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THE EFFECTS ON TEACHERS OF PUBLIC SCHOOL
ENROLLMENT DECLINE: A CASE STUDY OF AN
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Kay Lynne Madsen-Neumann

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THE EFFECTS ON TEACHERS OF PUBLIC SCHOOL ENROLLMENT
DECLINE: A CASE STUDY OF AN URBAN SCHOOL DISTRICT

By

Kay Lynne Madsen-Neumann

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to
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ABSTRACT

THE EFFECTS ON TEACHERS OF PUBLIC SCHOOL ENROLLMENT
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School districts faced with declining student enrollment and loss of financial support have had to initiate reduction-in-teacher-force (RIF) policies. The purpose of this study was to analyze changes in the teacher force in the Pontiac, Michigan, Schools during the period from 1977-78 through 1981-82 and to examine teachers' attitudes toward their worklife environment.

The demographic characteristics of the teaching force analyzed for this study included the number of teachers employed throughout this five-year period of RIF actions, teachers receiving layoff notices, the rate of teacher absenteeism, teachers leaving the district, and the number of teachers hired by the school district. The Teacher Questionnaire was used to examine teachers' attitudes toward their jobs, the students, and other concerns of their worklife environment.

The population described by the demographic data was the total teaching force of each school year from 1977-78 through 1981-82. The sample population to whom the Teacher Questionnaire was sent included 250 teachers randomly selected from the total 1981-82 teaching force.

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**This study is dedicated to my parents,
Kenneth and Barbara Madsen.**

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Urban school districts are faced with declining public-school enrollments and concomitant dwindling financial resources. Teachers have been affected directly by the growing burdens inherent in declining economies. Reduction-in-teaching-force policies have resulted in the loss of jobs, the uncertainty of yearly layoffs, and the involuntary transfer of teachers across subject areas and grade levels and among schools. The statistical as well as emotional effects of decline-management decisions need to be investigated. Educators must learn more about the nature and effect of reduction-in-force decisions to ensure that such decisions are the least detrimental to teachers and to the total educational program.

According to the National Center for Education Statistics, urban areas will continue to experience a decline in enrollments throughout the 1980s.¹ In cities in which declining resources are directly related to the complex needs of a lower socioeconomic changing and aging population, economic problems also affect the ability of the city to support its schools. Reduction-in-teaching-force policies will be a reality throughout this decade as school districts

¹ National Center for Education Statistics, Digest of Educational Statistics (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1975), p. 47.

and cities struggle with the problems of declining student enrollments and limited financial resources.

Background of the Study

During the 1950s and 1960s, school districts were growing rapidly--expanding their programs, services, and teaching forces to meet the needs of increasing student enrollments. Many concerns about teacher preparation, staffing patterns, and the overall quality of educational programs were addressed by adding support personnel, hiring additional curriculum writers, adding new courses, and preparing teachers to carry out growing responsibilities accepted by the schools. Most of today's public-school administrators and planners received their on-the-job training during this time of expansion. Many teachers who have survived reduction-in-force (RIF) policies also contributed to the educational programs during these years of growth. Educators were reluctant to acknowledge the eventual end of this era of expansion, as evidenced by the obvious lack of long-range planning needed to prepare for the financial and psychological disjunctures of decline.

Optimistic enrollment predictions of the early 1960s were partly to blame for some of this short-sightedness. The Bureau of the Census published a monograph projecting educational enrollments based on 1960 census data and social indicators. To illustrate the uncertainties associated with the predictions, the Bureau presented both optimistic and pessimistic estimates. All projections, however, pointed to growth that was expected to accelerate well into the years

after 1975. Even as late as the mid-1960s, the Census Bureau saw none of the indicators that would cause them to alter their estimates.²

In the early 1960s, the National Committee for Support of Public Schools continued to lobby for, among other things, more classrooms and more teachers.

The increase over the preceding year [in the supply of new teachers] is not proportionate to the increased needs; the prospect for substantial relief from the chronic shortage is not in sight. The accumulated shortage of instruction rooms from the past years also remains high despite the fact that in the last 6 years [1955-1961] an average of 69,000 rooms were completed.³

Public-school enrollments declined by half a million students between 1971 and 1972, and by 1980 there was a loss of more than five million students. Population predictions were revised using more complex data involving social, economic, and demographic trends within urban, suburban, and rural school districts. School districts were forced to reduce their educational expenses, usually by eliminating educational programs and support services and by laying off teachers.

As many school administrators discovered, the process of reducing the teaching force and eliminating parts of the educational program was not accomplished simply by reversing their expansionist

²John K. Folger and Charles B. Nam, Education of the American Population (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, Bureau of the Census, 1967), p. 66.

³John Norton, Changing Demands on Education and Their Fiscal Implications (Washington, D.C.: National Committee for Support of Public Schools, 1963), p. 66.

policies. William Keough, Jr., a former superintendent who has written extensively on decline, noted:

In growth, the passage of time tends to balance errors of judgement in resource allocation; in decline, time compounds them. Growth holds out promise of career advancement; decline portends consolidation. Growth encourages and provides for multiple priorities; decline necessitates focus on only a few.⁴

Findings of the National Center for Education Statistics give some sense of the problem continuing to face teachers and school districts in the 1980s:

A 14% reduction in public secondary school classroom staffs is expected between 1979 and 1988.

Approximately 325,000 fewer teachers will be hired from 1980 to 1990 than were hired from 1970 to 1980.

At the elementary level, the total number of teachers employed in 1984 is expected to be 93,000 fewer than in 1974.

211,000 new teachers competed for 145,000 teaching positions in 1981.⁵

These statistics and subsequent implications for education are further complicated by the economic pressures faced by school districts in urban cities. Urban areas experiencing declining enrollments and dwindling resources are, in most cases, cities experiencing chronic unemployment, underemployment, small-business failures, large-business disinvestments, and a growing non-school-age population. All these changes contribute to a dwindling tax base and a decreasing support base for schools. Urban areas also have the added pressures

⁴William F. Keough, Jr., "Early Warning Signs of an Enrollment Drop," School Management 18 (1974): 40.

⁵National Center for Education Statistics, The Condition of Education: A Statistical Report on the Condition of American Education, 1975 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, 1975), p. 71.

of supporting public services required by lower-income groups, a densely populated area, and the cost of running city government.

Between 1950 and 1972, spending on public schools increased rapidly. Because of the economic climate of the 1980s, the period of unquestioned economic support for public education is over. In 1979 and 1980, citizens voted down more than half of all attempts to increase property taxes, the primary source of school financial support. In addition to this loss of support, state and federal governments have also reduced their support of public education.

The proposed federal education budget for 1983 will create even more financial problems for urban school districts by placing greater responsibility on state and local governments to find additional funding for schools within their own geographical areas. The 1983 proposed federal budget for education is \$10 billion. The appropriation for education in 1982 was \$14.5 billion, and in 1981 it was \$15 billion.⁶

Included in the 1983 budget is a proposed 38% cutback in funds for supplemental reading and mathematics programs. Teachers and students in urban districts will be most affected by these proposed cuts. Schools within urban areas must be responsive to the varied needs of their student populations. Not only has the public expected more of these schools and their teachers, but it has also become concerned with how well educators are meeting the increased expectations of federal and state mandates. This concern has fostered public

⁶"Administrations Budget Proposal for Education Suggests Lean Times Ahead," Phi Delta Kappan (May 1981): 510.

skepticism of the schools' ability to educate their pupils and is responsible, in part, for the many voter defeats of requests for additional school funds as well as renewals of existing funds.

The lack of community support for school-funding proposals and the reduction in state and federal educational funds have had an immediate effect on teachers and the quality of their worklife. During the period between 1970 and 1974, the demand for additional public elementary and secondary school teachers was estimated at 974,000, or an average of 114,000 per year. From 1975 through 1979, the demand decreased to less than 840,000.⁷ The need for new teachers is not expected to increase until the late 1980s and early 1990s, and this need will not be evenly distributed across rural, suburban, and urban school districts or across subject-matter areas.

An estimated 150,000 public-school teachers throughout the United States, or 7%, were laid off by their school systems in 1979-80. By the end of the school year, 137,000 teachers eventually were rehired. These statistics have consequences reaching beyond the economic concerns of those teachers not rehired. In 1976, the average age of teachers was 33, whereas in 1982 the average age of teachers was 37. There are only half as many teachers under the age of 30 now as there were in 1976.⁸

⁷ National Center for Education Statistics, Digest of Educational Statistics (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1975), p. 47.

⁸ "Teacher Opinion Poll: Job Satisfaction," Today's Education (November-December 1979): 17.

In general, teachers' attitudes regarding their worklife are affected by economic instability, changes in the ethnic and racial mixture of the community, job insecurity, changes in the make-up of teaching staffs, and community dissatisfaction with the school system. An officer of the Detroit Federation of Teachers remarked:

Americans are taking their teachers for granted, public respect toward the profession has declined in the past decade and the people in the classroom are quite aware of that. It's not the enjoyable, gratifying job it used to be. And you certainly don't find people entering this profession for the money.⁹

The way in which teachers are affected by these variables should not be overlooked when studying the effects of RIF decisions. One way to learn more about the consequences of RIF actions is to study a teaching force affected by such policies. This descriptive study is a case study of the teaching force in Pontiac, Michigan.

In response to loss of financial support and declining enrollment, the Pontiac School District has been faced with reducing its teaching force throughout the past five years. Changes occurring within the Pontiac teaching force during the school years 1977-78 through 1981-82 are described in this study.

Pontiac Schools have experienced declining enrollment statistics characteristic of other lower-socioeconomic urban school districts in Michigan. School enrollment in Pontiac dropped more than 11% between 1971 and 1980. This represented approximately 2,500 students.

⁹Glen Macnow, "4th R for Teachers, Its Regret," Detroit Free Press, 12 May 1982, pp. 1 and 13.

Enrollment projections for Pontiac suggest a decline of an additional 3,000 students by the 1982-83 school year.¹⁰

The decline in student enrollment for Pontiac is indicative of other changes occurring throughout the city. Because of changing demographic patterns, Pontiac has experienced a movement of middle-class families, as well as businesses, to the suburbs. Many families who have chosen to stay in the city are seeking private schooling for their children. Parents in Pontiac have been withdrawing their children from the public schools at a rate of 10% a year.¹¹

The movement of families and industry out of Pontiac and the exceedingly high unemployment rate of 26.4% as of May 1982 further complicate the problem of securing steady financial support for Pontiac Schools. The defeat of eight millage proposals between 1978 and 1981 has been attributed to financial and demographic changes within the community. Superintendent Odell Nails stated that the millages were defeated for three reasons: "unemployment, inflation and retired people on fixed incomes."¹²

Pontiac's school goals adopted in 1977 and 1982 mirror Keough's statement presented earlier in this study--that in times of decline, school districts constrict their goals and priorities. The Pontiac School Board and the superintendent confirmed five major areas of concern that were to be the district's goals for 1977. They were:

¹⁰Joe Cisnesor, "Classes Runneth Over at Non-public Schools," Oakland Press, 7 May 1981, p. 1.

¹¹Ibid.

¹²"Pontiac Schools Face Additional Cutbacks," Oakland Press, 7 May 1981, p. 1.

(1) student citizenship and the social environment of the schools, (2) curriculum development and upgrading to include long-range staff-development programs and articulation of educational programs from one grade level to another, (3) good community/school relations to include educational and service programs for adults, (4) expansion of programs and services for exceptional students, and (5) development and evaluation of personnel and programs.¹³

After four years of declining student enrollment, eight millage defeats, and a deficit of \$3.8 million, the Pontiac School Board had one goal for the 1981-82 school year: "Keep the schools open and continue to furnish educational services to the students."¹⁴

If economic predictions and enrollment projections are accurate, Pontiac Schools will continue to experience yearly budget cutbacks of teachers and programs, fewer support personnel and services, and the closing of school buildings. Pontiac teachers will continue to be faced with involuntary transfers, yearly layoff notices, and continued threats to the quality of their worklife throughout the 1980s.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this descriptive study was twofold: to analyze changes in the demographic characteristics of Pontiac teachers that appear to be associated with RIF policies and to examine teacher

¹³School District of the City of Pontiac, School Board Minutes, July 1977.

¹⁴School District of the City of Pontiac, School Board Minutes, July 1981.

attitudes toward their worklife. The population that was analyzed for demographic characteristics included teachers employed by the school district during the school years 1977-78 through 1981-82. Responses from teachers during the school year 1981-82 to a Teacher Questionnaire were used in the examination of teacher attitudes.

During the five-year period between 1977 and 1982, Pontiac teachers experienced the effect of major reductions in the school budget through the loss of jobs, increased responsibilities, limited and inadequate instructional materials and supplies, fewer support personnel and services, and loss of community confidence. The teachers' perceptions of their worklife, changes in staff make-up, and related consequences of such staff reductions during this extended period of declining enrollment and concomitant dwindling resources were explored in the present study.

Importance of the Study

The results of this study may contribute to the understanding of decline management through its documentation and analyses of demographic statistics and teacher attitudes of an urban teaching force reduced because of diminishing resources and declining student enrollment over a five-year period. Other urban school systems are facing similar RIF decisions. The findings of this study may assist districts with their planning of staffing patterns to ensure greater job security for their teachers, an environment that will promote high teacher morale, and greater continuity for their educational programs. The findings may also assist school boards, teacher organizations, and

school administrators in understanding more fully the psychological effect of RIF policies on teachers.

As a secondary contribution, the study may help identify, within its limitations, attitudes of teachers who have been involved in major teacher-reduction actions. Teachers are the key to developing opportunities and significant learning environments for students. It is vital that school boards, central administrators, teacher organizations, and teachers themselves understand the consequences and implications of RIF strategies.

This study may also contribute to the field of on-going in-service education needs of teachers in similar circumstances. Staff-development needs can be expected to become more acute as diminishing resources and declining enrollments reduce the number of "new hires" in a school system. District administrators often view staff development as an ancillary activity that can be reduced or eliminated as declines force budget cuts to be made. If dissatisfaction and stress are found to be widespread among teachers in districts experiencing decline, these issues should be directly addressed by in-service education programs. Staff development should provide opportunities for teachers to identify personal sources of job dissatisfaction and assist them in creating individualized programs to modify pathogenic work environments or to alleviate emotional distress.

Data related to teacher job satisfaction may be useful to school boards and organizations that represent teachers. This subject is likely to become a part of collective bargaining, and it is possible

that much could be done to improve job satisfaction at little or no cost.

The findings of this study may also be beneficial to universities in designing pre-service teacher programs. Individuals who are considering teaching as a potential career choice should have this information for part of their career decision-making process. As part of their undergraduate programs, prospective teachers should also learn successful strategies for handling job-related frustrations and tensions. Becoming aware of demographic changes and the changing needs of school systems could also be part of the pre-service education for future teachers in selecting the kinds of qualifications and certification that would be most beneficial to their overall goals.

Questions to Be Answered

RIF policies have many consequences for teachers and school systems, apart from the obvious loss of jobs. The following questions were examined in this study, using the Pontiac teaching force.

1. What consequences have resulted from RIF decisions made by the Pontiac Public Schools in respect to the number of teachers employed and the number of teachers receiving layoff notices from 1977-78 through 1981-82?

2. What is the relationship between RIF actions and the average age of Pontiac teachers?

3. Does teacher absenteeism increase during extended periods of declining enrollment and dwindling financial resources?

4. Do teachers experience a decline in morale and job satisfaction during times of enforced RIF policies?

5. How do teachers view their students during times of dwindling resources and declining enrollments?

6. What are teachers' perceptions of personal control over their worklife environment?

7. What are the primary concerns of Pontiac teachers in 1982?

Limitations

This study includes a description of the teaching force in the Pontiac School District during the school years 1977-78 through 1981-82. Certain records were not available or were incomplete; therefore, other sources were used. For example, teacher-absenteeism statistics were approximated by using the number of substitute teachers hired each school day. Other limitations regarding the availability of records are discussed in the presentation of the statistics in Chapter IV.

Definitions of Terms

For the purpose of this study, key terms and phrases are defined in the following manner:

Reduction-in-force (RIF) policies: Policies and actions taken by the school board to reduce the number of teachers in response to declining student enrollment and dwindling financial resources.

Tenure: A term used in teaching contracts, indicating achievement of status as a permanent teacher upon successfully completing a probationary teaching period of two to five years.

Seniority: Teaching status attained by length of continuous service.

Elementary: Primary or elementary grades; for the purpose of this paper, includes kindergarten through grade 6.

Secondary: Grades 7 through 12.

Certification: To teach in a Michigan public school, a teacher must hold a provisional certificate or a continuing certificate. The Michigan provisional certificate is the mandatory initial Michigan teaching certificate and is always a prerequisite to an eventual Michigan continuing certificate.

To receive the continuing certificate, a teacher must have taught or administered successfully for the equivalent of three years following the issuance of the provisional certificate and have earned 18 semester hours in a course of study approved as a planned program by an approved Michigan teacher-education institution.

Teachers are certified to teach at the secondary or elementary level. A secondary-level certificate is valid for teaching all subjects in grades 7 and 8, and majors and minors in grades 9 through 12. An initial Michigan elementary-level certificate issued after July 1, 1970, is valid for teaching all subjects in grades kindergarten through 8, and majors and minors in grade 9. (An elementary certificate issued before July 1, 1970, is valid for teaching all subjects in grades kindergarten through 8 and does not include grade 9.)

Overview

This descriptive study is focused on the effects of RIF decisions on teachers in the Pontiac, Michigan, School District. Chapter II is a review of literature concerning the population and economic trends that have created the environment necessitating RIF decisions. Literature concerning the legal and psychological consequences of RIF actions is also discussed. The specific factors that have forced Pontiac Schools to implement RIF policies are described in Chapter III. A description of the methodology used in gathering the data required for this study is also included. The demographic and survey data are presented in Chapter IV, and conclusions from these findings are discussed in the final chapter.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Public-school systems in major urban areas have undergone substantial changes in their educational programs, student populations, and teacher forces. Contributing to these changes have been population shifts, a declining birth rate, and increasing financial demands on city governments. The total operation of a school district within lower-socioeconomic urban areas is interrelated with the economic status and well-being of the community it serves.

Decisions made by school boards to reduce their teaching force reflect the economic and social demands of the immediate population. This chapter contains a discussion of literature on the economic and social concerns that affect RIF decisions. The chapter is divided into three sections. Demographic trends, birth-rate predictions, and student-enrollment statistics are discussed in the first section. Financial concerns of lower-socioeconomic urban school districts are also presented in this section. The second section includes an overview of RIF policies and the legal aspects of seniority, tenure, and affirmative action as bases for RIF decisions. The final section is a review of the real and perceived consequences RIF decisions have for teachers regarding instructional changes, reductions in the established educational program, fewer support personnel and services, and

inadequate instructional materials and supplies. Additional concerns expressed by teachers involved in RIF actions are also presented in this section.

Population and Economic Trends

Data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, colleges, professional associations, and recruiting firms were used to rate the growth of various professions throughout the 1980s and into the 1990s. Teaching was ranked near the bottom of the list, with a predicted growth rate of only 2% by 1990. Teaching ranked in the lower 25% of the professions studied.¹⁵ The low ranking was based on predictions of continued budget cuts, declining enrollment, and a declining birth rate throughout the 1980s.

Population and Enrollment Predictions

A combination of social, economic, and demographic factors throughout the 1970s has resulted in the continuing decline in enrollments and the increasing number of minority students in urban schools. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, some of the factors contributing to the decreasing and changing student populations are as follows:

A steady decline in birth rates, especially among whites, causing a decline in the school population.

Emigration of increasing numbers of middle-income and white populations from central cities, leaving those cities with growing numbers of low-income and minority residents.

¹⁵ National Center for Education Statistics, Conditions of Education: 1979 Edition (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, 1978).

The exodus of business and industry from the central cities combined with generally poor economic conditions which cause increased unemployment and massive underemployment.

A decline in the number of persons immigrating to cities.

Increased transfers to private and parochial schools.¹⁶

A steady decline in the nation's birth rate in the 1960s and early 1970s created a 24% decrease from 1967 to 1977 in the total number of pre-primary-age children. However, it was not until 1976 that this decline began to affect the absolute number of children enrolled in pre-primary programs.¹⁷ The declining birth rate is now beginning to affect enrollments in the elementary and secondary schools, as well.

From 1950 to 1970, the elementary-school-age population increased by approximately 14.2 million, according to 1970 Census Bureau statistics.¹⁸ During the 1970s, this age group decreased by almost six million, but it is expected gradually to become larger by the end of the 1980s. Both in absolute and relative terms, however, neither the decrease of the 1970s nor the slight increase in the 1980s is expected to approach the population increase in the age group 5-13 years that occurred during the 1950s.

According to census predictions, population changes in the age group 14-17 years will be steadily downward until 1990. After an increase of almost 7.5 million between 1950 and 1970 and continued growth into the 1970s, this age group started to decline in size in

¹⁶Ibid., p. 23.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 49.

