 Keep textbooks longer to cut costs</td>
<td>.416</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61n Reduce amount of teaching materials to cut costs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 Permit high school students to &quot;pass out&quot; of courses</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35 Non-grading concept</td>
<td>.407</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Discipline</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Number of educational changes being made</td>
<td>.407</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Satisfaction or dissatisfaction with schooling</td>
<td>.402</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 Job of providing for individual needs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Satisfaction or dissatisfaction with schooling</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34 Experience curriculum</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
indicating that there is less than one chance in 100 that the relationship between the items occurred by chance.

Two of the correlations were computed as negative, but are reported as positive since the wording of the items was such that a negative correlation actually indicated a positive relationship. One of these was between the item dealing with satisfaction or dissatisfaction with schooling and the concept of the experience-based curriculum. No negative relationships were thus found between items with a coefficient strength of .400 or more.

The strongest association, a correlation coefficient \((r)\) of .574, was found between sex and occupation. Eight out of every ten interviewees were female (Table 38) and nearly six out of every ten were housewives (Table 40).

The next strongest, .572, was between the idea of the year-round school as a concept and operating school year-round as a means of cutting costs.

Since the strongest \(r\) reported was .574 the largest coefficient of determination \((r^2)\) was .329, indicating that only 32.9 per cent of the distribution can be explained by the relationships between the items. Thus no correlations were found to be strong enough that 50 per cent of the distribution could be said to be attributable to the association between the items, so none were found strong enough to indicate that any items could be eliminated from the instrument without adversely affecting the results.

Five items correlated at the strength of .400 or more.
with at least two other items. Satisfaction or dissatisfaction with schooling showed such relationships with the number of educational changes being made, the job being done of providing for individual needs and the concept of the experience-based curriculum. The number of education changes being made correlated at this strength with satisfaction or dissatisfaction with schooling and with discipline in the local schools. The experience-based curriculum correlated thus with satisfaction or dissatisfaction with schooling and with the independent study concept. The independent study concept showed such a relationship with permitting students to talk more, the experience-based curriculum, and with placing more emphasis on reasoning and developing opinions. Knowledge of the enrollment correlated at .400 or more with knowledge of the amount of the budget and with knowledge of the number of members on the board of education.

The full range of possible responses was obtained to every item included in the Opinion and Vision sections of the field survey form.

Suggestions of Urbandale School Administration

On November 5, 1973, a letter was received from Lyle Kehm, superintendent of the Urbandale Community Schools, along with copies of the October 11, 1973, and November 2, 1973, "Take Me Home" bulletins distributed in the school district
The letter expressed the thought that the information gathered and presented to the school officials had been useful in "helping us to understand parent attitudes and opinions" and added that "we see many possibilities for its use as we plan for improvement of our programs, policies and operations."

Four suggestions were offered in the letter for improving the survey:

1. Although the majority of the interviewees were housewives, it would have been possible for them to designate their husband's occupation, and thus we could have obtained additional information as to the occupation of the family income earner.

2. If possible to do so within the limitations of this survey model, it would be helpful to identify the responses by school rather than just the elementary-secondary divisions.

3. As to identifying the respondents by religious preference, I am surprised that the random sample did not draw any Jewish persons, because we do have a noticeable number of Jewish families in the community.

4. If we were to do the survey over again, I think we would have attempted to include in the knowledge section some items on curriculum and program instead of merely logistical items.
Summary

The purpose of this study was to develop and test a public opinion polling instrument to be used in the needs assessment process in local school districts focusing on opinions toward selected educational practices. There were five stages in the development and testing of the instrument. First, the national polls were searched to determine areas about which either approval or disapproval had been expressed and the literature searched to identify criticisms which had been voiced by writers of critical literature about educational practices used to instruct or control students. Second, a validity survey instrument of 94 items was submitted to a judgment panel consisting of 21 professional educators and 21 lay persons. The panel evaluated each item as to its appropriateness for the purpose of assessing public opinion.

For the third stage, the construction of the pilot instrument, judgment panel evaluations and intuitive judgment of the writer were utilized to identify the 61 items included in the Opinion and Vision sections. Opinion items were designed to assess opinion toward existing conditions in the school district and Vision items to ascertain opinions toward criticisms of schools found in current literature. A Knowledge section was designed to cover a need expressed by Nagel (62) with the items in this section being developed by the adminis-
tration of the Urbandale Community School District, the pilot
district selected. A fourth section, Demographic Information
was added to collect information on personal items considered
by Gallup (23) to be important in determining relationships
between responses and background of the respondents.

The fourth stage was the testing of the pilot instrument.
For this purpose 150 families of Urbandale students were
randomly selected for in-depth personal interviews, the data
collection technique recommended by the Iowa State University
survey section as being the most appropriate for this type of
research. Twelve members of the Women's Society for Christian
Service (WSCS) of the Altoona, Iowa United Methodist Church
were contracted and trained to conduct the interviews. The
data gathered were processed through the Iowa State University
Computation Center and an item analysis performed on each item
as well as correlations computed between items.

The fifth and final stage was the development of the
final instrument and recommendations for its use and for
future studies. Strengths and weaknesses and problems which
became apparent in the analysis of the data were noted along
with observations made by the interviewers, the Urbandale
administration and the researcher. Attempts were made to
resolve all problems identified.
Limitations

The determination of items which were appropriate to be included in the Opinion and Vision sections of the survey instrument was limited to 56 items identified through a search of critical literature and national public opinion polls about the schools which were deemed appropriate (and therefore valid) by a judgment panel and four items developed from the intuitive judgment of the researcher to fill voids for which no appropriate items had been identified. The items were limited to educational practices employed to instruct or control pupils in the public schools and items related to accountability. Knowledge section items were limited to those considered to be of importance and/or interest in the Urbandale Community School District. The social and economic characteristics sampled in the Demographic Information section were limited to age, sex, amount of formal education, occupation, income level, religious preference and number of children enrolled in public or parochial or private school.

The scope of the study was confined to field testing the system developed for ascertaining public opinion toward the selected educational practices in the Urbandale Community School District of Urbandale, Iowa. Interviewees were limited to parents of public school pupils in the Urbandale schools and no attempt made to draw any inferences to any other population or any other school district.
Interpreting any research requires a consideration of the design and sampling limitations. The following caveats must be considered:

1. Terminology was not always clearly communicated. What parents desired in the matter of "discipline" was never communicated, for example. Neither was a clear understanding of what the question regarding "starting school at the age of four" meant, and some parents indicated their responses to certain items might be different for elementary students than for secondary.

2. Aspirations which parents have for their children were never determined, although such aspirations may have been a factor in some opinions expressed.

3. The population of the Urbandale district is not typical of Iowa schools. Urbandale parents represent a more homogenous group than is usually found, being largely well-educated, having relatively high incomes, and representing a relatively narrow range of occupational choices.

4. Only parents, and generally mothers, were interviewed for this field study.
Conclusions

This section was divided into two parts, conclusions about the study as a whole and conclusions about the Urbandale respondents.

A. Conclusions about the study as a whole  The recent push from the public for more accountability has led to the development of "needs assessment" programs. Such programs involve the establishment of local educational goals and objectives through such means as sampling of local priorities and the development of educational programs designed to accomplish these goals and objectives. A search of the literature disclosed no method which has been used to attempt to determine local public opinion of which educational practices the local publics would prefer to have used in the local schools, although Gallup (23), Harrison (33) and Woodington (93) all assert that failure to consider such public opinions has often resulted in lack of support from the publics being served. The system developed by this study should help to fill this void and add another dimension to the needs assessment process, thus resulting in programs which will be better accepted locally.

A search of critical literature revealed a number of educational practices falling into the three general categories of (1) relevancy/irrelevancy of the curriculum, (2) humanizing/de-humanizing practices in the schools, and (3) accountability.
The feasibility of developing survey items from these criticisms was verified by the submission of the items to a judgment panel to establish the validity of the items.

Past research has demonstrated the feasibility of adapting the Gallup/C. F. Kettering poll for local uses to assess local opinions toward existing conditions in the schools (28). The feasibility of this study as a means of ascertaining local public opinions toward selected educational practices was demonstrated by the following four factors:

1. The validity of the survey items was established through judgment panel evaluations.
2. The use of non-professional interviewers was found to be practical with a minimum of training necessary.
3. The cost was found to be non-prohibitive.
4. The usefulness of the data collected to the local school was verified by statements contained in a letter from the superintendent of the pilot school.

Four items were worded in such a manner as to result in some difficulty of interpretation, the items regarding starting school at the age of four, involving students in planning their own learning activities, encouraging students to do more free, undirected exploration, and the independent study concept. Re-writing of these items for the final form of the survey was necessary to clarify their meanings.

Items in the Knowledge section failed to distinguish between the respondent who was critical or approving of the
schools and is ignorant or has knowledge upon which to base his opinions. This failure may well have been due to the wrong items being selected for this section. More emphasis should have been placed on curriculum and educational program in the development of items for this section and less on the logistical aspects of the school's operation.

No correlations between items were found to be of sufficient strength to warrant the elimination of any item from the final form of the instrument on that basis, even though 20 pairings correlated at a coefficient strength of .400 or more and were all significant at the .01 level.

The full range of responses was obtained for each item in the Opinion and Vision sections of the survey form, indicating that each item did permit for the full range of expression of opinion. This factor, combined with the observations of the interviewers and the correlations obtained, led to the conclusion that no logical basis could be found for excluding any items from the final form of the instrument, only that six items should be revised to clarify their meanings or to permit more accurate and/or effective categorization of respondents.

The methodology used did not provide an adequate means of distinguishing between parents of students of different grade levels. Three items in the Demographic Information section were revised for the final form of the instrument to rectify this situation, one to ascertain the occupation of the
major income earner of the family, one to determine whether respondents currently have children enrolled in public school and, if so, at which grade levels and the third to collect the same information concerning children enrolled in private or parochial school.

