

A COMPARISON OF TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF
CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT IN SELECTED DISTRICTS
WITH AND WITHOUT CURRICULUM COUNCILS

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This is to certify that the

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ABSTRACT

A COMPARISON OF TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT IN SELECTED DISTRICTS WITH AND WITHOUT CURRICULUM COUNCILS

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The purpose of this study was to ascertain teachers' perceptions of their roles in curriculum development and teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of curriculum councils. Comparisons were drawn between responses from teachers in districts with curriculum councils designated in their teacher-school board contracts and teachers in districts without curriculum councils designated in contracts.

Teachers in the state of Michigan have legally been able to bargain collectively with school boards since 1965 when Public Act 379 was enacted by the state legislature. One of the goals of the Michigan Education Association has been to include a provision in all contracts for a curriculum council to provide for effective teacher participation in curriculum development. An increasing number of districts in Michigan have included provision for a curriculum council in their contracts. Little research has been done to determine the effectiveness of the councils or teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of the council.

A questionnaire was developed that asked for checked responses with one open-ended question permitting respondents to express their opinions on teacher involvement in curriculum development. The survey was mailed to 3,017 teacher members of the Michigan Education Association in the five county area designated as Region 8. Questionnaires were coded

to indicate those sent to teachers in districts with curriculum councils and those without curriculum councils designated in the contracts.

The response was 34.31% from teachers in districts without councils and 38.09% from teachers in districts with curriculum councils designated in the contract. Both groups of teachers were comparable in that they were chiefly females with 1-5 years of teaching experience, and about equally divided between elementary and secondary teachers.

Data were recorded on computer cards, one card for each respondent, and frequencies and percentages were computed and recorded in tabular form to answer the following questions:

1. Comparing districts with and without curriculum councils provided for in the contract, what has occurred concerning:
 - a. curriculum changes?
 - b. teacher involvement in curriculum planning?
 - c. K-12 curriculum planning?
 - d. released time and/or other compensations for curriculum development?
2. Are teachers in districts with curriculum councils as compared with those districts without curriculum councils:
 - a. more likely to feel curriculum development is their responsibility?
 - b. more actively involved in education association work?
 - c. more likely to feel they have a responsibility to implement curriculum change?
 - d. more inclined to believe that curriculum changes have occurred in their districts?

Lois Redmond

Teachers from districts with councils designated in the contracts perceived that the curriculum council was more involved in a study of the total school curriculum, than were districts without curriculum councils.

Teachers from districts without curriculum councils believed more changes had occurred in various subject areas, and in other organizational patterns having implications for curriculum, such as team teaching and non-grading.

Most teachers from both groups believed curriculum councils should be provided in the contracts and that teachers should have more influence in curriculum development. Both groups of teachers felt they were responsible for the implementation of a curricular change once it had been decided upon. Curriculum changes were viewed as moderately effective and valuable by teachers from districts with and without curriculum councils designated in the contracts. Both groups perceived that administrators seemed to have more influence in curriculum development than did teachers.

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CHAPTER I - INTRODUCTION

Since the launching of Sputnik in 1957, more attention has probably been focused on education and the public schools than at any previous period in the history of our country. People who have no direct relationship to the public schools have both praised and condemned them. Educators and philanthropic foundations have engaged in and financed extensive studies of our educational system. The federal government has expended money for education and specialized educational programs. National institutions have been established to examine and develop curriculum in various subjects. The earlier curriculum revisions were in science and mathematics, representing an attempt to meet increased scientific and technological advances. In the wake of the changes in the science and mathematics curricula, other curricular studies and changes were explored and instituted. During this period of increased concern about school curricula more people have become involved in curriculum change, including students and teachers.

Changes have occurred in the roles of the curriculum worker as well as the classroom teacher with respect to terms of responsibility for curriculum development. In some of the literature the local administrator has been presented as the chief change agent in curriculum; in others it is the curriculum worker, or national foundations, or textbook companies, or universities or other pressure groups. Ultimately, of course, any curricular changes are the responsibility of the superintendent and board.

Teachers have been traditionally considered technicians in the classroom, and in many school districts have not been directly involved in the process of curriculum development and change. Once a curricular change has been approved and it is to be implemented, the classroom teacher has the real authority in its implementation. What happens in a classroom behind the closed door may be not at all what has been the desired curricular change.

Teachers have served on various committees related to curriculum areas such as textbook selection committees. However, teachers have not been recognized as the changers of the curriculum. Curriculum workers and administrators do realize that curriculum changes are dependent upon the classroom teacher; however, this opinion is relatively recent and not universal.

The report of the addresses of the 21st A.S.C.D. Conference in March 1966 indicates teachers were not considered the decision makers in curriculum change.¹ Lippett spoke of the "change agent" in curriculum innovation, but indicated the change agent should be "supportive" of and an aid to the teacher. Suggestions were made for a coordinating committee for curriculum development. This committee was to consist of college based personnel, the superintendent of instruction, the educational research coordinator, a director of manpower development for a local industry, a creative program director, curriculum coordinators, principals, students, and "several teachers".

Preparation of teachers frequently involves psychology and child

1. _____ "Curriculum Change: Direction and Process," Association For Supervision and Curriculum Development, p. 23.

development, methods, history and philosophy of education, and courses in the student's major and minor fields of study, but only a brief introduction to curriculum or curriculum development. The first year in the classroom most teachers are deeply involved in the teaching process and the "housekeeping" involved in classroom operation. Now before too many years of teaching elapse, teachers are involved in some kind of curriculum development, whether it is textbook selection, serving on subject matter or grade level committees, building committees, in-service days, or actual involvement in a curriculum committee. "Given adequate opportunity to study new developments and new materials, the teacher can become a helpful participant in selecting and even in originating change proposals."²

Teachers are becoming more aware of their influence and responsibility in curriculum change. Other educators have come to recognize teachers as being important to curriculum change. Verduin cites the values from involvement of the classroom teacher in curriculum development. He states that "the cooperative approach" as opposed to the "expert approach" is much more productive for development and change in curricular areas.³ Whether teachers are prepared or not for assumption of this role and these responsibilities, teachers are being actively involved in areas of education previously reserved for administrators, through new laws for collective bargaining for public employees.

Lieberman and Moskow mark the beginning of collective negotiations

2. William M. Alexander, "Changing Curriculum Content," *Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development*, p. 16.

3. John M. Verduin, Jr., Cooperative Curriculum Improvement, p. 18.

in public schools in 1960. At that time the United Federation of Teachers began an active movement in New York for collective negotiations. Prior to 1965 Wisconsin was the only state that had enacted a law pertaining to collective negotiations in education. By 1965 nine states had had bills passed in both legislative houses. Six of these bills were signed into law, including the Michigan law. Since then several other states have also enacted negotiation laws for educators.

Prior to and early in the 1965 legislative session in Michigan, the Michigan Education Association had proposed a bill that called for professional negotiations. The bill was to be a first step toward professionalization of teachers. Following their success in acquiring state-wide mandatory tenure, the Association hoped to succeed in professional negotiations with the passage of a bill permitting teachers to organize and negotiate with school boards through a professional framework, not labor negotiation procedures. Legislators were not receptive to the form of the bill as introduced by Francis Beedon, and instead proposed changes in the Hutcheson Act. The changes permitted public employees, including teachers, to bargain collectively. The bill, when enacted, became known as Public Act 379. Section II of the law states:

Representatives designated or selected for purposes of collective bargaining by the majority of the public employees in a unit appropriate for such purposes, shall be the exclusive representative of all the public employees in such unit for the purposes of collective bargaining in respect to rates of pay, wages, hours of employment, or the conditions of employment, and shall be so recognized by the public employer.

Were teachers prepared and ready to accept these additional responsibilities?

Collective bargaining, professional negotiations, or collective negotiations has created conditions in Michigan in which teachers are learning to cope with a situation and activity previously reserved for the labor unions. Even the term "collective bargaining" has not been acceptable to everyone, with local districts of the Michigan Education Association preferring to refer to the negotiations as "professional negotiations"--a less unionized expression than collective bargaining. Early contracts reflected teacher bargainer's point of view concerning "conditions of employment". The major portion of the contracts had one emphasis--salaries. As negotiators became more sophisticated, other items were negotiated into the contracts.

In Michigan, all items are negotiable, which means curriculum or any other conditions of employment are negotiable. The commission on Instruction of the Michigan Education Association has establishment of curriculum councils in contracts as one of its goals.⁴

A number of school districts now have curriculum councils, some designated in the contract and others are provided for in the personnel or administrative policies. Teachers themselves may not be aware that one of the "conditions of employment" that can be negotiated into a contract is the procedure by which change in curriculum can occur. One of these procedures is the curriculum council. In the contracts in some districts no mention is made of, or provision made for, teacher involvement in curriculum development either in the contract or in board policy. Teachers need to become and are becoming more cognizant of their role in determining policy changes and have adopted decision making positions. The curriculum council is an avenue for teachers to be involved in

⁴ "Commission Reports," Michigan Education Journal, May, 1969, p. 57; May, 1968, p. 62.

curriculum development and curriculum decisions.

Some school districts in Michigan have led the way in establishment of curriculum councils and involvement of teachers in curriculum change through the vehicle of the curriculum council. One such district is the Kentwood district near Grand Rapids. Kentwood board policy states:

ARTICLE 6 - INSTRUCTION
Organizational Plan

CURRICULUM COUNCIL

The Board of Education, to bring about desirable changes in teaching methods, techniques, class composition, curriculum and any other phase of the instructional program, establishes a professional staff Curriculum Council and Curriculum Study Committees. This Council is to provide effective consultation with, and assistance to, the Board to make needed improvements in the instructional program which it, the Council, deems feasible.⁵

Also the contract legally establishes the process for curricular change.

ARTICLE 12

All curriculum changes shall originate in the appropriate curriculum committee (as defined in the handbook for professional staff) which will present a recommendation with rationale to the curriculum coordinating council made up of the faculty chairmen of the curriculum committees and administrative officers. Those recommendations that are approved by the coordinating council shall be submitted to the board of education for consideration and action.⁶

Contracts throughout the state that provide for a curriculum council state the provision in similar terms. Some contracts such as the one from Grosse Pointe become very specific in delineating curricular items that are to be considered, but generally the contract will merely make provision for a curriculum council, with teachers assuming a major

5. _____ Kentwood Board Policy, p. 1.

6. _____ Kentwood Contract, p. 6.

responsibility in curriculum development.

Statement of the Problem

This study seeks to ascertain whether districts with curriculum councils designated in the contracts have more curriculum changes than districts without curriculum councils in the contract; and if teachers in these districts perceive their roles in curriculum development differently than teachers in districts without councils. A further problem is to determine what the curricular changes are and if the changes are K-12 in nature. Whether teachers perceive curriculum development as their responsibility is an additional problem.

Questions to be Answered

Data will be analyzed using frequencies and percents to seek to answer the following questions:

1. Comparing districts with and without curriculum councils provided for in the contract, what has occurred concerning:
 - a. curriculum changes?
 - b. teacher involvement in curriculum planning?
 - c. K-12 curriculum planning?
 - d. released time and/or other compensations for curriculum development?
2. Are a greater percent of teachers in districts with curriculum councils as compared with those districts without curriculum councils:
 - a. more likely to feel curriculum development is their responsibility?
 - b. more actively involved in education association work?
 - c. more likely to feel they have a responsibility to implement

curriculum change?

- d. more inclined to believe that curriculum changes have occurred in their districts?

Need for the Study

Opinions vary within the teaching profession between those who question whether any items of curriculum are negotiable to a few who would probably advocate all curricular changes and development should be negotiated. Currently Michigan teachers in the Michigan Education Association are involved in attempts to secure a Professional Practices Act and obtain recognition of education as a profession. According to Dr. Dan Lortie from the University of Chicago, one of the indications, for education, of professional autonomy, is in the control of what is taught, how, and by whom.⁷ One of the means to help obtain professional autonomy then could be through teacher involvement in curriculum development through the curriculum council.