¹⁸U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports Series P-25 601 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1970), p. 5.

the mid-1970s and is expected to continue to decrease until the late 1980s and early 1990s. The magnitude of the decline over the period 1974 to 1990 will be approximately 3.9 million.¹⁹

Overall, the most significant feature of the future population for schools will be the decline in the relative numbers of children. In 1974, 16% of the total United States population were 5 to 13 years old, and another 8% were 14 to 17 years of age. By 1990, however, these figures are expected to decline to 14% and 5%, respectively, as the median age of the United States population continues to increase.²⁰ Due to greater longevity and fewer births, the future population will be less child-dominated than the population of the present or the recent past.

Regional population trends.--Population and enrollment forecasts have educational consequences; some are traceable directly from population changes, and others must be traced more indirectly through economic and social factors. In a nationwide survey, Fuguitt and Zuiches found that if people were able to choose where they would like to live, populations within cities over 500,000 would decrease and rural areas within 30 miles of a city of 50,000 would increase in population.²¹ The largest decline would occur in cities over 500,000, and the largest increase would be in rural areas near cities of 50,000 population or more.²² The relationship between residential preference

¹⁹Ibid., p. 8.

²⁰Ibid., p. 34.

²¹Glen V. Fuguitt and James L. Zuiches, "Residential Preferences and Population Distribution," Demography (August 1975): 491-504.

²²Ibid., p. 496.

and actual migration behavior is affected by employment, transportation, educational opportunity, and individual motivation. There have indeed been changes in the geographical movement of people in the last 12 years, and if such migration continues it will compound the effects of decreasing birth rate and declining student enrollments.

Migration of families with school-age children is an important determinant of change in school enrollments within the United States. According to Census Bureau data for 1970 through 1975, central cities have experienced net out-migration in the 5-14 and 15-19 years school-age groups. The decrease in both age groups combined totalled approximately 2.3 million children.²³ Enrollment shifts have followed these migrational changes. Central-city enrollments have declined more rapidly than the national averages; suburban and adjacent rural areas have had less rapid declines, and in some instances have experienced gains. These broad trends are expected to continue into the late 1980s.

Regional shifts in population occurred during the early 1970s. The Northeast and North-Central regions had a net out-migration, and the Western and Southern areas experienced a more rapid growth in population as a result of net in-migration. According to elementary-school enrollment projections for the years after 1982, the South and the West may have increases above the national average. Projections

²³U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, Series P-20, 285 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1970), p. 48.

further suggest that enrollments may actually decline in central cities, despite patterns of national and regional growth.²⁴

Changes in population and student enrollment impose added economic pressures on urban areas already providing special support services required by lower-income groups, a densely populated area, and the cost of running city government. Schools within these urban areas must assume the responsibility of meeting the varied needs of their changing student populations.

Economic Concerns of Urban School Districts

Forecasts of slowing economic growth, which are based on national econometric predictions showing a decelerated growth in the population and work force, have implications for schools and educators. One certainty is an aging population and, numerically at least, one that is less youth-centered. Addressing the reality of an older population, Davis and Lewis stated in their book on education and employment in the future:

Whether fiscal conservatism is an inevitable consequence is unclear, but age-specific self-interest is likely. The aging babies from the boom years will be in their prime years and enfranchised in the leaner times ahead. Slower economic growth reduces revenues, produces tighter budgets, and dampens expansiveness. Inflation will continue to affect rising school costs. There will be fewer goods and services available at higher prices under tighter budgets.²⁵

²⁴Ibid., pp. 2-3.

²⁵Russell Davis and Gary Lewis, Education and Employment: A Future Perspective of Needs, Policies and Progress (Lexington, Mass.: Lexington Books, 1975), p. 43.

Between 1950 and 1972, spending on public schools in the United States increased by 738%. Because of the present economic climate and the changes occurring in cities' priorities, this period of unquestioned economic support for education is over. In 1979 and 1980, voters defeated more than 50% of all attempts to increase property taxes, a primary source of school support. Many of the defeated millage votes were in urban districts experiencing chronic unemployment, large business disinvestments, and a growing minority and non-school-age population. All of these changes contribute to a decreasing support base for schools. Urban areas are also affected by the competing pressures of public services required by lower-income groups and the costs of running a city.

In recent years, disparities in educational resources have been a concern at all levels of government. The greatest disparities in financial funding of public schools exist between lower-socioeconomic urban areas and the middle-class suburban school districts. Because of changes in laws, 28 states decreased funding disparities between 1970 and 1977. Many states are now reexamining existing financial structures and formulas to provide greater equity in funding among the districts within their states and among the cities and townships within districts. Between 1970 and 1977, 25 states enacted reforms in the financial structures of elementary and secondary education. In 18 of these states, disparities were reduced.²⁶

²⁶ National Center for Education Statistics, School Finance Reform in the States (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, 1978), p. 32.

The impetus for school finance reform came from state jurists and legislators. In *San Antonio v. Rodriguez*, the Supreme Court ruled that the Constitution does not guarantee education as a fundamental right, and left the decision of funding systems to the states. In a series of decisions beginning with *Serrano v. Priest* in 1971, in California, the State Court decided that the state's heavy reliance on property taxes for education was discriminatory and illegal. After that case, the state's share of financing for local schools in California rose from 30% to 70%.²⁷

Since the California case, courts in at least ten other states have issued similar decisions, forcing legislatures to adjust their system of paying for schools. Most of those states established plans that include some local property taxes but rely most heavily on state funding. Florida ensures an equal-based amount for each student but takes into account the cost of living in each of the 67 Florida counties.²⁸

A recent New York State Court of Appeals ruling found New York's system, which relied heavily on local property taxes, to be "constitutionally defective" because it discriminated against children in poor districts. New York depended on local taxes to provide 55% of all school aid. Thirty-nine percent came from state funds, and 6% came from the federal government. The judges said students growing up in districts with low property values had less money spent on

²⁷ Joe Cisneros, "Classes Runneth Over at Non-public schools," *Oakland Press*, 7 May 1981, p. 1.

²⁸ Ibid.

their education than those growing up in districts with solid industrial bases or high property values. That, they ruled, violated each child's constitutional right to equal education. The court ruled that the state may include some local property taxes in its finance system but must devise a formula that ensures an equal amount of money is spent on each student.²⁹

Reduction-in-Force Literature

The effects of enrollment decline, compounded by financial problems, have forced urban school districts to make severe reductions in their spending. Teachers' salaries make up 70% to 80% of yearly school budgets, causing teaching positions to be primary targets of any major cuts in school spending. RIF policies are determined in part by state laws, teacher contracts, the strength of teachers' unions, school boards, and superintendents. The following reference study presents RIF policies, the legal implications of RIF policies, and related concerns and consequences of RIF actions.

Legal Policies Affecting RIF Decisions

Many urban school districts have been reducing their teaching forces since the mid-1970s. The problems associated with such reductions are being addressed by a growing body of laws that define how school-staff reductions are to be accomplished.

State legislatures have played an important role in establishing RIF procedures. A survey of teacher employment and tenure

²⁹Ibid.

statutes in the 50 states shows a variety of provisions directly relating to RIF policies in more than 40 of the states.³⁰ The general themes of statutory provisions are categorized into three areas: reasons for RIF, order for release, and order for recall.

Reasons for RIF and due process.--Due process procedures for RIF actions are provided for in some state laws. A distinction exists in RIF statutes regarding the language used for releasing personnel for RIF reasons that may affect due process. A substantial minority of state statutes use language indicating possible recall, e.g., suspension, layoff, leave, or furlough. The majority of state statutes use terms such as dismissal, nonrenewal, or termination. The difference in language has a direct consequence on order of recall and extent of procedural due process. Courts have generally afforded more due protections, such as hearings, to dismissed teachers than to suspended teachers.

Grounds for staff reduction also vary in the legislation. In almost half of the states, decline in enrollment is cited with greater frequency than any other statutory basis. The second most frequent reason for RIF actions is stated as "other," "good cause," or "just cause." Additional categories include financial or economic causes, district reorganization or consolidation, elimination of positions, and curtailment of programs. Some states permit release of personnel at the discretion of the school board.

³⁰ Charles Bargerstock and Perry Zirkel, "Reduction in Force: A Statutory Reality," Compact (Fall 1981): 15-19.

and curtailment of programs. Some states permit release of personnel at the discretion of the school board.

Order for release.--Order for release is specified in 17 of the 50 state statutes. Four states expressly provide that nontenured personnel are to be released before tenured personnel. Eleven states provide for RIF actions to follow the inverse order of employment or seniority. A Louisiana statute specifically states that seniority is irrelevant. Oregon does not provide for an order of layoff but has a combined seniority-merit formula for the transfer of employees scheduled for layoff.

Another way of prioritizing the order for RIF actions is "bumping." This term is used colloquially to describe the effect of implementing a particular priority order for RIF. A tenured teacher scheduled for suspension or dismissal may have the right by law to "bump" a nontenured teacher or a teacher with less seniority who occupies a position for which the teacher is legally qualified and certified. In a court decision, *Lenard v. Board of Education*, "legally qualified" was construed to mean current state certification for the position.³¹ Courts have tended to extend, by common law expansion, the number of jurisdictions that grant tenured teachers bumping rights over nontenured teachers. According to a 1981 review of court decisions, however, courts have tended to be "relatively loathe to impose seniority order upon boards of education in the absence of statutory

³¹ *Lenard v. Board of Education*, 385 N.E. 20 1321 (Illinois 1979).

direction."³² The review also stated that cases concerning the applicability and calculation of seniority credit are quite varied and depend largely on the state's statutory and judicial precedent. The review further reported that some school boards have been forced by state legislation to realign their staffs (Pennsylvania) or to reschedule programs (New York) in order to retain teachers in the priority categories who might otherwise be dismissed.

Order for recall.--A majority of state statutes do not address the recall of teachers. Of the 16 states that do have laws regarding recall procedures, five have established a "preference list" with the names of dismissed teachers using certain criteria for placement on the list. Nine states base recall on the order of seniority.

Illinois does not have a specific statute regarding recall; however, the Illinois Appellate Court inferred legislative intent that tenured teachers be given preferential recall rights over non-tenured teachers but that nontenured teachers not be accorded any seniority preference over other applicants.³³

There continue to be numerous court cases and legislative debates concerning RIF policies. Changes will continue to occur, as evidenced by the reaction to a decision made by the Connecticut State Supreme Court. The court decided that the tenure law did not permit tenured teachers bumping rights over nontenured teachers.³⁴

³²Bargerstock and Zirkel, p. 16.

³³Bilek v. Board of Education, 377 N.E. 2d 1259 (Illinois Appellate 1978).

³⁴Garov v. Board of Education, 41 Conn. L.J.8 (August 14, 1980).

Pennsylvania had a similar experience with a much-litigated merit-seniority formula for RIF dismissals. The legislature finally removed the merit portion of the formula, leaving seniority as the only criterion for recall.

Tenure.--Tenure laws are state laws that outline conditions for reaching a tenured status and conditions and procedures for holding onto it. Forty-six states and the District of Columbia have tenure laws. Tenure laws generally accomplish three goals: (1) they specify that a teacher is entitled to permanent employment status after the successful completion of a probationary period of two to five years, depending on the state; (2) they list specific reasons for which a tenured teacher can be dismissed; and (3) they outline procedures designed to protect the tenured teacher's rights. Such procedures could require that a teacher be given written notice of termination and of the charges against him/her, be allowed a fair hearing, and be permitted to present witnesses in his/her own defense.

In four states--Mississippi, South Carolina, Utah, and Vermont--and in districts in other states without tenure laws, most teachers have one or two types of contracts. The "continuing contract" promises that the teacher will be notified by a certain date if the contract is not to be continued; it does not promise that the teacher will be given the reason for dismissal or that he/she has due process rights. The "annual," or "long-term," contract does not promise advance notification of dismissal. In no state, however, does tenure prevent a teacher from being laid off as a result of declining enrollment or loss of financial resources. Most tenure

laws state that a teacher can be dismissed if the position he/she holds is eliminated and no other position for which he/she is qualified and certified exists. Most districts begin to lay off tenured teachers only after the nontenured teachers are dismissed.

Teacher unions in many states have negotiated clauses into their contracts that specify procedures to follow in deciding who will be laid off. The procedure is usually based on seniority and certification. RIF policies and the predictions for the immediate future of teacher supply and demand have prompted teachers' unions to negotiate provisions into their contracts that clarify and expand their statutory protections, a move that is strongly advocated by the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) and the National Education Association (NEA).³⁵

Another movement taking hold within some unions supports the elimination of tenure while the union contract would have provisions to take its place. The United Teachers of Dade County ratified their contract to eliminate the possibility of tenure for new teachers. The move was not against tenure but rather against the lack of protection afforded to teachers who have not attained tenure status. Teachers within the Dade County teachers' union were concerned about the negative effects of tenure. A statement issued by the union's vice-president echoed this concern:

The total misunderstanding of what it [tenure] is or is not on the part of the public, the media and teachers

³⁵Patricia Palker, "Tenure, Do We Need It?" Teacher 97 (May/June 1981): 36-40.

themselves hurts the teaching profession. The myth that surrounds tenure is an albatross around the necks of teachers.³⁶

Such clauses are not new; they were among the first types of clauses to be negotiated once states began enacting laws giving teachers collective-bargaining rights in the 1960s. Michigan teacher unions were among the first, in 1965, to bargain these kinds of clauses into their contracts. The clauses typically clarified or expanded on rights provided by law. About 65% of all contracts now have "just cause" dismissal provisions.

The director of economic research for the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) called the unions negotiating to gain "just cause" clauses "the largest single trend in negotiations in the past five years."³⁷ Dade County teachers are unique in that they were the first to use the clauses instead of, rather than in addition to, their state tenure statute.

Opponents of statutory tenure use court precedents to support their argument for contract tenure. The courts have interpreted the Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments as providing due process for teachers' right to work. The Supreme Court ruled in 1923 that the concept of liberty included freedom to engage in one's chosen profession. Some courts have also ruled that when a person enters an occupation

³⁶ Ibid., p. 36.

³⁷ Gregg Downey, "What School Boards Do When That Irresistable Force Called RIF Meets That Immovable Object Called Affirmative Action," The American School Board Journal 163 (October 1976): 35-38.

he/she acquires "property" rights that cannot be arbitrarily taken away.³⁸

Proponents of state tenure statutes believe that constitutional interpretations are still not in actuality as strong a protection as tenure statutes. The NEA and the AFT issued statements regarding the importance of state tenure laws. They argued that not every local union in the country is large or powerful enough to win such clauses. Also, in many areas of the country, there are no bargaining rights. Therefore, if state laws were repealed, many teachers would be left unprotected.³⁹

According to one reviewer, observers predict that protection for teachers will increase in the 1980s, but so will administrators' success in dismissing incompetent teachers. It is also felt that the word "tenure," associated with protection by state statutes, will probably fade from use.

Seniority.--Because of the large numbers of tenured teachers affected by RIF decisions, seniority and not tenure has played a major role in determining layoff and recall procedures. Most contracts state that if an opening for which a displaced teacher is certified is not available in another school within the district, the teacher may "bump" a teacher with less seniority from his/her position. Seniority-based reductions can be detrimental to teachers and to the effectiveness and efficiency of school-district operations for several reasons. First, staffing patterns are often disrupted,

³⁸Ibid.

³⁹Ibid., p. 38.

resulting in the breakup of teams of teachers who have learned to work together effectively over a number of years. Second, it contributes to a growing imbalance among a faculty, which results in the loss of fresh ideas and viewpoints that young faculty members bring to an institution. Some administrators feel this is particularly costly to the school system because, as a result of the current oversupply of teachers, administrators have been able to upgrade the quality of their teaching staffs by being highly selective in choosing among the many applicants for positions. In addition, young teachers tend to be more responsive to innovations, and therefore the aging of the teaching population may make it particularly difficult to develop and implement new ideas.⁴⁰ A third problem with seniority is that it reduces the opportunity for students to be taught by instructors who are relatively close to them in age and outlook. A fourth concern of using seniority as the sole criterion for RIF actions is the budgetary effect of layoffs based on seniority. Because salaries are determined by seniority in most districts, layoffs of the most junior teachers provide the least relief to financially strained school districts.

Reductions based solely on seniority also result in an older, more experienced staff, which produces problems of its own. Maintaining a staff based strictly on seniority increases the average instructional costs because the teachers who are retained will be at

⁴⁰ Paul Berman and Milbrey McLaughlin, Federal Programs Supporting Educational Change, Vol. 7 (Santa Monica, Calif.: Rand Corporation, 1977), p. 54.

high pay levels. The increase will dramatically increase per-pupil costs. Management-of-decline studies have shown that in a majority of urban school districts it cost nearly 50% more to operate schools in 1979 than in 1971. Whereas the average enrollment dropped approximately 3.7% during the 1970s, the average operating cost increased 61%. Much of this increase has been attributed to the higher salaries of older staffs.⁴¹

Wilken noted that when there is a concentration of experienced staff members, bargaining strategies for salary increase.⁴² As staff experience increases, the interests of staff at the upper end of the salary scale tend to have greater weight. Because the majority of teachers are at the upper end of the salary scale, negotiations generally concentrate their efforts in that direction. Therefore, agreements are frequently for higher salaries and benefits for veteran employees, with less emphasis on the less-experienced teacher. Additional research has suggested that older staffs involved in extended periods of declining conditions within their school districts are involved in more strikes and become more militant. In many districts such as these, teachers have petitioned to call for a change in their union representation to a more aggressive union.⁴³

⁴¹Diane Divoky, "Burden of the Seventies: The Management of Decline," Phi Delta Kappan (October 1979): 87+.

⁴²William Wilken and John Callahan, "Declining Enrollment," in Declining Enrollment: The Challenge of the Coming Decade, ed. Susan Abramowitz and Stuart Rosenfeld (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, March 1979), pp. 257-304.

⁴³Allen Ornstein, "Teacher Salaries; Past, Present, Future," Phi Delta Kappan 61 (June 1980): 677-79.

In addition to aging staffs, lack of new teachers, and the financial burden of high salaries, seniority-based reductions ignore completely the effects of past discrimination against women and minorities. State laws are definitive in some places regarding affirmative-action policies, but they provide no national consensus. The statutes range from New York's absolute-seniority edict to Minnesota's law stating specifically that affirmative action may supersede even teacher certification. The two major teacher unions, the NEA and the AFT, support absolute seniority. At an AFT convention, the predominantly black union local of Washington, D.C., was urged by AFT leaders to present the following resolution:

Whereas, in times of a justifiable reduction in the work force, traditionally layoffs are made in conformance with an existing seniority system, and teachers hired under an Affirmative Action program would be among those with low seniority and would be the first to go. . . .

. . . Be it therefore resolved that this 60th annual convention of the American Federation of Teachers calls for construction of seniority clauses in the collective bargaining agreements that will make it possible to carry out the objectives of both agreements (seniority and Affirmative Action) to the fullest extent possible.⁴⁴

AFT leaders warned at the time, however, that such a resolution would "play right into the hands of school boards," and the membership voted to table the Affirmative Action resolution.

The AFT executive council then introduced another resolution they felt would touch on the concerns minority teachers had about seniority, and this resolution was adopted. The resolution read in part:

⁴⁴Downey, p. 37.

. . . Even as some jobs are being lost for economic reasons, others calling for new and specialized talents in bilingual education are being created by court mandate. The result may be competition and hostility among different groups of employees and an attack on seniority from those who suffer while others are protected. Management has nothing to lose and everything to gain from this atmosphere. . . .

. . . But even in times of high unemployment and economic recession, seniority must be defended. It is one of a worker's chief protections against arbitrary dismissal. Layoffs must not be selectively directed at employees who have previously been judged competent simply because they lack membership in some ethnic, racial or sex group. Today's minority group may be tomorrow's majority. Without seniority, a black worker who has fought his way into a system might be edged out by a member of an even newer group. Seniority cannot allow for preferential treatment in terms of quotas, its application must be blind to race, sex and background. . . .⁴⁵

This resolution confirmed AFT's stand on seniority, as well as rejecting any possibility of supporting affirmative-action policies requested by various groups.

According to an article published by the NEA, entitled "Employment Affirmative Action through Collective Bargaining," the NEA strongly urged all local affiliates to adopt affirmative-retention language in their negotiated agreements and to modify seniority policies so that women and minorities would not be disproportionately affected.⁴⁶ The reality, however, of adding such language in times of decline and RIF actions has been minimal. Majority-group teachers have not been willing to jeopardize their jobs by supporting the addition of affirmative-action clauses to their contracts.

⁴⁵Ibid., p. 38.

⁴⁶National Education Association, "Employment Affirmative Action Through Collective Bargaining," n.d.

Some attempts have been made to resolve the potential conflicts among affirmative action and seniority in regard to RIF decisions. Even these attempts have been plagued by large numbers of teachers who are forced to leave their positions because of declining resources and enrollments.