The utilization of the 99 point scale for the collection and compilation of data for the Vision section proved to be cumbersome and time-consuming. Responses tended to cluster around the extremes of the scale, limiting its usefulness. Therefore a five point scale would appear to be satisfactory and easier to use.

B. Conclusions about Urbandale parents Urbandale parents in general were satisfied with the schooling their children were receiving and supported the school, its staff, and its programs. The major concern expressed was with discipline, with the indication being that discipline was not strict enough. The strongest point of agreement was expressed in favor of work-study programs for high school students.

Parents of secondary students tended to be more knowledgeable about the topics included in the Knowledge section than were the parents of Elementary students, probably because of their longer association with the school which has given them more opportunity to become familiar with it. Parents categorized as Knowledgeable and as Elementary tended to express greater satisfaction with the schools than did those categorized as Not knowledgeable and as Secondary. The
apparent contradiction of Secondary parents being more critical yet more knowledgeable, but of Knowledgeable parents being more satisfied than Not knowledgeable is due to the entire sample being categorized as either Knowledgeable or Not knowledgeable while nearly one-fourth of the total sample could not name their children's principals and, consequently, could not be categorized as either Elementary or Secondary.

On most expressions of opinion there was generally more agreement than disagreement of opinion among the various groups with the exception of Dissatisfied parents. Dissatisfied parents not only showed greater disagreement with the other groups, but tended toward disagreement among themselves, expressing no majority viewpoint on several issues. This general similarity of opinion may be partially due to the somewhat homogenous character of the sample, which tended toward a relatively high level of education, a relatively high level of income, a small range of occupation (no farmers, no unemployed, very few unskilled workers and probably no working-poor), and a similarity of religious preferences. It may also be to some extent the result of the public relations and/or informational programs of the Urbandale Community Schools. The Urbandale school administration regularly sends home bulletins entitled "Take Me Home" containing information about the schools. These bulletins may have been instrumental in helping to shape opinions within the school district.

The Urbandale School information program, while better
than most, was not a complete success -- 55 per cent of Urbandale parents were categorized as Not knowledgeable, indicating a need for some changes in the informational program. First, however, a local determination must be made of the type or types of information considered to be important and/or desirable for the local public to know, then a program developed to effectively disseminate those types of information.

Programs to change the opinions of the Dissatisfied Urbandale parents may be difficult to design because of the diversity of opinion among that particular group. There would appear to be a need for a diversity of programs. However, since those parents expressing dissatisfaction with the schools also tended to be less knowledgeable about them, it is conceivable that at least a portion of the dissatisfaction is due to a lack of proper information. A well-designed informational program might, therefore, also be effective in lessening the amount of dissatisfaction.

In planning educational programs to deal with dissatisfactions expressed, the Urbandale school officials, like those in any other school district, should take care not to allow the dissatisfactions to occupy a disproportionate place in the planning. Many satisfactions were also expressed in Urbandale and those aspects of the school program receiving general approval should not be discarded or altered greatly in order to assuage the minority registering dissatisfaction.
Discussion

The major problem apt to face any school district desiring to use the system developed by this study for local purposes would appear to be that of designing appropriate items for the Knowledge section of the instrument. Since items in this section must be those which are of importance and/or interest locally, no "universal" items have been developed for this section. The experience of the Urbandale field test indicates that it would be easy to fall into the "trap" of designing items to cover the mundane and logistical aspects of the school and neglect the important areas of curriculum and educational program. The failure to develop such items for the pilot study appears to be a weakness in the instrument as used. If it is considered desirable by the school officials conducting the survey to be able to determine such things as the geographical areas in which the survey subjects live, such a determining item should be built into this portion of the instrument, along with any other specialized items about which the survey subject's knowledge is desired.

The use of letters to inform potential interviewees that they had been selected for the survey and asking for their cooperation and the use of the telephone to establish specific interview times were both found to be effective tools in obtaining interviews and in setting the proper tone for a cooperative interview session. The training session for interviewers in which all directions were read and discussed
and the entire questionnaire reviewed item by item helped to insure uniformity of approach among interviewers.

Even though the training session proved valuable, some interviewers were eminently more successful than others in completing their assigned interview tasks. The successful interviewer was one who exhibited a pleasant personality and possessed the characteristics of drive, dependability and perseverance and who did not procrastinate.

More women than men were willing to be interviewed and/or could be contacted. The occupation of the major wage earner was not obtained in this pilot testing, but should have been ascertained to allow conclusions to be drawn regarding any relationships between occupation and opinions by generalizing to a "family" viewpoint under the assumption that opinions are more apt to be similar within a household than they are to be different. No doubt the direct question "how does your spouse feel about these issues" could also be useful.

Both in the national polls and in this survey, discipline was the most commonly mentioned problem seen facing the public schools, with the main criticism being that discipline was not strict enough. To date there is no indication of what respondents mean by "not strict enough", only that there is dissatisfaction with discipline. To some people stricter discipline might refer to measures used and might vary from approval of such mild measures as a verbal reprimand or detention after school or loss of privileges to approval of
such strict measures as corporal punishment or expulsion from school. To others the phrase might not be as critical of the measures used as it is of the timing is using them. To some it could have reference to both.

An interesting situation was found in the responses of Dissatisfied parents who were unanimous in the belief that the Urbandale schools are doing an inadequate job of teaching basic skills, yet only slightly over half of them felt that the school was not doing an adequate job of preparing students for college or for the "world of work". This raises the questions of what they perceive as being involved in preparing students for college or for the "world of work", what aspirations they have for their children and what avenues or routes they see open to them as "success routes" for their children.

The second section of the survey form, the Vision section, was designed to ascertain opinions regarding which educational practices should be utilized in developing the local school's programs. No attempt was made to categorize interviewees as Visionaries or Non-visionaries. To do this it would be necessary to determine what sort of a response to each item indicates a measure of the characteristic of "vision." This can only be done at the local level by whatever district is using the instrument since the interpretation of what constitutes "vision" may vary from district to district, depending upon the educational philosophies of the district
involved. Approval or support of ability grouping or tracking, may be considered desirable in one district, for example, and thus indicate "vision" whereas in another district the person judged to possess "vision" would be the one favoring heterogeneous grouping of students.

Recommendations

This section of the chapter was divided into four parts, revision of the pilot instrument, the final instrument, recommendations for usage in the field, and recommendations for further research.

A. Revisions of the pilot instrument

1. The question concerning starting school at the age of four was re-written to specifically indicate kindergarten at the age of four.

2. The item regarding student involvement in planning of learning activities was re-written as two items, one dealing with elementary school students and the other dealing with secondary school students.

3. The item regarding students being encouraged to do more free, undirected exploration was re-written to form separate items for elementary and secondary students.

4. The item about independent study was re-written as two items, one each concerning independent
study for elementary students and independent study for secondary students.

5. A separate item was added for collection of the occupation of the major income earner of the family, if different from the respondent, so that relationships between occupation and opinions could be determined.

6. The item asking for the number of children enrolled in public school was revised to determine not only whether or not the respondent has children enrolled in public school but also the grade level or levels, thus facilitating the determination of whether a parent is the parent of an elementary or a secondary student, or any other type of categorization desired.

7. The item asking for the number of children enrolled in private or parochial school was revised to indicate whether the respondent has children enrolled in private or parochial school and at what grade levels.

8. A rigorous effort should be made to interview a sample broadly representative of the entire community (i.e. both sexes, all social and economic strata).

9. The size of the sample to be drawn depends upon generalizations to be made in the final report.
However, at least 8 per cent of the parents were deemed essential to represent that public in this investigation. The representativeness of the sample is of paramount importance, not the relative size. School administrators are advised to confer with experts in sampling for assistance in planning for a representative survey.

10. With the change to a 5-point scale, it is recommended that machine scored documents be used with these survey instruments. Such can contain 150 questions, are available in bulk at one cent per sheet, and may be processed at the rate of five cents per interview with standard IBM test scoring equipment in the format necessary for this report. Including all interviewing and processing costs as well as the introductory letter and working documents, the total cost should be approximately three dollars per interview in terms of 1974 prices.

B. The final instrument

INTERVIEWER INSTRUCTIONS

Purpose of the Survey

(The uses to which the information collected will be put may vary from school district to school district. The purposes of the local district should be stated here and explained thoroughly to the interviewers so that they will be able to state the purposes at the time of the interview.)
Your Job and Responsibilities

You are a representative of (insert name here) for the duration of the survey. One of your major responsibilities is to maintain good will from the beginning to the end of the interview. The other is to accurately record the responses of the survey subjects. The success of the survey depends upon your work in gathering the responses.

Procedures and Principles of Interviewing

(General)

Either parent (or spouse) may be interviewed. If both are present, ask which one prefers to be the respondent. The following procedures and principles, outlined by J. Stacy Adams in his manual "Interviewing Procedures," are to be followed in collecting the responses:

1. The interviewer must introduce himself and state the purpose of his call.
2. The interviewer must make the respondent feel that the interview situation is permissive.
3. The interviewer must make the respondent feel that the survey is important.
4. The interviewer must make the respondent feel that his answers are important.
5. The interviewer's appearance must be neutral.
6. The interviewer must attempt to obtain an interview at the time of his first call, or, if this is not possible, make definite arrangements to obtain the interview at a later time.
7. The interviewer's approach must be flexible. No set of instructions can possibly cover every situation which may arise, so you must use your common sense to deal with irregular cases.
8. The interview must be conducted in a quiet, comfortable place, if possible.
9. The respondent must be interviewed alone. This is to be desired, if possible, but use your common sense. If both spouses are strongly desirous of being present in the room do not destroy rapport by insisting that one of them leave. However, you may suggest that the responses are to reflect only the opinions of the person being interviewed rather than being the result of a conference.
10. The questions must be asked precisely as specified on the questionnaire.
11. The questions must be asked in the order presented on the questionnaire.
12. Every question on the questionnaire must be asked.
13. When a question is not understood or is misinterpreted
it must be repeated in the same words, not paraphrased. It is unlikely that any two different interviewers would paraphrase or interpret a question in exactly the same way. It is easy to see how paraphrasing could therefore destroy the accuracy of the survey. It would be better to say something like: "Let me read the question again." and then re-read the question a little slower and a little more distinctly, emphasizing any key words or qualifying phrases.