This study will attempt to ascertain whether teachers believe the curriculum councils already in the contracts are effective, what curriculum changes have occurred, or if teachers believe curriculum changes can be effected without the council.

The Michigan Education Association in cooperation with the National Education Association had a study published in 1968 that surveyed 1,066

⁷. Dan C. Lortie, "Can Teaching Move from Semi-Professional to Professional Standing?" N.E.A.-M.E.A. pamphlet, pp. 2-5.

teachers in Michigan. Teachers were asked to respond to questions related to curriculum involvement of the teacher. However, the study did not reveal the kinds of changes that had occurred in curriculum, whether a curriculum council was involved, nor other areas which the present study seeks to discover.

The current study should provide information valuable to the teacher negotiators, to curriculum directors, to administrators, to the Michigan Education Association, and to teacher preparation institutions. This study should provide information on the kinds of curriculum changes, subject matter or organizational, that teachers perceive have occurred in their districts. The effectiveness of the curriculum council and of the curriculum changes made in the perception of teachers, would be an indication whether the Michigan Education Association Commission on Instruction and teacher negotiators should consider providing for curriculum councils in the contracts. If teachers perceive that curriculum changes should be planned K-12, and that curriculum councils do plan K-12, then this may be an additional reason that curriculum councils be negotiated into contracts. Also if all teachers believe a curriculum council should be provided for in the contract and this is a means of teacher involvement, then effort should be made for such provisions.

If teachers believe they should have an influence in curriculum development and teachers are involved, then teacher preparation institutions need to provide for the preparation of teachers to assume these roles.

No attempt was made in this study to evaluate the effectiveness of the curriculum changes of the council in any other way than the teachers' perception.

Definition of Terms

1. Curriculum Council: A group of teachers, administrators, and curriculum workers charged with the responsibility to study, plan, implement, and evaluate curriculum improvement.

2. Curriculum: "All of the experiences of children for which the school should accept responsibility."⁸

3. Curriculum Committee: A group of educators charged with the responsibility for study and recommendations for curriculum development in certain subject areas, grade levels, or topics.

4. Curriculum worker: One who has the responsibility for leadership in curriculum as curriculum director, curriculum supervisor, curriculum consultant, director of instruction, etc., shall be referred to as a curriculum worker.⁹

5. Collective negotiations: "the performance of the mutual obligation of the employer and the representative of the employees to meet at reasonable times and confer in good faith with respect to wages, hours, and other terms and conditions of employment, or the negotiation of any agreement, or any question arising there under, and the execution of a written contract incorporating any agreement reached if requested by either party, but such obligation does not compel either party to agree to a proposal or require the making of any concession."¹⁰

8. Albert Oliver, Curriculum Improvement. A Guide to Problems, Principles, and Procedures, p. 12.

9. William F. Young, "The Supervisor: New Demands-New Dimensions," An Address delivered before the Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development, p. 11-12.

10. Myron Lieberman, The Future of Public Education, p. 160.

The terms professional negotiations, collective negotiations, and collective bargaining are now used interchangeably with the definition for all three terms being similar to the one above. The term "collective negotiations" will be used in this study except where other terms are part of direct quotations.

Scope and Limitation of the Study

Classroom teachers in Region 8 who are members of the Michigan Education Association were surveyed. Region 8 consists of Ingham, Eaton, Livingston, Shiawassee, and Clinton counties. Cities or districts within the region range in size from urban to small rural districts. Only teachers who were Michigan Education Association members were surveyed. There are no Federation districts in Region 8 at the present time. Figures indicate that 90-95% of the teachers in Region 8 are association members.¹¹

This study will be delimited by excluding Lansing from the list of districts surveyed. Lansing has an active curriculum council, and had one prior to Public Act 379; however, the 1968-1969 Lansing contract did not make provisions for the council. The districts with curriculum councils are fewer in number than those without councils designated in the contract, but using percents of responses provides a comparable sample. The inclusion of Lansing in the study would change the balance of teachers and there is not another district of comparable size with a council designated in the contract in Region 8. Although there are fewer districts with curriculum councils, they are of comparable size to those in the group without. Some of the districts may have what they refer to as a curriculum council operating in the district; however this

11. Accuracy in number of teachers and of Michigan Education Association membership is difficult to substantiate because of problems in maintaining strict account.

study specifically makes comparisons only between those districts having and not having curriculum councils designated in the contracts.

For many years the author of this study has been concerned that teachers become actively involved in curriculum planning for change and development. Experience has been that teachers who are not a part of the planning often are negative about any proposed change, refuse to implement the change, or find a change resulting in frustration for the teacher who may not know or understand what is expected.

Region 8 teachers were also selected as the source of data because the present author has been actively involved in education association activities for many years, and most recently has had leadership roles in Region 8 and as a teacher in the region.

Summary

With the change in Michigan law, teachers were given the right to bargain collectively with their school boards. One of the areas considered in bargaining is curriculum and curriculum councils. Teachers are assuming new roles as decision makers in curriculum through negotiations and their responsibilities as members of curriculum councils. This study seeks to ascertain the extent of teacher involvement in curriculum development and the effectiveness of that involvement and of the curriculum councils in Region 8.

Overview of the Study

Chapter I presented an introduction to the study, the limitations and need for the study. A review of the related literature will follow in Chapter II. The design methodology of the study will be in Chapter III, with an analysis of the data in Chapter IV. The final chapter will contain a summary of the findings of the study, recommendations and conclusions.

CHAPTER II - REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The literature is replete with information pertaining to curriculum development and curriculum change. Volumes have been filled concerning changes or developments in all the subject areas, grade levels, and with various innovative practices such as the non-graded school, flexible scheduling, multi-age grouping, team teaching, interdisciplinary studies, and various other practices. Books and articles have been written too on the roles of the superintendent, the principal and the curriculum worker. Much has been said about the roles and responsibilities of school boards, the public in general, and pressure groups outside the immediate realm of the educational scene. Least has been said about the role and responsibility of the classroom teacher, although most writers indicate the classroom teacher is the decisive figure in curriculum change. The classroom teacher's role in curriculum development is only recently becoming a topic of concern, particularly since the advent of collective negotiations in the public schools across the United States.

In many discussions on curriculum change, the group process is extolled as the most effective means to bring about change. Teachers are included in the group process, but emphasis in considerable literature is on the responsibilities of the principal, the administrator, and the curriculum specialist, and the various means curriculum development occurs and change can be initiated also receives much attention. "Group study is an essential ingredient of optimum curriculum improvement."¹ Other

1. Vernon Anderson, Principles and Procedures of Curriculum Improvement, p. 26.

writers not only discuss the group process, but frequently delineate those who should be involved in it.

First-rate curriculum development demands the coordination of a vast array of resources: subject matter specialists, experienced teachers, educationists with a broad understanding of schools, psychologists, programmers, film makers, publishers, and skilled managers to get the most out of this talent.²

Literature pertaining to the group process or group dynamics, of course, is relevant to the operation and function of curriculum councils. This study, however, was not designed to explore group dynamics, but only to survey teachers' perceptions of the curriculum development in their districts.

The roles of administrators and other external forces need to be mentioned in this discussion prior to a review of the emerging role of the classroom teacher as a developer or change agent in curriculum planning. Writers have outlined clearly the roles and responsibilities of principals, supervisors, superintendents, and other administrative personnel in curriculum change.

The view that the greatest power to change and improve curriculum lies in the hands of the local administrator has been expressed by a number of writers. MacKenzie and Corey in referring to the "status or official leader" names the principal, superintendent, and the curriculum coordinator as the instructional leaders.³ The principal has probably been designated most frequently as the curriculum leader.

I believe many people must contribute their talents if a school is to be successful. But pre-eminent among them, I believe, is a principal who knows his place, who knows what is going on in every field, who involves himself actually in the continuing work of developing curriculum in his school. . .

2. John Goodlad, School Curriculum and the Individual, p. 169.

3. Gordon MacKenzie and Stephen Corey, Instructional Leadership, p. 24.

4. Harry Walen, "A Principal's Role in Curriculum Development", The Bulletin of N.A.S.S.P., p. 44.

Kent Myers discusses a curriculum advisory committee consisting of the principal, counselor, curriculum coordinator, and three administrators.⁵ Note that teachers are not involved in the committee's work; however, the article stated that the faculty was to submit recommendations to the committee for consideration. Alice Miel stated that teaching was "closely related" to curriculum planning, but that it was not really a teaching function.⁶

Other groups than the teacher have had direct influence on curriculum change. Shifts have occurred, however, in these external forces and their influence in curriculum change and development. Parent Teacher Associations, tax payer groups, Chambers of Commerce and the American Legion have given way to other groups that have no legal authority to make curriculum changes. Occasionally one public person can bring about some changes in the curriculum. The emerging influence in the 1970's in curriculum change may be the classroom teacher.

The Role of the Teacher in Curriculum Change

The 1965 Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development year-book recognizes that changing curriculum involves changing those people who are directly related to the learning experience of the children---the teacher.⁷ In 1929 John Dewey stated "The contributions that might come from classroom teachers are . . . an almost unworkable mine."⁸ Blackman says "involvement of the professional staff of a school in effecting change

5. Kent Myers, "Administering the Curriculum," Clearing House, p. 147.

6. Alice Miel, "Curriculum Design and Materials," Childhood Education, p. 44.

7. _____, "Role of the Supervisor and Curriculum Director in a Climate of Change", Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development Yearbook 1965, p. 23.

8. Albert Oliver, Curriculum Improvement, p. 53.

is likely to produce satisfactory results because those involved will have an opportunity to acquire new ideas and a new perspective to contribute to their own development."⁹ Anderson says, "Group study is an essential ingredient of optimum curriculum improvement."¹⁰ By statements such as these, one should not assume curriculum changes are only those brought about by the teacher closing the classroom door and teaching whatever and however he or she believes without regard for an overall curriculum plan.

The belief that teachers are the experts and are on the scene of action in the classroom is usually cited as the reason to have teachers become more a part of the decision-making process in curriculum change. Teachers are finally the ones who are responsible for implementation of any change.

According to George Beauchamp four different groups of people have been involved in decisions in curriculum: "(1) specialized personnel, (2) representative groups composed of specialized personnel and some classroom teachers, (3) all professional personnel, and (4) all professional personnel plus representative lay citizens."¹¹

The involvement of specialized personnel and representative classroom teachers constitutes an extension of the use of specialized personnel. Such involvement assumes that the combination of specialized personnel and representative teacher groups will improve the effectiveness of curriculum decision making. Presumably, it will be improved because of the recency of experience of the teachers in classrooms and because teachers will be able to exert leadership in implementation when the planning is completed.¹²

9. Charles A. Blackman, "An Effective Basis for Curriculum Improvement", Michigan Journal of Secondary Education, p. 108.

10. Vernon Anderson, Curriculum Improvement, p. 65.

11. George Beauchamp, Curriculum Theory, p. 118.

12. Ibid., p. 119.

Cay found that if the teacher does not feel included in curriculum planning, a barrier to curriculum improvement has been raised.¹³ He further states that "curriculum building usually begins in the classroom."¹⁴

Barriers that exist in curriculum improvement as it relates to teachers have been isolated.