In Ann Arbor, Michigan, the collective-bargaining agreement countered the last-hired, first-fired effect by prescribing separate seniority groups for undefined racial categories so as to maintain racial ratios. In Lansing, Michigan, first-year, probationary, and ethnic-minority teachers were exempted from seniority-mandated reductions under the following arrangement:

If, at anytime, the percentage of ethnic minority teaching personnel reaches the ethnic minority student population percentage norm, further staff reduction shall result in maintaining a racial balance among staff no lower than the existing student ratio.⁴⁷

The Michigan Civil Rights Commission has been working to maintain gains by women and members of minority groups. The Commission emphasized in a policy statement that although it was not seeking to end seniority practices, in cases where seniority perpetuated the effects of past discrimination, it would seek to modify the system. The Commission stated that it would review carefully "any case where it is found that a layoff-recall system perpetuated the present effects of past discrimination."⁴⁸

⁴⁷Thomas Saucedo, "Negotiated Reduction-in-Force Provisions," Negotiations Research Digest (June 1975): 18.

⁴⁸Michigan Civil Rights Commission, Policy Statement, August 26, 1975, p. 3.

The Washington Education Association supported efforts to maintain women and minorities in school systems. They agreed to dual layoff systems when justified in accordance with the positions and provisions enunciated by the Human Rights Commission. The Superintendent of Public Instruction supported the teacher union's efforts by stating:

RIF (reduction in force) policies must adhere to affirmative action principles in order for the school districts' affirmative action in employment program (policy and implementation plan) to be considered a "good faith" effort. Effective immediately, the reduction in force policies and implementation practices and procedures are required of all school districts as a component of their affirmative action in employment programs. . . .⁴⁹

Affirmative-action-policy commitments such as this one are still quite rare in urban school districts facing RIF actions. Seniority as a criterion for layoffs has had and will continue to have adverse effects on women and minorities.

RIF and Teacher Worklife

RIF actions may affect many areas of the teacher's worklife. Duke and Cohen suggested that some worklife areas are affected immediately, such as increased student/teacher ratios, whereas other areas such as program cuts, deterioration of facilities, or yearly layoffs have latent consequences.⁵⁰ Some related areas that are affected by RIF actions include changes in educational programs, increase in

⁴⁹ Superintendent of Public Instruction, Washington State Bulletin No. 2-76, Executive Services, 10 May 1976.

⁵⁰ Daniel Duke and Jon Cohen, "Running Faster to Stay in Place," Phi Delta Kappan 63 (September 1981): 13-17.

class size, loss of support personnel, and lack or inadequacy of instructional materials.

Educational programs.--In a survey completed in the late 1970s, selected school-district personnel were asked to respond to questions regarding the extent to which declining enrollments and resources affected their instructional programs. The analysis of the data consisted of a comparison of the characteristics of school districts with increasing versus decreasing student populations from 1970 to 1978.⁵¹ The findings suggested that a greater percentage of districts experiencing declining enrollments, as compared with those experiencing an increase in enrollments, showed (1) an increase in the number of school drop-outs, (2) an increase in the median age of the teaching staff, and (3) more early-retirement-incentive programs. A greater number of districts with declining enrollments also required teachers to have state teaching certifications in more than one subject area than did districts with increasing enrollments.

The investigator also compared the differences between increasing- and decreasing-enrollment school districts with regard to various instructional issues. A much larger percentage of declining-enrollment districts used alternative education, perhaps in an attempt to lower the drop-out rate. There was also a great difference in the districts' responses regarding changes in

⁵¹Thomas Dembowski, "The Effects of Declining Enrollments on the Instructional Programs of Public Elementary and Secondary Schools" (paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Boston, Massachusetts, 24 April 1980).

materials-replacement cycles. Sixty-three percent of the increasing-enrollment districts responded that they had shortened their replacement cycles, whereas only 32% of the declining-enrollment districts had shortened their cycles. When asked if they thought the quality of the educational program had changed, a significant number of declining-enrollment districts responded that the quality of the programs had decreased.

Class size.--Another change in instructional programs within districts experiencing decline is the increase in the number of students enrolled in each class. In urban areas, class sizes are increasing. Teachers are presented with more students who have special needs, more students who lack basic skills, and more mainstreamed special-education students. The Nevada Supreme Court stated that class size is considered part of teachers' working conditions.⁵² Yet the implications of these changes have not been clearly defined. Research data on class size have presented conflicting views regarding the effect of class size on student achievement and the quality of education.⁵³

For the purpose of this research, the consequences of larger class size are viewed from the surviving teachers' standpoint. The following are six generalizations selected from class-size literature that present teacher arguments supporting the need for small class size.

⁵²Charles Hall, "The Effect of Teachers' Organizations on Salaries and Class Size," Industrial and Labor Relations Review 26 (January 1973): 834-41.

⁵³Susan Choy, "The Impact of Changing Resource Levels," National Institute of Education (May 1980): 60.

1. Teachers employ a wider variety of instructional strategies, methods, and learning activities and are more effective when they have fewer rather than more students to work with.⁵⁴

2. Students benefit from more individualized instruction when teachers have fewer rather than more students.⁵⁵

3. Students develop better human relations with and have greater interpersonal regard for other students and their teachers when teachers have fewer rather than more students.⁵⁶

⁵⁴Charles Danowski and J. Hall, "Teacher Preparation and Numerical Adequacy," IAR Research Bulletin 6 (1966): 7-10; Lawrence Knolle, Identifying Superior Teachers (New York: Institute of Administrative Research, Columbia University, 1959); Robert Whitsitt, "Comparing the Individualities of Large Secondary School Classes With Small Secondary School Classes Through the Use of a Structured Observation Schedule" (Ph.D. dissertation, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1965); Gene Stanford and Albert Roark, Human Interaction in Education (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1974); William Vincent, "Class Size," in Encyclopedia of Educational Research, 4th ed., ed. Robert Ebel (New York: Macmillan Company, 1969); Bruce Mitchell, "Small Class Size: A Panacea for Educational Ills?" Peabody Journal of Education 47 (July 1969): 32-35; Dwight Lindbloom, "Class Size as It Affects Instructional Procedures and Educational Outcomes" (Minneapolis: Educational Research and Development Council of the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area, June 1970).

⁵⁵Metropolitan School Study Council, Do You Know Your Pupils? (New York: The Council, Columbia University, 1958); Bernard McKenna and James Pugh, "Performance of Pupils and Teachers in Small Classes Compared to Large," IAR Research Bulletin 4 (February 1964): 1-4; Lawrence Lundberg, "Effects of Smaller Classes," Nation's Schools 39 (May 1974): 20-22; Charles Danowski, "Individualization of Instruction: A Functional Definition," IAR Research Bulletin 5 (1965): 1-8.

⁵⁶Jimmie Applegate, "Why Don't Pupils Talk in Class Discussions?" Clearing House 44 (October 1969): 78-81; M. J. Eash and C. M. Bennett, "The Effect of Class Size on Achievement and Attitudes," American Education Research Journal 1 (1964): 229-39; Lillian Katz, "The Child: Consumer or Consumed," Childhood Education 49 (May 1973): 394-97; Sherrell Varner, "Class Size," Journal of Experimental Education 42 (Winter 1973): 12-17; Dorothy Cohen, "Dependency and Class Size," Childhood Education 43 (September 1966): 16-19.

4. Students learn the basic skills better and master more subject-matter content when teachers have fewer rather than more students to work with.⁵⁷

5. Classroom management and discipline are better when teachers have fewer rather than more students to work with.⁵⁸

6. Teacher attitude and morale are more positive when teachers have fewer rather than more students to work with.⁵⁹

The research studies indicated that larger class sizes have a decidedly negative effect on teachers' performance within the classroom. Also, teachers' attitudes and concerns about the size of their classes can have negative implications for the total working environment.

⁵⁷ Carmelita O'Connor and Mary J. McDonald, "The Room of Twenty--A Success Story," School and Community 56 (November 1969): 43; I. H. Balow, A Longitudinal Evaluation of Reading Achievement in Small Classes (Bloomington: ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading, Indiana University, February 1967), p. 8; Jack Frymier, "The Effect of Class Size Upon Reading Achievement in First Grade," Reading Teacher 18 (November 1964): 90-93.

⁵⁸ Wilbert McKeachie, Improving Teacher Effectiveness, PREP Report No. 25, National Center for Educational Communication, Office of Education, U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare (Washington, D.C.: Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, 1971); William Edwards, "Classroom Size and the Human Equation," School and Community 55 (May 1969): 22.

⁵⁹ National Education Association, "Teachers and Principals Agree on Best Class Size," Research Bulletin 39 (December 1961): 107; Harold Shane, "Class Size and Human Development," NEA Journal 50 (January 1961): 30-32; E. G. Sitkei, The Effects of Class Size: A Review of the Research Study Series 1967-68 (Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Superintendent of Schools, 1968); New York State Teachers Association, "The School Day, the School Year and Work Life of Teachers: A Study of the Educational Implications" (Albany: The Association, 1969).

There does not appear to be consensus regarding the optimum class size for all school systems. The Michigan Education Association (MEA) advocated the following maximum-class-size standards: lower elementary, 22 students and upper elementary, 25 students; secondary classes, 25 students with the exception of 20 students for industrial arts, vocational shops, and homemaking classes; secondary music and gym classes, 40 students. The MEA, along with many local unions, also suggested that if teachers have one or more mainstreamed special-education students, their class size should decrease according to the number of such students and the nature and severity of impairment.

Support staff and materials.--Teachers have come to depend on the assistance of numerous support personnel within the district. As a result of RIF policies, many support positions are eliminated because they are usually non-load-bearing positions; that is, the teachers do not have regularly scheduled classes each day. RIF decisions usually include major cutbacks in counseling personnel, social workers, health-services personnel, school psychologists, attendance personnel, and subject consultants. The use of substitute teachers is frequently curtailed in districts experiencing decline; this usually requires teachers to give up their preparation time to replace an absent teacher.

A large number of school districts have also reduced their curriculum support staffs. This group is vulnerable to RIF actions

⁶⁰Daniel Duke and Jon Cohen, "Running Faster to Stay in Place," Phi Delta Kappan 63 (September 1981): 13-17.

because many board members and even school administrators are unclear about the value of these professionals in the overall educational program. Their reduction signifies the loss of a main source of instructional help for teachers.

Few resources in declining school districts are being allocated to hiring curriculum-writing teams or other ad hoc teams with curriculum tasks. This is seen as less necessary in some cases because of the amount of curriculum-guideline development in which some school boards are already engaged. Where such teams are still working, there is a tendency for the work to take place more during the regular school year, by releasing teachers from classroom duties, and less during the summer period. Overall reduction in this class of activity was cited as reducing the opportunities available to teachers and others for on-the-job professional development. Many administrators have identified professional development as a main advantage of such curriculum work.⁶¹

In addition to the loss of support personnel, teachers are faced with shortages in instructional materials. Shortages of such necessities as books, paper, pencils, workbooks, and chalk are not uncommon in districts facing major cutbacks. Not only does this allow for fewer hands-on activities, but it also forces teachers to compete among themselves for the instructional materials that are available. It also puts a strain on teacher-administrator relations

⁶¹ Raymond Schultz, "A Sane Approach to Staff Reduction," Education Digest 42 (September 1976): 23-26.

and credibility because the administrator is responsible for providing materials to the teachers.

Psychological Consequences of RIF Decisions

A review of literature pertinent to RIF policies must include some possible psychological considerations of teachers working in a school district experiencing decline or no-growth. Some writers believe the fear of future unemployment and the gradual elimination of programs, supplies, and personnel have contributed to the stressful nature of teaching and are likely to retard the efficiency of those teachers who do retain their jobs.⁶² This section is a review of literature relating to the psychological and emotional problems that teachers in such circumstances may experience.

Professional Frustration and Stress

A form of professional frustration termed "teacher burnout" describes the physical, attitudinal, and emotional exhaustion experienced by some teachers. Some authors still prefer the term "stress" to "teacher burnout" to define the symptoms. One study defined stress as the nonspecific response of the body to any demand made on it, or the environmental conditions that require behavioral adjustments.⁶³ The educational climate and quality of a school, or of a school

⁶²David Hunt and Janice Hunt, "On the Psychology of Declining Enrollment: With a Brief Review of Attempts to Cushion the Negative Effects of Professional Unemployment," Commission on Declining School Enrollments in Ontario, May 1978 (ED 197 446).

⁶³James Collins and Barbara Masley, "Stress/Burnout Report," Share & Exchange 8 (June 1980): 28.

district, can be negatively affected by teachers feeling stressful or burned out. After studying the effects of stress on school teachers and the subsequent effects on school programs, a researcher stated:

Students say that they learn best from teachers who are reasonable, relaxed, enthusiastic and interested in them. On the other hand, distressed individuals are often irritable, tense, depressed, humorless and self-absorbed. How you feel about your work affects how you do it. Job satisfaction affects classroom performance, which, in turn, leads to better student achievement. Distress distorts thinking and perceptions of reality and can produce irrational behavior. It creates a negative educational climate in the schools.⁶⁴

Not all researchers agree on what actually constitutes the school climate, but the important element common to all definitions is the important role played by the teacher, as well as teachers' perceptions of their roles, of the environment, and of the students. Brookover and Lezotte used productivity and achievement as measures of school climate. They concluded that the quality of a school's academic atmosphere is an important factor in its overall educational effectiveness. They also found that schools with high academically achieving student populations were characterized by greater teaching satisfaction, stronger principal leadership, and more staff cohesiveness than were schools with lower-achieving student populations.⁶⁵ The power of the classroom teacher, through setting expectations and monitoring student performance, cannot be underestimated in the creation and maintenance of effective learning environments.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Wilbur Brookover and Lawrence Lezotte, "Changes in School Characteristics Coincident With Changes in Student Achievement," Occasional Paper No. 17, Institute for Research on Teaching, Michigan State University, May 1979.

Absenteeism.--Teacher absenteeism has been suggested as a possible consequence of RIF actions. National figures for teacher absenteeism are not available, but estimates have been made. One study estimated that time lost through absenteeism by elementary and secondary teachers amounts to approximately 3.9% of the total scheduled work days. This lost time costs more than \$500 million for substitutes and \$140 million in fringe benefits that teachers receive whether they are in the classroom or not.⁶⁶

A relationship has been established between absenteeism and teachers' perceptions of the school psychological climate. In 1981, Esposito conducted a study that is relevant to the present research. He sent Organizational Climate Description Questionnaires to 396 teachers in a large urban school district. Using the teachers' responses, each school was categorized on an open/closed continuum. Open schools were those in which teachers worked well together and obtained considerable job satisfaction. The principals served as facilitators and models and were considered effective leaders. Closed schools were characterized as having low staff morale; teachers expressed little job satisfaction; and the principal was seen as an ineffective role model and leader. Esposito found that schools the teachers perceived as more "open" had significantly lower absence rates than schools they perceived as more "closed."⁶⁷ This supports

⁶⁶Edwin Bridges, "Job Satisfaction and Teacher Absenteeism," Educational Administration Quarterly 16 (Spring 1980): 41-56.

⁶⁷James Esposito, "School Climate Affects Teacher Absenteeism," Phi Delta Kappan 62 (February 1981): 458.

the need for additional research on the relationship between teacher job satisfaction and absenteeism, particularly in districts searching for ways to reduce budget expenditures and to retain quality learning environments.

Stress and loss of job.--Stress experienced by teachers who are affected by RIF policies has been likened to the stress involved with the loss of a job or the fear of losing one's job. In a study of job-related stress, Thomas suggested that people react negatively to any tampering with their work because occupation is so closely interwoven with their identity.⁶⁸ That is, a person's psychological well-being is closely tied to his/her work. Holmes and Rahe developed a 100-point scale ranking the effect of various stressful events people experience. The death of a spouse was rated at 100; "loss of job" was rated 47 and was ranked eighth of 43 events, below "a jail term" and above "retirement."⁶⁹

Personal control and causation.--Psychologists and sociologists have focused on whether individuals accept the responsibility for what happens to them. People vary in their general feelings of personal control, and these feelings also vary with different situations. It seems likely that one psychological consequence of declining enrollment, or RIF decisions, would be the teachers' experiencing a loss of personal control or a feeling of helplessness.

⁶⁸L. E. Thomas, "Why Study Mid-Life Career Change?" The Vocational Guidance Quarterly 9 (1975): 37-40.

⁶⁹Theodore Holmes and Robert H. Rahe, "The Social Readjustment Rating Scale," Journal of Psychosomatic Research 11 (1967): 213.

Feelings of personal control have been investigated under a variety of labels; anomia, internal control, and personal causation are some, but the central psychological process is similar. Merton described anomia as "a constellation of attitudes that includes pessimism, despair and a pervasive sense of individual helplessness; it is viewed as a product of social crisis."⁷⁰ An externally controlled person feels that what happens to him/her is beyond his/her control, being due to chance, luck, or external circumstances. By contrast, internal control describes the experience of personal control over what happens.

The other related psychological variable that should be considered is that of personal causation, which DeCharms defined as "the initiation by an individual of behavior intended to produce a change in his environment."⁷¹ DeCharms referred to people who initiate as intrinsically motivated, or as origins rather than pawns. He conducted intensive training work which showed that the feelings of personal causation (origins) of teachers can be increased and that teachers, in turn, can increase the feelings of personal causation and the academic achievement of their students. Other studies have

⁷⁰Robert K. Merton, "Anomie, Anomia, and Social Interaction: Contexts of Deviant Behavior," in Anomie and Deviant Behavior: Discussion and Critique, ed. M. B. Clinard (Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1964).

⁷¹Robert DeCharms, Personal Causation (New York: Academic Press, 1968), p. 61.

demonstrated that threat and crisis, such as the fear of losing one's job, increase anomia and decrease internal control.⁷²

Professionalism.--Another source of teacher dissatisfaction leading to job-related stress and frustration is the lack of opportunity for teachers to exercise their professional skills. RIF policies usually place more extraneous duties on surviving staff members. Gold supported this concern in the following statement:

Professionally trained secondary school educators all too often find it necessary to suppress their professional selves because of the superimposed roles of secretary, janitor, babysitter and unquestioning intermediary passing along the directives of school administrators. Extraneous duties have frequently included bus watching, cafeteria floor walking, cigarette surveying, hall monitoring, ticket-taking, book collecting, lavatory reconnoitering, and a host of other non-teaching and professionally demeaning tasks.⁷³

A more recent article by Dillman substantiated Gold's prediction. Dillman pointed out that although the professional preparation of teachers is increasingly extensive and credential requirements continue to rise, little has been done to improve the teacher's lot in and out of the classroom.⁷⁴

⁷²Robert N. Wolfe, "Effects of Economic Threat on Anomia and Perceived Locus of Control," Journal of Social Psychology 86 (1972): 233-40; Ronald E. Smith, "Change in Locus of Control as a Function of Life Crisis Resolution," Journal of Abnormal Psychology 75 (1970): 328-32; Gerald Reimanis, "Increase in Psychological Anomia as a Result of Radical and Undesirable Change Expectancy," Journal of Personality and Social Psychology 6 (1967): 454-57.

⁷³Frederick Gold, "Bus Watching or Professionalism," The Clearing House 37 (1962): 173.

⁷⁴Bruce R. Dillman, "Teacher Activities and Professional Growth as Perceived by Physicians, Lawyers, Clergymen, and Educators," Journal of Teacher Education (1964): 386-92.

Other authors have suggested that reluctance on the part of principals and school boards to respect teachers as professionals has been a prime source of frustration. Principals often see professionalism among teachers as a threat to their administrative powers. Corwin conducted a study of emerging patterns in public schools. He suggested that increased educational requirements and the professionalization of teaching have resulted in increased conflicts with traditionally autocratic principals as teachers demand freer rein and more professional recognition.⁷⁵ In a survey study on teacher freedom, Belok summarized the restrictions imposed on many members of the teaching profession. He reported that administrative personnel tended to limit the freedom of teachers by defining school programs and curriculum, not only in terms of content but also by prescription of methodology.⁷⁶

RIF Surveys

Conclusions drawn from surveys given to teachers involved in RIF decisions generally have yielded similar results. Daniel Duke, reporting findings from a survey of New York teachers, found that 43% were looking for jobs outside of education; 40% planned to retire early; 50% reported that conditions since 1975 had caused them

⁷⁵Ronald Corwin, A Sociology of Education: Emerging Patterns of Class, Status, and Power in the Public Schools (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1965), p. 469.

⁷⁶Martin Belok, "Teacher Freedom--How Much?" Journal of Teacher Education 16 (1965): 450-52.

increased stress and anxiety; and 33% said they suffered from job-related depression.⁷⁷

In 1979, a teacher center in Wayne County, Michigan, conducted a comprehensive survey of teacher satisfaction. Twenty-three percent of the respondents were elementary-school teachers, 32% were secondary-school teachers, and 45% were junior high/middle school teachers. All teachers taught in schools that had experienced a decline in enrollments and significant budget cuts affecting programs and teachers' jobs. Some of the responses to the survey were as follows:

Forty-six percent of the teachers were dissatisfied with their job as a whole, and an identical percentage said that, if they had it to do all over again, they would not choose teaching as a career.