14. Questions which the respondents hesitate or refuse to answer initially must be handled tactfully in order not to destroy rapport.

15. Instructions to the interviewer on the questionnaire must be followed carefully.

16. The questionnaire must be handled informally and with ease.

17. Rapport must be maintained throughout the interview.

18. Probes must be asked (a) when the response is irrelevant to the question asked, (b) when the answer is unclear, (c) when an answer seems incomplete and (d) when an answer is suspected of being untrue.

19. Probes must not suggest responses. Neutral questions should be used, such as "Are there any others?" "What else?" "Does anything else come to mind?"

20. The use of probes presumes good rapport and requires tact.

21. The respondent must be thanked for his participation in the survey and left with a feeling that the interview has been a pleasant and interesting experience.

22. Responses must be recorded at the time they are made.

23. A respondent's own words must be recorded.

24. Non-responses must be accounted for in detail.

25. All interviewer probes must be recorded in parenthesis.

26. Significant events during the course of the interview must be recorded.

27. Recorded responses must be clearly legible.

28. Before a questionnaire is returned to the supervisor it must be checked for completeness, understandability and legibility.

(Specific)

Part I -- Opinions

Say something such as "This section of the survey is designed to assess opinions toward existing conditions in the local public schools. Please keep in mind that all questions refer to the local public schools." Then proceed to collect the responses to Part I.
Part II — Vision

Hand the respondent the card with the scale on it and say something such as "For this section of the survey you will be read a number of statements and asked to agree or disagree with each one. Please use the scale shown on the card and respond with a number indicating your opinion." Then read the statement printed below the scale on the card (re-printed here):

If a statement expresses the exact opposite of your feelings and you strongly disagree with it, your answer will be "1". If you somewhat disagree with a statement, your answer will be "2". If you are uncertain or feel neutral, respond with a "3".

If you somewhat agree with a statement, your answer will be "4". If you strongly agree with a statement, your answer will be "5". The higher the number of your response, the more definitely you agree with the statement. The lower the number of your response, the more definitely you disagree with a statement. Likewise, the nearer your answer is to "3", the more uncertain you feel regarding your answer.

Part III — Knowledge

Say something such as "The purpose of this section of the survey is to ascertain whether there is any relationship between the responses a person gives and his knowledge about certain selected aspects of the local school's operation." Then collect the responses to Part III.

Part IV — Demographic Information

Say something such as "In order to determine whether there are any relationships between a person's responses and his background we are asking for the information shown on this sheet." Hand the sheet to the survey subject and ask him to check or answer each item. Upon receiving the sheet back from the respondent, check to see if all items have been answered. If not, try tactfully to obtain the answers to any items missed.

At the conclusion of the interview be sure to thank the respondent for his/her cooperation and participation.
SCALE

For Use in Answering Items in Vision Section

Please keep this scale in mind and respond with a number indicating your opinion.

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<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Somewhat Disagree</td>
<td>Uncertain, No opinion</td>
<td>Somewhat Agree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If a statement expresses the exact opposite of your feelings and you strongly disagree with it, your answer will be "1". If you somewhat disagree with a statement, your answer will be "2". If you are uncertain or feel neutral, respond with a "3".

If you somewhat agree with a statement, your answer will be "4". If you strongly agree with a statement, your answer will be "5". The higher the number of your response, the more definitely you agree with the statement. The lower the number of your response, the more definitely you disagree with the statement. Likewise, the nearer your answer is to "3" the more uncertain you feel regarding your answer.
PART I

OPINION

1. Are you generally satisfied or dissatisfied with the schooling that the children in your schools are receiving?
   
   ___ very well satisfied  ___ dissatisfied
   ___ satisfied           ___ very dissatisfied
   ___ about half and half ___ no opinion

2. In your opinion, in what ways are your local schools particularly good?

3. It has been proposed that children be permitted to start kindergarten at the age of four. Do you favor this proposal?
   
   ___ yes  ___ no  ___ no opinion

4. Do you believe that discipline in the local schools is too strict, not strict enough, or about right?
   
   ___ too strict  ___ about right
   ___ not strict enough  ___ no opinion

5. Do you believe that the local public schools are making too many educational changes, not enough, or about the right amount?
   
   ___ too many  ___ about the right amount
   ___ not enough  ___ no opinion

6. Do you believe that the local board of education is working hard to improve education in your district?
   
   ___ yes  ___ no  ___ no opinion

7. Do you believe that the local public school administration is working hard to improve education in your district?
   
   ___ yes  ___ no  ___ no opinion

8. Do you believe that the teachers in your school district are working hard to help all of the students they teach?
   
   ___ yes  ___ no  ___ no opinion

9. Do you believe the local public schools have a good program of extra-curricular activities?
   
   ___ yes  ___ no  ___ no opinion
10. Do you believe the local public schools are doing an adequate job of teaching the basic skills (the Three R's)?
    _____yes    _____no    _____no opinion

11. Do you believe the local public schools are doing an adequate job of preparing students for college?
    _____yes    _____no    _____no opinion

12. Do you believe the local public schools are doing an adequate job of helping students who do not plan to go college prepare for the "world of work"?
    _____yes    _____no    _____no opinion

13. Do you believe the local public schools are doing an adequate job of preparing students to be good citizens?
    _____yes    _____no    _____no opinion

14. Do you believe the local public schools are doing an adequate job of preparing students for parenthood and family life?
    _____yes    _____no    _____no opinion

15. Do you believe the local public schools are doing an adequate job of providing students with programs to meet their individual needs?
    _____yes    _____no    _____no opinion

16. Are students in your school district given too many rights and privileges, not enough, or about the right amount?
    _____too many    _____about the right amount
    _____not enough    _____no opinion

17. What do you feel are the biggest problems facing the local public schools?

PART II

VISION

18. Elementary school students should be involved in helping to plan their own learning experiences so that these will be more meaningful for them. _____

19. Jr. and Sr. High School students should be involved in helping to plan their own learning experiences so that these will be more meaningful for them. _____
20. The use of student marks (A, B, C, D, F) is arbitrary and meaningless. Courses should be on a "pass-fail" basis.

21. High school students should be permitted to "pass out" of a course; that is, a student who can pass an examination at the beginning of a course should receive credit for it and not be required to take the course.

22. Too much of a teacher's time is taken up with tasks that could be handled by an aide (selling lunch tickets, running duplicating machines, etc.). More aides should be hired to permit teachers more time to work directly with the students.

23. High school students should be required to be present in school only when they actually have classes.

24. Students should be required to attend school until they are 18 years of age or have completed high school.

25. More emphasis should be placed on helping students understand why something is so rather than just having them memorize the fact that it is so.

26. Students who fall a year or more behind their grade level in basic skills such as reading or arithmetic should be placed in remedial classes to receive special help.

27. Any textbook can, at best, present only one viewpoint and so the teacher should use it as only one of several sources of information.

28. Students should already have mastered the basic skills by the time they reach high school, therefore all high school courses should be "electives" which the student chooses to take and there should be no "required" courses which must be taken by all students.

29. A course examination should be a learning experience for the students, not a guessing game. Students should be informed in advance exactly what will be included in the examination so that they may adequately prepare for it.
30. Homework should be kept at a minimum so that students can have more time away from their studies for socializing, relaxation and activities not directly related to school.

31. Enough teachers should be hired that small classes of 25 students or less can be maintained.

32. Students in the local public schools should be given national tests so that their achievement level can be compared with that of students in other communities.

33. High school students should be permitted to be involved in such policy-making decisions as establishing rules of behavior and developing the curriculum.

34. Instructional personnel with differing talents should be assigned differing duties and paid according to those duties and responsibilities.

35. Elementary school students should be encouraged to do more free, undirected exploration in order to learn how things work and discover concepts for themselves.

36. Jr. and Sr. High School students should be encouraged to do more free, undirected exploration in order to learn how things work and discover concepts for themselves.

37. A student should be able to progress through school at his own speed and work at his own level of achievement in each subject studied. This might mean that he would be studying 6th grade arithmetic but only 4th grade reading.

38. The government should allot a certain amount of money for each child's education and give the parents slips of paper called "vouchers" which are good for that amount of money. Using these "vouchers" the parents could enroll the child in any public, private or parochial school they choose.

39. There is too much emphasis in school on pupils learning the "right" answers which they parrot back to the teacher.
40. More emphasis should be placed on reasoning and developing opinions in the public schools.

41. Since students learn best when actively involved, freer discussion should be encouraged and students given more opportunity to talk.

42. More time should be given in elementary schools to independent study projects, permitting the student to carry out learning projects on his own.

43. More time should be given in Jr. and Sr. High schools to independent study projects, permitting the student to carry out learning projects on his own.

44. Each teacher should be paid on the basis of the quality of his/her work rather than having a standard pay scale.

45. To use school buildings more efficiently, school should be in operation all year long. Each student would attend school for nine months each year, with the terms being staggered.

46. Work-study programs should be developed for high school students which will allow them to spend a part of each school day in actual on-the-job training programs for which they receive school credit.

47. Some schools are contracting with educational companies to initiate new methods of teaching elementary school children certain basic skills, such as reading or arithmetic. The company has responsibility for instructing the children and gets paid only for those who reach a certain level of achievement. This idea should be used in the local schools.

48. Teachers should be encouraged to teach in groups of two or more, sharing responsibilities and duties for a larger number of students so that each teacher can concentrate on his/her strongest areas.

49. Schools have too many petty and/or oppressive rules.
50. Too much emphasis is being placed on extracurricular activities in the schools.