- a. The teacher needs to be included in planning and policy making.
- b. The principal needs to consult the teachers before making decisions.
- c. The teacher needs to feel other teachers are supportive in curriculum change.
- d. The teacher needs to feel accepted professionally and socially.
- e. The teacher needs to interest pupils in planning.
- f. The teacher needs to see changed behavior in the pupils.
- g. The teacher needs to know goals and practices in connection with pupils.
- h. Parents need to let the teacher know they are interested.¹⁵

Teachers perceive other barriers, too, in addition to lack of time, lack of instructional materials and money, and lack of community interest and support. Barriers as perceived by teachers are unprofessional conduct of teacher groups, suggestions are from the top administrators not from the teachers; teachers want grade level groups for study; the administration never clearly defines limits; and the teacher is suspicious of the motives of consultants and administration.¹⁶ MacKenzie and Corey also cite the negative attitude of teachers toward curriculum change when the

13. Donald Cay, Curriculum: Design for Learning, p. 43.

14. Ibid., p. 52.

15. Ibid., pp. 61-62.

16. Ibid., p. 142.

proposals for curriculum study come from the administration.¹⁷

Leese, et al., discuss the modern role of the teacher. They state that the modern teacher:

1. must have imagination and ingenuity in the classroom,
2. finds subject centered teaching inadequate,
3. knows there is real learning only when there is a purpose,
4. understands real professionalism,
5. has a broader responsibility in the function of the school,
6. has confidence in his own ability to act independently,
7. has a healthy attitude toward specialists,
8. has an open mind for challenge.¹⁸

In order to function effectively in a group situation and affect change, Leese et al. cite a number of characteristics teachers ought to have as:

1. Initiative, self-motivation, drive
2. Responsive to opportunities to learn, to self evaluate, to participate
3. Alert to educational trends and issues
4. Able and willing to experiment sensibly
5. Self control, and interactive skill
6. Widely trained, informed in other areas than their subject field, and in research on learning
7. Independent and self directed
8. Emotionally stable and mentally healthy 19

Preparing teachers to develop these characteristics in itself would be a major task for the teacher preparation institutions without the charge of preparing teachers in subject area fields or for various grade level teaching.

17. Gordon MacKenzie and Stephen Corey, Educational Leadership, p. 83.

18. Joseph Leese, Kenneth Frasure, Mauritz Johnson, The Teacher in Curriculum Making, p. 64.

19. Ibid., p. 75.

Not all educational leaders or writers believe that teachers do have a role in curriculum development however, or that if they have a role it is limited to classroom decisions, not overall school district decisions. Statements such as ". . . any areas he (the teacher) makes decisions are given to him and not inherent in his role as teacher"²⁰ indicate that the teacher really doesn't make many decisions, or that "areas for teacher decision making are shrinking."²¹ Another statement also indicates that the teacher "selects tactics within the classroom for the pupils," but is really "carrying out judgments that have been made for him from outside."²²

Whether teacher participation in curriculum development is recognized as necessary to curriculum change or not, in Michigan and other states as well, teachers are assuming leadership roles in curriculum. In 1964 Betchkel said "Teachers are struggling for higher salaries, reduction of class size, duty free lunch periods, relief from other non professional chores, fringe benefits, and grievance procedures." Now he indicates their interests and concerns have expanded to other areas including curriculum revision.²³ Curriculum change becomes teacher re-education; and teachers will change by seeing and accepting for themselves the need for change, not by administrative edict.²⁴

Collective Negotiations

Legal negotiations for public school teachers is a relatively recent phenomenon. Lieberman and Moskow state that the beginning of negotiations

20. Harry Passow, Curriculum Crossroads, p. 43.

21. Ibid., p. 99.

22. Ibid., p. 48.

23. Charles Benson and Lester Dunn, "Employment Practices and Working Conditions," Review of Educational Research, p. 277.

24. William C. Jordan, "Emerging Craft of the Teaching Profession," Clearing House, p. 236.

for teachers was in 1960.²⁵ Teachers, on an informal basis, had discussed through their educational associations salaries for each ensuing year. Boards and superintendents in many districts listened to the teachers while others paid them no heed. Regardless of the situation, boards usually established salary schedules without the consent of the teachers. If teachers did not like what they were given as salaries for the ensuing year, their only recourse would be to find a position in another district where salaries were commensurate with their expectations. In 1952 the N.E.A. Research Division asked superintendents if no group was recognized for collective negotiations in their districts, what were the reasons that none had been so recognized. In answer, 94% of the superintendents gave as a reason that neither the teachers nor the administrators deemed such a group necessary.²⁶ Although collective negotiations in labor has a long history in the United States, the first collective action in public education along the lines of labor negotiations created considerable consternation in educational circles.

Until recently local and state education associations collected small amounts of dues from members, and frequently had the reputation of being purely social groups to sponsor teas and retirement parties. National Education Association in 1958-1959 showed that 64% of the local associations had dues of less than \$4 per year. Only 6.7% of the education associations had full or part-time staff members and 77.3% of the associations spent less than \$1,000 a year. Two or less communications in writing were sent to school authorities in a year, and 93.5% of the associations

25. Myron Lieberman and Michael Moskow, Collective Negotiations, p. 35.

26. Ibid., p. 57.

received two or less communications from school authorities.²⁷ Conditions changed in what appeared to be a rapid succession of events and legal enactments.

However, bargaining by employees has been a part of American life for many years and current collective negotiations for public school teachers has its roots in the various labor negotiation events that have occurred in the United States.

Lieberman and Moskow detail early legal action relative to unions and negotiations.²⁸ In 1806 in the Philadelphia-Cordwainers case, it was declared illegal for any concerted group action for higher wages. In 1842 the "doctrine of criminal conspiracy" was ended with the Commonwealth versus Hunt case. Unions were no longer considered "conspiracies." When the Sherman Anti-Trust Act was passed in 1890 to limit and regulate the effects of business combinations, which were considered harmful, the debate continued as to whether the act applied or not to unions. It was not until 1914 and the Clayton Act that the issue was clarified. The Clayton Act removed unions from the anti-trust laws. The Supreme Court, however, continued to use the Sherman Act against the unions into the early 1940's. A series of laws: Apex Hosiery Company versus Leader; United States versus Hutcheson; and Allen Bradley versus Local 3, I.B.E.W., finally settled the issue of whether unions could legally function in our country.

So called "yellow dog" contracts were used in labor, and it was assumed these would also be applicable in public education. In the "yellow

27. Ibid., p. 56.

28. Ibid., pp. 63-78.

dog" contracts, employees agreed not to join a union as a condition of employment. These contracts were used in public education. Their legality was never tested in the Supreme Court; however, the Washington Supreme Court made these "yellow dog" contracts legal.

The Norris-LaGuardia Act of 1932 neutralized the role of the federal courts in the relationship between labor and management by taking power from the courts to interfere with or restrict a wide range of union activities as long as these activities were not involved with fraud or violence. The 1933 National Industrial Recover Act endorsed collective bargaining, but it provided no effective penalties for non-compliance leaving the National Labor Board with no authority to penalize unfair labor practices. The consensus was that the act applied to company unions. The 1935 National Labor Relations Act, or the Wagner Act as it was generally called, limited the employers' rights to oppose employees organizing for purposes of bargaining. In fact the Act encouraged collective bargaining. The constitutionality of the Wagner Act was upheld on the commerce clauses in the Constitution. The constitutionality of the Wagner Act was tested in 1937 in the case of the National Labor Relations Board versus Jones and Laughlin Steel Company. The Supreme Court upheld the Wagner Act in a 5-4 decision. The case was argued on the basis of employees working in activities affecting interstate commerce. With this decision some confusion as to the position of teachers was somewhat clarified. Because teachers work for a political subdivision of the state, they are excluded from coverage of any federal labor legislation.

In 1947 the Taft-Hartley Act was passed over President Truman's veto. The Taft-Hartley Act resulted because it was felt unions now had too much

power in their hands. The Act placed the federal government in a more neutral position and added some rules concerning unfair labor practices on the part of the unions. For example, it became an unfair labor practice to refuse to bargain collectively with an employer, to permit employees not to join a union if they so desired unless the labor contract contained a union shop agreement; and there was to be no discrimination if an employee was not a union member. In 1958 the Landrum-Griffin Act further attempted to regulate the internal affairs of the unions.

One point of view that needs to be established is the general philosophy of the American labor unions that there is a management system. The unions do not intend to overthrow the system of private enterprise. Unions have accepted the philosophy that management has the right to manage. The evolution of this basic philosophical point of view and the recognition of labor unions has not occurred in a short time. Public education and its activity in collective negotiations is passing through similar struggles both legally and philosophically that the labor unions did years ago.

Professional Autonomy and Public Act 379

In a relatively short period of time teachers generally have traveled a long way in changing their perceptions of their relationships with boards and administration. In 1945 the National Education Association Department of Classroom Teachers endorsed the idea that school boards should not deal directly with any staff members other than the superintendent. Some cities such as San Francisco had laws against teachers participating in political activity of any kind.²⁹ During that era in education, teachers "bargained"

29. Myron Lieberman, Education as a Profession, p. 350.

directly with the superintendent for salaries on an individual basis, and frequently no two teachers on a staff received the same salary. The last teacher to be given a contract often fared financially better than one who signed in early spring. Courses of study established by the state were distributed, textbooks decided by the superintendent, and state board exams given in a number of states. As the Department of Classroom Teachers favored, teachers rarely communicated with school board members other than at a social sometime during the school year.

Then terms such as "professional autonomy," "professional practices act," and "professional negotiations" began to be heard among public educators across the nation. Teachers wanted to be recognized as a profession on par with others who called themselves professionals and were recognized as professionals.

According to Lieberman a high degree of autonomy is a characteristic of a profession.³⁰ Prior to the Michigan Education Association being admitted to the Michigan Association of the Professions, one of the points of argument used by the governing members of Michigan Association of the Professions was that the Michigan Education Association did not have professional autonomy, that the association did not control entry into its membership nor did it have control of the actual functioning of teaching as a profession in the state of Michigan. Probably to Lieberman the most "glaring invasion of professional autonomy"³¹ is the practice in most states of the legislature requiring certain subjects to be taught at certain grade levels. In 1949, thirty-one state boards of education still

30. Ibid., p. 84.

31. Ibid., p. 100.

had the responsibility for adopting courses of study. Some states as in Michigan find the state legislatures attempting to legislate even more areas of curriculum as in the current move to provide state-wide testing for all fifth grade pupils.

As a step toward the professionalization of teachers, the Michigan Education Association and National Education Association began to move toward two ideas that these organizations felt would provide means of acceptance as a profession. One was a Professional Practices Act and the other what was then called professional negotiations. At the representative assembly of the National Education Association in Atlantic City in 1961, the delegates passed a resolution calling for "professional negotiations".³² Again in Denver in 1962,³³ the representative assembly formulated a stronger resolution with a demand for legal enactments to guarantee to teachers the right to negotiate. At that time and early in the negotiations experiment, National Education Association and Michigan Education Association drew a distinction between professional negotiations and collective bargaining. The rationale was that professional negotiations would remove teachers and boards of education from labor laws and procedures.

Stinnett states, "Professional negotiations has been defined as a set of procedures, written and officially adopted by the local staff organization and school board; which provides an orderly method for the school board and staff organization to negotiate on matters of mutual concern, to reach agreement on these matters, and to establish educational

32. _____, Addresses and Proceedings, National Education Association, pp. 214-218.

33. _____, Addresses and Proceedings, National Education Association, p. 237.

channels for mediation and appeal in the event of an impasse."³⁴ The concept of professional negotiations as expressed by Stinnett implied that mediation and appeals would go through educational channels, not labor channels.

In 1960 the United Federation of Teachers began an active drive in New York for collective negotiations with the assistance of the Independent Union Department. Prior to 1965 Wisconsin was the only state with a comprehensive law regulating collective negotiations in public education. Michigan's law came into effect in 1965. Known as Public Act 379, the act was not a new one, but represented revisions in what was known as the Hutcheson Act. The act as now stated provides that employers must bargain with public employees, including public school teachers, on "conditions of employment." The earlier concerns in conditions of employment related most specifically to salaries, duty free lunch hours, class size and other so called "welfare" items.