Fifty-four percent said that it is at least somewhat likely that they will change occupations in the next five years, and a similar number stated that they would change jobs if they could find one with equivalent pay and fringe benefits.

Twenty-five percent indicated that they did not plan to stay in teaching until retirement, and an additional 30 percent were uncertain if they would remain in the profession until retirement.

Seventy percent of the teachers indicated that they frequently or always left school physically or emotionally exhausted, and 75 percent said that their jobs were physically or emotionally stressful.

Eighty-nine percent of the teachers perceived that they were very much personally involved in their work, and 64 percent reported that their job provided them with good feelings. However, feelings of powerlessness were also high: 70 percent felt trapped in their present jobs, and 91 percent said that they had little or no influence in curriculum or policy decisions in their schools.

Sixty-eight percent of the teachers indicated that they had high-quality relationships with their peers. Forty-three

⁷⁷ Duke and Cohen, pp. 13-17.

percent stated that they had high-quality relationships with the students, and 23 percent said they had high-quality relationships with administrators.

Seventy-three percent felt pulled in different directions by the expectations of students, administrators and the general public.⁷⁸

Sparks reviewed the written and verbal responses of the teachers involved in this survey and reported three major themes: sources of stress, including intense feelings attached to perceptions of powerlessness; poor teacher/administrator relationships; and role conflict. A response written on one survey reflected these concerns:

Teachers are in a system that fosters dependency. . . . The expectations are clear: do as you are told. Here is the text, here are your computer-selected kids, here is your in-service training to up-date, to inform you because of your ignorance. Ignore your individual differences . . . just do as you are told. . . . More and more decision making is being done in Lansing, central office and even in the principal's office.⁷⁹

The literature regarding teacher satisfaction, work-related stress, and other possible consequences of RIF actions is still inadequate. There is a definite need for more controlled, systematic examinations of teachers' attitudes and feelings about their work.

Summary

This chapter was organized into three sections: population and economic trends, RIF literature, and psychological consequences of RIF decisions. The literature suggested that most urban school districts will experience a decline in student enrollment throughout

⁷⁸Dennis Sparks, "A Biased Look at Teacher Job Satisfaction," The Clearing House 52 (May 1979): 447-50.

⁷⁹Ibid., p. 449.

this decade. There will also be greater competition by various service groups for fewer city, state, and federal dollars. Declining enrollment and dwindling resources will necessitate RIF decisions. The available literature stated that some of the consequences of RIF decisions affect school programs as well as school personnel. Studies showed a relationship between RIF actions and teacher absenteeism, stress, and professional frustration. The literature reviewed in this chapter suggested the truly complex nature of RIF actions and their consequences.

CHAPTER III

ORIGIN AND DESIGN OF THE STUDY

This chapter contains a description of the community involved in the study and the populations relevant to the research, the sources and procedures used in obtaining teacher data, the types of data obtained, and the survey procedures used.

Population

Populations relevant to this study included the student population, the teacher population, and the sample used in the survey. As presented in Chapters I and II, key features of lower-socioeconomic urban school districts encountering declining enrollments and dwindling resources are changing populations and changing economic conditions.

The Community of Pontiac and Its Environs

The Pontiac School District is located in Oakland County. During the past ten years, Oakland County's population grew 11.5%, from 907,781 to a total of 1,011,793 inhabitants. Even though the population movement within Oakland County was away from the urban areas, more than 86% of the county's residents remained in the urban areas.

The county's population includes 493,665 men and 518,128 women; 93% of them are identified as being "white." The average age is 30.0;

men average 29.4 years and women 31.3 years. There are, however, 89,793 persons older than 65. There are 42,489 children of pre-school age and 239,321 of school age under 18 years.⁸⁰

Oakland County's population increase during the 1970s was less than any time since 1940 and even less than the decade from 1920 to 1930. In terms of percentages, the county experienced its biggest growth during the 1920s and the next highest in the 1950s. In the 1950s, 294,602 people moved into Oakland County. In the 1970s, the figure was 103,922.

Of the 26 cities located in Oakland County, 14 dropped in population growth during the 1970s. Yet in the 23 rural townships in Oakland County, only three experienced any decline at all. Pontiac, the largest city, with a population of 76,715, sustained a 10% loss in population during the decade. Compared to the racial percentage of the entire county (93% "white"), Pontiac's adult population is 75% white.⁸¹ Table 1 shows a population comparison of the five largest cities in Oakland County between 1970 and 1980.⁸²

Student enrollment in public schools.--Throughout Michigan, student enrollment is down 15% from 1970, from 2.2 million to less than 1.9 million students. The number of schools has dropped 25% from 1960, from 5,200 to 3,900. Table 2 presents student-enrollment statistics for Michigan, Oakland County, and Pontiac during the 1976-77 and

⁸⁰Jean Saile, "'80 Census: Figures Show Movement Away From Communities," Oakland Press, 18 March 1982, pp. 1 and 6.

⁸¹Ibid.

⁸²Ibid., p. 6.

1980-81 school years, as well as projected enrollments for 1981-82 through 1983-84.⁸³

Table 1.--Population comparison of five Oakland County cities.

Cities	1980 Population	1970 Population	Percent Change
Pontiac	76,715	85,279	-10.0
Southfield	75,568	69,285	+ 9.1
Royal Oak	70,893	86,238	-17.8
Troy	67,102	39,419	+70.2
Farmington Hills	58,056	48,694	+19.2

Table 2.--Student enrollment for Michigan, Oakland County, and Pontiac (public schools).

School Years	Michigan	Oakland	Pontiac
1976-77	2,081,936	215,643	21,021
1980-81	1,861,703	201,445	18,100
1981-82 ^a	1,700,359	187,428	17,216
1982-83 ^a	1,658,798	183,278	14,909
1983-84 ^a	1,626,000	180,629	14,718

^aProjected enrollment.

⁸³ Michigan Statistical Abstract, 16th Edition, 1981 (Detroit: Bureau of Business Research, Wayne State University, 1981), p. 97.

The kindergarten enrollment for Oakland County is expected to increase slightly in the 1982-83 school year, but the overall school population is expected to decrease at least through 1984. This phenomenon is the result of what is called the "echo" baby boom. That is, women born in the post-war baby boom of the mid-1950s are now in their child-bearing years.⁸⁴ They are not having as many children as their mothers did, but the sheer number resulted in a small increase in the birth rate from 1977 through 1979.

The changes in the racial and socioeconomic mixtures of the student population of urban school districts are a major concern that affects the worklife demands of teachers. Table 3 shows the student population of Pontiac public schools according to racial composition for the years 1976-77 through 1981-82.⁸⁵

Table 3.--Student population in Pontiac according to race.

School Years	Percent Black Students	Percent White Students	Percent Latino Students	Other
1976-77	43.5	49.2	6.6	.2
1977-78	44.5	47.8	6.9	.2
1978-79	45.3	46.6	7.1	.3
1979-80	46.2	45.4	7.1	.8
1980-81	47.4	43.7	7.6	1.0
1981-82	48.9	42.4	7.6	1.0

⁸⁴Cindy Goodaker, "Echo Baby Boom Hits Schools," Oakland Press, 24 March 1982, pp. 1 and 8.

⁸⁵School District of the City of Pontiac, Enrollment Statistics, Pupil Personnel Office.

Student enrollment in nonpublic schools.--An estimated 220,200 of Michigan's 1.9 million high school students are attending nonpublic schools. More than 25,300 of those students are in Oakland County, an increase of 1,101 since 1977. The percentage of Michigan high school students attending nonpublic schools has risen from approximately 9% in 1977 to almost 13% in 1982. The principal of a Pontiac parochial high school attributed the rise in enrollment in part to the following factors:

. . . a feeling of uncertainty on the part of parents over millage defeats and program cutbacks in the public schools. Many were very concerned about the loss of extracurricular activities. I think people are searching for more discipline and smaller classes.⁸⁶

Fifteen nonpublic schools, offering various grade levels, with a combined enrollment of 976 students, have been started in Oakland County since 1976; four have since closed. Eleven of the 15 have religious affiliations.⁸⁷

The nonpublic school enrollment figures for the five largest cities in Oakland County are presented in Table 4.⁸⁸

School financing.--In Michigan, 54% of school aid comes from property taxes, 40% from state aid, and 6% from the federal government. Michigan's funding formula for school support, set in 1973, was established to help middle- and low-income districts stay up with wealthier districts. The state guarantees that each of Michigan's 529 school districts providing a program for students kindergarten

⁸⁶Joe Cisneros, "Classes Runneth Over at Non-public Schools," Oakland Press, 6 May 1982, pp. 1 and 6.

⁸⁷Ibid.

⁸⁸Ibid., p. 6.

Table 4.--Student enrollments in Oakland County's five largest cities in 1977 and 1981 for nonpublic schools.

City	1977 Nonpublic Student Enrollment	1981 Nonpublic Student Enrollment	Percent Change
Pontiac	934	1,154	+19.0
Southfield	2,260	2,069	- 8.4
Royal Oak	3,079	3,417	+ .1
Troy	488	618	+21.0
Farmington Hills	2,977	2,954	- .8

through twelfth grade receives a minimum, from combined state and local sources, of \$365 per pupil plus \$50.55 per pupil for each mil of taxation approved by local voters. In districts in which one mil of tax does not equal \$50.55 per student, the state makes up the difference. Districts whose one mil of property tax exceeds \$50.55 per student receive state aid on a declining scale. This funding system promoted equalization until about 1970, when changes in property values, combined with large cuts in state aid, created a significant disparity between the wealthier and poorer school districts.

In 1982, the disparity among school districts was great. The problem has been compounded by the reduction of state funding from 30% of the total state budget in 1970 to less than 15% in 1981. Examples of the disparity in student costs resulting from this formula are shown in Table 5, which compares the per-pupil costs in five Oakland County school districts. The inequalities among Oakland County school districts have continued to increase. For example, in 1981-82

Bloomfield Hills spent \$3,277.24 per student, compared to Pontiac's \$1,803 per student.⁸⁹

Table 5.--Per-pupil funding in five Oakland County school districts: 1979-80.

City	Local Aid	State Aid	Other Aid	Total Aid
Pontiac	\$1,147	\$867	\$421	\$2,429
Royal Oak	2,102	304	268	2,674
Farmington Hills	2,149	211	217	2,577
Bloomfield Hills	2,695	166	207	3,068
Birmingham	2,877	128	76	3,081

The economy.--At the beginning of 1982, Michigan was \$567 million in debt. Compared with 1981 statistics, unemployment in 1982 was up over 16%, state business failures were up 23%, mortgage delinquencies increased 35%, home-building permits decreased by 40%, automobile production was down 31%, and welfare payments increased 34%. Oakland County townships and cities influenced these statistics through increased employment rates ranging from 9% in the city of Troy to 28% in Pontiac. Pontiac's total labor force for 1982 was approximately 42,800; of that number, 11,775 workers were unemployed.⁹⁰

Many of Pontiac's economic problems have been caused by a dramatic shift in that city's industrial and commercial base. In an

⁸⁹Glen Macnow, "School Financing System Like Michigan's Is Voided," Detroit Free Press, 28 October 1981, pp. 1 and 10.

⁹⁰Pat Shellenbarger, "Bulging Deficit Forces Tax Hike Plan," Detroit News, 14 March 1982, pp. 1 and 6.

attempt to adjust to the rapid changes and needs of the city, local leaders participated in many state and federal grant and funding programs, which presented additional problems for Pontiac. A city commission memorandum assessed the situation as follows:

Pontiac has been eligible for and has participated in virtually every major urban initiative since 1958. The end product of the millions of dollars expended over the past 22 years has been the city's dubious distinction as HUD's number one city.⁹¹

The economic problems Pontiac faced throughout the 1970s and into the 1980s are reflected in statistics used to obtain a \$6.5 million federal grant to help pay for downtown-development projects. The statistics included: 47% housing stock older than 1940, a per-capita income growth of \$1,042 between 1969 and 1974, a population growth of less than 9%, an unemployment rate that averaged over 18% throughout the 1970s, a loss of more than 7% in the job market between 1967 and 1974, and over 13% of the population below the federal poverty level for income.⁹²

Pontiac's economy and well-being have been closely tied to and dependent on the automobile industry, particularly General Motors, located in Pontiac. General Motors occupies almost 80% of the business and industrial property in the city, pays more than 58% of Pontiac's taxes, and spends more than \$1.1 billion annually in the Pontiac area. Not only was Pontiac's economy significantly affected

⁹¹Memorandum from the City of Pontiac, "A Small City's Hands-On Impression of the Reagan Budget and Economic Philosophy," August 1981.

⁹²"Federal Grant to Finance Re-building," Oakland Press, 17 June 1979, p. 1.

by the loss in automobile sales throughout the 1970s, but the decision in January 1980 to build a new General Motors assembly plant outside of Pontiac has had an additional effect on one-sixth of all employment within Pontiac, not counting workers on temporary layoffs. (Pontiac's unemployment rate in May 1980, over 26%, was also a consequence of the state phasing out Clinton Valley Hospital within the city.) This move will create a severe loss in revenue for the city because of a decline in income taxes levied against workers; for example, a loss of 5,850 jobs from General Motors due to temporary layoffs in 1979 cost the city \$1.78 million in income taxes. Property-tax revenues will also decline because of vacant plant facilities.

The changes in population and in the economy of the state, the county, and particularly the city directly affect what happens in Pontiac schools. The movement of middle-class families, as well as businesses, from the city has created a large lower-socioeconomic population within the city. Property values have decreased, and the cost of city governmental services needed to support the population has increased. Competition for local and state funds also has increased as unemployment caused by a recession in the automobile industry continues. People without jobs are forced to remain in the city, as are older people whose retirement and social security benefits restrict their ability to move away from the city. People surviving on unemployment benefits and food stamps, and senior citizens living on fixed incomes, are not financially capable of supporting a school system that requires additional kinds of support services and personnel to educate the changing student population adequately. The social,

political, and economic changes occurring within Pontiac become more complex each year, and they will continue to affect what happens to the Pontiac school system. These are some of the reasons the Pontiac Schools lost eight millage requests between the years 1978 and 1981.

Teacher Population

The demographic data used in this study encompass the total population of teachers teaching in the elementary and secondary schools from 1977-78 through 1981-82. Consultants, librarians, and other support personnel who are certified as teachers are included in some information and are specifically identified by their titles.

Teachers were selected randomly from all 20 elementary schools and the nine secondary schools to receive the survey prepared specifically for this study. Table 6 presents a breakdown by sex and certification of the teacher population from which the sample of 250 teachers was drawn.

Table 6.--Teacher employment in Pontiac during the 1981-82 school year.

Certification	Men	Women	Total
Elementary	41	301	342
Secondary	216	165	381

One hundred twenty-five elementary teachers were selected from a total of 342 teachers. Eighty-four of the 125 teachers returned their surveys; 65 responses came from female elementary teachers and 19 responses came from male elementary teachers.

One hundred twenty-five secondary teachers were sent surveys. Thirty-three female teachers and 42 male secondary teachers responded to the survey request. Sixty percent of the secondary teachers returned the survey.

Methodology

The procedures used to acquire the demographic data and the survey information are discussed in this section.

Procedures for Collecting Demographic Data

Five major areas of information were necessary for this study: (1) number of teachers employed; (2) rate of absenteeism; (3) average age of teachers; (4) number of teachers who retired, were granted leaves of absence or sabbaticals, or resigned; and (5) number of teachers who were laid off.

The Pontiac School District has started to record teacher and student information, such as was required for this study, on computer. However, this system was not yet available in June 1982 and was not of assistance in locating the required information. It was necessary to search files, school-board minutes, and records located in the personnel office, the office of research and development, the superintendent's office, the assistant superintendent's office, and the community-relations office to obtain teacher statistics.

Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) records were used for the data showing the number of teachers employed within the district for the specified years. Because of a lack of other records, teacher

absenteeism was approximated by a search of the daily requests for substitute teachers. A major limitation in using such records is that some schools have "permanent" substitute teachers within their buildings, and they would therefore not request a substitute teacher if one of their teachers was absent. Other schools sometimes ask regular teachers to teach an absent teacher's class during their preparation periods.

Determining the average age of the teaching staff required locating a list of all teachers and their birth dates. A "Teacher Certification" computer printout was used for this purpose. Biweekly school-board minutes were used to determine the number of teachers retiring, resigning, going on leave, and being granted sabbatical status. Board minutes and teacher-recall lists were used to obtain the numbers of teachers being laid off and rehired. "New hires" were also determined by reviewing board minutes.

Survey Procedures

To augment the findings regarding the statistical consequences of RIF decisions, a survey was sent to 250 elementary and secondary teachers in Pontiac Public Schools. The purpose of the survey was to ascertain teachers' opinions about their worklife, their satisfaction with teaching, and their attitudes about their students, their principals, and the quality of education being offered to students within the district.⁹³

⁹³Questions used for the Teacher Questionnaire survey were selected from the 1975 Pontiac Teacher Study (see Appendix C). The 1975 study was developed by the Office of Research and Evaluation,

The survey was mailed to randomly selected elementary and secondary teachers on May 14, 1982. An introductory letter and an addressed stamped envelope were enclosed with the five-page survey. The survey consisted of 19 questions, three of which were open-ended. (See Appendix A for cover letter and Teacher Questionnaire.)

Of the 250 surveys mailed, nine were returned because of wrong addresses; four of those were readdressed and mailed, and five were hand-carried to the teachers. A total of 159 surveys were returned by June 10, 1982. The survey information was coded and prepared for statistical analyses.

Summary

Background information concerning the community of Pontiac, trends in public-school and non-public-school enrollment in Michigan, and school financing was offered in this chapter to describe the environment of the Pontiac Schools. The methodology used in gathering the survey data was also presented. The statistical and demographic findings are reported in the next chapter.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to analyze changes in the demographic characteristics of the Pontiac, Michigan, teaching force between 1977 and 1982 and to examine teachers' attitudes toward their worklife. The demographic data, survey responses, and other findings relevant to the seven questions of this study are presented in this chapter.

Question 1: Numerical Consequences of RIF

What are the numerical consequences of RIF decisions regarding teachers employed and laid off between the years 1977 and 1982?

The following information describes the Pontiac teaching force during the five-year period from 1977-78 through 1981-82.

Teaching Staff

The number of teachers employed during the school years from 1977-78 through 1981-82 is shown in Table 7. These statistics represent teachers employed at the beginning of each school year. The loss of 441 professionals between school years 1978-79 and 1979-80 included 210 classroom teachers. The remaining professional personnel were in specialized roles as counselors, librarians, and consultants. In 1979, the Pontiac School Board attempted to operate half-day

sessions for elementary students. A minimum staff was required. The Michigan State Board of Education found this mode of operation unacceptable, and additional elementary teachers were hired during the 1979-80 school year. The number of teachers hired during this period is not reflected in the yearly totals.

Table 7.--Teachers employed during the school years 1977-78 through 1981-82.

	1977-78	1978-79	1979-80	1980-81	1981-82
Number of teachers	1,111	1,058	617	990	793

Table 8 shows the positions that teachers were hired to fill. In 1977-78, 65% of the total staff were classroom teachers. Classroom teachers made up 76% of the 1979-80 total teaching staff and 91% of the 1981-82 total teaching staff. A breakdown by gender and certification of teachers employed by Pontiac Schools during this period is presented in Table 32 in Appendix B. Table 33 in Appendix B shows the number of teachers who resigned, retired, or were granted sabbatical leaves between 1977 and 1982.

Table 9 depicts the number of teachers hired by Pontiac Schools during this five-year period. These figures were obtained from the superintendent's minutes of biweekly school-board meetings. The school board is responsible for confirming the hiring of new staff members. The total number of teachers hired "new" to the district

during this time was 162. Of this number, 44 were elementary teachers, 20 were secondary teachers, and 98 were special-education teachers.

Table 8.--Positions of teachers employed: 1977-1982.

Position	1977-78	1978-79	1979-80	1980-81	1981-82
Elementary	406	375	267	365	342
Secondary	319	305	203	304	381
Other classroom	274	272	66	220	37
Guidance	33	28	15	21	14
Librarians	20	14	6	21	0
Other professional staff	59	64	60	59	19

Table 9.--Teachers hired by the Pontiac School District: 1977-1982.

	1977-78	1978-79	1979-80	1980-81	1981-82
Number of teachers	71	36	36	18	1

The total number of teachers granted tenure during this five-year period was 131. Included in that number were 43 elementary teachers, 33 secondary teachers, and 49 special-education teachers.