51. Pupils should be promoted to the next grade or level only when they have met rigid academic standards which should be the same for all students.

52. More drill is needed in the elementary schools in such skills as arithmetic and spelling.

53. More practice is needed in the elementary schools in such skills as penmanship.

54. More emphasis should be placed in the elementary schools upon developing reading skills.

55. Too much emphasis is being placed on science in the public schools.

56. Some high school classes (such as physics) may be so important to some particular students for college entrance that they should be taught even if a smaller number of students enroll in them than the minimum number specified.

57. The school curriculum should be flexible so that it can be adapted to the unique needs of each student rather than being the same for all.

58. Students should be provided with occupational information and experiences at all levels of their education.

59. The public schools should include sex education as a part of the school curriculum.

60. Some educators feel that for effective teaching it is best to divide pupils of the same age or grade level into groups according to their ability. This is called ability grouping. Other educators feel that ability grouping puts labels on students that hinder them for years. Do you agree or disagree with the idea of ability grouping?

61. Some school systems place new teachers on probation for the first few years, then grant tenure to those judged to be competent teachers. Tenure provides job security for the teacher since it specifies that the teacher cannot be discharged except for some good cause. Do you agree or
disagree with the idea of tenure?

62. Local citizens should be polled on their opinions of what the schools' educational goals should be and these opinions should carry weight with those who determine the educational program.

63. Separate curriculum offerings should be available for members of minority groups because of their differing backgrounds.

64. Let us assume that the local school board finds it necessary to make some cuts in school costs because of a lack of sufficient funds. I am going to list some things that have been suggested as possible cuts. Please indicate whether you would favor or oppose each cut.
   a. Reduce the number of teachers by increasing class sizes.
   b. Cut all teachers' salaries by a set percentage.
   c. Eliminate extra-curricular activities, such as sports, music, etc.
   d. Have the schools run on a 12-month basis with three months vacation for students, one for teachers.
   e. Make parents responsible for getting children to and from school.
   f. Eliminate kindergarten.
   g. Charge rent for all textbooks instead of providing them free.
   h. Eliminate twelfth grade by covering in three years what is now covered in four.
   i. Cancel any subjects that do not have the minimum number of students registered.
   j. Reduce the number of subjects offered.
   k. Reduce janitorial and maintenance services.
   l. Keep present textbooks and library books longer although this may mean using outdated materials.
   m. Reduce the number of guidance counselors on the school staff.
   n. Reduce the amount of supplies and materials available for teachers to use in the classroom.
   o. Reduce special services, such as speech, reading and hearing therapy.
   p. Reduce the number of administrative personnel.
PART II

KNOWLEDGE

No specific universal items have been developed for this section. Items to be used in each individual school district should be determined by the local school officials and should be related to those items or issues considered to be of importance and/or interest locally.

It is recommended that items be developed concerning not only the logistical aspects of the school's operations but also its curriculum and educational programs. A minimum of 10 items is recommended for this section in order to provide an adequate number of items for the determination of a mean number of correct responses, thus facilitating the division of the sample into Knowledgeable and Not knowledgeable respondents.

PART IV

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

1. Age
   _____a. Under 20   _____c. 30 - 39   _____e. 50 and over
   _____b. 20 - 29   _____d. 40 - 49

2. Sex
   _____a. Male   _____b. Female
3. What was the highest grade or class you completed in school?
   ___ a. Elementary  ___ d. Technical, trade or business school
   ___ b. H.S., incomplete  ___ e. College, univ., incomplete
   ___ c. H.S., complete  ___ f. College, univ., complete

4. Which category most closely represents your occupation?
   ___ a. Professional or technical  ___ e. Clerical or sales technical
   ___ b. Self-employed, manager, official  ___ f. Farm
   ___ c. Skilled worker  ___ g. Housewife
   ___ d. Unskilled worker  ___ h. Unemployed

5. Which category most closely represents the occupation of the major income earner of the household (if other than yourself)?
   ___ a. Professional or technical  ___ e. Clerical or sales technical
   ___ b. Self-employed, manager, official  ___ f. Farm
   ___ c. Skilled worker  ___ g. Housewife
   ___ d. Unskilled worker  ___ h. Unemployed

6. Please indicate the category which most closely represents your total family income for [year]; prior to taxes.
   ___ a. Under $2,999  ___ d. $7,000 to $9,999
   ___ b. $3,000 to $4,999  ___ e. $10,000 to $14,999
   ___ c. $5,000 to $6,999  ___ f. $15,000 and over
7. Religious preference
   ___a. Protestant   ___c. Jewish
   ___b. Catholic     ___d. Other

8. Do you currently have children enrolled in public school?
   ___a. Yes   ___b. No

   If yes, please indicate the number enrolled in each grade level.
   ___a. Kindergarten   ___e. 4th grade   ___i. 8th grade
   ___b. 1st grade      ___f. 5th grade   ___j. 9th grade
   ___c. 2nd grade      ___g. 6th grade   ___k. 10th grade
   ___d. 3rd grade      ___h. 7th grade   ___l. 11th grade
   ___m. 12th grade

9. Do you currently have children enrolled in private or parochial school?
   ___a. Yes   ___b. No

   If yes, please indicate the number enrolled in each grade level.
   ___a. Kindergarten   ___e. 4th grade   ___i. 8th grade
   ___b. 1st grade      ___f. 5th grade   ___j. 9th grade
   ___c. 2nd grade      ___g. 6th grade   ___k. 10th grade
   ___d. 3rd grade      ___h. 7th grade   ___l. 11th grade
   ___m. 12th grade

C. Recommendations for usage in the field

   1. The items to be included in the Knowledge section are dependent upon the local situation and should be developed carefully to cover areas of local importance and/or interest. Items should cover
not only the logistical aspects of a school district's operations but also the curriculum and educational programs. Specialized information may be collected in this section, such as the geographical area in which the respondent lives (which bus route, which elementary school area, etc.)

2. The personal interview technique should be employed in utilizing the instrument developed by this study.

3. Interviewers should be obtained who do not reside in the area being surveyed, if possible. Interviewees may be more frank and honest in expressing their opinions if they do not feel threatened by the presence of an interviewer personally known to them.

4. Interviewers should be obtained who have pleasant personalities and who can and will work independently.

5. A training session should be held for the interviewers to explain the purposes of the survey, review all of the instructions, review the instrument and assign interview subjects.

6. Prospective interviewees should be informed by letter of the purpose of the survey, that they have been selected as participants and their cooperation requested.

7. Interviewers should phone the prospective respondents to establish definite interview appointments.
8. Results obtained locally should be utilized by local school authorities in the development of educational programs to fulfill the goals and objectives identified in the needs assessment process.

D. Recommendations for further research

1. More research is needed to determine the kinds of disciplinary methods and actions parents and others prefer the schools to use. What does the public mean by discipline?

2. Investigations concerning the aspirations parents perceive for their children and the types of educational programs they believe will help them reach those aspirations are needed. Success route expectations could be linked to program planning.

3. The system developed by this study should be employed to ascertain whether differences of opinion exist between residents of school districts using innovative educational practices and those using more traditional practices. Perhaps the special nature of Urbandale practices skewed the satisfaction ratings positively.

4. The system developed by this study should be used to determine opinion differentials among various populations in a cross section of public school districts, vz., blacks, whites, urban, rural, parent,
non-parent, young, old, conservative, liberal.

5. The results of this study should be verified through research to determine whether items determined to be appropriate for this study actually prove useful in the needs assessment process at the program development stage.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to express my sincere thanks and appreciation for the guidance and assistance extended to me by several people during my graduate program. My major advisor, Dr. Richard P. Manatt, freely gave of both his time and counsel at all stages of the program. Mr. Clarence Bundy, Dr. Anton Netusil, Dr. Ray Bryan, and Dr. Dean Yoesting helped by serving as committee members. A special thanks is given to Dr. Roy Hickman and to Dr. John Menne for their valuable aid throughout this study.

I am especially grateful to my wife, June, for her thoughtfulness, understanding, patience, and encouragement during my graduate studies and particularly during the completion of the dissertation.
191

BIBLIOGRAPHY


APPENDIX A. APPROPRIATENESS SURVEY
JUDGMENT PANEL

PROFESSIONAL EDUCATORS

Public School Superintendents

Charles Joss
West Des Moines Community Schools

Lyle Kehm
Urbandale Community Schools

Charles Varner
Southeast Polk Community Schools

David Teigland
Maxwell Community Schools

Louis Friestadt
Johnston Community Schools

Richard Branstrator
Saydel Community Schools

Keith Hopkins
Ankeny Community Schools

College-level Educators

Anton Netusil
Iowa State University

Glenn Holmes
Iowa State University

Ray Bryan
Iowa State University

Gordon Hopper
Iowa State University

Ross Engel
Iowa State University
Iowa State Department of Public Instruction Educators

James Mitchell
Associate Superintendent

Earl Miller
Director

Stanley Kerr
Consultant

Don Dunlavy
Consultant

Norman Ash
Consultant

Joseph Wolvek
Consultant

Harold Hulleman
Consultant

LAY PERSONS

Parents

Mr. Ronald Grant
Bondurant, Iowa

Mrs. Dorothy McCleary
Bondurant, Iowa

Mr. Jerry Kunze
Mitchellville, Iowa

Mrs. Ruby Cherry
Ankeny, Iowa

Mrs. Mary Beckman
Ankeny, Iowa

Mrs. Alyce Stratton
Maxwell, Iowa

Mrs. William Creger
Maxwell, Iowa
Students

Wayne Bailey
Bondurant, Iowa

Vikki Haning
Bondurant, Iowa

Melvin Quinn
Altoona, Iowa

Mike Smith
Maxwell, Iowa

Jana Myers
Maxwell, Iowa

David Fish
Ankeny, Iowa

Karen King
Ankeny, Iowa

School Board Members

Art Mott
Southeast Polk Community Schools

Maurine Coe
Southeast Polk Community Schools

Donald Zuck
Ankeny Community Schools

Linden Caple
Maxwell Community Schools

John Rooney
Maxwell Community Schools

Herb Randels
Saydel Community Schools

Dale Callen
Saydel Community Schools
Thank you for consenting to serve as a member of a panel to judge the appropriateness of the attached questions for the purpose of assessing public opinions toward selected educational practices in the public schools.