The term 'conditions of work', when used to indicate the matters which are negotiable becomes highly nebulous as one discusses it with staff members. First, it is nebulous within the welfare area including salaries. . . . An even more important extension of 'conditions of work' may be found in the curricular offering. There are few program adaptations which do not in some way affect the working conditions of the teacher, whether it be a change in pupil/staff ratio, the use of TV instruction, the extension of the school day, or the addition of an elementary librarian. The decision to implement each of these practices has undoubtedly been reached after consideration of certain alternatives which would also affect the teacher's conditions of work. On this basis, to what extent do such non-economic factors as the curriculum program and organization become negotiable items? ³⁵

Law itemizes and discusses topics for negotiations, but does not

34. T. M. Stinnett, Jack Kleinmann and Martha L. Ware, Professional Negotiations in Public Education, p. 2.

35. Ibid., p. 154.

mention curriculum items specifically other than a few that were on the fringe of curriculum such as length of the school year and class size.³⁶

Dr. Dan Lortie of the University of Chicago addressed a National Education Association seminar on Professional Negotiations in Public Education on August 2, 1966.

It could be that teacher militancy is no more. Or it could be that having tasted the fruits of victory on wages, working conditions, and lunch periods, that teachers may want a greater say in school policy. They may be saying, 'Superintendent, forget all those laymen committees. Don't be calling in everybody in the community on curriculum. Call us in. We're your instructional experts.'³⁷

Lieberman and Moskow list negotiable items that are to be included in collective agreements as:

Accident benefits	Military leave
Additional facilities	Paid absences for negotiators
Book duty	Pensions
Cafeteria duty	Personal leave
Central placement	Preparation periods
Class size	Professional meetings
Compensation for extra duties	Promotions
Cumulative absences	Relief from non-teaching duties
Damage to teacher property	Sabbatical leaves
Duty-free lunch period	Salary schedules
Hospitalization insurance	Seniority
In-service courses	Sick pay
Jury duty	Summer school assignment
Leave without pay	Teacher aides
Legal assistance for teachers	Teaching assignments
Length of school day	Teaching hours
Medical examinations	Transfers
	Washroom facilities 38

Although some of the listed items are related to curriculum, no specific reference is made for teacher participation in the curriculum

36. Kenneth Law, Kenneth Melley, Thomas Mondani, and James Sandler, The Manual for Teacher Negotiators, p. 24.

37. Dan Lortie, Transcript of an Address, National Education Association Seminar on Professional Negotiations in Public Education, p. 10.

38. Op. cit., Lieberman and Moskow, pp. 226-227.

development process.

Once wages, hours, benefits, and rights are established, curriculum and instruction will become the next logical area in which to move. Most of the negotiations contracts available for study make some provision for curriculum study or review. Within certain limitations this can be a promising development; it is in contrast to the fact that many teachers and principals in recent years avoided involvement in curriculum development. Now many groups are moving to mandate individual participation or to mandate the existence of the group; this is done, however, as an alternate power play rather than to encourage this activity as a professional responsibility.³⁹

The Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development's position concerning curriculum negotiations is further indicated in part of a resolution of the 1967 conference.

In the present context of professional negotiations it is essential that welfare concerns and curriculum concerns be handled as separate entities. A.S.C.D. believes that program and curriculum decisions per se must not be negotiable items. All professional personnel should have the right to participate in curriculum policy making; the procedures to be followed are negotiable, but the result or outcome of the process must not be subject to negotiation. Rather, such decisions must result from the application of a variety of professional expertise after a thorough study of all factors basic to a curriculum decision. Curriculum making is a study process and not a confrontation.⁴⁰

Most people in public education agree that teacher participation in curriculum decision making is necessary. Differences are found, however, in the way teachers are to be involved in the process. The Michigan Education Association position is that the most propitious means is through negotiation of a curriculum council. As a model for other councils and teacher participation pattern, the Kentwood School District council is often cited.⁴¹

39. Leslee Bishop, "Collective Negotiations in Curriculum and Instruction," Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, p. 4.

40. Ibid., p. 6.

41. Kentwood School District Contract, 1968-69.

Contracts that include a curriculum council often use the general terminology established by the Michigan Education Association.

Instructional Council

- A. 1. There is hereby established a joint Instructional
2. Council consisting of four (4) representatives appointed
3. by the Board, and five (5) representatives appointed by
4. the Association. The Instructional Council shall meet
5. on the first (1st) and third (3rd) Tuesday of each month
6. during the regular school year and advise the Board and
7. the Association on such matters as teaching techniques,
8. textbooks, pupil testing and evaluation, philosophy and
9. educational goals of the district, research and experimenta-
10. tion, educational specifications for buildings and related matters.
- B. 1. The Instructional Council may appoint such joint pro-
2. fessional study sub-committees as are deemed necessary.

It is essential to establish contractual language where curriculum and instructional matters are concerned. Emphasis should be on process, not program; on work toward openness in the process of instructional improvement, leaving prerogatives of instruction to teachers and to constituted groups. Procedures for research, study, and experimentation should be included in the process for instructional improvement as regular, not ad hoc measures. ⁴²

The drive for negotiations procedures is not only an attempt to redress certain inequities, to modify procedural weakness, but also to place the classroom teacher more intimately within the decision-making apparatus through the role of the professional association or the union. ⁴³

Michigan has led the way in collective negotiations in public education. The Michigan Education Association move to establish a curriculum council in every contract in the state may some day be realized. Teachers need to be made aware of the goal of the Michigan Education Association. The association has held workshops, published materials, and done some research in the area of teachers' involvement and contractual items.

In early 1968 the research division of Michigan Education Association conducted a survey of 1,066 Michigan teachers with assistance from the

42. Op. cit., Bishop, p. 21.

43. Op. cit., Bishop, p. 13.

National Education Association.

Between 20% and 35% of the respondents said that the following areas should be negotiated but were not: (1) teacher involvement in curriculum decisions; (2) teacher involvement in budget making; (3) selection of textbooks; (4) determination of class size; (5) non-teaching duties; (6) procedures for selecting school principals; (7) secretarial and clerical assistance in preparing reports, tests, etc.; (8) procedures for teacher evaluation; and (9) student discipline procedures ⁴⁴

A number of these items pertain directly and indirectly to curriculum concerns.

Other opinions relating to curriculum were:

1. Nearly 60% of the teachers believed there should be a greater degree of teacher planning for curricular decisions negotiated in future agreements.

2. A majority believed that freedom of the classroom teacher to determine methods of instruction, within broad goals, should be negotiated in future agreements. ⁴⁵

The Michigan Education Association study has found some of the opinions and attitudes of teachers in Michigan in regard to curriculum and negotiations. The effectiveness of the curriculum councils, what curricular changes have been affected with the council, and how teachers perceive their roles in curriculum decision-making was not part of the Michigan Education Association study.

Two recent dissertations have dealt with negotiations; one in particular concerning the curriculum councils. Marilyn Steele looked at 30 instruction related areas in the contracts of 52 districts in Michigan.⁴⁶ The contracts Steele studied were both Michigan Education Association and Michigan Federation of Teachers contracts. The study attempted to find

⁴⁴. _____. "A Survey of Teacher Attitudes Concerning Negotiations," Michigan Education Association, p. 6.

⁴⁵. *Ibid.*, p. 12.

⁴⁶. Marilyn Steele, "Has Collective Bargaining Contributed to Instructional Improvement in Michigan Schools?" Unpublished dissertation, p. 197.

if collective negotiations had made a difference in the number of curricular items negotiated, but did not pertain to curriculum councils.

Phillips studied the curriculum council membership, organization, and operation, and implementation of innovations.⁴⁷ His sample consisted of K-12 districts with 1,000 or more school population, with data collected from chief administrators in these districts. The current study is concerned with teachers' perceptions and used more diversified selection of school districts.

Summary

Much has been written about curriculum development and change. The roles of the curriculum worker and administrator have been explored and delineated. A consensus is that teachers are important to curriculum decisions, but their actual involvement in any depth has come in recent years with collective negotiations. Collective bargaining or negotiations, has had a long history in the United States in industry. Michigan's historic Public Act 379 placed negotiations for public educators in the arena of labor relations. Negotiations in relation to curriculum has not been fully accepted by all educators, although more schools in Michigan are moving in that direction with the inclusion of a curriculum council in contracts. The effectiveness of these councils has not been investigated, nor the kinds of curriculum changes the councils have affected.

47. John M. Phillips, "A Study of the Significance of the System-Wide Curriculum Council as an Agent of Curricular Change in Selected School Districts in Southwestern Michigan," (Unpublished doctoral dissertation), pp. 1-67.

CHAPTER III - METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

Introduction

The curriculum council or the curriculum council as a negotiable item has received little treatment in the literature. Recognition was given to the teachers' influence in curriculum development, but little as to their perceptions of their role. Nothing was found pertaining to the changes teachers believed were a result of curriculum council action. This study attempts to discover some of these changes and to survey whether the changes were effective as compared to changes within districts without curriculum councils.

Chapter III will include a description of the sample, design, development and distribution of the questionnaire used in collecting the data for the study, and the technique used to code and record the data, and how the data will be analyzed.

Basis for Sample Selection

The sample for this study was the classroom teacher members in Region 8 of the Michigan Education Association. Region 8, for purposes of M.E.A. services, includes Ingham, Clinton, Eaton, Livingston, and Shiawassee counties. The five county area has a fairly representative cross section of the school districts of the state. There are rural, and urban areas within the encompassment of the region; however none of the districts in Region 8 is the size of some of the larger metropolitan areas in Michigan. Members in all the school districts, except the teachers in the Lansing Public Schools, were surveyed

by means of a mailed questionnaire. A pilot study, to be discussed later, was made in one Lansing school. Lansing was omitted from the study for two reasons. Firstly, Lansing is by far the largest district in the region, with nearly as many teachers as were in all the districts without curriculum councils designated in the contract; consequently there was no other district with which to compare Lansing. Secondly, Lansing has had an active curriculum council functioning for a number of years, although the council has not been designated in the contract of 1968-1969. The establishment and operation of Lansing's curriculum council is found in the printed administrative policies of the district.

Districts of comparable sizes appear in those both with and without curriculum councils. Those without curriculum councils designated in the contracts include both the largest district other than Lansing and the smallest district in the region. In number, there were both more districts and teachers represented by the group without curriculum councils. With the relatively recent move for curriculum councils, and particularly curriculum councils designated in the negotiated contracts, Region 8 is not unique in the state. Any other Michigan Education Association region would probably find the same situation prevailing with fewer districts having councils.

Contracts for all the districts in the region were read and provisions for a curriculum council were noted. Some contracts made no mention of even a professional growth committee or an in-service committee. However, items have been negotiated into other contracts in Michigan that can be related to curriculum as Marilyn Steele found in her study of the

contracts.¹ Other committees or provisions appeared in some contracts that could be considered curricular concerns. For example, in Olivet's contract provision is made for teachers to attend state department of education curriculum meetings. However, for this study, districts were considered as having curriculum councils "designated in their contracts" only if the contract stated this, usually in the terms used in the model contract developed by the Michigan Education Association. The provision for a council in the Kentwood contract previously cited is an example that includes this model clause.

Districts Surveyed

Table I shows the districts and the number of teachers who were sent surveys. Table II shows districts without curriculum councils designated in the contract. Any other districts within Region 8 not included in the districts surveyed were omitted because no teacher-school board contracts were available.