Teacher Layoffs

The Pontiac School Board has supported a RIF policy based on seniority. Until 1979, teachers laid off by the district were assigned to one of six recall lists, according to their current assignment. The

recall lists were as follows: Elementary, Secondary, Vocational, Special Education, Bilingual/Bicultural, and Continuing Education. Placement on a list was determined by continuous years of service and by certification.

In 1979, the Pontiac School Board and teachers mutually agreed on a change in this policy. The 1979 agreement provided that after publication of the six recall lists, teachers would be given seven days in which they could choose to be placed on any of the six recall lists for which they were certified. The rest of the recall procedure remained the same.

As vacancies in any of the six areas are identified, the Board must recall the teacher at the top of the list, unless the only teacher certified for the vacancy is not the next teacher eligible. Each list is divided at the tenure/probationary point. No probationary teacher can be recalled if a tenured teacher who is certified for the position remains on the list.

Table 10 represents the total number of layoff notices received as well as a breakdown of layoff notices by teaching positions. During the school years 1978-79 through 1981-82, approximately 75% of the teaching staff received layoff notices.

Question 2: Age of Teaching Force

Is the average age of the teaching force affected by RIF decisions over the five-year period from 1977-78 through 1981-82?

The average age of the teaching staff was determined by reviewing teacher-certification records, which include teachers' birth dates.

Table 10.--Teachers receiving layoff notices during 1977-78 through 1981-82.

	1977-78	1978-79	1979-80	1980-81	1981-82
<u>Total</u>	408	666	576	901	537
Elementary teachers	100	218	186	318	187
Secondary teachers	112	203	166	304	129
Special-education teachers	173	171	199	260	198
Other teachers	23	74	25	19	23

In 1977-78, the average age of Pontiac teachers was approximately 35 years. In 1981-82, the average age increased to approximately 47 years. These age averages include all teachers in regular elementary and secondary teaching assignments; they exclude persons teaching in special-education programs. Approximately 70% of the special-education teachers' salaries are supported by federal and/or state monies; therefore, they are not subject to the full force of RIF policies.

Question 3: Teacher Absenteeism

Does teacher absenteeism increase during extended periods of declining enrollment and dwindling financial resources?

The average number of days teachers were absent increased during the time period examined in this study. In the 1977-78 school year, the average number of days teachers were absent, calculated from the number of daily requests for substitute teachers, was 7.5 days. In the 1981-82 school year, the number of days absent averaged per teacher was 12.2 days. Table 11 shows the number of substitute

requests and the average of substitute requests per teacher during the five-year period. Table 12 indicates the average number of substitute-teacher requests for elementary and secondary teachers. Overall, teacher absenteeism increased by 4.7 days between the 1977-78 and 1981-82 school years.

Table 11.--Teacher absenteeism as determined by the number of substitute-teacher requests.

	1977-78	1978-79	1979-80	1980-81	1981-82
Substitute requests	5,436	6,002	6,655	8,313	8,798
Average number of requests per teacher	7.5	8.8	14.2	12.4	12.2

Table 12.--Average number of substitute-teacher requests by certification.

	1977-78	1978-79	1979-80	1980-81	1981-82
Elementary substitute requests per teacher	8.0	8.9	14.2	12.4	12.2
Secondary substitute requests per teacher	6.8	8.6	14.0	11.1	11.7

Question 4: Teacher Morale and Job Satisfaction

Do teachers experience a decline in teacher morale and job satisfaction during times of enforced RIF policies?

Question 2 of the Teacher Questionnaire dealt with teacher morale throughout the school district. Table 13 shows that more than

91% of the teachers felt that teacher morale had declined throughout the district during the past five years.

Table 13.--Teacher morale--Survey Question 2 (n=158).

"Over the past 5 years do you feel that teacher morale throughout the Pontiac School District has increased, declined, or remained the same?"

Increased	Remained the Same	Declined
1.3%	7.0%	91.7%

Survey Question 5 asked teachers to rate morale within their own schools. Approximately 40% of the teachers rated staff morale as being "excellent" or "good," and over 60% rated morale as "not so good" or "poor." Table 14 indicates the responses by gender and certification of the teacher respondents.

Table 14.--Teacher morale--Survey Question 5.

"How would you rate teacher morale in your school?"

	Excellent	Good	Not So Good	Poor
<u>Total</u> (n=158)	7.0%	32.8%	45.6%	14.6%
Female teachers (n=97)	9.3	36.1	47.4	7.2
Male teachers (n=61)	3.3	27.9	42.6	26.2
Elementary teachers (n=83)	9.6	36.2	44.6	9.6
Secondary teachers (n=75)	4.0	29.3	46.7	20.0

Survey Questions 12 and 13 concerned teachers' feelings toward their present jobs and about teaching in general. Table 15 shows that more than half of the teachers (55.8%) had become less satisfied with their jobs over the past five years. Table 16 indicates that over 57% of the teachers were satisfied with their present jobs. A breakdown of the responses to Questions 12 and 13 by respondents' gender is presented in Tables 59 and 60 in Appendix B.

Table 15.--Satisfaction with teaching--Survey Question 12 (n=154).

"During the past 5 years has your satisfaction with teaching increased, remained the same, or decreased?"

Increased	Remained the Same	Decreased
16.3%	27.9%	55.8%

Table 16.--Job satisfaction--Survey Question 13 (n=156).

"How satisfied are you with your present job?"

Very Satisfied	Fairly Satisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
21.2%	35.9%	28.8%	14.1%

Question 5: Teachers' Perceptions of Student Characteristics

How do teachers view their students during times of dwindling resources and declining enrollments?

Teacher responses to eight student characteristics listed in Survey Question 8 are presented in Table 17. (Tables 51 through 58

in Appendix B show the responses to the eight characteristics by gender and certification of the teacher respondents.) More than 40% (43.7%, 46.8%) of the teacher respondents gave a low rating to students' "eagerness to learn" and "motivation." More than 80% of the respondents rated students' attendance and ability to get along with their teachers, principals, and peers in the medium or high categories.

Table 17.--Rate student characteristics--Survey Question 8.

Student Characteristic	Low	Medium	High
Eagerness to learn (n=158)	43.7%	41.7%	14.6%
Ability to do the required work (n=158)	38.6	53.2	8.2
Behavior in class (n=158)	28.5	63.9	7.6
Daily attendance (n=158)	15.2	62.0	22.8
Getting along with their peers (n=158)	17.1	63.3	19.6
Getting along with the teachers (n=158)	10.1	67.1	22.8
Getting along with the principal (n=158)	15.2	58.0	26.0
Motivation (n=158)	46.8	43.7	9.5

Question 6: Teachers' Perceptions of Personal Control

What are teachers' perceptions of personal control over their worklife environment?

Five survey questions were relevant to the question of personal control. Tables 18 and 19 present teacher responses to Survey Question 1.

Table 19 shows the teachers' responses in terms of low, medium, and high categories. The low category combined the 1, 2, and 3 ratings; the medium included ratings of 4, 5, 6, and 7; and the high category

Table 18.--Rank Pontiac Schools--Survey Question 1 (n=158).

"Please rate Pontiac Schools on the following 10-point scale. #1 represents the worst possible schools for students. #10 represents the best possible schools for students."

- A. Where on the scale do you feel Pontiac Schools stand at the present?
- B. Where on the scale would you say the Pontiac Schools stood five years ago?
- C. Where on the scale do you think the Pontiac Schools will be in five years from now?"

	Rating Scale									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Present	.6%	4.4%	17.2%	12.6%	30.4%	11.4%	13.9%	5.7%	1.9%	1.9%
Five years ago	0	3.2	5.2	8.7	20.9	10.1	20.2	22.2	7.6	1.9
Five years from now	7.0	15.2	18.4	10.1	14.5	13.3	8.2	7.0	1.9	4.4

combined the 8, 9, and 10 ratings. The table indicates that teachers gave Pontiac Schools, in 1977, the highest rating (91.6%, combining the medium and high responses); the present, 1982, the next highest rating (77.8%); and the future the lowest of the ratings (59.4%) of all three time periods. Survey Question 1 is broken down in Appendix B by gender and by age groups (see Tables 39, 40, 41, and 42).

Table 19.--Rank Pontiac Schools (low, medium, high)--Survey Question 1 (n=158).

	Low	Medium	High
Present	22.2%	68.3%	9.5%
Five years ago	8.4	59.9	31.7
Five years from now	40.6	46.1	13.3

The second survey question relevant to teachers' perceptions of personal control was Survey Question 4. When asked who makes decisions in their buildings, approximately 60% of the teachers stated that they shared in the decision making. Table 20 presents the teacher responses.

Survey Question 14, the third question related to teachers' control over their environment, concerned involuntary transfers. Table 21 indicates that almost 70% of the teachers had not been involuntarily transferred at some point during the past five years. The table also shows that more than 52% of the respondents between the ages of 20 and 39 had been involuntarily transferred during the past five years.

Table 20.--Building decisions--Survey Question 4 (n=158)
 "How are decisions made at your school?"

	Total	Female	Male
Principal on his/her own	38.0%	25.7%	57.5%
Principal/teachers share	60.1	72.2	40.9
Usually teachers alone	1.9	2.1	1.6

Table 21.--Involuntary transfers--Survey Question 14.
 "Have you been involuntarily transferred during the past five years?"

	Total (n=156)	Age Group			
		20-29 (n=7)	30-39 (n=50)	40-49 (n=61)	50+ (n=38)
Yes	30.1%	85.7%	48.0%	18.0%	15.8%
No	69.9	14.3	52.0	82.0	84.2

The fourth and fifth survey questions that pertained to the question of personal control were Questions 16 and 17. Table 22 indicates that over 61% of all respondents wanted to continue to teach the grade level and subject they were presently teaching. More than half of the male teachers (56.9%) would prefer a different teaching assignment.

Table 23 shows that approximately 44% of the male teachers and only 17% of the female teachers would like to teach in another school building.

Table 22.--Preference for different assignment--Survey Question 16.

"Would you prefer to teach a subject or grade level that is different from your present assignment?"

	Total (n=155)	Female Teachers (n=97)	Male Teachers (n=58)
Yes	38.7%	27.8%	56.9%
No	61.3	72.2	43.1

Table 23.--Preference for different building assignment--Survey Question 17.

"Would you prefer to teach in another building?"

	Total (n=156)	Female Teachers (n=97)	Male Teachers (n=59)
Yes	27.6%	17.5%	44.1%
No	72.4	82.5	55.9

Question 7: Teachers' Primary Concerns

What are the primary concerns of Pontiac teachers in 1982?

Survey Questions 9, 10A, and 10B asked teachers to address specific concerns. Three open-ended questions (11, 18, and 19) asked teachers to state their major concerns about teachers' union goals, teaching in general, and education in Pontiac. Table 24 indicates that teachers felt the Pontiac Education Association (PEA) did not place enough emphasis on helping members become better teachers (77.8%), improving the quality of education within the district (69.9%),

improving working conditions (56.4%), or helping get laid-off teachers rehired (54.5%).

Table 24.--Union issues--Survey Question 9.

"How much emphasis do you feel the Pontiac Education Association (PEA) places on the following items?"

Item	Too Much	Not Enough	About Right
Raising salaries and improving fringe benefits (n=156)	6.4%	28.9%	64.7%
Helping members become better teachers (n=157)	0	77.7	22.3
Improving working conditions (n=156)	1.9	56.4	41.7
Protecting job security (n=156)	7.0	50.0	43.0
Helping get laid-off teachers rehired (n=156)	2.6	54.5	42.9
Improving the quality of education in the district (n=156)	0	69.9	30.1

More than half of the teachers (54.2%) responding to Survey Question 10A (Table 25) believed that the PEA could deal effectively with both issues of economic benefits and the quality of education. Of those teachers who felt the PEA could not deal effectively with improving both economic benefits and the quality of education, 56.3% believed the PEA should concentrate on improving the quality of education (Table 26).

Table 25.--Union issues--Survey Question 10A (n=155).

"In your opinion, can the PEA deal effectively with
(a) improving the quality of education and (b) gaining
economic benefits?"

Yes	No
54.2%	45.8%

Table 26.--Union issues--Survey Question 10B.

"If you checked no to the above question (10A), which
issue do you feel is more important for the PEA to
pursue?"

	Economic Benefits	Quality of Education
<u>Total</u> (n=71)	43.7%	56.3%
Female teachers (n=38)	16.0	84.0
Male teachers (n=33)	76.0	24.0

Survey Question 11 concerned potential issues of the 1982-83 contract negotiations. Teacher responses were categorized into 13 concerns. Table 27 indicates that more than 47% of the teachers believed "class size" should be the number-one issue for the contract negotiations. The second concern was maintaining or improving salaries and fringe benefits, and the third concern was protecting job security.

Table 27.--Union issues--Survey Question 11.

"What do you feel should be one of the issues in this year's contract negotiations?"

Issue	Total (n=135)	Female Teachers (n=83)	Male Teachers (n=52)
Maintaining or lowering existing class size	47.4%	54.2%	36.5%
Improving or maintaining salaries/fringe benefits	19.3	12.1	30.8
Protecting job security	12.6	15.7	7.7
Improving retirement benefits and options	3.7	1.2	7.7
Offering students quality education	3.7	4.8	1.9
More input by teachers in school decisions	2.2	0	5.8
Reinstate extracurricular activities/programs	2.2	2.4	1.9
Change teacher layoff procedure	2.2	2.4	1.9
Job sharing as job option	.7	2.4	0
Other	6.7	4.8	5.8

According to teacher responses to Survey Question 18, the three biggest problems facing teachers today are discipline, job uncertainty, and lack of parent support and involvement within the schools (see Table 28).

Table 29 shows the responses to Survey Question 19: "What do you think is the biggest problem facing Pontiac Schools?" Approximately 48% of the respondents believed the poor economic climate of Pontiac and the state was the greatest problem. Twenty-nine percent stated that poor leadership from the Pontiac Schools central

administration was the major problem. The responses were organized into nine categories, as shown in Table 29.

Table 28.--Issues for teachers--Survey Question 18.

"What do you think is the biggest problem for you as a teacher today?"

Problem	Total (n=142)	Female Teachers (n=89)	Male Teachers (n=53)
Discipline	16.2%	11.2%	24.5%
Job uncertainty	14.1	12.4	17.0
Lack of parent support and involvement	14.1	14.6	13.2
Student motivation and poor attitude	11.3	11.2	11.3
Inadequate supplies	11.3	15.7	3.8
Poor building leadership	6.3	5.6	7.5
Trying to meet students' needs	6.3	7.9	3.8
Teacher morale and job- related stress	4.2	4.5	3.8
Lack of community support and respect	3.5	2.2	5.7
Teachers not recognized as professionals	2.8	3.4	1.9
Working in an economically depressed area	1.4	1.1	1.9
Poor parent/school communications	1.4	1.1	1.9
Other	7.1	9.1	3.7

Table 29.--Concerns of Pontiac Schools--Survey Question 19.

"What do you think is the biggest problem facing Pontiac Schools?"

Problem	Total (n=145)	Female Teachers (n=90)	Male Teachers (n=55)
Poor economic climate	48.3%	50.0%	45.4%
Poor central leadership	29.0	22.2	40.0
Inadequate community/ parent support	6.9	8.9	3.6
Lack of school/teacher credibility	6.2	6.7	5.4
Lack of job security	2.8	2.2	3.6
Quality of education	2.0	3.3	0
Teacher morale	2.0	3.3	0
Discipline	1.4	2.2	0
Other	1.4	1.1	1.9

Summary

Chapter IV presented findings concerning the demographic characteristics of the Pontiac teaching force between the years 1977 and 1982, as well as teacher responses to the 1982 Teacher Questionnaire. The research findings were organized according to the seven questions asked in Chapter I. The concerns of these questions included the numerical consequences of RIF, age of the teaching force, teacher absenteeism, teacher morale and job satisfaction, teachers' perceptions of student characteristics, teachers' perceptions of personal control, and teachers' primary concerns.

Additional demographic data and survey questions not presented in this chapter are included in Appendix B. Conclusions from the data presented in this chapter and recommendations for RIF actions and further research are presented in Chapter V.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

School districts faced with declining student enrollment and dwindling financial support have had to initiate reduction-in-teacher-force (RIF) policies. The purpose of this study was to analyze changes in the teacher force in one school system--the Pontiac, Michigan, Schools--during the period from 1977-78 through 1981-82 and to examine teachers' attitudes toward their worklife environment.

The demographic characteristics of the teaching force analyzed for this study included the number of teachers employed throughout this five-year period of RIF actions, teachers receiving layoff notices, the rate of teacher absenteeism, teachers leaving the district, and the number of new teachers hired by the school district. The Teacher Questionnaire was used to examine teachers' attitudes toward their jobs, the students, and other concerns of their worklife environment.

The population described by the demographic data was the total teaching force of the school years from 1977-78 through 1981-82. The sample population to whom the Teacher Questionnaire was sent included 250 teachers randomly selected from the total 1981-82 teaching force. The following conclusions were drawn from the findings of the demographic and questionnaire data.

Conclusions

Conclusions from the findings in Chapter IV are presented as they relate to the seven questions of this study.

Question 1

What consequences have resulted from RIF decisions made by the Pontiac Public Schools in respect to the number of teachers employed and the number of teachers receiving layoff notices from 1977-78 through 1981-82?

The majority of Pontiac teachers have directly experienced the consequences of RIF policies. Since 1977, the total teaching staff has been reduced by almost 29%. Teachers who retained their teaching positions did not escape other consequences of RIF policies, such as receiving layoff notices. In 1977, over 36% of the teachers received layoff notices; in 1979, approximately 93%; and in 1981, over 67% received layoff notices. For five months of every year, more than half of Pontiac's teachers did not know if they would be employed by that school system during the next year. The majority of those not laid off did not know to which grade level, subject, or building they would be assigned the following year. The emotional and financial effects of such circumstances are real consequences of RIF policies. These concerns are addressed later in this chapter.

RIF policies have affected significantly the worklife of Pontiac teachers through loss of teachers, breaking up of teaching teams and building staffs, and the insecurity associated with yearly layoffs.

Question 2

What is the relationship between RIF actions and the average age of Pontiac teachers?

There has been a definite increase in the age of the teaching force in Pontiac Schools. Between 1977 and 1982, the average age increased 12 years, from 35 years of age to 47 years of age.

Research studies reported in Chapter II suggested that older staffs involved in decline conditions become more militant and that many older staffs have petitioned for their union representation to become more aggressive. In 1982, a movement was initiated to remove the present teacher union, the Pontiac Education Association (PEA), in favor of the less conservative American Federation of Teachers (AFT). Although the AFT claimed to have the support of over 40% of the teachers, a vote to dislodge the PEA did not take place.

Considering future student-enrollment predictions for Pontiac Schools, the average age of the teachers will most likely remain in the mid- to late forties through 1985.

Question 3

Does teacher absenteeism increase during extended periods of declining enrollment and dwindling financial resources?

There was a significant increase in teacher absenteeism during the five-year period from 1977-78 through 1981-82. Teacher absenteeism was determined by the daily number of substitute requests. During the school year preceding this study (1976-77), the average rate of absenteeism was five days per teacher. By the 1977-78 school year, the absenteeism rate had risen to approximately 7.5 days per

teacher. In 1979-80, the teaching force had been significantly reduced from the previous year by 441 teachers. The absenteeism rate increased to an average of 14 days per teacher. As the teaching staff increased during the succeeding school years, teacher absenteeism decreased slightly to approximately 12 days per teacher in 1980-81 and 1981-82.

Absenteeism did increase among Pontiac teachers as the number of teachers decreased. The complexity of the relationship is one that cannot be examined fully within the parameters of this study.

Question 4

Do teachers experience a decline in morale and job satisfaction during times of enforced RIF policies?

According to the survey results, more than 91% of the teacher respondents felt teacher morale had decreased during the past five years. Over 60% rated teacher morale within their building as "not so good" or "poor." Approximately 55% of the respondents stated that their satisfaction with teaching over the past five years had decreased, and over 42% were dissatisfied with their present jobs.

As discussed in Chapter II, Esposito found that teacher absenteeism occurred more often in schools and school districts characterized by low staff morale. He also found absenteeism to be higher among teachers who expressed low job satisfaction. The relationship between low morale and high absenteeism was supported by the findings of this study.

Teacher responses to specific worklife activities suggested other sources of teacher dissatisfaction. Almost 70% of the teachers

stated that they did not like to do paperwork. Administrative paperwork has always been a part of teaching. However, during the past five years, there have been fewer aides, assistants, and office personnel, and teachers have been required to record more information than in previous years.

The needs of Pontiac's student population also have changed in the past five years. More students require remedial help in reading and math and help with social-adjustment skills than in the past. Teacher responses to certain survey questions suggested additional reasons why teachers may be experiencing greater job dissatisfaction. Respondents ranked discipline as the biggest problem facing them as teachers. Yet, approximately 79% of the teachers did not like to discipline students.