The entire opinion questionnaire is being constructed to utilize the concepts expressed by John Nagel in his article "How To Tell What Your Public Really Thinks" which appeared in the December, 1968 issue of the American School Board Journal. Nagel contends that for a poll of opinions toward public schools to be effective it must contain three types of questions: (1) Knowledge (such as "How many pupils are there in the school district?"); (2) Opinion (such as "How well do you think the schools are doing the job of . . . .?”); and (3) Vision (such as "Indicate your agreement or disagreement with the following statements.") The questions you are being asked to review are in the two categories of opinion and vision.

The opinion section covers areas identified through a search of public opinion polls conducted nationally over the past four years and includes items designed to assess opinion toward existing conditions in the local public schools.

The vision section covers educational practices identified through a search of critical literature about the schools. These criticisms generally fall into the three categories of (1) relevancy/irrelevancy of the school curriculum, (2) humanizing/de-humanizing practices in the public schools, and (3) accountability. The purpose of this section of the final questionnaire is to assess opinion toward these practices in order to better determine those educational practices which would be looked upon with favor or disfavor by the local public.

Please check one response to each question to indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with the appropriateness of the item as one to be included in a questionnaire to assess public opinion toward educational practices in the public schools. (1) Very inappropriate, (2) Somewhat inappropriate, (3) Undecided, (4) Somewhat appropriate, (5) Very appropriate.

Richard P. Manatt  
Section Leader  
Educational Administration  

Glenn E. Primmer  
Researcher
OPINION

Please check one response to each question to indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with the appropriateness of the item as one to be included in a questionnaire to assess public opinion toward educational practices in the public schools.

(1) Very inappropriate
(2) Somewhat inappropriate
(3) Undecided
(4) Somewhat appropriate
(5) Very appropriate

(Total evaluator ratings shown to the left of each item)

1. In your opinion, in what ways are your local public schools particularly good?

2. What do you feel are the biggest problems facing the local public schools?

3. Do you believe that discipline in the local public schools is too strict, not strict enough, or about right?

4. What disciplinary practices do you believe the public schools should employ to control unruly pupils in each of these levels?
   a. primary grades (K-2)
   b. elementary grades (3-6)
   c. junior high (7-9)
   d. high school (10-12)

5. When a child does not do well in school, some people feel that the blame rests with the child, some with the child's home life, some with the school and some with the teacher. All of these share in the blame, but where would you place the chief blame?

6. Do you believe that the local public schools are making too many educational changes, not enough, or about the right amount?

7. Do you believe that the local board of education is working hard to improve education in your district?
8. Do you believe that the local public school administration is working hard to improve education in your district?

9. Do you believe that the teachers in your school district are working hard to help all of the students they teach?

10. Do you believe the local public schools have a good program of extra-curricular activities?

11. What do you think should be done to improve the extra-curricular program?

12. Do you believe the local public schools are doing a good job of teaching the basic skills (the Three R's)?

13. Do you believe the local public schools are doing a good job of preparing students for college?

14. Do you believe the local public schools are doing a good job of helping students who do not plan to go to college prepare for the "world of work?"

15. Do you believe the local public schools are doing a good job of preparing students to be good citizens?

16. Do you believe the local public schools are doing a good job of preparing students for parenthood and family life?

17. Do you believe the local public schools are doing a good job of providing students with the proper religious, ethical or moral training?

18. Do you believe the local public schools are doing a good job of providing students with programs to meet their individual needs?

19. What do you think could be done to improve the educational program of the local public schools?

20. Are students in your school district given too many rights and privileges, not enough, or about the right amount?

21. Should 18 year olds, who now have the right to vote, be given more rights and privileges than other students?
22. Should sex education be included in the public school curriculum? If yes, at what grade level should it be introduced?

23. It has been proposed that children be permitted to start school at the age of four. Do you favor this proposal?

24. What do you think should be the age at which students are permitted to quit school?

25. There are many different reasons people give for wanting their children to receive an education. What would be the main ones for you?

26. Are you generally satisfied or dissatisfied with the schooling that the children in your schools are receiving?

___ very well satisfied  ___ dissatisfied
___ satisfied            ___ very dissatisfied
___ about half and half  ___ no opinion
Please check one response to each question to indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with the appropriateness of the item as one to be included in a questionnaire to assess public opinion toward educational practices in the public schools. (In the final questionnaire form survey subjects will be asked to indicate a degree of agreement or disagreement with each item.)

(1) Very inappropriate
(2) Somewhat inappropriate
(3) Undecided
(4) Somewhat appropriate
(5) Very appropriate

(Total evaluator ratings shown to the left of each item)

(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)

1. Pupils of the same age or grade level should be divided into groups according to their abilities so that faster students will not be held back by slower ones nor slower students frustrated by not being able to keep up with faster ones.

2. Students should be involved in helping to plan their own learning experiences so that these will be more meaningful for them.

3. Students learn well from one another. Therefore students should be given the opportunity to help teach one another.

4. The use of student marks (A, B, C, D, F) is arbitrary and meaningless. Courses should be on a pass-fail basis.

5. High school students should be permitted to "Pass Out" of a course; that is, a student who can pass an examination at the beginning of a course should receive credit for it and not be required to take the course.

6. Students should be required to do more memorizing as a mind-training exercise.

7. The world is changing so fast and facts accumulating so rapidly that it is more important for a pupil to learn to use references well than it is for him to try to memorize a lot of facts.
Students cannot learn unless the classroom is quiet and orderly, so maintaining discipline should be a teacher's first concern.

Too much of a teacher's time is taken up with tasks that could be handled by aids (selling lunch tickets, running duplicating machines, etc.) More aides should be hired to permit teachers more time to work directly with the students.

High school students should be required to be present in school only when they actually have classes.

Students should be expected to conform to a given set of standards regarding such things as mode of dress, hair styles, etc.

Students who fall a year or more behind their grade level in basic skills such as reading or arithmetic should be placed in remedial classes to receive special help.

More emphasis should be placed on helping students understand why something is so rather than just having them memorize the fact that it is so.

Students learn by "doing" better than they do by listening. Therefore teachers should lecture less and have the students spend more time in learning activities.

Textbooks are the best source of information the students have, so the teacher should follow the text closely.

Any textbook can, at best, present only one viewpoint and so the teacher should use it as only one of several sources of information.

For more efficient operation, students of the same age should be placed in the same grade level (1st grade, 2nd grade, etc.) and expected to do the same work.

Students should already have mastered the basic skills by the time they reach high school, therefore all high school courses should be "electives" which the student chooses to take and there should be no "required" courses which must be taken by all students.
19. A course examination should be a learning experience for the students, not a guessing game. Students should be informed in advance exactly what will be included in the examination so that they may adequately prepare for it.

20. Homework should be kept at a minimum so that students can have more time away from their studies for socializing, relaxation and activities not related to school.

21. Students who do not achieve up to a set standard should repeat the grade or course.

22. The elementary school is much too oriented toward a woman's world. More male teachers are needed in elementary school.

23. Enough teachers should be hired that small classes of 25 students or less can be maintained.

24. Students in the local schools should be given national tests so that their achievement level can be compared with that of students in other communities.

25. High school students should be permitted to be involved in such policy-making decisions as establishing rules of behavior and developing the curriculum.

26. When other disciplinary methods fail, elementary school teachers should be permitted to spank unruly students.

27. Instructional personnel with differing talents should be assigned differing duties and paid according to those duties and responsibilities. This is called Differentiated Staffing.

28. Children should be encouraged to do more free, undirected exploration in order to learn how things work and discover concepts for themselves.

29. Students should be involved in evaluating their own work since the purpose of evaluation should be to assist the student in making progress rather than for assigning grades.

30. Students should be allowed to work independently on their projects, or in groups of their own choosing.
A student should be able to progress through school at his own speed and work at his own level of achievement in each subject studied. This might mean that he would be studying 6th grade mathematics but only 4th grade reading.

The government should allot a certain amount of money for each child's education and give the parents slips of paper called "vouchers" which are good for that amount of money. Using these "vouchers" the parents could enroll the child in any public, private or parochial school they choose.

Children should be allowed to learn things when they need to know them and have an interest in them rather than when some teacher decides it is time to learn them.

High school study halls should be conducted on an optional basis. Students should go to them only if they wish to study.

Closed-circuit television should be used to instruct larger numbers of students in the same thing at the same time, thus reducing the number of teachers needed.

There is too much emphasis in school on pupils learning the "right" answers which they parrot back to the teacher. More emphasis should be placed on reasoning and developing opinions.

Since students learn best when actively involved, freer discussion should be encouraged and students given more opportunity to talk.

Too much emphasis is placed in the high schools on preparing students for college and not enough on preparing them for occupations not requiring a college degree.

More time should be given in the schools to independent study projects, permitting the student to carry out learning projects on his own.

Each teacher should be paid on the basis of the quality of his/her work rather than having a standard pay scale for all.
To use school buildings more efficiently, school should be in operation all year long. Each student would attend school for nine months each year, with the terms being staggered.

Work-study programs should be developed for high school students which will allow them to spend a part of each school day in actual on-the-job training programs for which they receive school credit.

The school curriculum should draw more upon student experiences for learning and less upon teacher-directed facts.

Some schools are contracting with educational companies to initiate new methods of teaching elementary school children certain basic skills, such as reading or arithmetic. The company has responsibility for instructing the children and gets paid only for those who reach a certain level of achievement. This idea should be used in the local school.

There is an "essential body of knowledge" (a group of facts beyond the skills of reading, writing, and arithmetic) which everyone needs to know.