Collection of the Data

A data gathering questionnaire was designed to be as brief and concise as possible, yet yield the desired information concerning teachers' perceptions of the kinds of curriculum changes within each district, the effectiveness of curriculum changes, and the effectiveness of the curriculum councils. The questionnaire was also devised, hopefully, to elicit the information desired with the least effort and time on the part of the respondent. Teachers are asked to respond to numerous surveys, some quite detailed and requiring lengthy and complicated responses (see

1. Marilyn Steele, "Has Collective Bargaining Contributed to Instructional Improvement in Michigan Schools?" 1969 (Unpublished dissertation).

TABLE I

Districts with Curriculum Councils Designated
in the Contract

Districts	Number of Teachers
Brighton	37
Charlotte	131
Corunna	83
Dansville	34
Eaton Rapids	112
Grand Ledge	174
Howell	153
Laingsburg	41
Owosso	237
Waverly	<u>203</u>
TOTAL	1260

TABLE II

Districts Without Curriculum Councils Designated
in the Contract

Districts	Number of Teachers
Bath	50
Bellevue	51
DeWitt	46
Durand	118
East Lansing	245
Fowler	21
Fowlerville	53
Haslett	81
Holt	146
Leslie	33
Maple Valley	74
Mason	117
Marrice	31
Okemos	150
Olivet	55
Ovid - Elsie	96
Pewama - Westphalia	24
Pinckney	75
Potterville	19
St. Johns	116
Stockbridge	65
Webberville	34
Williamston	52
TOTAL	1757

Appendix A). With this in mind, a questionnaire was designed in which the teachers generally needed only to check one response they considered most applicable in their perceptions of conditions in their own districts. The first five questions were to yield demographic information. The next five questions concerned whether or not the district had a council; or if not, how teachers participated in curriculum development. Questions 11 through 16 were questions of influence on curriculum and effectiveness of the council. Questions 17 through 20 concerned more specific curricular changes. The remaining four questions covered opinions as to responsibility in change and compensatory concerns in curriculum development. The final question was open-ended allowing respondents an opportunity to state freely, in as much detail as they desired, their perceptions of curriculum development and teacher participation in curriculum change. A few of the questions, specifically numbers 9, 17, and 18, called for more than one response. An explanatory cover letter was included with the survey (see Appendix B).

With the hope of ensuring a better return, the questionnaires were mailed to each teacher's home address using first class mail rather than third class mail or sending the questionnaire through school buildings, Michigan Education Association representatives, or school administrators. The most expeditious means of obtaining names and addresses of classroom teachers was to prevail upon the services of the Michigan Education Association. Tapes of teacher members names and addresses for teachers in Region 8 were obtained from the circulation department of the Michigan Education Association. Included with the mailing of the questionnaire was a stamped, addressed envelope for the return of the completed questionnaire.

Prior to mailing, the questionnaires were coded to indicate those sent to districts with curriculum councils designated in the contracts and those with no contractual designation for a curriculum council. No other attempt was thought necessary to record to whom the questionnaires were sent. When returns were received, no record was maintained as to the districts or from whom the returns came. Anonymity of the respondents was usually maintained except in instances when some teachers included their names on the returned questionnaire. Names and identities of the respondents were irrelevant to this study. The primary differentiation considered important to this study was a distinction between districts with and without curriculum councils designated in the contract.

Pilot Study

To further refine the developed questionnaire prior to mailing it to the sample population, a pilot study was made in Elmhurst Elementary School in Lansing to determine if any further clarifications and revisions were needed. The only revision apparent was in question 6 which originally read: Does your district have a curriculum council? The words "designated in the contract" were added to the final form of the questionnaire to ensure clarity and more accuracy in the responses. From an analysis of the pilot study, no other revisions appeared to be necessary.

Recording the Data

When the questionnaires were returned, they were sorted according to the districts with and without curriculum councils. This process was simplified by the symbol placed on the questionnaire prior to mailing to the teachers to be surveyed. Each questionnaire was hand coded using a

pattern that would facilitate recording the information for processing. The information was then key punched, one card for each questionnaire returned.

As was previously stated, the last question was open-ended. Responses to this question were not key punched. Some respondents did not avail themselves of the opportunity to respond at all, while others commented at length. Some of the comments were relevant to the study, while others were comments on individuals, curriculum studies within individual districts, administrators, negotiations, curriculum study committees, and innumerable other personal grievances of the respondents. Sample relevant comments will be included in the analysis of the data.

Analysis of the Data

The cards were run through a card sorter to tabulate the various responses to the questionnaire. The first analysis attempted to define the background information of the teachers surveyed. Responses for each question were tabulated and comparisons were made between responses from districts with and those without curriculum councils designated in the contracts, answering the questions as proposed in Chapter I. Other comparisons were made in an attempt to determine teachers' perceptions of their roles as changers of the curriculum and the effectiveness of curriculum changes.

Data were analyzed utilizing percent and frequency tables. The kind of data desired and collected did not seem to warrant a more sophisticated statistical analysis. Information gleaned from this study will probably prove more valuable to teachers, negotiators, the Michigan Education Association, and teacher preparation institutions in the form of tables

representing a summation of the data in frequencies and percents.

Summary

This study was designed to determine teachers' perceptions of their involvement and responsibility in curriculum development and in the curriculum council. The only analysis deemed necessary was one that analyzed teachers perceptions in terms of frequencies and percents. Chapter IV will deal with an analysis of the data collected.

CHAPTER IV - ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

Introduction

This study was designed with the object of exploring teachers' perceptions. Utilizing a survey type of study with an undetermined percentage of expected returns and recording teachers' perceptions seemed to preclude a sophisticated statistical analysis. As previously indicated, the information derived has been arranged in tables utilizing frequencies and percentages. Using a large sample as this study does, and a mailing of the questionnaire without personal administration of the questionnaire, one cannot really predict the possible number of returns. In this study, questionnaires were mailed to 1757 teachers in districts without a curriculum council designated in the contract. A total of 603 or 34.31% were returned. Of the 1260 questionnaires mailed to teachers in districts with curriculum councils designated in the contracts, 480 or 38.09% were returned.

In reading and interpreting the tabulation of the returns, one must realize and remember that all respondents did not answer each of the questions. Even some of the demographic questions concerning the respondent himself, such as experience, sex, and teaching certification, etc. were not answered. Consequently, the addition of the numerals in the percentage columns does not always result in 100%. Also some of the questions could have more than one response. This will be discussed again when those particular questions are analyzed.

To further identify the teachers in both groups, several questions were included in the questionnaire to help delineate the sample. Questions

related to years of teaching experience, certification, teaching level, and sex were asked.

Table III shows the years of teaching experience of the respondents. It is interesting to note that the larger number of responses, 38.33% in districts with curriculum councils and 43.78% in districts without curriculum councils came from the group with 1-5 years experience. The next group in percentage of responses is the 6-10 years experience with 21.25% for districts with councils and 20.39% for districts without. However, this particular study provides no evidence whether there are more teachers in Region 8 within those experience groups, or if teachers with less experience tend to be more interested and involved; consequently more willing to respond to a questionnaire.

TABLE III

Years of Teaching Experience

Years	Districts With Curriculum Councils		Districts Without Curriculum Councils	
	N	%	N	%
1-5	184	38.33	264	43.78
6-10	102	21.25	123	20.39
11-15	56	11.66	74	12.27
16-20	41	8.54	47	7.79
21-25	27	5.62	36	5.97
More than 25	69	14.37	58	9.61

Table IV indicates the grade level of teaching of those who responded to the questionnaire. There seems to be no appreciable difference in the percentage of responses for elementary, junior high or middle school, and high school between those from districts with councils and those without

councils. The greatest responses in both groups were from the elementary teachers with 50% from those with councils and 49.25% from those without councils. The next group in size was from those teaching at the high school level with 26.87% from districts with councils and 32.17% from districts without councils. Again there is nothing to indicate whether the elementary teachers were more interested; however, there are more elementary teachers in the region.

TABLE IV
Grade Level of Teaching

Grade Levels	Districts With Curriculum Councils		Districts Without Curriculum Councils	
	N	%	N	%
Elementary	240	50.00	297	49.25
Jr. H. or Middle School	105	21.87	108	17.91
High School	129	26.87	194	32.17

Certification held by the teachers who responded correlates with the grade levels in which the respondents teach. Table V shows that in the districts with curriculum councils 45.41% are elementary certified and 44.10% secondary certified. In the districts without curriculum councils 45.43% held elementary certificates and 44.27% held secondary certificates.

From this study no conclusions can be derived to explain Table VI indicating the similarity of the male and female responses in both categories of the sample. In districts with curriculum councils, 27.70% were male respondents and 72.30% were female; while 27.52% were male respondents and 72.13% were female in districts without curriculum councils.

There are more women in education, but one cannot conclude in this instance that women were more interested and responded to the questionnaire.

TABLE V
Teaching Certificate Held

Certificate	Districts With Curriculum Councils		Districts Without Curriculum Councils	
	N	%	N	%
Elementary	218	45.41	274	45.43
Secondary	212	44.16	267	44.27
Both	46	9.58	60	9.95

TABLE VI
Sex of Respondents

Sex	Districts With Curriculum Councils		Districts Without Curriculum Councils	
	N	%	N	%
Male	133	27.70	166	27.52
Female	347	72.30	435	72.13

Both groups of teachers from districts with and without curriculum councils were comparable in sex, age group, and teaching certification.

Teachers Perceptions of Curriculum Development

Question number 6 asking whether the teacher's district had a curriculum council designated in the contract produced some interesting responses as indicated in Table VII. Responses from districts with a curriculum council show 54.37% of the teachers agreed the contract contained such a provision; however, 25.41% replied no, and 17.29% did not know

whether the council was designated in the contract or not. From districts without curriculum councils designated in the contract, 56.71% of the teachers stated there was no such provision, while 22.88% believed there was and 18.90% did not know. Although the percentages are not statistically significant, teachers in districts without curriculum councils designated in the contracts seemed slightly more aware of whether or not their districts do have a council designated in the contract. This writer cannot help speculate that too many of our teachers are not cognizant of the contents of the contracts they ratify.

TABLE VII

Curriculum Council Designated in Contract

Councils Designated	Districts With Curriculum Councils		Districts Without Curriculum Councils	
	N	%	N	%
Yes	261	54.37	138	22.88
No	122	25.41	342	56.71
Don't Know	83	17.29	114	18.90

Table VIII reflects the percentage of membership on the curriculum council from those districts with the council designated in the contract, indicating 21.66% of those who responded were members of the council and 32.7% were not members. For no apparent reason, a great number of those returning the questionnaire obviously did not respond at all to question 7 regarding their council membership.

Make up of the membership of the councils themselves is found in Table IX. Responses of the teachers indicate 55.20% believe more teachers

are on the council, while 3.54% believed there were more administrators and 20.00% believed there was a balance of teachers and administrators.

TABLE VIII

Respondent's Membership on the Council

Response	Districts With Curriculum Councils	
	N	%
Yes	104	21.66
No	157	32.70

(222 did not respond.)

TABLE IX

Curriculum Council Membership

Membership	Districts With Curriculum Councils	
	N	%
More teachers	265	55.20
More administrators	17	3.54
Balance of both	96	20.00

(102 did not respond.)

Table X indicates that more teachers believe that members on the curriculum council are either selected by buildings and by department or grade levels. As teachers perceive the selection of council membership, administrative appointments are the least numerous means of council membership selection.

Table XI records how teachers perceive the effectiveness of the curriculum council. Only 5.00% believed the council was not effective at all, and 13.54% believed the council was very effective. The largest

percentage, 50.00% believed the curriculum council was moderately effective. 20.62% felt the council was slightly effective. These perceptions would indicate that teachers tended to find the council effective, but not overwhelmingly effective.