A question that offers further illumination concerning the effects of RIF policies on teachers' job satisfaction and perceptions of their work environment is one in which teachers were asked to rate Pontiac Schools in the past and in the present and to predict the future ability of the schools to educate the students (Survey Question 1). More than 22% of the teachers gave Pontiac Schools a low rating for the present year, and approximately 40% gave a low rating to the future of Pontiac Schools. These responses suggest that teachers have accepted a level of continued dissatisfaction with their jobs. Teacher morale and job satisfaction for Pontiac teachers, according to the limits of this survey, have definitely decreased over the past five years. Additional studies are required to determine accurately the causes for the decline.

Question 5

How do teachers view their students during times of dwindling resources and declining enrollments?

In the Teacher Questionnaire, teachers stated that the biggest problem facing them was student discipline. Students' lack of motivation and poor attitudes toward school ranked fourth among the 12 major concerns identified by teachers. When asked to rate specific student characteristics, however, teachers tended to rate those characteristics associated with discipline problems (social skills) less negatively than characteristics of an academic nature. Teachers gave a higher rating to their students' abilities to relate to their peers, to the teachers, and to the principal than they gave to the students' characteristics associated with learning, such as eagerness to learn and ability to do the required work. Students' behavior in class was also rated higher than learning characteristics. According to the survey results, teachers generally believed that their students had the ability and skills to handle the personal interactions required of successful students. They did, however, feel their students lacked the ability, skills, and motivation to do the required academic work. It is unclear why teachers did not rate the level of academic skills, instead of discipline, as being a major concern.

Question 6

What are teachers' perceptions of personal control over their worklife environment?

Personal control essentially is focused on whether individuals accept the responsibility for what happens to them. Studies presented

in Chapter II suggested that threat, such as the fear of losing one's job, increases the feeling of individual helplessness. Teachers who receive yearly layoff notices, experience involuntary transfers, or lose their jobs could develop such feelings of loss of control or powerlessness.

Teachers in Pontiac have been affected by numerous decisions necessitated by RIF policies over which they have had no control and no input in formulating. The most obvious of these decisions is the seniority rule. The teachers' contract with the School Board mandates that teachers are laid off and recalled according to their date of hire and not by their teaching ability.

There are other areas over which teachers felt they had no control, as suggested by responses to survey questions. More than 38% of the teachers stated they would prefer to teach a different grade level or subject area than the one to which they were presently assigned. Almost 28% stated they would prefer to teach in another building. Thirty percent also stated they had been transferred involuntarily to another building at some time during the five-year period of this study. These decisions appear to have been made without teacher input.

Concerning teacher input into decisions made within a building, 38% of the respondents stated that the principal alone made all of the decisions within the school. The top three concerns identified by teachers suggested additional areas over which they had no control: discipline, which is regarded as an administrative problem; lack of parental support and involvement; and job uncertainty.

Question 7

What are the primary concerns of Pontiac teachers in 1982?

Studies presented in Chapter II suggested that the greatest concern of aging staffs and staffs experiencing the cuts mandated by decline-management decisions is that of improving salaries and fringe benefits. Responses to the Teacher Questionnaire, however, showed that improving salaries and fringe benefits was not the major concern of Pontiac teachers. When asked what was their greatest concern as teachers, Pontiac teachers stated: discipline (16.2%), lack of parental support and involvement (14.1%), and job uncertainty (14.1%). When asked what was the greatest problem facing Pontiac Schools, they cited poor economic conditions (48.3%) and the lack of strong central leadership (29.0%). An examination of additional survey responses suggested that the surveyed teachers were concerned more with the quality of education they would offer students than with economic benefits (with the exception of job security). Pontiac teachers responded to Survey Question 9 by stating that the Pontiac Education Association (PEA) did not place enough emphasis on the following items: helping members become better teachers (77.8%), improving the quality of education within the district (69.9%), improving working conditions (56.4%), and helping get laid-off teachers rehired (54.5%). Half of the teachers believed that not enough emphasis was being directed to protecting job security. The last concern of only 28% of the teacher respondents was raising salaries and improving fringe benefits.

More than half of the teacher respondents (54.2%) felt the PEA could deal effectively with both issues of economic benefits and the quality of education. Of those teachers who felt the PEA could not do both, over 56% said the PEA should concentrate on improving the quality of education rather than on gaining additional economic benefits.

Survey Question 11 in the Teacher Questionnaire was an open-ended question asking teachers what issues the PEA should pursue in the 1982-83 contract negotiations. The first concern was class size (47.4%); the next-highest-rated concern (19.3%) was improving or maintaining salaries and fringe benefits.

An overall examination of the teachers' responses revealed that the two major concerns of Pontiac teachers were issues of class size, which directly affect the quality of education and working conditions, and the problems inherent in job uncertainty.

Summary

RIF policies have directly and indirectly affected the work-life and personal life of many Pontiac teachers during the past five years. The certainty of yearly layoffs, the uncertainty of being recalled, and the possibility of yearly reassignment promote an environment that has eroded teacher morale. The average age of the teaching staff has increased greatly during this period and has created problems and needs peculiar to these staff members. Statistics also confirmed that teacher absenteeism has increased as more teachers have been forced to leave the system and as programs and

support personnel have been eliminated. Teachers' satisfaction with teaching has also decreased during this period of declining enrollment and dwindling resources.

Examining teacher attitudes toward students and teachers' perceptions of personal control and causation further suggested the complex and far-reaching effects of RIF policies. It is certain that Pontiac teachers have experienced the consequences of RIF policies. The immediate consequences of these RIF decisions have been presented in the findings of this study. However, the personal and professional consequences for Pontiac teachers and Pontiac Schools are not so immediate, obvious, or evident. The Pontiac teaching force has changed demographically, and teachers' perceptions of and attitudes toward their worklife environment have also been affected by the RIF policies mandated by declining enrollments and concomitant declining resources.

Comparison of This Study and a 1975 Teacher Study

In 1975, the Pontiac School Board started the process of reducing and eliminating programs and personnel. Many teachers received one or two layoff notices that year; however, no classroom teacher was laid off in May 1975. This was the beginning of an extended period of declining student enrollment and dwindling financial resources for Pontiac Schools.

In May 1975, the Pontiac Schools prepared a survey, the Pontiac Teacher Study, which was given to a randomly selected group of teachers (Appendix C). This survey covered many aspects of teachers'

worklife activities. A review of responses to selected questions in that survey is presented in Appendix C. These questions were included in the Teacher Questionnaire used in the present study. Comparisons between the demographic characteristics and the questionnaire responses from the 1975 and 1982 survey populations are also shown in Appendix C. Some revealing differences between the two surveys are evident.

Demographic Characteristics

The sample populations of the 1975 and 1982 surveys were selected randomly from the total teaching populations. The 1975 population included 175 teachers, and the 1982 survey results came from 159 teachers. Approximately the same number of female, male, elementary, and secondary teachers constituted both sample populations. The "age" of the populations and the "number of years teaching" support the findings of this study. In 1975, almost 56% of the survey population was between the ages of 20 and 40. Yet, only 36% of the 1982 survey population fell in that age category. Over 64% of the teachers in the 1975 group had been teaching fewer than ten years. Only 17% of the teachers in the 1982 group had taught between one and ten years. These statistics, within the limits of the comparison, suggest the aging process brought about by RIF policies.

Teachers responding to the 1975 survey ranked Pontiac Schools in the past, present, and in the future, as did teachers in the 1982 survey. The comparison showed that teachers in 1975 gave the highest ranking to the future, whereas 1982 respondents gave the lowest ranking to the future and the highest ranking to the past.

Student Characteristics

Teachers responding to the 1975 survey gave higher ratings to the student characteristics of "eagerness to learn," "ability to do required work," "behavior in class," and "motivation" than did teachers responding to the 1982 survey.

Input, Leadership, and Job Satisfaction

A greater number of teachers responding to the 1975 survey felt they shared in building decisions than did teachers responding to the 1982 survey. The 1975 survey results also indicated that teachers had a greater professional respect for their principals, in comparison to the 1982 results.

Fifteen percent of the teachers responding to the 1975 survey voiced some dissatisfaction with their jobs. Almost 43% of the teachers in the 1982 survey said they were dissatisfied with their jobs.

Pontiac Education Association--Issues

Two issues that have undergone a major change in terms of teacher concerns between 1975 and 1982 are working conditions and job security. In 1975, only 32% of the teachers felt the PEA did not place enough emphasis on improving working conditions. In contrast, 65% of the teachers responding to the 1982 survey felt that not enough emphasis was placed on improving working conditions. In 1975, 15% of the teacher respondents felt the PEA was not concerned enough about protecting job security, whereas in 1982 the figure was 50% of the teachers surveyed.

This informal comparison between the results of the 1975 Pontiac Teacher Study and the 1982 Teacher Questionnaire suggests possible changes in staff demographics, teachers' perceptions of students, teacher job satisfaction, and the major concerns of teachers during the two distinct periods. A closer examination of the 1975 survey and additional input concerning teacher attitudes in 1982-83 would give educators a clearer understanding of the consequences of RIF actions.

Recommendations for Pontiac

Pontiac teachers and administrators have been faced with reducing programs and school personnel for almost a decade. Teachers have had to adjust to changes in their worklife environment and have had to cope with the psychological consequences of these reduction decisions. RIF decisions made by Pontiac administrators appear to have been reactive, rather than proactive, responses to immediate financial crises. The following recommendations support the initiation of responsive RIF strategies. They include: (1) developing effective, long-range staffing policies; (2) creating alternative work patterns and options for teachers; and (3) assisting in the development of in-service programs designed to meet the needs of a changing staff working with a changing curriculum and a changing student population.

1. Long-range planning is essential to the effective educational management of school systems facing decline. Effective planning depends heavily on the ability of educators to isolate those factors that impinge on the operations of the schools and to make sound

projections related to these factors. To develop proactive RIF strategies, the first recommendation for Pontiac administrators is that they engage in a thorough redefinition of problems and of activities that have been altered by declining enrollments and dwindling resources. The redefinition dialogue should include such concerns as an examination of the skills, abilities, and needs of the existing teaching force; a close look at the disruptive "crisis" activity created by moving and rehiring teachers during the first three months of school and at semester changes; and a reevaluation of the objectives of successful programs that have been eliminated by budget cuts for possible infusion into the existing curricula.

In preparing RIF strategies, administrators should make use of the accurate enrollment predictions, consistently generated by the Pupil Personnel Office, in conjunction with other information, to outline future staffing needs. Combined with information on the existing teacher force (numbers, certification, age, retirement, and turn-over predictions), a RIF strategy could be initiated.

A key element of effective RIF strategies is informing teachers of the projected staffing needs of the school system. Teachers wishing to gain greater job flexibility and/or security or desiring a change in assignment could then exert greater control of their careers by being certified accordingly. This would grant teachers greater job stability and would also give younger teachers a more realistic picture of their future in the Pontiac system. Allowing teachers to prepare for predicted changes within the system would also provide the school system with a resource group of professionals

trained and aware of new literature concerning advancements in particular fields of education.

2. Pontiac administrators should investigate and provide alternative professional career patterns and options for teachers.

Options such as job sharing and part-time teaching yield several benefits for teachers and school systems in addition to controlling unemployment, which is costly to both teachers and schools. Some of the benefits of these options include opportunities for teachers to fulfill personal priorities, infusion of new working populations, reduced absenteeism, higher morale, and greater possibility of innovation.⁹⁴ Another option that Pontiac Schools should consider is the creation of better incentive plans for early retirement. Teachers' personal goals and professional needs should be a prime consideration in devising RIF strategies and in developing and maintaining effective teaching staffs.

3. Planned retraining of teachers and administrators and the training of future administrators should be a priority in RIF strategies developed by Pontiac administrators. Declining enrollments create needs and opportunities for retraining active and inactive teachers for other subjects, other levels, and new market demands. The school district could become involved in a planned upgrading of teachers' skills in English, math, the arts, and sciences. Retraining might be given during enforced educational leaves or sabbaticals.

⁹⁴ Marsha Weil, "Oversupply as Opportunity: An Exploration of Job-Sharing and Inservice Education," in Creative Authority and Collaboration, ed. Sam Yarger et al. (ED 129 735)

Programs and curricula could be modified to meet in-service education needs, training in professional development, programs leading to certification and advanced degrees, and retraining programs facilitating transfers. Local universities could assist Pontiac with assessing the needs of its teachers and administrators and with developing and implementing in-service programs and the evaluation procedures required of such activities.

An additional concern of this researcher is the training of future administrators and the retraining of present administrators. Pontiac needs to develop a new generation of academic administrators. Present administrators have grown up in a period of rapid growth and have been selected presumably because they are well adjusted to growth and capable of dealing with it. The immediate situation, and that of the future, requires different skills from administrators. It requires administrators who are skilled in the process of adjusting to static growth or decline. Programs and positions that were formerly used as training grounds for teachers interested in school administration have been eliminated or altered. Hence Pontiac must provide opportunities for these potential administrators and for the retraining of present administrators in areas that might enhance RIF strategies, such as creative management, group dynamics, instructional leadership and evaluation, curriculum development, and computer science.

A concern underlying all of these recommendations is to help teachers gain the psychological freedom associated with personal control. Information generated by these recommendations may assist

teachers in making career decisions based on realistic appraisals of staffing needs for future school years. Psychological freedom is also associated with feelings of personal causation. In the past few years, Pontiac administrators have selected a way of operating that does not promote such feelings. By disseminating primarily financial information to teachers, the administration has attempted to make the financial problems of the school district the concern of all its teachers. Teachers should not be burdened with the details of the school district's financial problems, particularly ones into and over which they have no input or control. These recommendations for Pontiac would direct the focus of the central administration toward helping teachers do their best job and away from asking teachers to save their jobs.

Recommendations for Further Study

The literature concerning the consequences of RIF policies is sketchy, at best. The following recommendations for further research focus on the implications of RIF decisions.

1. Additional research should be conducted on the psychological consequences of RIF actions in terms of the attitudes and perceptions of teachers toward their worklife environment. Present research suggests that teachers' attitudes and expectations play an important role in determining classroom and building climate. Classroom climate affects student learning. If educators are to improve the quality of education, they must understand more fully the psychological effect and latent consequences of RIF decisions. Given such

information, administrators should be able to create better staffing strategies and offer more relevant and effective in-service programs.

2. More research should be done on the differences among teachers in various age groups. Systematic conceptions of adult development have been evolving for many years. Levinson, Gould, and Sheehy are among the age theorists who have discussed adult development in such terms as life periods, passages, stages of life, and periods of transitions.⁹⁵ Relating this concern to staff needs, Howey stated:

Were we to take one persistent problem commonly addressed in programs of inservice education, such as discipline, we are confident we could find significant differences in how this is viewed on the basis of sex and age of teachers. There may well be similar differences with respect to communication, teacher expectations, grading, parental relations, and other common topics focused upon inservice.⁹⁶

It is important that differences and needs of an older staff be identified and considered in the total RIF strategy and in the development and implementation of in-service programs.

3. Simulation models that analyze information and help develop personnel policies appropriate to the different educational and administrative goals of a particular school district need

⁹⁵ Daniel Levinson, The Seasons of a Man's Life (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1978); Roger Gould, "Adult Life Stages: Growth Toward Self-Tolerance," Psychology Today 8 (February 1978): 74-78; Gail Sheehy, Passages: Predictable Crises of Adult Life (New York: E. P. Dutton and Co., 1976).

⁹⁶ Ken Howey, Adult Learning and Development: Implications for Inservice Teacher Education, Center for Educational Research and Innovation Project on Inservice Education and Training for Teachers, 1979, p. 26.

further study and greater practical use. The Markov Chain⁹⁷ and the FLEXOR⁹⁸ model are examples of simulation models that make possible projections on the future composition of a faculty according to demographic and experimental variables. Empirical transition rates can be determined for an entire state or for selected districts. From such data, a variety of personnel policies can be simulated. Wider use should be made of such models, in addition to continued research in the field of simulation models.

Reflections

Many findings presented in this study were anticipated and expected. However, some expected findings did not materialize, and some findings were unexpected. Two areas of nonrealized findings, age and teacher stress, are discussed in the following paragraphs, along with differences found in the questionnaire responses of men and women teachers.

Age

The researcher expected to find significant differences in the expectations, attitudes, and perceptions of teachers in various age groups. The findings initially suggested that teachers in the 30-39 and 50+ age groups were more optimistic and less critical of

⁹⁷William Baugh and Joe Stone, "Simulation of Teacher Demand, Demographics, and Mobility: A Preliminary Report" (Washington, D.C.: National Institute of Education, December 1980).

⁹⁸Hansen Group, "Simulation Experiments to Examine the Impact of Environmental Factors and Policy Decisions on Ontario Teacher Education Institutions, 1978-2002," September 1978. (ED 197 462)

students and of their teaching jobs. These findings would have supported the theories of numerous age theorists and would also have given additional insight into the needs and concerns of aging teaching staffs. Upon closer examination of the findings, however, there were no obvious consistencies in the responses of the various age groups from which to draw such conclusions.

Stress

The second nonrealized finding concerned teacher reportings of stress or "burn-out." It was anticipated that teachers would mention these problems in the three open-ended questions of the survey. Only a few teachers referred specifically to stress. Concerns were generally outwardly directed to things, such as "economic climate," or to people, such as "building principals" or "parents." Teachers rarely saw themselves as part of the problem or as part of the solution to problems.

Findings concerning building leadership and differences between the responses of men and women teachers were also of interest. Comparing the responses of teachers' perceptions of their principals, teacher-administrator cooperation, and student characteristics, two generalizations can be made: (1) Teachers who perceived their principal as being an effective role model and leader rated job satisfaction and students' eagerness to learn, ability to do required work, classroom behavior, and motivation higher than teachers who perceived their principals as ineffective role models and leaders. (2) Teachers who rated teacher-administrator cooperation as being "good" rated job satisfaction and their students' eagerness to learn, ability to

do required work, classroom behavior, and motivation higher than teachers who rated teacher-administrator cooperation as being "not so good." This informal analysis lends support to research studies that have suggested the importance of well-trained, highly functioning administrators in promoting healthy learning and working environments.

Attitudes and Concerns of Men and Women Teachers

Overall, the survey responses of women teachers were more positive than those of men teachers. Women were considerably more satisfied than men with teaching in general and with their present jobs. Reviewing certain concerns and characteristics, the women's responses were significantly different from those of the men teachers.

Twenty-five percent of the men teachers rated discipline as the number-one problem facing them as teachers. About 12% of the women teachers placed discipline in the fifth position. When respondents were asked how much they enjoyed particular teaching activities, a greater percentage of women teachers supported the activities that represent a more realistic attitude of teacher responsibilities required in meeting the needs of the present student population. Table 30 shows the responses by men and women teachers to certain activities. The responses shown in Table 31 are combined percentages of medium and high ratings concerning student characteristics.

General Teacher Surveys

The last concern of this researcher is the results of studies conducted in other parts of the country and in school districts not

Table 30.--Teacher worklife activities--Survey Question 3.

"How much do you enjoy the following activities?"

Activity	Responses of "Very Much" and "A Great Deal"	
	Women	Men
Working with "slow" students	47%	18%
Teaching students on one-to-one	80	54
Attempting to improve the self- concept of students	93	72
Trying to make class exciting	92	73
Teaching students things they need to get along with in school	90	59

Table 31.--Student characteristics--Survey Question 8.

"How would you rate the students in your school in terms
of the following characteristics?"

Characteristic	Women	Men
Eagerness to learn	71.3%	32.7%
Ability to do required work	77.3	36.0
Motivation	67.0	31.1

enforcing RIF policies. Two surveys were conducted by the National Education Association (NEA),⁹⁹ and a third survey was administered

⁹⁹"Teacher Opinion Poll: Job Satisfaction," Today's Education (November-December 1980): 86; Glen Macnow, "4th R for Teachers, It's Regret," Detroit Free Press, 12 May 1982, pp. 1 and 3.

to the faculty of a medium-sized midwestern school system.¹⁰⁰ Although these surveys did not select teachers or school systems undergoing RIF cuts, their findings were very similar to those of the present study.

The findings of the three surveys led to the following conclusions: (1) many teachers are dissatisfied with their jobs and would probably not become teachers if they could start over again, (2) teachers in urban areas are more dissatisfied with their jobs than those in suburban or rural areas, and (3) a majority of the teachers felt that public attitudes toward schools and student attitudes toward learning had the greatest negative effect on their overall job satisfaction.

These surveys and others have suggested that teachers in different geographic and economic areas are experiencing serious doubts about teaching, job dissatisfaction, and an overall disenchantment with the students they teach. RIF policies have their own peculiar consequences; however, these may be harder to distinguish when teachers not involved in RIF policy decisions are voicing similar concerns. Determining which issues are peculiar to RIF decisions and which are common to teachers teaching in 1982 is not obvious from available research studies. It is imperative that intensive studies of teaching staffs involved in RIF decisions be conducted so that the more subtle and latent consequences of RIF policies are not ignored or mistaken for other concerns.

¹⁰⁰Charles Dedrick, "Teacher Stress: A Descriptive Study of the Concern," NASSP Bulletin (December 1981): 31-36.