Nothing should be taught in school that is not in some way relevant to the life of the child.

Teachers should be encouraged to teach in groups of two or more, sharing responsibilities and duties for a larger number of students so that each teacher can concentrate on his/her strongest areas. (This is called Team Teaching.)

Students should be permitted to move freely from one learning activity to another as their interests change rather than when directed to do so by the teacher.

The schools should place more emphasis upon teaching subject matter and less upon developing individual interests of the pupils.

Too much emphasis is being placed on extra-curricular programs in the schools.

Pupils should be promoted to the next grade or level only when they have met rigid academic standards which should be the same for all students.
(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)

52. More drill is needed in elementary school in such fundamentals as arithmetic and spelling and more practice in such skills as penmanship.

53. Any high school class that does not have a minimum number of students enrolled should be cancelled.

54. Some high school classes (such as physics) may be so important to some particular students for college entrance that they should be taught even if a smaller number of students enroll in them than the minimum number specified.

55. The school curriculum should be flexible so that it can be adapted to the unique needs of each student rather than being the same for all.

56. Students should be provided with occupational information and experiences at all levels of their education.

57. Grades (A, B, C, D, F) stimulate the student to work harder and learn more.

58. Younger students learn better when there is no sharp distinction between work and play.

59. Grouping students by ability has harmful effects; students placed in the lower groups are often made to feel stupid and worthless and therefore they stop trying.

60. Grades (A, B, C, D, F) are self-defeating since they lead a child to study and learn only what is necessary to get a good grade.

61. The public schools should include sex education as a part of the school curriculum.

62. Some educators feel that for effective teaching it is best to divide pupils of the same age or grade level into groups according to their ability. This is called ability grouping. Other educators feel that ability grouping puts labels on students that hinder them for years. Do you agree or disagree with the idea of ability grouping?

63. If the schools and the teachers really interest the students in learning, most disciplinary problems will disappear.
Schools should reduce the time students spend in the classrooms to give them more time to spend on independent study, carrying out learning projects of their own.

Let us assume that the local school board finds it necessary to make some cuts in school costs because of a lack of sufficient funds. I am going to list some things that have been suggested as possible cuts. Please indicate whether you would favor or oppose each cut.

a. Reduce the number of teachers by increasing class sizes.
b. Cut all teachers' salaries by a set percentage.
c. Cut out extra-curricular activities, such as sports, music, etc.
d. Have the schools run on a 12-month basis with three months vacation for students, one for teachers.
e. Make parents responsible for getting children to and from school.
f. Cut out kindergarten.
g. Charge rent for all textbooks instead of providing them free.
h. Cut out twelfth grade by covering in three years what is now covered in four.
i. Cancel any subjects that do not have the minimum number of students registered.
j. Reduce the number of subjects offered.
k. Reduce janitorial and maintenance services.
l. Keep present textbooks and library books longer although this may mean using outdated materials.
m. Reduce the number of guidance counselors on the school staff.
n. Reduce the amount of supplies and materials available for teachers to use in the classroom.
o. Reduce special services, such as speech, reading and hearing therapy.
p. Reduce the number of administrative personnel.

Some school systems place new teachers on probation for the first few years, then grant tenure to those judged to be competent teachers. Tenure provides job security for the teacher since it specifies that the teacher cannot be discharged except for some good cause. Do you agree or disagree with the idea of tenure?
Local citizens should be polled on their opinions of what the schools' educational goals should be and these opinions should carry weight with those who determine the educational program.

Separate curriculum offerings should be available for members of minority groups because of their differing backgrounds.
APPENDIX B. PILOT SURVEY
Dear parents:

The Urbandale school district is cooperating with the Educational Administration section, College of Education, Iowa State University, in testing a newly developed survey of public opinion toward certain educational practices in the public schools. The survey was developed by Glenn Primmer of Bondurant, Iowa as a part of his doctoral studies. It is hoped that the results obtained from this survey will enable us to better understand what Urbandale parents want from their schools.

From the total list of parents of Urbandale students, 150 parents' names have been randomly selected as interviewees. Your name was among those selected. Sometime during the next two or three weeks you will be contacted by an interviewer at your home and asked to participate in the survey. Most of the interviews will probably be conducted in the early evening since that is the time when the greatest number of parents can be found at home.

We would like to request your participation in this survey and we hasten to assure you that all responses will be treated as confidential. Results will be reported in total and no attempt will be made to identify the responses of any individual. Data will be processed by the Computer Center at Iowa State University.

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Tyle W. Kehr
Superintendent

LWK:mf
Purpose of the Survey

In recent years there has been a growing demand for more "accountability" from the public schools. Basically this means that the taxpayers want to be assured that they are getting their money's worth. As a means of determining exactly what it is that is wanted from the schools, various programs have been developed to assist the local schools in determining what educational goals the local public wishes the schools to accomplish. This is the first step in a needs assessment program. The purpose of this survey is to test an instrument developed to add another dimension to the needs assessment program; the dimension of determining whether the local public has any preferences as to the educational practices or approaches which should be used to accomplish the school's educational goals.

Your Job and Responsibilities

You are a representative of the College of Education of Iowa State University for the duration of the survey. One of your major responsibilities is to maintain good will from the beginning to the end of the interview. The other is to accurately record the responses of the survey subjects. The success of the survey depends upon your work in gathering the responses.

Procedures and Principles of Interviewing

(General)

Either parent may be interviewed. If both are present, ask which one prefers to be the respondent. The following procedures and principles, outlined by J. Stacy Adams in his manual "Interviewing Procedures," are to be followed in collecting the responses:

1. The interviewer must introduce himself and state the purpose of his call. This has been facilitated for this survey by the cooperation of the Urbandale school system. A letter has been sent from the Urbandale school central office to the parents to be included in the survey informing them of the survey and requesting their cooperation. You might say something such as: "Hello. My name is __________. I am the interviewer for the public school opinion survey you were recently informed about in a letter from the school."

2. The interviewer must make the respondent feel that the interview situation is permissive.

3. The interviewer must make the respondent feel that the survey is important.

4. The interviewer must make the respondent feel that his answers are important.

5. The interviewer's appearance must be neutral.

6. The interviewer must attempt to obtain an interview at the time of his first call, or, if this is not possible, make definite arrangements to obtain the interview at a later time.
7. The interviewer's approach must be flexible. No set of instructions can possibly cover every situation which may arise, so you must use your common sense to deal with irregular cases.

8. The interview must be conducted in a quiet, comfortable place, if possible.

9. The respondent must be interviewed alone. This is to be desired, if possible, but use your common sense. If both parents strongly wish to be present in the room do not destroy rapport by insisting that one of them leave. However, you may suggest that the responses are to reflect only the opinions of the person being interviewed rather than being the result of a conference.

10. The questions must be asked precisely as specified on the questionnaire.

11. The questions must be asked in the order presented on the questionnaire.

12. Every question on the questionnaire must be asked.

13. When a question is not understood or is misinterpreted it must be repeated in the same words, not paraphrased. It is unlikely that any two different interviewers would paraphrase or interpret a question in exactly the same way. It is easy to see how paraphrasing could therefore destroy the accuracy of the survey. It would be better to say something like: "Let me read that question again," and then re-read the question a little slower and a little more distinctly, emphasizing any key words or qualifying phrases.

14. Questions which the respondents hesitate or refuse to answer initially must be handled tactfully in order not to destroy rapport.

15. Instructions to the interviewer on the questionnaire must be followed carefully.

16. The questionnaire must be handled informally and with ease.

17. Rapport must be maintained throughout the interview.

18. Probes must be used (a) when the response is irrelevant to the question asked, (b) when the answer is unclear, (c) when an answer seems incomplete and (d) when an answer is suspected of being untrue.

19. Probes must not suggest responses. Neutral questions should be used, such as: "Are there any others?" "What else?" "Does anything else come to mind?"

20. The use of probes presumes good rapport and requires tact.

21. The respondent must be thanked for his participation in the survey and left with a feeling that the interview has been a pleasant and interesting experience.

22. Responses must be recorded at the time they are made.

23. A respondent's own words must be recorded.

24. Non-responses must be accounted for in detail.

25. All interviewer probes must be recorded in parenthesis.

26. Significant events during the course of the interview must be recorded.

27. Recorded responses must be clearly legible.

28. Before a questionnaire is returned to the supervisor it must be checked for completeness, understandability and legibility.
(Specific)

Part I - Opinions

Say something such as "This section of the survey is designed to assess opinions toward existing conditions in the local public schools. Please keep in mind that all questions refer to the local public schools." Then proceed to collect the responses to Part I.

Part II - Vision

Hand the respondent the card with the scale on it and say something such as "For this section of the survey you will be read a number of statements and asked to agree or disagree with each one. Please use the scale shown on the card and respond with a number indicating your opinion." Then read the statement printed below the scale on the card (re-printed here):

If a statement definitely states your feelings and you completely agree with it, your answer will be "99." If you feel that a statement expresses the exact opposite of your feelings and you completely disagree with it, your answer will be "1." If you are uncertain or feel neutral, respond with a "50."

If you somewhat agree with a statement, your answer will fall somewhere between "50" and "99", depending upon how strongly you agree. The nearer your answer is to "99" the more definitely you agree with the statement. If you somewhat disagree with a statement, your answer will fall somewhere between "1" and "50", depending upon how strongly you disagree. The nearer your answer is to "1" the more definitely you disagree with the statement. Likewise, the nearer your answer is to "50" the more uncertain you feel regarding your answer.

Part III - Knowledge

Say something such as "The purpose of this section of the survey is to ascertain whether there is any relationship between the responses a person gives and his knowledge about certain selected aspects of the local school's operation." Then collect the responses to Part III.

Part IV - Demographic Information

Say something such as "In order to determine whether there are any relationships between a person's responses and his background we are asking for the information shown on this sheet." Hand the sheet to the survey subject and ask him to check or answer each item. Upon receiving the sheet back from the respondent, check to see if all items have been answered. If not, try tactfully to obtain the answers to any items missed.