TABLE X
Selection of Curriculum Council

Selected	Membership	
	N	%
By buildings	105	21.87
At large	26	5.41
Departments or grade levels	73	15.20
Administrative appointment	13	2.70
Education Association selected	57	11.87
(206 did not respond.)		

TABLE XI
Effectiveness of Curriculum Council

Effectiveness	Districts With Curriculum Councils	
	N	%
Very effective	65	13.54
Moderately effective	240	50.00
Slightly effective	99	20.62
Not effective at all	24	5.00

Teachers who taught in districts without curriculum councils were asked to respond, in question 9, how they participated in curriculum development.

Question 10 asks to define the membership of these curriculum committees.

Table XII illustrates the membership in various kinds of curriculum committees, with 41.29% of teachers feeling that the curriculum committee membership consisted of more administrators than teachers; while 33.16% of the teachers believed more teachers than administrators served on the various curriculum committees. Only 2.32% felt the committees were chiefly made up of curriculum workers and 17.41% felt the committees consisted equally of teachers, administrators, and curriculum workers.

TABLE XII
Curriculum Planning Committee Membership

Membership	Districts Without Curriculum Councils	
	N	%
More teachers	200	33.16
More administrators	249	41.29
Curriculum worker	14	2.32
Equally	105	17.41

Question 9 was a multiple answer type question, answered by teachers in districts without curriculum councils designated in their contracts. The distribution of teachers' perceptions concerning their participation in curriculum development appears in Table XIII. Opportunity for multiple answers resulted in a total exceeding 100%. Grade or subject participation in curriculum development was the way 44.27% of the teachers perceived their involvement. In-service planning and textbook selection were about

equally chosen as the next means of teacher participation with 27.86% indicating in-service planning, and 25.53% indicating textbook selection were the means of involvement. The other categories were all perceived by considerably fewer teachers as the way they participated in curriculum development. There were 5.14% of the respondents, too, who did not know how teachers participated.

TABLE XIII

Teacher Participation in Curriculum Development

Means of Participation	Districts Without Curriculum Councils	
	N	%
In-service planning	168	27.86
Grade or subject	267	44.27
Buildings	57	9.45
Textbook selection	154	25.53
Professional development	50	8.29
Other	22	3.64
Not at all	15	2.48
Don't know	31	5.14

Teachers from districts both with and without curriculum councils designated in the contracts responded to questions 11 and 12 concerning who teachers perceive as having most influence in curriculum development and who they feel should have most influence. Tables XIV and XV illustrate the responses to these two questions. In districts both with and without councils, teachers perceive that administrators have more influence

in curriculum decisions, as indicated by 38.33% of those in districts with councils and 41.29% in districts without councils. A larger percentage of teachers (33.16%) in districts without councils than teachers (24.16%) in districts with councils felt that teachers had more influence.

TABLE XIV

Who Does Influence Curriculum Decisions ?

Who Does?	Districts With Curriculum Councils		Districts Without Curriculum Councils	
	N	%	N	%
Teachers	116	24.16	200	33.16
Administrators	184	38.33	249	41.29
Curriculum Worker	25	5.20	14	2.32
Equally	119	24.29	105	17.41

TABLE XV

Who Should Influence Curriculum Decisions?

Who should ?	Districts With Curriculum Councils		Districts Without Curriculum Councils	
	N	%	N	%
Teachers	209	43.45	290	48.09
Administrators	9	1.87	8	1.32
Curriculum Worker	29	6.04	26	4.31
Equally	215	44.79	264	43.78

Table XV indicates that 48.09% of the teachers in districts without councils and 43.54% in districts with councils believe teachers should have more influence. Also 43.78% of those in districts without councils

and 44.79% in districts with councils felt that curriculum workers, teachers, and administrators should have equal influence in curriculum decisions.

Another question concerning the planning of the council, question 15, asked teachers only in districts with curriculum councils how the planning was done--K-12, grade or subject areas. Most of the teachers perceived the planning done by their councils as K-12 planning with 53.54% responding to this category (Table XVI).

TABLE XVI
Curriculum Council Planning

Basis for Planning	Districts With Curriculum Councils	
	N	%
K-12	257	53.54
Grade levels	75	15.62
Subject areas	88	18.33

Teachers from districts with and without councils responded to question 16 pertaining to how they believed a curriculum council should plan. Teachers in both groups, 58.37% in districts without councils and 67.70% in districts with councils, decidedly believed curriculum planning should be on a K-12 basis as indicated in Table XVII.

Changes in specific curricular areas and subjects were identified through questions 17 and 18, also multiple response questions. Table XVIII reports that in districts without curriculum councils, teachers seem to perceive that a wider variety of change has occurred than did the teachers in districts with curriculum councils. In districts without

TABLE XVII

How Curriculum Council Should Plan

Basis Council Should Plan	Districts With Curriculum Councils		Districts Without Curriculum Councils	
	N	%	N	%
K-12	325	67.70	352	58.37
Grade levels	42	8.75	53	8.78
Subject areas	61	12.70	82	13.59

(116 did not respond.)

councils 35.15% believed team teaching had come about in the last three years; also 10.94% indicated programmed instruction, 24.87% organization of content around concepts, 10.94% interdisciplinary study, 31.34% individualized instruction, 35.98% use of behavioral objectives, and 14.75% felt changes had occurred in vocational areas. In districts with curriculum councils 22.91% of the teachers found non-graded schools to be a curriculum change as opposed to 14.92% of the teachers in districts without. The greatest percent of teachers, 60.20%, in districts with curriculum councils perceived the major change as being a study of the total school curriculum. These perceptions would tend to indicate that more curriculum changes occur in districts without curriculum councils. Curriculum councils apparently concentrated more of their efforts on a study of the total school curriculum rather than particular curricular changes.

Similarities in perceptions of changes in specific subject areas appeared in the teachers' responses to question 18 as recorded in Table XIX. The subject areas both groups of teachers believed most changes had occurred were in science, mathematics, English or language arts, and social studies. Neither group of teachers, either these from districts

TABLE XVIII
Curriculum Changes That Have Occurred

Changes	Districts With Curriculum Councils		Districts Without Curriculum Councils	
	N	%	N	%
Team Teaching	158	32.91	212	35.15
Programmed Instruction	39	8.12	66	10.94
Non-graded	110	22.91	90	14.92
Organization around concepts	79	19.75	150	24.87
Interdisciplinary study	45	9.37	66	10.94
Individualized Instruction	71	14.79	189	31.34
New Approach to Subject	163	33.95	217	35.98
Behavioral Objectives	45	9.37	81	13.43
Total School Curriculum	289	60.20	219	36.31
Teaching values	92	19.16	91	15.09
Vocational	66	13.75	89	14.75
Other	40	8.33	40	6.63

with nor without curriculum councils, tended to believe that any one particular subject area had changed more than another.

TABLE XIX
Subject Area Most Changed

Subject Area	Districts With Curriculum Councils		Districts Without Curriculum Councils	
	N	%	N	%
Science	121	25.20	185	30.67
Math	166	34.58	163	27.03
English or Language Arts	149	31.04	185	30.67
Foreign Language	11	2.24	18	2.98
Social Studies	140	29.16	138	22.88
Vocational	38	7.91	65	10.77
Other	15	3.12	28	4.64

The unusual responses to question 19 concerning the extent the changes reflected trends of such national groups as the National Council of Teachers of English or the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics appears in Table XX. Of the teachers in districts with curriculum councils 56.87% did not know, and 55.88% of the teachers in districts without curriculum councils did not know. One can only surmise that teachers in Region 8 do not actively participate in or read publications of various national curriculum groups.

Teachers were asked to evaluate the effectiveness of the curriculum changes in their districts. There was no appreciable difference between the perceptions of teachers in districts with curriculum councils and

those in districts without curriculum councils. Table XXI indicates the percentages of the responses with 40.62% of the teachers in districts with councils perceiving the changes as moderately effective and valuable, while 38.80% of those in districts without councils viewed the changes in the same way. In districts with councils 23.33% thought the changes were slightly effective and valuable, and 20.39% thought so in districts without councils. Neither group found the changes exceedingly valuable and effective.

TABLE XX
Extent Changes Reflect Trends of National Councils

Extent	Districts With Curriculum Councils		Districts Without Curriculum Councils	
	N	%	N	%
Follow Closely	3	0.62	7	1.16
Follow with variations	98	20.41	103	17.08
Do not follow	37	7.70	41	6.79
Do not know	273	56.87	337	55.88

Both groups of teachers, however, overwhelmingly believed it was their responsibility to implement a curriculum change once that change had been approved, as indicated in Table XXII. In districts with councils 92.91% agreed, and in districts without 94.52% agreed teachers should assume responsibility for implementation of the change.

When teachers were asked whether a provision for a curriculum council should be made in the contracts, a greater percent of teachers, 78.12%, in districts with councils felt it should than did the teachers, 67.16%, in districts without the council in the contracts (Table XXIII). This would

tend to indicate that teachers in districts with curriculum councils valued the provision, and also a large percentage of those in districts without the council thought such a provision should be included in the contract.

TABLE XXI

Evaluation of Curriculum Changes

Evaluation	Districts With Curriculum Councils		Districts Without Curriculum Councils	
	N	%	N	%
Valuable and effective	85	17.70	103	17.08
Moderately effective and valuable	195	40.62	234	38.80
Slightly effective and valuable	112	23.33	123	20.39
Not effective at all	12	2.50	26	4.31

TABLE XXII

Responsibility for Implementation of Curriculum Change

Response	Districts With Curriculum Councils		Districts Without Curriculum Councils	
	N	%	N	%
Yes	446	92.91	570	94.52
No	11	2.29	10	1.65

TABLE XXIII

Should Provision for a Curriculum Council be Included in the Contract?

Response	Districts With Curriculum Councils		Districts Without Curriculum Councils	
	N	%	N	%
Yes	375	78.12	405	67.16
No	51	10.62	105	17.41

Two questions were asked concerning compensations for curriculum development and how teachers perceived curriculum development generally.

More teachers (45.58% to 34.66%) in districts with councils indicated either released time or other compensations were provided (Table XXIV). In districts without curriculum councils teachers (45.93% to 43.54%) responded that they were given no compensations.

TABLE XXIV
Compensations for Curriculum Development

Responses	Districts With Curriculum Councils		Districts Without Curriculum Councils	
	N	%	N	%
Yes	214	45.58	209	34.66
No	209	43.54	277	45.93
Don't Know	40	8.33	66	10.94

Table XXV indicates that most teachers in both groups perceived curriculum development as a means of communication and a means of professional growth as opposed to a source of additional money and time consuming. Slightly more teachers in districts with a curriculum council, 43.33%, believed it was a means of communication than did teachers, 39.63%, in districts without curriculum councils.

TABLE XXV
What Curriculum Development Means

Response	Districts With Curriculum Councils		Districts Without Curriculum Councils	
	N	%	N	%
Communication	208	43.33	239	39.63
Additional Money	3	0.62	3	0.49
Professional Growth	184	38.33	241	39.96
Time Consuming	51	10.62	60	9.95

Question 5 was designed to determine the extent of teachers involvement in their education association at the local, state, region, and national levels. It was assumed that teachers would respond to only one foil; however, many responded to more than one. The question specifically stated "actively involved," but teachers surveyed apparently had a different perception of what this term meant. A number of teachers checked the response "all levels", but then made a marginal notation that this meant only paying their dues. Some checked only local or state and then indicated this response meant paying dues only, an almost impossible situation in Michigan where Michigan Education Association rules demand that is one is to be a member, one must affiliate on the local, state, and national levels. The only recourse possible then in recording the responses was to record multiple responses for this question. Table XXVI shows the percentage of responses, but perceptions of what "actively involved" means limits the significance which can be attached to this tabulation. However, more teachers in districts with and without curriculum councils tended to be involved locally than at any other level.