Educational programs and personnel will continue to be reduced, and teachers will be expected to cope with the decline-management decisions and consequences. It is hoped that teaching staffs will be given support and adjustment strategies from enlightened educators who have seriously considered the far-reaching implications and consequences of RIF.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

COVER LETTER AND 1982 TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE

TO THE TEACHER:

Your assistance is needed to supply some crucial information for a research project I am doing in conjunction with the College of Education, Michigan State University. The major objective of this project is the development of more educationally responsive strategies for reducing the teaching force within districts undergoing declining enrollments and declining resources.

Information regarding teacher satisfaction and teacher attitudes toward teaching in districts like Pontiac is crucial in planning for responsible reduction-in-force policies. Your cooperation in completing this questionnaire will be very beneficial to the research study.

Upon completion, the questionnaire should be returned in the enclosed envelope prior to June 4.

Please do not write your name or the name of your school on the questionnaire. It is important that all responses remain anonymous.

If you would like to receive the findings of this questionnaire, please call me and I will send you the information when the responses have been tabulated. My phone number is: 625-0433.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Kay Neumann

TEACHER QUESTIONNAIREBackground Information

Education: B.A. ____ B.A.+ ____ M.A. ____ M.A.+ ____

Additional degrees _____

Age: 20-24 ____ 25-29 ____ 30-34 ____ 35-39 ____ 40-44 ____

45-49 ____ 50-59 ____ 60+ ____

Sex: M ____ F ____

Years of teaching ____ Years of teaching in Pontiac ____

Certification: Elementary ____ Secondary ____ Other ____

What grade(s) are you presently teaching? _____

Pontiac Schools

1. Please rate Pontiac Schools on the following 10-point scale.

#1 represents the worst possible schools for students.

#10 represents the best possible schools for students.

A. Where on the scale do you feel Pontiac Schools stand at the present time? (circle a number)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

B. Where on the scale would you say the Pontiac Schools stood 5 years ago?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

C. Where on the scale do you think the Pontiac Schools will be in 5 years from now?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

2. Over the past 5 years do you feel that teacher morale throughout the Pontiac School district has ... ?

_____ increased _____ remained the same _____ declined

Teacher Work Environment

The role of the teacher is a varied one, involving many different tasks and calling for the application of many different skills.

3. To what degree do you enjoy each of the following aspects of your role as a teacher?

1 = Not at all 2 = Very little 3 = Somewhat
4 = Very much 5 = A great deal

- _____ a. Attending teachers' meetings.
- _____ b. Working with pupils in extracurricular activities.
- _____ c. Talking with individual parents about a problem concerning their child.
- _____ d. Working with students who are having a hard time adjusting to school life.
- _____ e. Working primarily with children rather than adults.
- _____ f. Working with "exceptionally able" pupils.
- _____ g. Working with "average" pupils.
- _____ h. Working with "slow" pupils.
- _____ i. Handling administrative paper work.
- _____ j. Having to discipline problem children.
- _____ k. Working with a committee of teachers on a common problem.
- _____ l. Teaching students on a one-to-one basis.
- _____ m. Attempting to improve the self-concept of your students.
- _____ n. Trying to make your class exciting for your students.
- _____ o. Teaching students the things they need to get along in school.

4. How are decisions usually made at your school?

___ Principal on his/her own

___ Principal and teachers share

___ Usually teachers alone

5. How would you rate teacher morale in your school?

___ Excellent ___ Good ___ Not so good ___ Poor

6. How would you describe teacher-administrator cooperation in your school?

___ Excellent ___ Good ___ Not so good ___ Poor

7. How would you rate your principal in terms of being a good role model for teachers and a good leader?

___ Very Effective ___ Effective ___ Not Effective ___ Ineffective

Students

8. How would you rate the students in your school in terms of the following characteristics?

1 = Low

2 = Medium

3 = High

___ a. Eagerness to learn

___ b. Ability to do the required work

___ c. Behavior in class

___ d. Daily attendance

___ e. Getting along with their peers

___ f. Getting along with the teachers

___ g. Getting along with the principal

___ h. Motivation

Pontiac Education Association--Issues

The Pontiac Education Association has played a major role in presenting teacher needs to the school board during the past years of negotiation.

9. How much emphasis do you feel the P.E.A. places on the following items?

1 = Too much

2 = Not enough

3 = About right

- ☐ a. Raising salaries and improving fringe benefits
- ☐ b. Helping members become better teachers
- ☐ c. Improving working conditions
- ☐ d. Protecting job security
- ☐ e. Helping get laid-off teachers rehired
- ☐ f. Improving the quality of education in the district

10. In your opinion, can the P.E.A. deal effectively with (a) improving the quality of education and (b) gaining economic benefits?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If you checked "No" to the above question, which issue do you feel is more important for the P.E.A. to pursue?

☐ Quality of education
or

☐ Economic benefits

11. What do you feel should be one of the issues in this year's contract negotiations?

Job Satisfaction and Personal Concerns

12. During the past 5 years has your satisfaction with teaching ...?
___ increased ___ remained the same ___ decreased
13. How satisfied are you with your present job?
___ Very satisfied ___ Somewhat dissatisfied
___ Fairly satisfied ___ Very dissatisfied
14. Have you been involuntarily transferred during the past 5 years?
___ Yes ___ No
15. Are you presently teaching in your major area? ___ Yes ___ No
16. Would you prefer to teach a subject or grade level that is different from your present assignment?
___ Yes ___ No
17. Would you prefer to teach in another school building?
___ Yes ___ No
18. What do you think is the biggest problem for you as a teacher today?
19. What do you think is the biggest problem facing Pontiac Schools?

Do you have any additional comments you would like to make concerning topics covered in this questionnaire?

APPENDIX B

TEACHERS EMPLOYED IN PONTIAC

TEACHER RESIGNATIONS, RETIREMENTS, LEAVES
OF ABSENCES, AND SABBATICAL LEAVES

DESCRIPTION OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS

TEACHER RESPONSES TO TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE

Teachers Employed in Pontiac by
Gender and Certification

The number of male and female teachers employed by Pontiac Schools is shown in Table 32. Approximately 33% of the teachers during this five-year period were men, and 77% of the classroom teachers were women.

Table 32.--Teachers employed in Pontiac by gender and certification.

	1977-78	1978-79	1979-80	1980-81	1981-82
Elementary	406	375	267	365	342
Female	352	330	235	321	306
Male	54	45	32	44	36
Secondary	319	305	203	304	381
Female	137	125	91	140	151
Male	182	180	112	164	230

Teacher Resignations, Retirements, Leaves of
Absences, and Sabbatical Leaves

Table 33 shows the number of teachers who left the teaching force during the five-year period of this study. The four categories included as reasons for leaving are resignation, leave of absence, sabbatical leave, and retirement. The figures in the table were obtained from School Board minutes of the regular biweekly meetings from July 1977 through June 1982. These minutes, however, do not reflect the total number of teachers who left the school system.

School records indicating the status of all teachers not recalled during these years were not available.

Table 33.--Teacher resignations, retirements, leaves of absences, and sabbatical leaves.

	1977-78	1978-79	1979-80	1980-81	1981-82
Resignations	51	42	54	32	28
Retirements	17	19	9	12	17
Leaves of absences	31	51	45	59	68
Sabbatical leaves	3	3	6	6	1

Description of Survey Respondents

Table 34.--Gender of survey respondents.

Sex	Percent
Female (n=98)	61.6
Male (n=61)	38.4

Table 35.--Gender and certification of respondents.

	Elementary	Secondary
<u>Total</u> (n=159)	52.8%	47.2%
Female (n=98)	66.3	33.7
Male (n=61)	31.2	68.8

Table 36.--Age grouping of respondents in ten-year intervals by gender.

	Years of Age			
	20-29	30-39	40-49	50+
<u>Total</u> (n=159)	4.4%	32.1%	39.0%	24.5%
Female (n=98)	6.1	30.6	33.7	29.6
Male (n=61)	1.6	34.5	47.5	16.4

Table 37.--Age grouping of respondents according to certification.

	Years of Age			
	20-29	30-39	40-49	50+
Elementary (n=84)	8.3%	34.5%	34.5%	22.6%
Secondary (n=73)	0	27.4	45.2	27.4

Table 38.--Number of years of teaching (n=159).

Years of Teaching					
1-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21-25	26+
.6%	17.0%	30.0%	20.8%	17.7%	13.9%

Teacher Responses to TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE

Survey Question 1

"Please rate Pontiac Schools on the following 10-point scale.
 #1 represents the worst possible schools for students.
 #10 represents the best possible schools for students.

- A. Where on the scale do you feel Pontiac Schools stand at the present time?
- B. Where on the scale would you say the Pontiac Schools stood 5 years ago?
- C. Where on the scale do you think the Pontiac Schools will be in 5 years from now?"

Table 39.--Responses by gender to Survey Question 1.

	Low	Medium	High
A. Present			
Female (n=97)	9.3%	78.3%	12.4%
Male (n=61)	42.6	52.5	4.9
B. 5 years ago			
Female	6.2	56.7	37.1
Male	11.5	65.6	22.9
C. 5 years from now			
Female	28.9	51.5	19.6
Male	59.1	37.7	3.2

Table 40.--Responses by age group to Survey Question 1A (n=158).

"Where on the scale do you feel Pontiac Schools stand at the present time?"

Age Group	Low	Medium	High
20-29	28.6%	71.4%	0 %
30-39	17.6	66.7	15.7
40-49	33.9	61.3	4.8
50+	7.9	81.6	10.5

Table 41.--Responses by age group to Survey Question 1B (n=158)

"Where on the scale would you say the Pontiac Schools stood 5 years ago?"

Age Group	Low	Medium	High
20-39	14.3%	57.1%	38.6%
30-39	5.8	62.7	31.5
40-49	8.1	72.5	19.4
50+	10.6	36.8	52.6

Table 42.--Responses by age group to Survey Question 1C (n=158).

"Where on the scale do you think the Pontiac Schools will be in 5 years from now?"

Age Group	Low	Medium	High
20-29	42.8%	57.2%	0 %
30-39	35.3	54.9	9.8
40-49	50.0	40.3	9.7
50+	31.6	42.1	26.3

Table 43.--Survey Question 3A through 3H.

"To what degree to you enjoy each of the following aspects of your job as a teacher?"					
	Not At All	Very Little	Somewhat	Very Much	A Great Deal
A. Attend teachers' meetings (n=157)	5.1%	36.3%	45.8%	8.3%	4.5%
B. Working with pupils in extra-curricular activities (n=153)	2.6	3.3	32.0	41.8	20.3
C. Talking with individual parents about a problem concerning their child	0	10.8	38.6	34.2	16.4
D. Working with students who are having a hard time adjusting to school life (n=158)	2.5	16.5	30.4	31.6	19.0
E. Working primarily with children rather than adults (n=155)	0	7.7	25.8	36.8	29.7
F. Working with "exceptionally able pupils" (n=155)	0	3.9	18.7	41.3	36.1
G. Working with "average pupils" (n=157)	0	0	25.5	49.0	25.5
H. Working with "slow pupils" (n=158)	8.2	20.9	34.8	28.5	7.6

Table 44.--Survey Question 3I through 3M.

"To what degree do you enjoy each of the following aspects of your job as a teacher?"

	Not At All	Very Little	Somewhat	Very Much	A Great Deal
I. Handling administrative paper- work (n=158)	30.4%	39.2%	23.5%	7.0%	0 %
J. Having to discipline problem children (n=158)	35.4	43.7	15.8	3.2	1.9
K. Working with a committee of teachers on a common problem (n=156)	.6	10.9	46.9	30.1	11.5
L. Teaching students on a one-to-one basis (n=157)	1.3	5.1	22.9	36.3	34.4
Female teachers (n=96)	0	2.1	16.7	36.4	44.8
Male teachers (n=61)	3.3	9.8	32.8	36.1	18.0
M. Attempting to improve the self- concept of your students (n=158)	0	3.2	11.5	44.9	40.5

Table 45.--Survey Question 30.
"To what degree do you enjoy each of the following aspects of your job as a teacher?"

	Not At All	Very Little	Somewhat	Very Much	A Great Deal
0. Teaching students the things they need to get along in school (n=158)	1.3%	4.4%	15.8%	34.8%	43.7%
Female teachers (n=97)	2.0	0	7.2	35.1	55.7
Male teachers (n=61)	0	11.5	29.5	34.4	24.6

Table 46.---Survey Question 3F.

"To what degree do you enjoy working with exceptionally able students?"

	Not At All	Very Little	Somewhat	Very Much	A Great Deal
Female teachers (n=94)	0	5.3%	6.4%	43.6%	44.7%
Male teachers (n=61)	0	1.6	37.7	37.7	23.0
Elementary teachers (n=81)	0	4.9	11.1	48.2	35.8
Secondary teachers (n=74)	0	2.7	27.0	33.8	36.5
<u>Age Group</u>					
20-29 (n=7)	0	0	14.3	14.2	71.5
30-39 (n=50)	0	8.0	8.0	42.0	42.0
40-49 (n=60)	0	1.7	36.7	43.3	18.3
50+ (n=38)	0	2.6	5.3	42.1	50.0

Table 47.--Survey Question 3G.

"To what degree do you enjoy working with average students?"

	Not At All	Very Little	Somewhat	Very Much	A Great Deal
Female teachers (n=96)	0	0	19.8%	50.0%	30.2%
Male teachers (n=61)	0	0	34.4	47.5	18.0
Elementary teachers (n=82)	0	0	19.5	53.7	26.8
Secondary teachers (n=75)	0	0	32.0	44.0	24.0
<u>Age Group</u>					
20-29 (n=7)	0	0	85.7	14.3	0
30-39 (n=50)	0	0	18.0	56.0	26.0
40-49 (n=61)	0	0	32.8	41.0	26.2
50+ (n=39)	0	0	12.8	59.0	28.2

Table 48.--Survey Question 3H.

"To what degree do you enjoy working with slow students?"

	Not At All	Very Little	Somewhat	Very Much	A Great Deal
Female teachers (n=97)	3.1%	12.4%	37.1%	37.1%	10.3%
Male teachers (n=61)	16.4	34.4	31.2	14.8	3.2
Elementary teachers (n=83)	3.7	12.0	31.3	41.0	12.0
Secondary teachers (n=75)	13.3	30.7	38.6	14.7	2.7
<u>Age Group</u>					
20-29 (n=7)	0	42.8	28.6	14.3	14.3
30-39 (n=51)	5.9	9.8	47.1	27.4	9.8
40-49 (n=62)	9.7	29.0	22.6	35.5	3.2
50+ (n=39)	10.3	18.0	38.5	23.0	10.2

Table 49.--Survey Question 6.

"How would you describe teacher-administrator cooperation in your school?"

	Excellent	Good	Not So Good	Poor
<u>Total</u> (n=158)	13.9%	48.7%	27.8%	9.5%
Female teachers (n=97)	14.4	53.6	24.7	7.2
Male teachers (n=61)	13.1	41.0	32.8	13.1

Table 50.--Survey Question 7.

"How would you rate your principal in terms of being a good role model for teachers and a good leader?"

	Very Effective	Effective	Not Effective	Ineffective
<u>Total</u> (n=158)	15.8%	43.7%	27.2%	13.3%
Female teachers (n=97)	20.6	48.4	21.7	9.3
Male teachers (n=61)	8.2	36.0	36.0	19.8

Survey Question 8

"How would you rate the students in your school in terms of the following characteristics?"

Table 51.--Survey Question 8A.

"Eagerness to learn."

	Low	Medium	High
<u>Total</u> (n=158)	43.7%	41.7%	14.6%
Female teachers (n=97)	28.9	50.5	20.6
Male teachers (n=61)	67.2	27.9	4.9
<u>Certification</u>			
Elementary teachers (n=83)	26.5	51.8	21.7
Secondary teachers (n=75)	62.6	30.7	6.7

Table 52.--Survey Question 8B.

"Ability to do the required work."

	Low	Medium	High
<u>Total</u> (n=158)	38.6%	53.2%	8.2%
Female teachers (n=97)	22.7	70.1	7.2
Male teachers (n=61)	64.0	26.2	9.8
<u>Certification</u>			
Elementary teachers (n=83)	27.7	62.7	9.6
Secondary teachers (n=75)	50.7	42.7	6.6

Table 53.--Survey Question 8C.

"Behavior in class."

	Low	Medium	High
<u>Total</u> (n=158)	28.5%	63.9%	7.9%
Female teachers (n=97)	25.8	66.0	8.2
Male teachers (n=61)	32.8	60.6	6.6
<u>Certification</u>			
Elementary teachers (n=83)	25.3	67.5	7.2
Secondary teachers (n=75)	32.0	60.0	8.0

Table 54.--Survey Question 8D.

"Daily attendance."

	Low	Medium	High
<u>Total</u> (n=158)	15.2%	62.0%	22.8%
Female teachers (n=97)	13.4	59.8	26.8
Male teachers (n=61)	18.0	65.6	16.4
<u>Certification</u>			
Elementary teachers (n=83)	10.8	53.0	36.2
Secondary teachers (n=75)	20.0	72.0	8.0

Table 55.--Survey Question 8E.

"Getting along with their peers."

	Low	Medium	High
<u>Total</u> (n=158)	17.1%	63.3%	19.6%
Female teachers (n=97)	14.4	65.0	20.6
Male teachers (n=61)	21.3	60.7	18.0
<u>Certification</u>			
Elementary teachers (n=83)	19.3	61.4	19.3
Secondary teachers (n=75)	14.7	65.3	20.0

Table 56.--Survey Question 8F.

"Getting along with the teachers."

	Low	Medium	High
<u>Total</u> (n=158)	10.1%	67.1%	22.8%
Female teachers (n=97)	7.2	61.9	30.9
Male teachers (n=61)	14.8	75.4	9.8
<u>Certification</u>			
Elementary teachers (n=83)	8.5	60.2	31.3
Secondary teachers (n=75)	12.0	74.7	13.3

Table 57.--Survey Question 8G.

"Getting along with the building administrator."

	Low	Medium	High
<u>Total</u> (n=158)	46.8%	43.7%	9.5%
Female teachers (n=97)	33.0	53.6	13.4
Male teachers (n=61)	68.8	27.9	3.3
<u>Certification</u>			
Elementary teachers (n=83)	34.9	51.8	13.3
Secondary teachers (n=75)	60.0	34.7	5.3

Table 58.--Survey Question 8H.
"Motivation."

	Low	Medium	High
<u>Total</u> (n=158)	36.8%	43.7%	9.5%
Female teachers (n=97)	33.0	53.6	13.4
Male teachers (n=61)	68.8	27.9	3.3
<u>Certification</u>			
Elementary teachers (n=83)	34.9	51.8	13.3
Secondary teachers (n=75)	60.0	34.7	5.3

Table 59.--Survey Question 12.

"During the past 5 years, has your satisfaction with
teaching increased, remained the same, or declined?"

	Increased	Remained the Same	Declined
Female teachers (n=95)	20.0%	36.8%	43.2%
Male teachers (n=59)	10.2	13.6	76.2

Table 60.--Survey Question 13.

"How satisfied are you with your present job?"

	Female Teachers (n=97)	Male Teachers (n=59)
Very satisfied	27.8%	10.2%
Fairly satisfied	43.3	23.7
Somewhat dissatisfied	25.8	33.9
Very dissatisfied	3.1	32.2

Table 61.--Survey Question 15.

"Are you presently teaching in your major area?"

	Yes	No
Total (n=156)	78.8%	21.2%
Female teachers (n=97)	88.6	11.4
Male teachers (n=59)	62.7	37.3
<u>Certification</u>		
Elementary teachers (n=83)	91.6	8.4
Secondary teachers (n=75)	62.7	37.3

Table 62.--Survey Question 18.

"What do you think is the biggest problem for you as a teacher today?"

	Elementary Teachers (n=75)	Secondary Teachers (n=67)
Discipline	21.3%	10.4%
Job uncertainty	16.0	11.9
Lack of parental support and involvement	14.6	13.4
Student motivation and poor attitude	4.0	19.4
Inadequate supplies	10.7	11.9
Poor building leadership	4.0	9.0
Trying to meet students' needs	9.3	2.9
Teacher morale and job-related stress	4.0	4.5
Lack of community support and respect	2.7	4.5
Teachers not recognized as professionals	2.7	3.0
Working in an economically depressed area	0	3.0
Poor parent/school communications	2.7	0
Other	8.0	6.0

APPENDIX C

1975 PONTIAC TEACHER STUDY

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS OF 1975 PONTIAC TEACHER STUDY

RESPONSES FROM SELECTED QUESTIONS OF 1975 PONTIAC TEACHER STUDY

COMPARISONS BETWEEN SELECTED QUESTIONS OF THE 1975 PONTIAC TEACHER STUDY AND THE 1982 TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE

Pontiac Teacher Study

Department of Research and Evaluation
Pontiac Public Schools
May 1975

1. First, what is your exact job title at (NAME OF SCHOOL)?

JOB TITLE: _____

2. What grade level students do you teach?

K-3 1

4-6 2

7-8 3

9-12 4

3. How long have you been teaching in the Pontiac Schools?

NUMBER OF YEARS: _____

4. How many years have you been teaching at (NAME OF BUILDING)?

NUMBER OF YEARS: _____

Now, here is a picture of a ladder. Suppose we say that the top of the ladder represents the best possible schools for children and the bottom of the ladder represents the worst possible schools.