At the conclusion of the interview be sure to thank the respondent for his/her cooperation and participation.
Please keep this scale in mind and respond with a number indicating your opinion.

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## Interview Report

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1. Are you generally satisfied or dissatisfied with the schooling that the children in your schools are receiving?
   - very well satisfied
   - satisfied
   - about half and half
   - very unsatisfied
   - unsatisfied
   - no opinion

2. In your opinion, in what ways are your local schools particularly good?

3. It has been proposed that children be permitted to start school at the age of four. Do you favor this proposal?
   - yes
   - no
   - no opinion

4. Do you believe that discipline in the local schools is too strict, not strict enough, or about right?
   - too strict
   - not strict enough
   - about right
   - no opinion

5. Do you believe that the local public schools are making too many educational changes, not enough, or about the right amount?
   - too many
   - not enough
   - about the right amount
   - no opinion

6. Do you believe that the local board of education is working hard to improve education in your district?
   - yes
   - no
   - no opinion

7. Do you believe that the local public school administration is working hard to improve education in your district?
   - yes
   - no
   - no opinion

8. Do you believe that the teachers in your school district are working hard to help all of the students they teach?
   - yes
   - no
   - no opinion

9. Do you believe the local public schools have a good program of extra-curricular activities?
   - yes
   - no
   - no opinion

10. Do you believe the local public schools are doing an adequate job of teaching the basic skills (the Three R's)?
    - yes
    - no
    - no opinion
11. Do you believe the local public schools are doing an adequate job of preparing students for college? 
   ___yes ___no ___no opinion

12. Do you believe the local public schools are doing an adequate job of helping students who do not plan to go to college prepare for the "world of work?"
   ___yes ___no ___no opinion

13. Do you believe the local public schools are doing an adequate job of preparing students to be good citizens?
   ___yes ___no ___no opinion

14. Do you believe the local public schools are doing an adequate job of preparing students for parenthood and family life?
   ___yes ___no ___no opinion

15. Do you believe the local public schools are doing an adequate job of providing students with programs to meet their individual needs?
   ___yes ___no ___no opinion

16. Are students in your school district given too many rights and privileges, not enough, or about the right amount?
   ___too many ___about the right amount ___not enough ___no opinion

17. What do you feel are the biggest problems facing the local public schools?
18. Students should be involved in helping to plan their own learning experiences so that these will be more meaningful for them.

19. The use of student marks (A, B, C, D, F) is arbitrary and meaningless. Courses should be on a "pass-fail" basis.

20. High school students should be permitted to "pass out" of a course; that is, a student who can pass an examination at the beginning of a course should receive credit for it and not be required to take the course.

21. Too much of a teacher's time is taken up with tasks that could be handled by an aide (selling lunch tickets, running duplicating machines, etc.) More aides should be hired to permit teachers more time to work directly with the students.

22. High school students should be required to be present in school only when they actually have classes.

23. Students should be required to attend school until they are 18 years of age or have completed high school.

24. Students who fall a year or more behind their grade level in basic skills such as reading or arithmetic should be placed in remedial classes to receive special help.

25. More emphasis should be placed on helping students understand why something is so rather than just having them memorize the fact that it is so.

26. Any textbook can, at best, present only one viewpoint and so the teacher should use it as only one of several sources of information.

27. Students should already have mastered the basic skills by the time they reach high school, therefore all high school courses should be "electives" which the student chooses to take and there should be no "required" courses which must be taken by all students.

28. A course examination should be a learning experience for the students, not a guessing game. Students should be informed in advance exactly what will be included in the examination so that they may adequately prepare for it.
29. Homework should be kept at a minimum so that students can have more time away from their studies for socializing, relaxation and activities not directly related to school.

30. Enough teachers should be hired that small classes of 25 students or less can be maintained.

31. Students in the local public schools should be given national tests so that their achievement level can be compared with that of students in other communities.

32. High school students should be permitted to be involved in such policy-making decisions as establishing rules of behavior and developing the curriculum.

33. Instructional personnel with differing talents should be assigned differing duties and paid according to those duties and responsibilities.

34. Children should be encouraged to do more free, undirected exploration in order to learn how things work and discover concepts for themselves.

35. A student should be able to progress through school at his own speed and work at his own level of achievement in each subject studied. This might mean that he would be studying 6th grade arithmetic but only 4th grade reading.

36. The government should allot a certain amount of money for each child's education and give the parents slips of paper called "vouchers" which are good for that amount of money. Using these "vouchers" the parents could enroll the child in any public, private or parochial school they choose.

37. There is too much emphasis in school on pupils learning the "right" answers which they parrot back to the teacher.

38. More emphasis should be placed on reasoning and developing opinions in the public schools.

39. Since students learn best when actively involved, freer discussion should be encouraged and students given more opportunity to talk.

40. More time should be given in the schools to independent study projects, permitting the student to carry out learning projects on his own.

41. Each teacher should be paid on the basis of the quality of his/her work rather than having a standard pay scale.
42. To use school buildings more efficiently, school should be in operation all year long. Each student would attend school for nine months each year, with the terms being staggered.

43. Work-study programs should be developed for high school students which will allow them to spend a part of each school day in actual on-the-job training programs for which they receive school credit.

44. Some schools are contracting with educational companies to initiate new methods of teaching elementary school children certain basic skills, such as reading or arithmetic. The company has responsibility for instructing the children and gets paid only for those who reach a certain level of achievement. This idea should be used in the local schools.

45. Teachers should be encouraged to teach in groups of two or more, sharing responsibilities and duties for a larger number of students so that each teacher can concentrate on his/her strongest areas.

46. Schools have too many petty and/or oppressive rules.

47. Too much emphasis is being placed on extra-curricular activities in the schools.

48. Pupils should be promoted to the next grade or level only when they have met rigid academic standards which should be the same for all students.

49. More drill is needed in elementary school in such fundamentals as arithmetic and spelling.

50. More practice is needed in the elementary schools in such skills as penmanship.

51. More emphasis should be placed in the elementary schools upon developing reading skills.

52. Too much emphasis is being placed on science in the public schools.

53. Some high school classes (such as physics) may be so important to some particular students for college entrance that they should be taught even if a smaller number of students enroll in them than the minimum number specified.
54. The school curriculum should be flexible so that it can be adapted to the unique needs of each student rather than being the same for all.

55. Students should be provided with occupational information and experiences at all levels of their education.

56. The public schools should include sex education as a part of the school curriculum.

57. Some educators feel that for effective teaching it is best to divide pupils of the same age or grade level into groups according to their ability. This is called ability grouping. Other educators feel that ability grouping puts labels on students that hinder them for years. Do you agree or disagree with the idea of ability grouping?

58. Some school systems place new teachers on probation for the first few years, then grant tenure to those judged to be competent teachers. Tenure provides job security for the teacher since it specifies that the teacher cannot be discharged except for some good cause. Do you agree or disagree with the idea of tenure?

59. Local citizens should be polled on their opinions of what the schools' educational goals should be and these opinions should carry weight with those who determine the educational program.

60. Separate curriculum offerings should be available for members of minority groups because of their differing backgrounds.

61. Let us assume that the local school board finds it necessary to make some cuts in school costs because of a lack of sufficient funds. I am going to list some things that have been suggested as possible cuts. Please indicate whether you would favor or oppose each cut.

   a. Reduce the number of teachers by increasing class sizes.
   b. Cut all teachers' salaries by a set percentage.
   c. Eliminate extra-curricular activities, such as sports, music, etc.
   d. Have the schools run on a 12-month basis with three months vacation for students, one for teachers.
   e. Make parents responsible for getting children to and from school.
f. Eliminate kindergarten.
g. Charge rent for all textbooks instead of providing them free.
h. Eliminate twelfth grade by covering in three years what is now covered in four.
i. Cancel any subjects that do not have the minimum number of students registered.
j. Reduce the number of subjects offered.
k. Reduce janitorial and maintenance services.
l. Keep present textbooks and library books longer although this may mean using outdated materials.
m. Reduce the number of guidance counselors on the school staff.
n. Reduce the amount of supplies and materials available for teachers to use in the classroom.
o. Reduce special services, such as speech, reading and hearing therapy.
p. Reduce the number of administrative personnel.
62. How many members are there on the Urbandale board of education? _____.
63. Please name two of them. ________________________________
   and ________________________________.
64. What is the approximate total enrollment of the Urbandale school system? ________________________________.
65. How many elementary schools are there in the Urbandale school system? ________________________________.
66. How many elementary principals? ________________________________.
67. What is the new school building under construction to be used for? ________________________________.
68. Please name your child's (or one of your children's) principal. ________________________________.
69. Please give the name of the Urbandale school superintendent. ________________________________.
70. To the nearest million, what is the amount of the Urbandale school district's current operating budget? ________________________________.
71. What are the two main sources of school funds? ________________________________
   and ________________________________.
72. To whom would you go with your child's school problems? ________________________________.
PART IV

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

73. Age
   __a. Under 20       __c. 30 - 39       __e. 50 and over
   __b. 20 - 29        __d. 40 - 49

74. Sex
   __a. Male           __b. Female

75. What was the highest grade or class you completed in school?
   __a. Elementary      __d. Technical, trade or business school
   __b. H.S., incomplete __e. College, univ., incomplete
   __c. H.S., complete   __f. College, univ., complete

76. Which category most closely represents your occupation?
   __a. Professional or technical __e. Clerical and sales
   __b. Self-employed, manager, __f. Farm official
        __g. Housewife
   __c. Skilled worker      __h. Unemployed
   __d. Unskilled worker

77. Please indicate the category which most closely represents your total family income for 1972, prior to taxes.
   __a. Under $2,999       __d. $7,000 to $9,999
   __b. $3,000 to $4,999   __e. $10,000 to $14,999
   __c. $5,000 to $6,999   __f. $15,000 and over

78. Religious preference
   __a. Protestant   __b. Catholic  __c. Jewish  __d. Other

79. Number of children now enrolled in public school. ____________

80. Number of children now enrolled in private or parochial schools. _____
APPENDIX C. RESPONSE TO VISION SECTION
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APPENDIX D. URBANDALE (IOWA) SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION LETTER
Mr. Glenn Primmer, Supt.
Central City Community Schools
Central City, Iowa 52214

Dear Mr. Primmer:

Thank you for the data you have sent me on our school survey last spring. We are finding it very useful in helping us to understand parent attitudes and opinions, and we see many possibilities for its use as we plan for improvement of our programs, policies, and operations.