The final question, as indicated previously, was an open-ended one permitting teachers to respond freely. Of the 603 responses from teachers in districts without curriculum councils, 291 responded to question 25. Of the 480 responses from teachers in districts with curriculum councils designated in the contracts, 237 answered question 25. Thus, in both instances nearly half of the respondents commented on the open-ended question. Comments on question 25 ranged from a very brief statement to several pages. Some of the comments were pertinent to the study, while many other comments irrelevantly dealt with personal concerns about the individual's school district, administrators, the inadequacy of curriculum

assistance from professors from Michigan State University, and that some respondents were teaching their first and last year. Representative relevant comments, both positive and negative, will be recorded. A sample of those comments follow.

TABLE XXVI
Involvement in Education Association

Involvement	Districts With Curriculum Councils		Districts Without Curriculum Councils	
	N	%	N	%
Not at all	33	6.87	51	8.45
Locally	290	60.41	368	61.02
Regionally	35	7.29	48	7.96
State	22	4.58	27	4.47
National	17	3.54	25	4.14
All Levels	127	26.45	170	28.19

Comments from Teachers in Districts with Curriculum Councils

I think teachers should have an active part in curriculum development since they will be teaching it and since they are familiar with the capabilities and interests of their age group. I think the curriculum and material used should be ever changing and up to date with modern changes. The teachers and administrators should be aware of research and data found on new techniques so they can better aid their district to a successful curriculum development.

If teachers are involved in curriculum changes, they are more ready to accept and implement these changes even when the changes are arbitrarily announced by the administration. Most teachers feel that they are more aware of the curriculum needs in their grade than are administrators. For this reason, they like to have changes discussed with them.

Teacher involvement is critical; can't successfully impose changes from top down!

There has been a professional growth observed among the teachers as the various committees prepared their proposals for these curriculum changes to the council.

Teacher involvement is necessary for ultimate implementation.

As a member of the curriculum council, I feel it is most important that all teachers in the system become involved in the curriculum development and changes effecting their work in anyway. Only then can the council have a real view of the feelings, ideas, interests, etc. of the staff which it represents.

Teacher-administrator communication has increased and become more effective. New ideas, purposeful suggestions and an enthusiasm by teachers has helped us get much done this year.

I feel the way we've been doing now for the past two years is 100% better. I do wish more teachers would become involved.

I feel the curriculum changes made recently were valuable and are headed toward a study of total K-12 development.

If curriculum changes are to be effective, faculty must be involved and implement the changes. Changes usually involve 'change' in the attitudes of people.

We are still thinking in isolated groups, but it seems we see more teachers aware of the need to understand and develop a K-12 program. Also, I believe the council fosters a growth in professionalism, of appreciation for the contribution of other professionals.

Even though ideas and changes have evolved, the lack of funds has made application of changes quite indefinite.

I think the council is valuable as a channel of communication and a source of inspiration to many of the people much of the time.

I feel strongly that the teaching profession will never realize its potential until it learns to be self-governing. This curriculum council (staffed by 90% teachers) is a firm step in that direction.

Some commented that teachers needed to be prepared for curriculum involvement.

Teachers should be involved although they should have more training on how. There is too much 'I believe' this and that should be done without any reason for believing. More training for teachers is needed to make them more valuable to a curriculum council.

The teacher is not automatically the highest authority in curriculum work--he must study to make himself so.

Curricular change of any sort is seriously affected by lack of proper orientation.

Other teachers in districts with curriculum councils were not favorable in their comments either about the council or teacher involvement.

I am disgusted with the teacher involvement. They are more concerned with reviewing textbooks than helping teachers

Unfortunately we get little feedback from our council. I believe they have spent most of the year evaluating the various programs.

I have fought long and hard for teacher involvement in curriculum development. Forget it.

Curriculum councils tend to stifle change because results or decisions are based on consensus of opinion which means a great deal of compromise. Good ideas that need to be tested are 'watered down' to be acceptable to all, i.e. teachers, administrators, the curriculum coordinator. As a result, good ideas become mediocre ideas and are long in realization Curriculum councils are part of the bureaucracy of the institution of education which serves the needs of the institution but not the needs of children. (A comment from a teacher, male, with 1-5 years teaching experience.)

Teachers generally don't want to bother with it

This takes away from teaching preparation time.

The conscientious good teacher can't afford to lose valuable time from her classroom I resent wasted time in committee meetings and people holding the floor with generalized statements lifted from textbooks by some one who has never been in a hectic daily classroom situation--with 6 or 7 year olds, mixed up teenagers, or smug high school students who have already been on sophisticated sexual or drug trips." (A female with 21-25 years teaching experience.)

Much ado about nothing!!

Teachers need to be involved in their own fields. I question the council which may not have anyone in it from certain areas of interest. (Male, in vocational education.)

Our curriculum council is a farce

It has to be a give and take with confidence on both sides. This we do not have.

Comments from Teachers in Districts Without Curriculum Councils

Teachers' comments from districts without curriculum councils varied in much the same way that comments did from teachers in districts with a council.

I feel teacher involvement is an absolute necessity for any curriculum change to be effective.

Teacher involvement with time off from teaching a must.

Teacher involvement in curriculum development seems essential because we are the ones that have to implement these changes. We are the closest to the students and can more quickly and effectively bring about changes and evaluate the results. Unless there is good communication between faculty and administration, the development of a better curriculum would be slowed without lots of teacher involvement.

The teacher is the most important person involved in curriculum development as she will be the implementor. She does need help to keep up with changes and what they can mean to her--this is where administrators can be important.

Teacher initiated gets better results.

I feel that teachers should definitely be involved in curriculum planning and improvement because they are vitally concerned. They are the ones who will implement the change. Concerning this, I feel there should be more dialogue between teachers and administrators on an equal basis. Both are professionals and both need to equally respect the other. I believe we need curricular changes only and in as this change will provide more effective learning situations for students. Deliver us from curricular change for exaltation of members of the profession.

If the teachers participate in curriculum change, they are much more apt to accept new techniques and content and do a good job teaching the material. If they do not have a voice in curriculum change and favor it, it is very hard to implement new programs.

I think teachers need a voice, but we need curriculum experts very much.

Teachers should be involved in only their own area.

Teacher involvement essential, otherwise changes will not be effectively carried out in the classroom.

Curriculum change must be real, not merely an elaborate curriculum guide. The change must come in the outlook of classroom teachers, and in actual classroom practice. This is much more complex than adoption of a new text, or a new course of study on paper.

Considering the mobility of the modern American family, I feel we must make every effort to make some nation-wide curriculum guides.

Somehow I do think that it's most difficult for secondary teachers to see the 'total picture' of curriculum changes. (A comment from a secondary teacher.)

I believe curriculum development should be continuous and not just worked on at in-service training session, as we have done somewhat this year. I believe it should be a total integration of K-12 grades and subjects.

The teacher is the curriculum. It is necessary that we become involved and informed as to what and how we are to use the materials in our classroom. In forming a curriculum council, I would feel that it would be necessary to move slowly and carefully in the selection of such a committee, so as to select the very best and most capable people to serve on it. All areas should be well represented working together with administrators.

I do not feel a curriculum council should be controlled by the teachers but should be a joint effort between teachers and administrators.

Teacher involvement in total curriculum development is basic to establishing priorities and defining relevancies in the curriculum. The problem in our area does not appear to revolve around either the recognizing of curriculum needs or the getting together of interested staff for discussions; it is, rather, the implementing of recommendations that evolve from such committees.

I believe that teacher contracts in spelling out and making provisions for curriculum councils, would get these initial committees off dead center.

Our school district, I feel, needs more planning for K-12.

I believe teachers should be actively involved in implementing curriculum change from the proposal of change to the actual carrying out of change.

Many teachers are only concerned with curriculum development as far as their own field is concerned and not with an overall program.

Again comments from teachers in districts without curriculum councils were sometimes critical of lack of interest on the part of teachers, lack of funds and time, lack of administrative support, and a feeling that nothing was ever accomplished.

Generally speaking a curriculum change in our system is nothing more than a glorified version of the same old thing.

In my opinion our curriculum structure, and many other schools' curriculum structures stagnate educational improvement rather than encourage improvement.

Teachers have little effect on curriculum--administrators determine it.

The teachers in our system have been involved in the curriculum planning. I see no reason why it should be designated in the teacher's contract. Teachers are hired and I don't believe we should be running the school entirely. (A female teacher with 11-15 years experience.)

In the main, curriculum changes occur by individuals who write their own programs and get administrative approval. Most of the teachers do not seem involved in curriculum change and do not receive strong encouragement from the administration. The new curriculum council idea looks like a cumbersome bureaucracy. I don't like to be pessimistic, but I cannot visualize many curriculum proposals surviving all that red tape.

Teachers are involved to a great degree but little is accomplished. Teachers often put many, many hours into these fruitless meetings.

Now I feel a curriculum director should do this job with the help of selected teachers and administrators. I feel this way because most teachers do not study curriculum in depth, or even care to!

I served on a curriculum committee guided by M.S.U.--thoroughly disappointed.

The teachers' ideas are diluted or vetoed by Supt.

Curriculum development councils can say what they will, administrators will still do what they desire in our district.

A number of teachers in the 1-5 years of teaching experience bracket indicated that the one group most directly affected and concerned with curriculum has not been involved or considered in curriculum development. That group is the students. These teachers felt that regardless of the structure utilized for curriculum development nothing valuable would be achieved without consideration of involvement of students in the decision making process.

These comments seem to indicate too that teachers in districts with curriculum councils are more aware of the teachers' responsibilities in curriculum development. These teachers also tend to feel that more teachers should become interested and involved in the work of the council in curriculum development. They seem to feel more confident that what teachers do in the area of curriculum development will receive acceptance by administrators.

From the comments, the writer has a feeling teachers from districts with curriculum councils have more realization of the time involved in curriculum development and change--that the process is not sudden or rapid. These teachers also seem to have more commitment to what they are attempting and less feeling that what they are doing is valueless because no immediate change occurs. They seem more aware of the changes that must occur within themselves as teachers.

In districts without curriculum councils, teachers also believed they should be involved in curriculum development, but tended to seem less aware of the full ramifications of the responsibility and effort involved.

Teachers in both groups are beginning, too, to view curriculum development as a total package, K-12. Also these teachers seemed to realize that teachers were not adequately prepared to assume responsibilities in the area of curriculum development. Fewer teachers in districts with curriculum councils tended to have negative attitudes about teacher involvement in curriculum development. Those who were negative seemed to express this attitude in some of the platitudes used for common complaints of today.

Conclusions from the data and further recommendations will be found in Chapter V of this study.

CHAPTER V - SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

General Summary

When the Michigan state legislature passed Public Act 379, the classroom teachers in the state were tossed into an alien arena. The legal technicalities of the act demanded that teachers negotiate under the auspices of labor regulations. Few teachers were knowledgeable in this area, and many are still in the process of learning what are the full ramifications of teacher-school board negotiations. Early negotiations concentrated on salary and various fringe benefits such as insurance and duty free lunch hours. In more recent months, the interpretation of terms of working conditions has expanded to consideration of such items as curriculum councils.

A review of the literature revealed no information on research pertaining to the effectiveness of the curriculum council. Some discussion was found relative to classroom teachers involvement in curriculum development, but their perceptions of responsibilities in this area were not evident in the literature. Any materials relative to the curriculum council as a negotiable item in the contract were only available in dittoed reports or pamphlets from the Michigan Education Association or the National Education Association. Evaluation of the effect of negotiations on the curriculum or on the educational process has not been done. New techniques would need to be devised to evaluate the effectiveness of negotiations or the curriculum council as a part of negotiations.