5.A. Where on the ladder do you feel the Pontiac
Public Schools stand at the present time?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

5.B. Where on the ladder would you say the Pontiac
Public Schools stood 5 years ago?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

5.C. Where do you think the Pontiac Public Schools
will be on the ladder 5 years from now?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

6. Here is a list of activities connected with the work life of teachers. (HAND CARD.) I'd like to find out how important you think each of these activities is to your job. How important is planning lessons to your job as a teacher--would you say planning lessons is very important, fairly important, or not important at all? CODE IN COLUMN FOR Q.6: THEN ASK B-N IN SAME WAY.

7. And now, I'd like you to tell me how important these things are for the administration at your school. Would you say the administration at your school consider planning lessons very important, fairly important, not important at all? CODE IN COLUMN FOR Q.7; THEN ASK B-N IN SAME WAY.

	Question 6				Question 7		
	Important to You				Important to Admin.		
	Very impor- tant	Fairly impor- tant	Not impor- tant		Very impor- tant	Fairly impor- tant	Not impor- tant
a. planning lessons	1	2	3	24/	1	2	3
b. filling out forms for the office	1	2	3	25/	1	2	3
c. teaching students to obey the rules	1	2	3	26/	1	2	3
d. serving on school committees	1	2	3	27/	1	2	3
e. helping students master the basic ideas in your class	1	2	3	28/	1	2	3
f. supervising extra-curricular student activities	1	2	3	29/	1	2	3
g. trying to make your class exciting for students	1	2	3	30/	1	2	3
h. doing housekeeping duties such as washing the boards or dusting	1	2	3	31/	1	2	3
i. attempting to improve the self-concepts of your students	1	2	3	32/	1	2	3
j. helping students learn adult values and attitudes	1	2	3	33/	1	2	3
k. maintaining order in the classroom	1	2	3	34/	1	2	3
l. teaching students the things they will need to get along in the adult world	1	2	3	35/	1	2	3
m. teaching students on a one-to-one basis	1	2	3	36/	1	2	3
n. attending PTA or other after school meetings	1	2	3	37/	1	2	3

8. On a scale of high, medium, or low, how would you rate your students in terms of these characteristics?

	<u>High</u>	<u>Medium</u>	<u>Low</u>
a. eagerness to learn	1	2	3
b. ability to do the required work	1	2	3
c. behavior in class	1	2	3
d. daily attendance	1	2	3
e. respect for authority and rules	1	2	3
f. home environment	1	2	3
g. health and nutrition	1	2	3
h. getting along with other students	1	2	3
i. academic achievement	1	2	3

9. To what extent do you think schools can motivate students who do not want to learn? Do you think schools can have a great deal of influence, some influence, or not much influence motivating students?

A great deal 1
 Some 2
 Not much 3

Now, I'd like to get your reaction to some specific developments in the Pontiac Schools over the past few years.

10. How do you feel about the desegregation plan using busing?

Strongly favor 5
 Somewhat favor 4
 Neither favor nor oppose . 3
 Somewhat oppose 2
 Strongly oppose 1
 Don't know 0

11. The way things are going between blacks and whites in the schools, do you think things will be better or worse next year?

Better 1
 Worse 2
 No difference 3
 Don't know 0

12. How has the desegregation plan influenced the achievement of black students in your school--would you say the level of achievement of black students has been raised, lowered, or stayed the same as a result of the desegregation plan?

Raised 1
 Lowered 2
 Stayed the same 3
 I'm not sure 4

13. How has the desegregation plan influenced the achievement of white students in your school--would you say the level of achievement of white students has been raised, lowered, or stayed the same as a result of the desegregation plan?

Raised 1
 Lowered 2
 Stayed the same 3
 I'm not sure 4

14. How would you describe the relationships between black and white students at your school? How often do black and white students sit together in class of their own choice (ASK FOR EACH ITEM BELOW)--would you say they usually sit together, sometimes sit together, or never sit together of their own choice?

	<u>Usually</u>	<u>Sometimes</u>	<u>Never</u>
a. sit together of their own choice	1	2	3
b. choose one another as partners for class work	1	2	3
c. hang around together during free time at school	1	2	3
d. join in together on the same after-school activities	1	2	3

15. A number of federal and state programs are operating in various schools in Pontiac.

A. Which federal or state program has been most effective in improving education in your building?

NAME OF PROGRAM: _____

B. Which program would you say has been least effective?

NAME OF PROGRAM: _____

16. How much confidence do the teachers in your building have about the ability of new programs to improve education in the schools--would you say your colleagues are very skeptical, somewhat skeptical, or not skeptical at all about new programs?

Very skeptical	1
Somewhat skeptical	2
Not skeptical	3

17. What do you think is the biggest problem facing the Pontiac Public Schools today?

18. What do you think is the biggest problem for you as a teacher today?

19. Whose opinion of your work as a teacher do you consider to be most valuable? (ONE RESPONSE ONLY)

	Your own	1
If respondent gives more than one answer, ask: "Whose is the <u>single</u> most val- uable opinion?"	Your principal	2
	Other teachers in your building	3
	Other teachers not in your building	4
	Parents of your students	5
	Your students	6
	Other (SPECIFY) _____	7

20. How often do you meet socially outside of working hours with other teachers in your building--would you say often, seldom or never?

Often	1
Seldom	2
Never	3

21. How often do you meet socially with other people connected in some way with teaching--would you say often, seldom, or never?

Often	1
Seldom	2
Never	3

22. In addition to their administrative duties, some building administrators are actively involved in matters which pertain to curriculum such as the selection of textbooks or the adoption of special curriculum programs. To what extent is the administration at your school involved in the selection of textbooks and instructional materials--is your administration very involved, somewhat involved, or not involved at all? CODE IN COLUMN FOR Q.22 BELOW; THEN ASK B-E IN SAME WAY.
23. Now I'd like to find out to what extent you think the administration at your school should be involved in matters which pertain to curriculum. Do you think the administration should be very involved, somewhat involved, or not involved at all in the selection of textbooks and instructional materials? CODE IN COLUMN FOR Q.23 BELOW; THEN ASK B-E IN SAME WAY.

	Are involved				Should be involved		
	Question 22				Question 23		
	Very invol- ved	Some- what involved	Not invol- ved		Very invol- ved	Some- what involved	Not invol- ved
A. The selection of textbooks and instructional material	1	2	3	14/	1	2	3
B. The adoption of special curriculum programs	1	2	3	15/	1	2	3
C. The actual teaching of students	1	2	3	16/	1	2	3
D. The disciplining of students	1	2	3	17/	1	2	3
E. The in-service training of teachers	1	2	3	18/	1	2	3

24. How are building policy decisions usually made at your school--would you say the principal usually makes them on his own, the principal and teachers usually share equally in making the decisions, or the decisions are usually made by the teachers with the principal going along?

Principal on his own 1
 Principal and teachers share. . 2
 Usually teachers alone 3

25. How much say do you personally have in making policy decisions at your school--would you say you have a great deal of say, some say, or not much say in important decisions?

A great deal 1
Some 2
Not much 3

26. How much respect do you have for your principal professionally--a great deal, some, or not too much?

A great deal 1
Some 2
Not too much 3

27. All things considered, how satisfied are you with your present job--you say very satisfied, fairly satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied?

Very satisfied 1
Fairly satisfied 2
Somewhat dissatisfied 3
Very dissatisfied 4

28. Now I'd like to ask some questions about your background and ambitions.

Before beginning to work for the Pontiac Schools, did you have any previous teaching jobs?

Yes (ASK A & B) 1
No 2

IF YES: A. Where did you work?
B. When was that?

A. LOCATION--SCHOOL DISTRICT

B. DATES

29. Have you ever had any other full-time jobs outside the teaching field?

Yes (ASK A & B) 1
No 2

IF YES: A. What jobs were those?
B. When was that?

A. <u>TYPE OF JOB</u>	B. <u>DATES</u>
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

30. What type of work would you most like to be doing in five years?--
teaching or something different?

Teaching (ASK A) . . . 1
Something different . . (ASK B) . . . 2

IF TEACHING:

A. Do you hope to be teaching in the Pontiac School District or
in another district?

Pontiac 1
Some other _____ 2
(PLEASE SPECIFY)

IF SOMETHING DIFFERENT:

B. What is that? _____

31. What is the highest grade you completed in school?

1-3 years of college . . (Go to Q. 32) 1
Graduated from college (ASK A-C) . 2
Some graduate work, no degree . . (ASK A-D) . 3
Advanced degree(s) (ASK A-G) . 4

IF GRADUATED FROM COLLEGE OR MORE:

A. From which college or university did you graduate?

COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY: _____

B. What year was that? YEAR _____

C. What was your undergraduate major? MAJOR _____

IF GRADUATE WORK OR MORE:

D. What field were you in in graduate or professional school?

FIELD: _____

IF GRADUATE DEGREES:

E. Which graduate degree(s) do you hold:

F. From which university did you obtain it?

G. What year was that?

DEGREE	UNIVERSITY	YEAR
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

32. Since you began working full-time in teaching have you participated in any workshops or in-service training programs?

Yes (ASK A & B) 1
 No (GO TO Q.33) 2

IF YES:

A. What type of workshop or in-service training program was that?

B. What workshop or in-service training program have you found particularly helpful to you in your job?

33. Is there any type of additional training, study, or refresher course which you think would be particularly helpful to you at this point in your career?

Yes (ASK A) 1
 No 2

IF YES: What is that?

34. Have you attended any professional educational meetings or conferences which involved more than one school district in the past two years?

Yes, more than one 1
 Yes, only one 2
 No 3

35. Do you read any professional journals, that is, publications which are addressed to some academic area?

Yes, I read them regularly . . (ASK A) . . . 1
 Yes, I read them occasionally (ASK A) . . . 2
 No 3

IF REGULARLY
OR OCCASIONALLY:

A. Which journals are those?

36. Where would you say you get your best information about educational issues--from material you read, from discussion with teachers in this district or from discussion with teachers in other districts? (ONE RESPONSE ONLY) IF RESPONDENT GIVES MORE THAN ONE ANSWER, ASK FOR SINGLE BEST SOURCE.

From reading 1
 From discussion with teachers in this district 2
 From discussion with teachers in other districts 3
 Other (SPECIFY) 4

37. How much emphasis does the Pontiac Education Association put upon the following things--would you say they put too much emphasis, not enough emphasis, or just about the right amount of emphasis?

	<u>Too much</u>	<u>Not enough</u>	<u>About right</u>
a. raising salaries and improving fringe benefits?	1	2	3
b. helping members become better teachers?	1	2	3
c. improving working conditions?	1	2	3
d. protecting job security?	1	2	3
e. improving the quality of education for children?	1	2	3

38. In your opinion, can the P.E.A. deal effectively both with improving the quality of education and with gaining economic benefits for teachers?

Yes 1
 No . . . (ASK A) . . . 2

IF NO: Which is more important for the P.E.A. to pursue:

Quality of education . 1
 Economic benefits . . . 2

39. Do you belong to any other organizations or associations that are primarily for people in the teaching field?

Yes (ASK A & B) 1
 No 2

IF YES:

- A. Which ones? RECORD UNDER COLUMN A BELOW. (Any others?)
- B. In which of these do you attend meetings, serve on committees, or serve as an officer? CODE YES IN COLUMN B FOR EACH ORGANIZATION FOR WHICH RESPONDENT ATTENDS MEETINGS, SERVES ON COMMITTEES, OR SERVES AS AN OFFICER. OTHERWISE CODE NO.

A. NAME OF ORGANIZATION	B. ACTIVE	
	YES	NO
1.	1	2
2.	1	2
3.	1	2
4.	1	2
5.	1	2

RECORD NUMBER ORGANIZATIONS
 MENTIONED: _____

40. Do you belong to any organizations or associations that are primarily people in your neighborhood or the community where you live?

Yes, a couple 1
 Yes, one 2
 No, none 3

41. What is your age? AGE _____

42. How old were you when you first decided to enter the teaching field?

AGE _____

43. What factors influenced you to go into teaching as a career?

44. Where were you born?

STATE IN U.S. OR COUNTRY: _____

45. Were either of your parents in the teaching field?

Yes, both	1
Yes, father	2
Yes, mother	3
No	4

46. How far did your father go in school?

Some elementary school	1
8th grade only	2
Some high school	3
Completed high school	4
Some college	5
Graduated from college or more	6

47. RECORD RESPONDENT'S SEX

Male	1
Female	2

48. RECORD RESPONDENT'S RACE (BY OBSERVATION)

White	1
Black	2
Other	3

CONCLUDE WITH THANKS.

Demographic Characteristics of Respondents
of 1975 Pontiac Teacher Study

In May 1975, the Research and Evaluation Department of Pontiac Schools prepared a teacher survey concerning education and teaching in Pontiac (Pontiac Teacher Study). A random sample of teachers (175) were interviewed by representatives of Market Opinion Research.

Tables 63, 64, 65, and 66 indicate the gender, certification, age of the respondents, and length of service of the teachers. Almost twice as many female as male teachers were interviewed. Approximately the same number of elementary as secondary teachers were involved in the survey.

Table 63.--Gender of teachers interviewed for 1975 Pontiac Teacher Study (n=175).

Sex	Percent
Female	65.1
Male	34.9

Table 64.--Certification of respondents in 1975 study (n=175).

Certification	Percent
Elementary	47.4
Secondary	45.7
Other	6.9

Table 65.--Age of teachers in 1975 Teacher Study (n=175).

Age Group	Percent
20-39	25.2
30-39	30.8
40-49	26.3
50+	17.7

Table 66.--Length of service of teachers in 1975 study (n=175).

Years of Service	Percent
1- 5	29.6
6-10	34.5
11-15	17.7
16-20	10.3
21-25	6.3
26+	1.7

Responses to Selected Questions From
1975 Pontiac Teacher Study

Table 67.--Rank Pontiac Schools--1975 Teacher Study.

	Low	Medium	High
Present (n=173)	5.8%	66.5%	27.7%
Five years ago (n=162)	12.3	53.1	34.6
Five years from now (n=166)	11.4	43.4	45.2

Table 68.--Rank Pontiac Schools--1975 Teacher Study (elementary teachers).

	Low	Medium	High
Present (n=82)	6.1%	56.1%	37.8%
Five years ago (n=74)	10.8	62.2	27.0
Five years from now (n=78)	7.7	33.3	59.0

Table 69.--Rank Pontiac Schools--1975 Teacher Study (secondary teachers).

	Low	Medium	High
Present (n=79)	6.3%	74.7%	19.0%
Five years ago (n=78)	12.8	42.3	44.9
Five years from now (n=76)	15.8	52.6	31.6

Table 70.--Student characteristics--1975 Teacher Study.

"Rate students on the following characteristics."

	Low	Medium	High
Eagerness to learn (n=171)	17.5%	55.0%	27.5%
Ability to do required work (n=172)	24.4	61.0	14.5
Behavior in class (n=173)	13.3	63.0	23.7

Table 71.--Student motivation--1975 Teacher Study (n=175).

"To what extent can schools motivate students who do not want to learn?"

A Great Deal	Some	Not Much
44.6%	43.4%	12.0%

Table 72.--Building policy decisions--1975 Teacher Study (n=171).

"How are building policy decisions made?"

Principal alone	24.6%
Principal/teachers	73.1
Teachers alone	2.3

Table 73.--Respect for principal--1975 Teacher Study (n=171).

"How much respect do you have for your principal professionally?"

A Great Deal	Some	Not Much
60.2%	28.1%	11.1%

Table 74.--Job satisfaction--1975 Teacher Study.

"How satisfied are you with your job?"

	Total (n=163)	Elementary (n=83)	Secondary (n=80)
Very satisfied	49.7%	60.2%	45.0%
Fairly satisfied	34.9	30.2	35.0
Somewhat dissatisfied	13.1	8.4	16.3
Very dissatisfied	2.3	1.2	3.7

Table 75.--Union issues--1975 Teacher Study.

"How much emphasis does the Pontiac Education Association place on the following areas?"

	Too Much	Not Enough	About Right
Improving working conditions (n=172)	0 %	32.6%	67.4%
Protecting job security (n=172)	7.0	15.1	77.9
Improving the quality of education for children (n=169)	.6	56.2	43.2

Comparisons Between Selected Questions in the 1975 Pontiac Teacher Study and the 1982 Teacher Questionnaire

Table 76.--Gender and certification of 1975 and 1982 respondents.

	1975 Study	1982 Questionnaire
Female teachers	65.1%	61.6%
Male teachers	34.9	38.4
Elementary teachers	47.4	52.8
Secondary teachers	45.7	47.2

Table 77.--Age of 1975 and 1982 respondents.

Age Group	1975 Study	1982 Questionnaire
20-29	26.2%	4.4%
30-39	30.8	32.1
40-49	26.3	39.0
50+	17.7	24.5

Table 78.--Number of years of teaching--1975 and 1982 respondents.

Years of Teaching	1975 Study	1982 Questionnaire
1- 5	29.6%	.6%
6-10	34.5	17.0
11-15	17.7	30.0
16-20	10.3	20.8
21-25	6.3	17.7
26+	1.7	13.9

Table 79.--Rank Pontiac Schools--1975 and 1982 Responses.

"Rank Pontiac Schools on a ten-point (1-10) scale."

	1975 Study	1982 Questionnaire
<u>Present</u>		
Low	5.8%	22.2%
Medium	66.5	68.3
High	27.7	9.5
<u>Five years ago</u>		
Low	12.3	8.3
Medium	53.1	59.9
High	34.6	31.7
<u>Five years from now</u>		
Low	11.4	40.6
Medium	43.4	46.1
High	45.2	13.3

Table 80.--Rank Pontiac Schools--1975 and 1982 responses
(elementary teachers).

	1975 Study	1982 Questionnaire
<u>Present</u>		
Low	6.1%	15.7%
Medium	56.1	71.1
High	37.8	13.2
<u>Five years ago</u>		
Low	10.0	7.2
Medium	62.2	53.0
High	27.0	39.0
<u>Five years from now</u>		
Low	7.7	34.9
Medium	33.3	45.8
High	59.0	19.3

Table 81.--Rank Pontiac Schools--1975 and 1982 responses
(secondary teachers).

	1975 Study	1982 Questionnaire
<u>Present</u>		
Low	6.3%	28.0%
Medium	74.7	65.3
High	19.0	5.3
<u>Five years ago</u>		
Low	12.8	9.3
Medium	42.3	68.0
High	44.9	22.7
<u>Five years from now</u>		
Low	15.7	46.7
Medium	52.6	46.7
High	31.6	6.6

Table 82.--Student characteristics--1975 and 1982 responses.

"How would you rate the students in terms of the following characteristics?"

	1975 Study	1982 Questionnaire
<u>Eagerness to learn</u>		
Low	17.5%	43.7%
Medium	55.0	41.7
High	27.5	14.6
<u>Ability to do required work</u>		
Low	24.4	38.6
Medium	61.0	53.2
High	14.5	8.2
<u>Behavior in class</u>		
Low	13.3	28.5
Medium	63.0	63.9
High	23.7	7.6

Table 83.--Building decisions--1975 and 1982 responses.

"How are decisions made in your building?"

	1975 Study	1982 Questionnaire
Principal alone	24.6%	38.0%
Principal/teachers	73.1	60.1
Teachers alone	2.3	1.9

Table 84.--Respect for principal--1975 responses.

"How much respect do you have for your principal professionally?"

A Great Deal	Some	Not Much
60.2%	28.7%	11.1%

Table 85.--Rate principal--1982 responses.

"How would you rate your principal in terms of being a good role model and instructional leader?"

Very effective	15.8%
Effective	43.7%
Not effective	27.2%
Ineffective	13.3%

Table 86.--Job satisfaction--1975 and 1982 responses.

"How satisfied are you with your present job?"

	1975 Study	1982 Questionnaire
Very satisfied	49.7%	21.1%
Fairly satisfied	34.9	35.9
Somewhat dissatisfied	13.1	28.8
Very dissatisfied	2.3	14.2

Table 87.--Union goals--1975 and 1982 responses.

"How much emphasis does the Pontiac Education Association place on the following items?"

	1975 Study	1982 Questionnaire
<u>Improving working conditions</u>		
Too much	0 %	1.9%
Not enough	32.6	56.4
About right	67.4	41.7
<u>Protecting job security</u>		
Too much	7.0	7.0
Not enough	15.1	50.0
About right	77.9	43.0

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