We have already given our people, through two issues of the weekly "Take Me Home" this fall, some of the feedback information obtained in the survey. The first issue, dated October 11, 1973, deals with parents' opinions about school. The second issue, dated November 2, 1973, deals with how well informed our parents are about their schools. Copies of these two issues of "Take Me Home" are enclosed for your information.

As soon as we have had time to study the data more thoroughly, we will prepare a flip-chart or overhead projector presentation for inservice use with our school board and with school building teacher groups.

Several minor suggestions we could make concerning survey items are:

1. Although the majority of the interviewees were housewives, it would have been possible for them to designate their husband's occupation, and thus we could have obtained additional information as to the occupation of the family income earner.
2. If possible to do so within the limitations of this survey model, it would be helpful to identify the responses by school rather than just by the elementary-secondary divisions.
3. As to identifying the respondents by religious preference, I am surprised that the random sample did not draw any Jewish persons, because we do have a noticeable number of Jewish families in the community.
4. If we were to do the survey over again, I think we would have attempted to include in the knowledge section some items on curriculum and program instead of merely logistical items.

However, we are extremely pleased to have participated in this project, and regard the information we have received as very useful to us in our understanding of the community we serve and in our planning for the future. We deeply appreciate your help.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Kyle Kehm
Superintendent

LK:mf
Enclosures
PARENTS' OPINIONS ABOUT SCHOOL

Last April, in cooperation with the Graduate School in Education Administration at Iowa State University, we agreed to be a test school to try out a new model in community assessment — "What do the parents think about their school system?" 137 randomly-selected parents throughout our district were personally interviewed by the project's trained interviewers. The results have now been tabulated. You will be interested in the summaries as given below:

Two-thirds of the parents were satisfied with the schooling their children were receiving. Specific items they approved were:

- the number of educational changes being made.
- the efforts of the school board.
- the efforts of the administration.
- the efforts of the teachers.
- the extra-curricular activities.
- the job being done of teaching the basic skills.
- the job being done of preparing students for college.
- the job being done of preparing students for "the world of work."
- the job being done of preparing students to be good citizens.
- the job being done of meeting individual needs.

They indicated disapproval of:

- permitting students to begin school at the age of four (a legislative bill introduced last year).
- discipline in the schools (they do not feel discipline is strict enough).

The parents were divided on:

- whether the school is doing an adequate job of preparing students for parenthood and family life.
- whether students are being given too many rights and privileges.

When asked to give their views on various education theories and practices, they agreed that:

- students should be involved in planning their learning activities.
- aides could do more of the teachers' routine non-teaching tasks.
- students should be compelled to attend school until age eighteen.
- remedial or compensatory education should be provided.
- concepts should be stressed over memorization.
- classes should not be strictly textbook-oriented.
- students should be informed in advance exactly what will be included in an exam.
- homework should be kept at a minimum.
- classes should be small.
- national tests should be used to compare local achievement levels.
- high school students should be involved in policy-making decisions.
- differentiated staffing was a good concept.
- children should be encouraged to do more free, undirected exploration.

(continued on reverse side)
Parents agreed that: (continued from front page)

---the concept of non-graded school was good.
---more emphasis should be placed on reasoning and developing opinions.
---students should be given an opportunity to talk.
---the concept of independent study was good.
---the concept of merit pay was good.
---"work-study" programs (supervised experience in the world of work) are good.
---the concept of team-teaching os good.
---more drill is needed in such fundamentals as arithmetic and spelling.
---more practice is needed in penmanship.
---more emphasis should be placed on reading skills.
---some classes should be taught even if a small number of students enroll in them.
---the concept of a flexible curriculum is good.
---sex education should be a part of the curriculum.
---the local public should be polled on local priorities.

The disagree with:

---"pass-fail" marking systems.
---open campus plans for high school students.
---all high school classes should be elective.
---the concept of the "voucher" system.
---the concept of year-round school.
---performance contracting.
---the suggestion that schools have too many petty and/or oppressive rules.
---the suggestion that there is too much emphasis on extra-curricular activities.
---the idea that there should be uniform standards for promotion to the next grade level.
---the suggestion that there is too much emphasis on science in elementary schools.
---separate curriculum offerings for members of minority groups.

They were divided on:

---allowing a high school student to "pass out" of a course.
---whether or not there is too much emphasis on memorizing "right" answers.
---ability grouping.
---tenure for teachers.

If faced with a lack of school funds, the only two cuts favored by parents were:

---making parents responsible for transporting children to and from school.
---charging rent for all textbooks.

The results of the questionnaire were interesting, and should be very helpful to the school board and staff as they plan for the future programs and policies in our schools. We wish to give a special thanks to the 137 parents who made the interviewers welcome and gave their time to answer the items in the extensive questionnaire.

If anyone is interested, we will be glad to share with you the detailed summaries of the project. Identity of individual respondents has of course not been given to us, and we presume that, now that tabulation of responses is complete, the individual questionnaires have long ago been shredded and destroyed somewhere on the ISU campus at Ames.
HOW MUCH DO YOU KNOW ABOUT SCHOOL?
One thing we attempted to find out through our survey last spring was how much Urbandale parents know about their schools. Here are some of the things we found out.

--Only ten percent knew how many members the Board of Education contained. (Correct answer: 7)

--Only 48 percent were able to correctly name at least one board member. Only 24 percent knew the names of at least two board members.

--95 percent could not give the school enrollment to within 200 pupils. (Correct answer: 3,700)

--81 percent did not know the number of Urbandale elementary schools. (Correct answer: 6)

--Only 24 percent knew how many elementary principals there were. (Correct answer: 4)

--Almost everybody (92 percent) knew the purpose of the new school building under construction. (Correct answer: junior high)

--Three-fourths of the parents were able to correctly name their child's principal. Two-thirds were able to correctly name the superintendent.

--Only 9 percent were able to give the amount, within $1 million, of the school's current budget. (Correct answer: $3 million)

--Only 40 percent were able to name the two major sources of school funds. (Correct answers: property taxes and state funds)

--98 percent knew where to go with a problem. They named the teacher (68 percent), the principal (23 percent), and the guidance counsellor (7 percent).

LESS BUTTERFAT IN THE MILK
This week we began serving two percent (lowfat) milk throughout the school lunch program. Same company; same protein, vitamin, and mineral content; same purity. Just less butterfat. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's recent approval of lowfat milk for school lunch recognized a fact long voiced by nutritionists: that today's children get too much fat in their diets anyway. Another factor to reckon with: lowfat milk is less expensive than milk with full butterfat content.

TEACHER-PARENT CONFERENCES SOON
No school all day Tuesday and Thursday, November 13 and 15, for kindergarten children.
No school in afternoons on those days (11:30 dismissal) for all other students. (over)
URBANDALE SCHOOL BULLETIN BOARD

CALENDAR OF EVENTS: November 2 - November 9

Fri. Nov. 2 - HS Varsity Football at Perry, 7:30 p.m. Bus leaves 5:00 p.m.
       Pep Bus leaves 6:15 p.m.
Sat. Nov. 3 - HS Boys State Gymnastics Meet at Cedar Rapids, 9:00 a.m. Bus leaves
       4:00 p.m. Friday.
       HS "Bye Bye Birdie" play, HS Commons, 8:00 p.m. Admission, Adults, $2.00,
       Students, $1.00.
Sun. Nov. 4 - HS Football Banquet, HS Commons, 6:00 p.m.
Tues. Nov. 6 - HS - "Sounds of Stadium" presented by the Jayhawk Marching Band,
       7:30 p.m., HS Gym. No admission charge.
       Olmsted - E-2 and E-3 students to Iowa Lutheran Hospital, 12:30 to 2:45 p.m.
Thurs. Nov. 8 - HS Business Education students to Brenton Bank, 9:25 to 9:55 a.m.
       Olmsted - E-2 and E-3 students to Iowa Lutheran Hospital, 12:30 to 2:45 p.m.
Fri. Nov. 9 - HS Girls Basketball, West Marshall here, JV at 6:30 p.m. Varsity, 8:00 p.m.
       Admission, Adults, $1.50, Students, $1.00.

REMINDER: Goodwill clothing bags being sent home today may be returned to the
       school at any time until the deadline of Thursday morning, November 8.

KAREN ACRES

Mark this on your calendar today! November 19th will be Family Fun
Night at Karen Acres school. 5:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. will be 2 1/2 hours
of Fun! Food! and Games! You won't want to miss this one!

HOT LUNCH MENU: November 5 - November 9

Mon. Nov. 5  Beefburger on bun, cottage cheese, buttered corn, fruit, milk.
Tues. Nov. 6  Chili & crackers, finger foods, cinnamon roll, fruit cup, milk.
Wed. Nov. 7  Chicken & noodles, buttered green beans, peanut butter sandwich,
               jello, milk.
Thurs. Nov. 8  Spaghetti w/meat & cheese, lettuce salad, peanut butter sandwich,
               cooky, milk.
Fri. Nov. 9  Orange juice, macaroni & cheese, hot roll & butter, buttered peas,
            fruit, milk.

"CAN YOU IMAGINE? MY TEACHER THINKS
   SHE KNOWS AS MUCH AS I DO."

REG HIDER