This study did not attempt to develop any evaluative technique that could be used to test the effectiveness of the council. As in any change, the people involved need to change their thinking, attitudes, and insights as a part of being effective in bringing about change. With any kind of evaluation, one can begin by assessing perceptions of those involved in a change process; therefore, this study was an attempt only to assess teachers' perceptions.

In developing the questionnaire for this study and in reviewing the compilation of the returns, the writer has continued to keep one thought in mind. On any opinion questionnaire such as this study used, there always is a question as to how objective the respondents are in their answers. Even teachers are not always objective in their responses. The apparent lack of objectivity of some of the respondents was evident in the vituperative and personal kinds of statements some teachers made in answering the open-ended question. Consequently, in drawing conclusions for this study, this was born in mind.

Conclusions

Two major questions were posed to be explored by this study. These questions and conclusions concerning these questions and their subparts will be presented in this chapter. The basic comparison, of course, was that of teachers' perceptions in districts with curriculum councils designated in the contract to teachers' perceptions in districts without curriculum councils in the contract.

With slightly more than one third of the selected sample returning responses to the survey, both groups of teachers responding appeared to be formed of comparable groups from the demographic information gathered, chiefly females with 1-5 years teaching experience and about evenly di-

vided between elementary and secondary teachers. Conclusions of their perceptions are as follows:

- 1.a. Comparing districts with and without curriculum councils provided for in the contract what curricular changes have occurred?

Both groups of teachers indicated changes had occurred in organizational areas affecting curriculum as indicated in Table XVIII. The subject areas most changed also were the same for both groups, with little differences in percentages. (Table XIX) The most significant difference, as indicated in the largest percent of response, was the concern for the total school curriculum by teachers in districts with councils. (Table XVIII)

- 1.b. Comparing districts with and without curriculum councils provided for in the contract, what has occurred in teacher involvement in curriculum planning?

More than half the teachers in districts with councils believed there were more teachers serving on the councils (Table IX). However teachers in districts without councils tended to believe administrators were more heavily represented on any kind of curriculum planning committees (Table XII). In this latter group teachers felt they participated in curriculum planning more on grade levels or in subject areas, in in-service planning and textbook selection (Table XIII). However, both groups tended to believe administrators still had more influence in curriculum decisions than did teachers (Table XIV).

Whether or not teachers viewed the administrative in-

fluence as part of the council, or as influence only in terms of the ultimate decision maker is not evident from this study.

- 1.c. Comparing districts with and without curriculum councils provided for in the contract what has occurred in terms of K-12 curriculum planning?

Data in Tables XVI and XVIII indicate a K-12 approach, or a study of the total school curriculum. Table XVIII would indicate districts without curriculum councils were more involved in grade level or subject area kinds of concerns. Table XVII indicates a majority of both groups believe that the curriculum councils should plan K-12. If this is the case, then curriculum councils are planning curriculum as most teachers surveyed believe they should, while districts without curriculum councils are planning curriculum chiefly in subject areas.

- 1.d. Comparing districts with and without curriculum councils provided for in the contract what has occurred concerning released time and/or other compensations for curriculum development?

Table XXIV indicates districts with curriculum councils tend to have more compensations for curriculum development. This perception was also evident in many comments from teachers in answer to question 25. Very few teachers in either group equated curriculum development with a source of additional income (Table XXV).

- 2.a. Are teachers in districts with curriculum councils as compared with those districts without curriculum councils likely

to feel curriculum development is their responsibility?

Table XV indicates both groups seemed to feel teachers should have influence in curriculum development; approximately as many teachers also believed this was an equal responsibility with administrators and curriculum workers. Table XXIII also indicated a large percentage of the teachers believed a curriculum council should be included in the contract which would probably indicate greater involvement of the teachers.

- 2.b. Are teachers in districts with curriculum councils as compared with those districts without curriculum councils more actively involved in education association work?

As previously indicated, the interpretation of "actively involved" varied with the teachers. However, Table XXVI would indicate teachers were more involved locally in both groups. This preponderance of local involvement might explain such a large percent of teachers being uncertain about whether curriculum changes in their districts tended to follow trends of the various national councils (Table XX). It might also be a reason that a considerable number of teachers in both groups responded incorrectly or did not know whether a curriculum council was designated in their contracts (Table VII). From the writer's experience with local associations, and teachers who are only involved locally, there tends to be a concentration on parochial concerns rather than trends and movements throughout the state or nation.

- 2.c. Are teachers in districts with curriculum councils as compared with those districts without curriculum councils likely to feel they have a responsibility to implement curriculum change?

Table XXII indicates both groups of teachers decidedly agreed it was their responsibility to implement curriculum changes once the change had been approved.

- 2.d. Are teachers in districts with curriculum councils as compared with those districts without curriculum councils inclined to believe that curriculum changes have occurred in their districts?

Table XVIII would indicate that teachers in districts without curriculum councils apparently perceive that curriculum changes have occurred in more areas. The major exception is the item on a study of the total school curriculum where 60.20% of the teachers from districts with councils believed this was the area of change. Table XIX dealing with changes in specific subject areas, indicated no appreciable difference between the two groups. Both groups, too, found whatever changes had occurred moderately effective and valuable (Table XXI).

Recommendations

Recommendations evident from this study can be made for further research, for teacher preparation institutions, and for the Michigan Education Association.

A. Questions for further research:

1. Do perceptions of teachers concerning the effectiveness of curriculum councils change as these councils exist for a longer period of time?
 2. Do teacher perceptions concerning teacher influence change with the introduction of the council?
 3. What techniques of evaluation need to be developed to measure effectiveness of curriculum changes that are applicable to the philosophy and goals of the changes?
 4. Is there any significant differences in teacher involvement in curriculum development between teachers with many years of experience and those with a few years of experience?
 5. Is there a relationship between involvement in education associations and involvement in curriculum development?
- B. Recommendations to teacher preparation institutions are as follows:
1. Colleges need to assist in better preparing both pre-service and in-service teachers in the realities of negotiations and an awareness of the implications. This needs to be more than a mere mention of the fact there are contracts, but instruction in what are teacher responsibilities are in this area.
 2. Colleges need to better prepare both pre-service and in-service teachers to realize their role and responsibilities in curriculum development as a total process, rather than just a commitment to only their own grade or subject areas.
 3. Colleges can explore more effective means to assist in helping pre-service and in-service teachers become more open to change and to evaluate themselves objectively.

C. Recommendations for the Michigan Education Association:

1. The association should not merely pursue the establishment of curriculum councils in the contracts, but encourage that these councils ensure teacher involvement and K-12 planning.
2. The association should make a concentrated effort to encourage all teacher members to become familiar with conditions of their contracts prior to ratification.

APPENDIX A

Check the answers which best answers the question as you see it.

1. Number of years of teaching experience?

<u> </u> 1-5	<u> </u> 11-15	<u> </u> 21-25
<u> </u> 6-10	<u> </u> 16-20	<u> </u> More than 25
2. Are you teaching?

<u> </u> Elementary
<u> </u> Junior or middle school
<u> </u> High School
3. What certificate do you hold?

<u> </u> Elementary
<u> </u> Secondary
<u> </u> Both
4. Sex

<u> </u> Male
<u> </u> Female
5. How actively are you involved in your education association?

<u> </u> Not at all	<u> </u> State
<u> </u> Only locally	<u> </u> Nationally
<u> </u> Regionally	<u> </u> All levels
6. Does your district have a curriculum council designated in the contract?

<u> </u> Yes
<u> </u> No
<u> </u> Don't know
7. Are you a member of the curriculum council?

<u> </u> Yes
<u> </u> No
8. The curriculum council membership consists of:

<u> </u> More teachers than administrators
<u> </u> More administrators than teachers
<u> </u> Balance of teachers and administrators

9. If your district does not have a curriculum council, how do teachers participate in curriculum development?
- ☐ In-service planning committee
 - ☐ Grade level or subject area committee
 - ☐ Building committee
 - ☐ Textbook selection committee
 - ☐ Professional development committee
 - ☐ Other
 - ☐ Not at all
 - ☐ Don't know
10. If your district does not have a curriculum council, curriculum planning committees in your district consist of:
- ☐ More teachers than administrators
 - ☐ More administrators than teachers
 - ☐ Balance of teachers and administrators
11. Who do you believe has more influence in curriculum decisions in your district?
- ☐ Teachers
 - ☐ Administrators
 - ☐ Curriculum worker
 - ☐ Equally all of the above
12. Who do you think should have more influence in curriculum decisions?
- ☐ Curriculum worker
 - ☐ Teachers
 - ☐ Administrators
 - ☐ Equally all of the above
13. How were the members of your curriculum council selected?
- ☐ Elected by buildings
 - ☐ Elected at large from the total staff
 - ☐ Elected by department or grade levels
 - ☐ Appointed by the administration
 - ☐ Selected by the education association
14. How effective do you believe your curriculum council is?
- ☐ Very effective
 - ☐ Moderately effective
 - ☐ Slightly effective
 - ☐ Not effective at all
15. Does the curriculum council plan on a K-12 basis or is the work of the council concerned with particular grade levels and/or subject areas?
- ☐ K-12
 - ☐ Grade levels
 - ☐ Subject areas

16. How do you think the curriculum council should plan?
 _____ K-12
 _____ Grade levels
 _____ Subject areas
17. What curriculum changes do you believe have occurred in your school in the last three years? (Check more than one if applicable)
 _____ Team teaching
 _____ Programmed instruction
 _____ Non-graded
 _____ Organization of content around structural elements or concepts
 _____ Interdisciplinary study
 _____ Individualized instruction
 _____ New approach to teaching subject matter
 _____ Development of behavioral objectives
 _____ Study of the total school curriculum
 _____ Teaching values
 _____ Vocational
 _____ Other
18. Which subject area do you think has had the most changes?
 _____ Science
 _____ Math
 _____ English or Language Arts
 _____ Foreign Language
 _____ Social Studies
 _____ Vocational
 _____ Other
19. To what extent do the curriculum changes in your district tend to reflect the trends of national councils? (National Council of Teachers of English; National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, etc.)
 _____ Follow closely
 _____ Follow with variations to fit district needs
 _____ Do not follow at all
 _____ Do not know
20. How would you evaluate curriculum changes in your district?
 _____ Changes were valuable and effective
 _____ Changes were moderately effective and valuable
 _____ Changes were slightly effective and valuable
 _____ Changes were not effective at all
21. Once a curriculum change has been approved, do you believe it is your responsibility to assist in implementation of the change?
 _____ Yes
 _____ No

22. Do you think provision for a curriculum council should be included in the contract?
_____ Yes
_____ No
23. Is released time or other compensations provided for curriculum development?
_____ Yes
_____ No
_____ Don't know
24. Curriculum development is mostly
_____ A means to communication
_____ A source of additional money
_____ A kind of professional growth
_____ Time consuming with little result
25. Comment briefly on how you feel about teacher involvement in curriculum development and on curriculum changes you are familiar with in your district.

APPENDIX B

Curriculum councils are being formed in many districts in Michigan. The councils are designated in some of the teacher contracts. In other districts councils have not been established, but are being discussed with the prospect of including such councils in the contracts.

At the present time districts would find it helpful to know more about the conditions under which these councils operate, the involvement of the teachers in curriculum development, and the kinds of curriculum changes the councils have affected. Similar information would be of use to not only the school districts, but also the local education associations and teacher preparation institutions. To provide some of this information the following questionnaire has been prepared.

The executive board of the M.E.A. Region 8 Council has endorsed this study and urges that all teachers surveyed assist by responding to the questionnaire.

Please answer the questions to the best of your knowledge. If a question is not applicable to your district, go on to the next question.

Thank you very much for your time and effort in completing the survey questions. Return the survey in the stamped, addressed envelope enclosed.

Lois Redmond

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